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The discursive framework for development.
From discourses and concrete political actions to
the range of actions by deportee associations.

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Summary

In early 2006, the shores of Senegal became one of the main points of departure for the *cayucos* (boats) destined for the Canary Islands. While readmission agreements between Spain and Senegal are the focus of diplomatic preoccupations, the Senegalese government has taken up the argument of development *versus* the control of migratory flows in order to negotiate compensation from the Spanish authorities. This paper will show how, beyond these political negotiations, the development argument is also a core argument used by the deportee associations which are trying to become visible in the social arena in Senegal, and to acquire a number of resources.

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Introduction

This paper presents some of the conclusions drawn from a field study conducted in February–March 2008 and June–July 2008 in Senegal (under the Mitrans project).¹ This research is built around two main components.

First, I studied the way the discursive framework ‘development/control of migration flows’ was used in negotiations to fight illegal migration between European countries (especially Spain) and Senegal. In 2006–2007, the Senegal coastline became one of the main points of departure for the *cayucos* (boats) destined for the Canary Islands. While the readmission of the Senegalese who reached the Spanish islands is the focus of negotiations between Spain and Senegal, the development argument is used by the Senegalese government to negotiate, in exchange for its collaboration with regards to deportations, compensations from the Spanish authorities.

Second, I looked at the way this discursive framework ‘development/control of migration flows’ was taken up by associations established in 2006–2007 by Senegalese citizens deported from the Canary Islands, in their range of actions, justifications and arguments (Tily, 1986).

I use the notion of a discursive framework, rather than a system of reference, according to the definition proposed by Hudébine (2006). By discursive framework, the author means the ‘grammar of arrangements which are not necessarily tantamount to an agreement, between the partners of the public action involved, on basic principles and common objectives’, but which allow the control of a system.

The aim of this paper will therefore be to highlight how the construction of institutional categories and discourses influences the discourse of deportee associations. More precisely, we will see how these discourses influence the way these associations position themselves in the social arena² in order to obtain a number of material, intellectual and positional resources.

I The discursive framework of development at the political level

Starting from the distinction established by Vivien Schmidt (2004) between concrete public action, co-ordination discourse and communication discourse, the first part of this paper will highlight how the discursive framework of development is used during negotiations to fight illegal migration between Senegal and European countries.

Besides concrete public action, Vivien Schmidt differentiates two levels of discourse which both pertain to political communication, but with different stakes. On the one hand, Vivien Schmidt describes the co-ordination discourse, which refers to the construction of a programme by political actors with a common institutional language and framework; and, on the other hand, the communication discourse, the aim of which is to convince the public, through

¹ ANR Project, *Migrations de transit en Afrique, dynamiques locales et globales, gestion politique et expériences d’acteurs*, conducted with URMIS, URMIS-SOLIIS, and Institut français d’Afrique du Sud (IFAS). This paper is taken from the presentation at the closing seminar *Migrations de transit en Afrique. Dynamiques locales et globales, gestion politique et expériences d’acteurs*, Université de Nice Sophia Antipolis, 10-13 December 2009.

² If, according to Habermas, the notion of public space reflects the mediation and discussion space between individuals and states, the notion of arena allows us to refer more precisely to ‘a space to give *visibility* to and to address a question considered as a social issue’. E. Neveu, *Sociologie des mouvements sociaux*, La Découverte, Paris, 2005, p. 16.

cognitive and normative arguments, that the politics implemented within the co-ordination process are justified and necessary.

So what can be said about the discursive framework of development at the level of communication discourses and co-ordination discourses?

Communication and co-ordination discourses: the politically acceptable

Today, one of the principles that European countries frequently refer to both at bilateral³ and multilateral levels, is the subordination of development assistance to the objectives of migration flow control (for instance, European Summit in Seville in June 2002, Euro-African Conference in Rabat, Spain's Africa Plan 2006–2008, conclusions of various European councils, etc.).

Furthermore, the European Commission regularly identifies poverty and under-development in countries of origin as fundamental causes and drivers of illegal migration:

‘In the context of development co-operation policies and programmes, the EU will continue to explore the drivers promoting illegal migration, such as poverty, unemployment, conflicts, environmental degradation, poor governance, insufficient access to education, health, etc.’⁴

Official declarations seem to be based on the assumption, considered as fact, that the development of countries of origin would help to reduce migration – whereas many studies have shown that the links between migration and development cannot be reduced mechanically to a cause-and-effect correlation, even though economic precariousness can be an incentive to seek a better future in a different country (Guegant, 1996). But, as Edelman reminds us (1991), associating a solution with a given problem gives political discourses a rational appearance, beyond the contradictions that they often incorporate but that the political language tries to dissimulate. Therefore in this case one wonders if the political discourse linking migration to development is not based on a contradiction from the very start.

Indeed, European countries seem, on the one hand, to consider poverty as a decisive factor encouraging illegal migration.⁵ But, on the other hand, they make development assistance conditional on third-country co-operation against illegal migration. However, if the European Union threatens to suspend the development assistance it provides to third countries because these countries do not co-operate sufficiently in the management of migration flows, does it not run the risk, if we follow its perspective on migration factors, of aggravating poverty and therefore increasing the pressure to emigrate? The result would thus be the opposite of the desired one – unless this rhetoric is based on different stakes. Indeed, presenting development assistance as a response to migration factors appears more politically acceptable than presenting it as a way of negotiating the implementation of police operations, as was mentioned behind closed doors by several institutional actors in Senegal.

³ Thus, on 23 September 2006, a French–Senegalese agreement was signed in Dakar between the French Interior Ministry (then Nicolas Sarkozy) and the Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade. In exchange for a reinforced co-operation between the French and Senegalese police off the coast of Senegal and a set of measures to accelerate the repatriation of illegal Senegalese migrants residing in France, the agreement will make it easier for some categories of Senegalese (businessmen, sportspeople, artists, students satisfying certain criteria) to obtain a visa. Simultaneously, France committed to grant €2.5 million for the country's development.

⁴ COM (2006) 402 final. European Commission communication, dated July 2006.

⁵ For a more detailed criticism, which cannot be undertaken here, see A. Pian, ‘Lutte contre l’immigration clandestine et développement’, presentation during the seminar *Le développement, une réponse aux migrations ?*, SSAE, Paris, September 2009.

In addition, today, development assistance granted by the EU remains below the levels required to achieve concrete results⁶ (see also Spain's 2006–2008 Plan for Africa). Declarations by European countries with regards to development assistance seem therefore to evidence a gap – which, in itself, is a recurring process (Hudébine, 2006) – between communication discourse, co-ordination discourse and concrete public action.

This is why, beyond the 'politics as they are expressed at the highest level' (Fassin, 2004, p. 259), I quickly turned my attention to the positions and representations of political actors in the field.

Ambiguous discourses: from official to unofficial discourses

The European diplomats who met in Dakar seemed rather unconvinced by the efficacy of development (and by its co-development variations) when it comes to fighting illegal migration: 'Today, development is a fashionable concept. We don't quite know what it is and it did not prevent the summer 2006 crisis!', a diplomat said.

Some members of the European delegation regretted the lack of clear directives coming from the European headquarters even though, after the summer 2006 emergency, the European Commission granted €1.8 million credit under a six-month rapid response mechanism.⁷

However, as highlighted by Hudébine (2006) in a different context, we can ask ourselves whether this lack of well-defined guidelines, as expressed by the diplomats, does not constitute in itself a means of control. Indeed, a Spanish diplomat does not hide the fact that, in 2006–2008, the negotiations conducted with the Senegalese authorities about the readmission of Senegalese citizens who had reached the Canary islands by *cayucos* are ad-hoc arrangements which allow for adjustment to the needs of the Spanish labour market, while taking into account the constraints of the Senegalese political agenda at a time of electoral campaigning.⁸ Anonymously, the same diplomat acknowledged that Spanish development assistance policies do not follow a well-defined programme in Senegal. He added that, for now, they are rather like a form of 'reward', working as a compensation for the deployment of Frontex⁹ and the Guardia Civil patrols in the Senegalese territorial waters, and for the deportations from the Canary Islands back to Senegal. Yet, in the 2006–2008 Africa Plan, Spain committed to increase its development assistance.

In general, the European country representatives whom I met acknowledged that 'there is no solution to the complex problem of illegal immigration' but only 'answers that can be proposed'.¹⁰ However, as noted by Hudébine (2006), it does not really matter whether the

⁶ See Rodier (2002).

⁷ Themed around 'building capacities for management and fighting against illegal migration on Senegal', the project is conducted with IOM (International Organisation for Migration), UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) and Spanish co-operation.

⁸ Deportations from the Canary Islands are indeed perceived rather negatively by the public, who then question the actions of the Senegalese government.

⁹ European Agency for the Management of Operational Co-operation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union: established in 2004, it aims at strengthening controls of maritime, terrestrial and air areas.

¹⁰ Furthermore, some diplomats wonder if the Senegalese government really has anything to gain by fighting against illegal movements to Europe. According to them, some rivalries create interferences between ministries, which all try to assert themselves as the preferred negotiating partner for European countries.

actors believe in the co-ordination discourse that they officially convey, as long as this scepticism is not publicly expressed, and the rule of apparent coherence is respected.

An analysis in terms of policy transfer, such as the one developed in the analysis of international public policies, allows some light to be shed on the questions at stake around development (and notably its conditionality to the migration control objectives).¹¹ Although I will not have time to go into detail here, I would simply say that, in the Senegalese context, the processes at work at the ideological transfer level are ambiguous, insofar as third countries do not seem more convinced than European countries that development programmes are efficient – yet they vigorously defend these programmes. Thus, the arguments for development seem to work principally as a discursive coalition (Jobert, 2001) between European countries and Senegal. This coalition supposes a common definition of the situation (in this case, European countries and Senegal officially align themselves with this argument as a means to fight illegal migration, by finding incentives for the individuals to remain in their country of origin). However, this coalition does not necessarily imply sharing a common value or belief system, as each partner is focused on the pursuit of its own – sometimes differing – interests (Jobert [2001] quoted in Hudébine [2006]). In this respect, the Plan Reva stands as a perfect example.

The Plan Reva or ‘building gestures as a solution’

Following the events of Ceuta and Melilla and the repatriation to Senegal of hundreds of Senegalese citizens, the Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade promoted – on both national and international scenes – an important development programme named Plan Reva (*Retour vers l’Agriculture* – Back to Agriculture). This programme, which officially aims to modernise agriculture in the country in order to offer opportunities to young Senegalese and encourage them to remain in Senegal, benefited from the financial support of Spain in exchange for the readmission of the Senegalese citizens who had reached the Canary Islands (Pian, 2009).

By means of this plan, the Senegalese president uses the discursive framework of development to negotiate funds, which he never fails to make the public aware of, especially during the electoral campaign. In this situation, development assistance becomes a crucial factor in obtaining material resources and seeking popularity at the national level. However, there is an obvious gap between these communication discourses and concrete political action.

First of all, it took a long time to establish the agency in charge of the Plan Reva. Its managers, who acknowledge that they had a bad start, make no secret, off the record, of the existence of political pressure for the selected zones to include certain constituencies, without any consideration for the quality of the land. Simultaneously, several independent experts expressed strong criticisms on the technical aspects of the project and its contradiction of the government’s agricultural policy.¹²

¹¹ The concept of *policy transfer* refers to the process through which ‘the knowledge of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas within a political system (past or present) is used for the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas within another political system’. These transfers follow a variety of arrangements, from the ideological transfer and the imposition of a certain vision of the world (*lesson transfer*) to a *forced* transfer (obligations originating from a treaty) and to a *coercive* transfer (direct impositions submitted to conditions) Channac (2006).

¹² Interviews conducted in Dakar and Mbour in 2008 with Senegalese and foreign agronomy engineers.

Similarly, the actors who represent European countries in Senegal show a deep scepticism about the Plan Reva.¹³ Among several other examples, one Spanish diplomat thinks that the Plan Reva will allow the creation of 2,000 jobs at most. This number appears derisory, both when considering the amount of financial support Spain gave to the programme which, in 2008, amounted to €10 million, and when considering the Senegalese government's official declarations.

Thus, the Plan Reva seems to participate in a process of 'building gestures as a solution' (Edelman, 1991) which, by taking the 'appearance of a response to a problem' (but only the appearance), allows the opposing actors to bring their cards to the table.

On another level, the discursive framework of development is also taken up by the associations of the numerous Senegalese deported from the Canary Islands, created in 2006–2007.¹⁴ This point will be developed in the second part of this paper.

II Migrations and development at the core of the discourse of deportee associations

I will focus mainly on the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain, made up of Senegalese citizens deported from the Canary Islands. Drawing on the *frame perspective*¹⁵ which looks at the production of 'frames'¹⁶ and at the 'work of signification' in social arenas, I will show how the leaders of this association base their arguments on the 'grammars of public life' (Céfaï, 2001). But, first of all, it is important to relate how this association came into being, and in what socio-political context this happened.

Between dissidence and co-optation

The first chartered flights coming from the Canary Islands landed in Dakar airport at the end of May 2006.¹⁷ Very angry at the Senegalese government that they accused of 'betrayal', the deportees expressed their discontent in front of the presidential palace. After altercations with police forces, the demonstrators were ordered to prepare a written hearing if they wished to meet President Abdoulaye Wade. By June, the number of deportees had grown; they demonstrated violently in Yarakh¹⁸ and, supported by a segment of the population, they blocked the main road by burning car tyres. They clashed with police forces, resulting in two of the leaders being arrested. Among them was the future president of the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain, who had been set free after spending three weeks in jail. While the social tension increased, the deportees, urged by the government to select spokespersons, were eventually invited to see Abdoulaye Wade in September. The future president of the

¹³ The same can be said about the Senegalese population, as exemplified by the slogan 'REVA=Rêver' (*REVA=Dream*), which has become popular.

¹⁴ In common speech, the term 'repatriated' is often used instead of 'deported'. In the case of the Senegalese who, having reached the shores of the Canary Islands, are sent back to Senegal, it constitutes, from a legal viewpoint, a deportation rather than a repatriation. This is why we use the term deported.

¹⁵ Derived from the *frame analysis* (Goffman), this theoretical perspective stands apart from the theory of resource mobilisation (RMT).

¹⁶ The frames of collective action refer to 'the sets of beliefs and significations directed towards action', which 'inspire and justify the activities and campaigns' of a social movement's organisational divisions' (Snow, 2001, p. 28). If frames are defined during interaction from a set of possible repertoires, they must be looked at in the macro-social context (cultural, political, institutional) which influences their construction and shaping.

¹⁷ In 2006, almost 6,000 Senegalese were deported from the Canary Islands.

¹⁸ Suburb of Dakar, on the coast.

National Association of People Repatriated from Spain, speaking in the name of the group from Yarakh, describes his first public speech:

‘On that day, I spoke, but not much...I was a bit upset...Then I explained: Mr President, with all respect that is due to you, we are young people and since 2000 we have voted for Wade. When the transition government came, young people’s hopes were rewarded. Because it’s Wade who said: when I get to power, I will give jobs to all young people. But we didn’t find jobs. And that’s why we left our country for Spain. We are proud to be Senegalese...Even when we get killed...We will never give up our Senegalese citizenship...I explained to the government that all we want is to succeed, and if we can find work here, we won’t leave the country...Then people applauded’.

Very quickly, the association’s future president takes the role of a leader: his arrest contributes to the construction of his image in the media and his charisma; then he learns to manage political sensitivities by showing his support for the government and insisting, in his public speeches, on strong political symbols, such as national pride. During this first important meeting attended by representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Youth, the Senegalese President announces the possibility of financing projects for the deportees and, above all, the impending signature of an agreement with the Spanish government on seasonal work contracts. The Head of State then urges the deportees to create a national association, made up of national delegates. Three of them will sit on the Commission responsible for drawing lots to choose the beneficiaries of the Spanish work contracts. To elect the delegates, the audience is invited to attend the international fair. Tensions between deportees increase, each of them asserting the legitimacy of his candidacy while the others are accused of being opportunistic charlatans. Using the attraction of the work contracts, the Senegalese Government promotes the creation of an association which, from the start, is partially co-opted. The leaders’ discontent is brought under control, and what could have emerged as a collective cause turns into disputes between those who are integrated in the structure’s management and those who are left out.

The members of the committee of the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain have all received Spanish work contracts, which they had to give to family members, because they could not leave for Spain themselves.¹⁹ Trying to remain discreet about obtaining these contracts, the people concerned deny any form of co-optation. Despite criticisms by many other deportees who felt they had been wronged, the committee members themselves guarantee the transparency of procedures, whereas the media regularly suspects the existence of privileges and criticises the vagueness of the system which works as follows. From a list of all people repatriated from Morocco and deported from the Canary Islands, the Commission formed by the Government preselects candidates at random, supposedly considering the profile of workers sought by Spain while ensuring a fair geographical distribution. Then, Spanish companies organise the recruitment of workers from the pre-selected candidates. Thus, in January 2007, 73 Senegalese were recruited. Although the BIT is involved in selecting and training candidates, its role remains of secondary importance. The Spanish Embassy in Dakar acknowledges that they have no way of controlling the procedures taking place, but they appear more preoccupied

¹⁹ While initially the Senegalese President had asserted, during the electoral campaign, that the deportees could obtain the contracts, he rapidly had to retract this assertion. The deportees, now on the files of the Schengen database, cannot legally travel to Europe. To hush up the scandal, the Director of the National Agency for the Employment of Young People offered the repatriated the chance to elect a family member to go in their place.

by the rate of non-return of seasonal workers – who often vanish before the end of their contract – than by the transparency of the recruitment process.²⁰

While the Association's leaders received Spanish work contracts, they also belonged to the 20 or so deportees who benefited, in 2007, from funding from the IOM under its programme in support of 'social reintegration of repatriated people and potential candidates'.²¹ In collaboration with the Ministries of Youth, Employment and Home Affairs, the IOM finances a total of approximately 70 projects. After a two-week training period, the beneficiaries receive funds and material resources amounting to a total varying between CFA 1 and 4 million. One committee member created a spare parts business for bicycles while another one opened an ironmongery.

Once again, the committee members try to remain discreet about these allocations, and delegate the management of their project to a close third party. If this discretion forms part of a strategy to avoid the obligation, enshrined in Senegalese society, to redistribute resources, the beneficiaries are also well aware that their legitimacy as spokespersons, already questioned, would be even more weakened if the news started to spread. Moreover, some of them are convinced that the government had something to do with their being selected by the IOM: 'This was a way to ensure that we remain quiet!' one of them admits.

Thus, the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain mobilises a discourse which, while respecting conventional appearances, aligns itself with the prevailing discursive framework. As highlighted by Payet *et al.* (2008), weak actors are more or less forced to conform – at least in appearance – 'to the normative framework of acceptability of the voice' if they want to be heard and obtain a certain level of recognition in the social arena. Let's now shed some light on the process they follow to construct their discourse.

Double discourse and detailed alignment of frameworks

Shortly after its creation, the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain engages in a campaign against illegal immigration, with government support. Visiting several places profoundly affected by departures in dug-out canoes, it seizes the opportunity to call on the population to renew confidence in the authorities.

In June 2008, the Association takes new steps to organise another awareness-raising day. The diagnostic (analysis of the causes of a problem) and prognostic (propositions of solutions to resolve the problem) processes²² used to promote this day to donors (IOM, European country embassies, Senegalese ministries) reveal an alignment with the prevailing discursive

²⁰ In February 2008, in order to stop the 'leak' of seasonal workers, Spain imposed, after tense negotiations with the Senegalese Government, the recruitment of a contingent of approximately 750 women to pick strawberries. Their contract is supposed to be renewable for three or four years, provided they return to Senegal at the end of each season. If these procedures are complied with, a longer-term residence permit could be delivered to the women after five years. The recruitment campaign was promoted in the media by the Senegalese Government, which even broadcasted adverts on television. However, recurrent accusations appeared in the press that the selected women were party members or had bought their contract. While the Spanish authorities expected to reduce the rate of non-return thanks to these new arrangements, this rate remains high. Consequently, at the end of 2008, Spain questioned the renewal of its agreements with Senegal – agreements that are also in place with Morocco.

²¹ Interview at IOM, Dakar, June 2008.

²² As shown by the *frame perspective*, this double process is a constituent of framing operations.

frameworks. Indeed, development is presented as the remedy against illegal migration. During an interview, a regional delegate promotes this day of action:

‘...it’s the reason why we, the individuals repatriated from Spain, have initiated a national day on immigration, which aims to contribute to finding sustainable and efficient solutions in order to put an end to illegal movements...And to revive the reflection on alternative strategies to ensure the youth settle down in the territory, through development. So, we have invited all the NGOs, the Ambassadors and ourselves to try and find a solution’.

And another added: ‘We are going to reflect on the parameters which will constitute a strategic document that will be submitted to the Ministry’.

The written preamble to the project, drawn up in order to request funds from the Senegalese authorities and the IOM, starts by praising the Senegalese President for having been able to negotiate a ‘balanced partnership’ with Europe, with regards to the management of migration flows. However, in private, the Association’s leaders are staunch critics of the policy followed by the Head of State and accuse him of not doing anything regarding the promises made to help with the ‘reintegration’ of deportees. Actually, like the majority of the population, they do not believe in the Plan Reva. A committee member admits:

‘I criticise the government but I work with them [...]. We did not want to say anything stupid that would make the government angry, but the Senegalese Government has not made any... effort since our return. Sometimes, it draws up plans such as Reva or Goana. But all this has nothing to do with reality...They do politics on TV only to give information...’.

This double discourse – different in the public and private spheres – highlights the ‘*bricolage des sens*’ (tinkering with meanings) (Céfaï, 2001, p. 58) which adjust according to what is at stake in a given situation, and to interlocutors.²³ Here, as highlighted by D. Céfaï (*ibid.*), ‘the framing of messages is indissociable from the framing of audiences’. But the series of arguments used by the Association also uses a ‘*système actanciel de dénonciation*’ (an actancial model of denunciation) (Boltanski *et al.*, 1984), making European countries responsible for illegal immigration. A regional delegate related in the following way a meeting organised with a European MP through a development association based in Dakar:

‘We spoke together about a variety of things. The deputy asked us what we wanted and what could put an end to illegal migration. This is what we said: in previous years, the sea was good, we could earn a living here. We didn’t want to leave our sea to try illegal migration. But today, African countries are badly governed. They signed agreements with European countries, and there are lots of fishing boats off our shores which have caught all the fish. We only fish in depths up to 300 metres. But they can go up to 1,000 metres [...]. At present, the sea is overwhelmed. In previous years, when we came back to our families with a full canoe, it was enough to satisfy everybody. For food, for health and for all expenses. But today, five canoes are not sufficient to satisfy our needs. Look, the canoes are here. No-one wants to use them

²³ To analyse how the framings of discourses change during the interaction, and the identification processes locating the opposing actors, it is necessary to look at the processes of construction of meaning rather than to seek the truth – difficult to define – of a discourse in itself. This does not mean that therefore the discourses used by the sociologist – and recorded by him in the field – could be more ‘fair’ or ‘true’ than those which might be used by other people. The sociologist himself is unavoidably trapped in a set of identifications which influence the investigative report. However, the researcher should not only pay attention to the context in which discourses are produced, but he should consider this context as a key element of analysis.

because they are expensive. If you have bought fuel for the canoe, you will not be able to cover its cost with your catch. So, we told him that we wanted to emigrate. He said that it wasn't possible. He said that not everyone can go to Europe, which is true. But we cannot stay here empty-handed. If you bring concrete projects to us, here, we will work. But we know only too well that no-one wants to come and develop here without the Cayarois. But we need concrete means[...]. Here, all the resources have been seized by the Spanish. Lots of Spanish boats come and catch the prawns. [...] But us, what are we going to do? If Spain remains in Spain, we will stay and work here. But if Spain comes here to take our resources, we will always take our canoes and go there'.

The rhetoric employed in this discourse is organised around a double opposition: the first is temporal and formulated through the diachrony between a 'before' and an 'after' referring to the fishing agreements signed with Spain;²⁴ the second is spatial and is based on the duality 'Spain'/'Senegal' and appears again in the last two sentences through the dialectic 'here' and 'there'. The reframing of the discourse by the regional delegate, in contrast with the usual allegations against illegal immigrants, reverses the situation on two different levels. First, the discourse clears the Senegalese of all illegitimacy – and illegality – for trying to reach the Canary Islands illegally, making Spain responsible for the situation since, by grabbing resources from the Senegalese territory, it forces the local population to emigrate. From then on, Spain is the one who is requested to stay at home, if it does not wish Senegalese people to migrate to its territory, at least by canoe. Thus, the deportees are pictured as 'victims' and no longer 'guilty'²⁵ of illegal migration. During this meeting, alternatives are also mentioned, which would allow the Senegalese to remain in their country and work. Projects such as an ice factory, a fishing training centre, and better collaboration with Spanish fishing boats are all mentioned. But, through the training centre, the regional delegate confides that his aim is, above all, to obtain a seasonal contract in Spain: 'Because at the moment, Zapatero has come to sign an agreement for 700 Senegalese fishermen to go to Spain. I sometimes said before that European countries need Senegalese fishermen. So, because we have founded a training school here, when European countries need fishermen, they will come to us'.

Thus, under cover of discourses on development and the promotion of training projects, emigration remains the objective, notably through obtaining a Spanish work contract. But, rather than leaving to work in Europe themselves – in somewhat precarious conditions – the committee members rather see, through these potential awards, an opportunity to strengthen their position and popularity in Senegal. Once more, we can see here how the development argument works in a constrained discursive framework, incontrovertible in terms of obtaining material and positional resources – but used to achieve a different objective.

Dramatic staging

Moreover, the Association's leaders have not only learnt to adjust the content of their discourses: they also know how to adapt their act, going along with the requirements of the dramatic repertoire.²⁶

²⁴ In the 2006–2008 Africa Plan, Spain granted, *on top of* conditional development assistance, an important role to investments and the establishment of Spanish companies in Africa, notably in the fishing and energy sectors.

²⁵ Guilty from the viewpoint of European countries, but also of the Senegalese Government which, in 2006, sued a number of Senegalese citizens for 'illegal emigration'. However, in reality, it is mostly the organisers who are at risk of being given a jail sentence.

²⁶ On this subject, see also the works of Bouilly (2008) on the Thiaroye Collective.

First, the committee members, like many other deportees, have learnt to welcome journalists while conforming, in return for remuneration, to the roles expected of them. In Yarakh, as in Cayar, canoe ‘tours’ are offered to foreign reporters to give them an idea of the ‘reality’ of the crossing to the Canary Islands.²⁷ The interest of the media is exploited and, in areas hit hard by departures, people try to get as much money as possible for their testimony, whether they have attempted the crossing or not. The sociologist himself is not excluded from this staging: the first time we meet the Association’s president for a simple talk, he welcomes us in his room in the family home. A little while later, when we meet for a more formal interview, he proposes that we talk in the house yard, whose wall is decorated with a large fresco depicting a canoe arriving in the Canary Islands. Pointing to the picture on the wall, on which is also written the name of his witchdoctor, he insists: ‘here, we will have the right ambience’.²⁸

This dramatic staging also punctuates the awareness days organised by the Association. Thus, a commemoration in memory of people who died at sea, with recitals of prayers and poems in the presence of witchdoctors, is on the agenda for the day that the Association wishes to organise during summer 2008. This ‘work of adjusted figuration’ (Joseph, 1999) is accompanied by a progressive learning process during which the committee members transform their deportation experience into a springboard for a career as a militant.

Symbolising identity

Through the staging of a public issue according to the ‘grammars of political life’, the Association’s spokespersons attempt to create a collective cause, but one which, above all, brings them personal benefits, whether material, relational or symbolic.

First, the Association becomes for them the starting point of new ambitions, where the labels ‘illegal’ and ‘repatriated’ are elevated to a symbol of identity and contribute to an improvement of their social image, and especially their personal image:

‘Sometimes, when I’m walking in the street, I say to myself that I’m proud to be an illegal migrant,’ the Association president emphasises. Then he adds: ‘Every day, when I wake up, I keep myself busy with the case of illegal migrants and repatriated individuals, to keep up-to-date...Sometimes NGOs get in touch with us...We speak about it, we explain how we spend our days...Yes, when I was repatriated, return was hard...it hurt a little bit, but I pretended that it didn’t so that no-one could see, I said it was nothing...Maybe I will leave again in a couple of days...But I actually suffered from things that I couldn’t explain and I couldn’t sleep at night... Then I said it wasn’t a big deal, we would start taking action, and because of this I felt a little bit...I became...I’m not saying like a manager or something, but now I feel like my image has improved...Because now in the whole Medina, in the whole of Senegal, when I travel to another region or city, when I walk a few steps, there’s someone who comes to me and says: ‘Hey, you, I saw you on TV, you explained the case of the illegal migrants...’.

²⁷ I will also hear similar propositions at the beginning of my field work.

²⁸ His family, like the Cayar delegates’ family, is used to the arrival of *toubab* journalists (term referring to Europeans). In the house, the children are asked not to make any noise during the interview; I am offered a *touba* coffee, a beverage served on great occasions; and, when someone from the house starts talking a bit too loud on the terrace, another family member quickly asks him to stop, pointing at the microphone with his finger. Furthermore, during each of my visits, the mother of the president of the Association never fails to show us a photo of her husband, who used to be an infantry soldier and is now deceased, and whose portrait is hung on a terrace wall.

As revealed by Edelman (1991, p. 20), commitment to political action (and, more generally, to militancy) produces a construction with two meanings: one at the level of individual subjectivities and the other at the level of ideologies or ‘moral positions’. Indeed, this commitment does not only imply the employment of ideological discourses and actions (in which, moreover, the individual in question may not always believe) but it also influences the subjectivity of actors or their ‘impression of what they are’. This double process, which the notion of *voice* can also account for (Payet *et al.*, 2008, p. 9),²⁹ is obvious in this situation.

The Association committee members hope to successfully promote their cause in Europe through the organisation of a European tour, similar to the Collectif de Thiaroye.³⁰ Since their return from the Canary Islands, they have not gone back to their previous jobs. They now focus entirely on the collective cause they claim to be defending:

‘My mission, now, is here in Senegal [...]. Now, if I leave for Europe, it is not to work in masonry or something of the kind. But it is to work with associations, to take part in important Immigration Days...’.

These new careers, to which are attached new projects and ambitions, imply a change in the relationship with Europe.

A political label

In fact, the Association’s leaders instantly played the political game. The ‘repatriated’ label refers to the political category of readmission, and it is as repatriated individuals that the members of the committee negotiate their co-optation with the government. However, the construction of this collective identity (which influences individual identities) is limited insofar as it depends on a specific situation, which is the mobilisation of political circles around the ‘canoe phenomenon’, as well as the strong media attention given to this subject.³¹ The committee members are indeed aware that this label may not ‘sell’ so well in the future. As highlighted by Céfai (2001, p.71), building collective identities cannot happen without the ‘movement of their temporalisation in context’ which implies several modes of readjustment. Therefore, from now on the Association’s leaders are considering widening their range of actions and arguments:

‘And you know, we thought about projecting a future. We can say that the repatriated status is short-lived, because we can’t remain repatriated forever!...But then, there is nothing against us changing identity and status, and working in a different way. So that we become even more credible. Because, in Spain, the term repatriated is sometimes hurtful, derogatory! So we’re going to try and think about it... And why not cast our net wider and, rather than focus only on the problem of illegal migration, address other domains that may be of interest to other young people, so that we can improve the future of the Senegalese youth. Adopt a wider approach’.³²

²⁹ For the authors, this notion which articulates ‘the political and the phenomenological’ is interesting insofar as it ‘recreates a sensitive, incarnated presence which reintroduces the physical, corporeal dimension – therefore emotional and affective – of exchanges linked to the action of being heard, of being important for, of expressing oneself. Thus, the notion of voice recreates the anthropological experience, for the weak actor, to be present in the public space and ensuring his voice is heard.’

³⁰ Bouilly, ‘Les enjeux féminins de la migration masculine : le Collectif des femmes pour la lutte contre l’immigration clandestine de Thiaroye-Sur-Mer’, *Politique Africaine*, n° 109, p. 16-31, p. 2008.

³¹ As highlighted by Edelman (1991), the media play a central role in the construction of social issues and the definition of events as crises.

³² Interview in Dakar in July 2008 with a committee member.

The search for a new collective identity does not only include a symbolic dimension, it is also a way, for its creators, to keep hold of resources and maintain a visibility in the social arena, according to whatever appears, at a given time, to be a major public issue. The Association's members do not intend to abandon the discursive framework of development; on the contrary, they are considering linking it to the wider question of national development, and not just to the fight against illegal migration and the reintegration of deportees. The result is that the relationship of co-optation between the Association and the government confers on the Association a legitimacy that many deportees challenge.

Internal divisions and disputed legitimacy

Despite his media-friendly image, the president of the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain is far from being unanimously supported. He is criticised very harshly by some young Yarakh, who accuse him of having betrayed them after the first demonstrations, in which they all took part. Co-optation by the government, non-disclosure of information, lack of communication (aggravated any the fact that the organisation does not possess any space in which to hold meetings, so they all take place in the president's house), personal benefits – such are the recurrent allegations against him: 'For us, it's a bit difficult when we see X. As he was getting a lot of media attention, people started to listen to him. But we don't like him. He forced himself on us. In Senegal, to be at the top, you have to have a big mouth,' a young Yarakh confides.

In fact, the split between the Association committee and its base reflects tensions regarding so-called collective perspectives which, in fact, function empirically at the individual level. Beyond the personal benefits gained by the committee members in a society where, generally, brokerage and political patronage are common (Olivier de Sardan, 1996), the issue of Spanish work contracts – which, as we saw earlier, has been linked from the start to the history of the Association – have consequences not easily compatible with the promotion of a collective cause.³³ As soon as the contracts are granted on an individual basis and, furthermore, without any transparency, the collective action can only run out of steam and crumble under the weight of its divisions. It turns into a constraint, devoid of aims, especially as most of the government's promises to help with the implementation of projects have not materialised. This situation further exacerbates tensions between the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain and the majority of deportees.

A new market? Competition between associations

While the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain stands out thanks to its visibility in the media, other Canary Islands deportees have also organised themselves, in 2006–2007, and created Economic Interest Groupings (EIG). Some benefit from the support of local development associations which play the role of a middleman to help them draw up plans and ask local and European partners (NGOs, various associations) for funds. Once again, the discursive framework of development is at the core of the range of arguments used, and becomes the basis of a real market in the search for external support. Other local associations – until then dedicated to cultural activities or local development – also mobilise themselves around the theme of fighting against illegal migration and, by integrating this new social and political problem into their range of activities, they contribute simultaneously to its

³³ This tension between the individual and the collective can be observed in many forms of collective action. See for example the works by Fassin and Morice (1999) on undocumented migrants.

construction. For instance, from 13–16 February 2008, the theatre company Kaddu Yaraax³⁴ organises in Yarakh, with the support of the IOM and the Friedrich Erbert Foundation,³⁵ three awareness days against the pitfalls of illegal immigration. Without getting into too many examples, it is also in 2006, in Dakar, that the *Coalition luttant contre l'émigration clandestine des jeunes* (Coalition against the illegal migration of young people) is created.³⁶ In 2008, during the traditional demonstrations of 1 May, this collective marches next to the *Confédération nationale des travailleurs au Sénégal* (National Confederation of Senegalese Workers); next to slogans against the cost of living, banners can be seen saying 'no' to illegal migration. Black headbands are distributed to the demonstrators, as a commemoration for the Senegalese who died at sea.

This proliferation of associations is accompanied by a competition between them or, at least, an absence of co-ordination of their actions. Even when they do not ignore their mutual existence, they are not always informed of actions organised by the others. And when they are, they very often view their actions with much scepticism. They tend to function individually or in clusters, each of them maintaining a more or less restricted network of relationships. For instance, the Coalition considers the awareness days organised by the Kaddu Yaraax Company as rather poor. Furthermore, it does not maintain any relations, at the moment, with the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain. As for the Cayar delegate, he expresses his dismay at seeing a Dutch foundation entering into a partnership with an inn owner in the village to implement youth training projects, rather than coming to him.

It is true that third-party associations and deportee associations tend to agree, in their public discourses, on the definition of the causes (poverty) and solutions (development) to fight illegal migration; in spite of this, they confront each other around conflicts of legitimacy. The Association's leaders claim that they are the only ones who have the legitimacy to express themselves on the subject, based on two arguments. On the one hand, they highlight the depth of their experience: only those who have endured the crossing towards the Canary Islands, and so experienced this crossing from within, can, according to them, have a legitimate point of view on the issue. On the other hand, to emphasise their distinctiveness compared to the other deportee associations, they insist on the fact that they are the government's preferred interlocutor. By accusing other associations of trying to gain some personal benefit through their mobilisation around the cause of illegal immigration, they make the same allegations of which they themselves are victims.

As for the members of the Coalition against the emigration of young people, the majority of whom have never attempted the crossing towards the Canary Islands, they legitimate their interventions by using a rhetoric of expertise, speeches made by intellectuals and shared responsibility.³⁷ While the National Association of People Repatriated from Spain claims the

³⁴ The association was created in 1993, notably to generate awareness, among the local population, of the problem of pollution and the risks of AIDS transmission.

³⁵ German political foundation for 'democracy, justice and social peace'. In 2002, the association supported Attac-Morocco by covering the travel costs of two of its activists so that they could go the Social Forum in Porto Alegre. Cheynis, 'Usages et enjeux nationaux de l'anti-mondialisation : comment le 'mouvement' prend pied au Maroc', presentation during the seminar 'Les mobilisations altermondialistes', 3-5 December 2003.

³⁶ The Coalition, founded following an initiative by *Action citoyenne des jeunes pour la bonne gouvernance* (Young People's Civic Action for a Good Governance), brings together around thirty associations, including the *Association des Étudiants entrepreneurs Afrique* (Associations of Student Entrepreneurship of Africa).

³⁷ A large number of the Coalition's members are indeed students. However, they do not hide the fact that they sometimes have difficult relationships with the deportees, who accuse them of trying to take advantage of the situation and speak about 'things they do not know'.

right to express itself on this subject because of the personal and collective experiences of its members – to which can be added a privileged relationship with the government – the Coalition legitimises their position by highlighting their duties as citizens.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to highlight the ambiguities of the discourses on development in its association with the objectives of migration control. These ambiguities can be found both at the level of political negotiations between European countries and Senegal and at the level of the set of arguments used by deportee associations. In his analysis of what he calls the ‘political performance’, Edelman notes that ‘for any political problem or ideological dilemma’ exists ‘a set of formulations and expressions in constant use’ (Edelman, 1991, p. 209). Development becomes part of these ‘conventional codes’ (Payet *et al.*, 2008), as soon as the control of migration flows is mentioned. But this *forme langagiere* (form of language) is itself restricted in the sense that it constitutes an incontrovertible argument to negotiate a set of resources, whether at the macro-, meso- or micro-social level. In this respect, the ‘development/control of migration flows’ pair functions like a discursive framework which is both constrained and the object of negotiated mobilisations. Thus, this paper has attempted to shed light on the ‘discursive coalition’ (Jobert, 2001) that takes place around the discursive framework of development and which, in reality, serves as a support for a variety of ad hoc arrangements.

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