

Senegalese Illegal Immigration to Spain during the first Decade of the XXIth Century: A Gender and Islamic Perspective

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Based on current fieldwork taking place in Spain's capital Madrid, the aim of this communication is to analyze the styles of appropriation of the notion of illegal immigration by the Senegalese transnational Murid community, with a special emphasis on women's perceptions. By introducing the gender perspective, I look forward to make a description of feminine Senegalese migration evolution over the last decade in Spain, as well as a number of issues it has raised (invisibility, exploitation, differential access to social rights and labor).

Through the construction of a migrant discourse, I would like to present the way they question the notion of illegal immigration, as well as the political division of formal and informal economic activities, the latter being increasingly linked by governmental authorities as belonging to the world of crime and illegality. In fact, Spain's recent conversion from a country of emigration into a country of immigration, is the main contextual factor of hostile public perceptions about current population flows proceeding from various countries worldwide. Sensationalist mediatization of Subsaharian African and Islamic immigration in particular, has contributed to nourish conservative political discourses and perceptions, as well as the creation and enforcement of restrictive policies that they entail.

Finally, through a comparison of the actual immigration legislation in Europe (Italy, Spain, France) and the USA, I would like to shed light into the terms and criteria used in these countries to "fight" illegal immigration