

The Singularity of Senegal's Democratic Model: Resilience in the Face of Political Crises

El Hadji Mamadou Mbaye, Alassane Ndao

Department of Political Science, Gaston Berger University, Saint-Louis, Senegal
Email: elhadji-mamadou.mbaye@ugb.edu.sn, alassane.ndao@ugb.edu.sn

How to cite this paper: Mbaye, E. H. M., & Ndao, A. (2026). The Singularity of Senegal's Democratic Model: Resilience in the Face of Political Crises. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 16, 17-38.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2026.161002>

Received: September 30, 2025

Accepted: December 21, 2025

Published: December 24, 2025

Copyright © 2026 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

This article examines the resilience of Senegalese democracy in the face of recurrent electoral crises by analyzing the regulatory roles of two central actors: the Constitutional Council and religious leaders. While Senegal is widely regarded as an exception in West Africa—avoiding authoritarian backsliding despite repeated episodes of violence, its political trajectory has been shaped by cycles of contestation, reform, and institutional adaptation. The study adopts a diachronic and synchronic historical approach, mobilizing neo-institutionalist perspectives to trace continuities and ruptures in democratic practices from independence to the 2024 presidential elections. It explores how institutional arrangements, religious authority, and political stakeholders interacted across different “routine” and “fluid” crisis situations. Findings reveal that before 2000, religious leaders—particularly Muslim brotherhoods—played a decisive role in legitimizing ruling elites through mechanisms such as voting instructions (*ndigge!*) and political mediation, while the judiciary adopted a conservative, positivist stance. After 2000, however, the decline of religious directives coincided with the rise of judicialization, making the Constitutional Council a pivotal regulator of electoral disputes. The 2012 and 2024 crises over third-term candidacies demonstrate this shift: religious leaders emphasized axiological discourse promoting peace and neutrality, while constitutional judges, despite accusations of bias, delivered landmark rulings that ultimately safeguarded democratic continuity. The unprecedented 2024 opposition victory underscored Senegal's capacity to withstand systemic crises without collapsing into praetorianism or authoritarianism. The study concludes that Senegalese democracy is sustained by the dynamic interplay between institutional law and religious legitimacy. While fragile and contested, these dual pillars have enabled Senegal to maintain its status as a “phoenix democracy”, resiliently reinventing itself in moments of profound political stress.

Keywords

Democracy, Africa, Senegal, Political Crises, Constitutional Council, Religious Leaders

1. Introduction

We always ask ourselves when democratic practices began in Senegal and what makes the Senegalese democratic model (Gellar, 2002) so exceptional, its resistance and resilience in the face of the conflicts and crises it has experienced since independence. Several studies have addressed this question, emphasizing a political history centered on cities, the role of evolved elites (Johnson, 1971), the role of the media (Sow, 2016), civil society (Fall, 2007), and the clientelist political exchange between marabouts and political actors. While the influence of religion has not disappeared, it is eroding with each election, to the benefit of legal power. This is reflected in the “juridification of electoral conflicts”, both in their creation and in their handling. Thus, before 2000 and after 2000, we have seen a shift in Senegal in the influence of the two key actors responsible for regulating electoral conflicts. This regulation depends on the timing of the electoral crisis (before or after), its scale, its spatial and temporal scope, its complexity, and its interdependence with other crises (economic, cultural, social) (Peters, 2005).

Democracy is characterized by three mandatory conditions: first, the effective existence of competition between individuals, parties, or coalitions for power. Second, the right and freedom of citizens to participate in the choice of leaders through the organization of free, fair, transparent, and regular elections. Finally, the recognition and legal guarantee of the exercise of recognized civil and political freedoms and rights. Electoral democracy is essential. It determines the rights, freedoms, and choice of political leaders. Elections are a means of selecting political personnel and a mechanism for regulating political conflicts through the electoral majority. They are also an indicator of the state of a democracy.

Senegal can boast a long tradition of electoral democracy, dating back to the colonial period. Since independence, Senegal has been considered one of the most stable countries in the West African sub-region. Despite a population that is 95% Muslim, it succeeded in electing Léopold Sedar Senghor, a citizen belonging to the Christian minority, as the first president of the Republic. He then succeeded in maintaining and consolidating the Senegalese social contract initiated by the colonizers. This contract was passed on to Abdou Diouf in 1981. The latter inaugurated full multiparty politics in the early 1980s. In 2000, Senegal experienced its first political change of power. This was followed by two others in 2012 and 2024.

The Senegalese model of democracy is based on what O’Brien calls the “Senegalese social contract”. Unlike other countries in the sub-region, which have been marked by democratic crises that often lead to political and social crises, the Senegalese social contract has always been, even during colonization, the ultimate

regulator of political crises. Based on a “general agreement” between religious and political leaders, this social contract makes it possible to anticipate crises and manage them. Although it has evolved since independence, it has adapted to the political and social changes in Senegalese society.

The unprecedented situation of political change in 2024 places Senegal among the ranks of Africa’s consolidated democracies. Indeed, Pastef, an opposition party dissolved a few months before the elections, succeeded for the first time in securing victory for its candidate in the first round of the presidential election. This is a real political feat that confirms Senegal’s democratic success story. It contrasts with a sub-regional political context marked by a resurgence of praetorian regimes (Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger).

On the other hand, Senegalese democracy has been marked by a succession of conflicts and violent pre- and post-election crises, threatening the country’s political, economic, and social stability. Thus, all the reforms initiated, relating to multipartyism (1974, 1980), electoral transparency rules (1992), political institutions (2013), and the presidential election calendar (2024), have been punctuated by political uprisings. The Senegalese democratic model is described as an “insurrectionary democracy” (Ndao, 2018). Crises have occurred throughout Senegal’s political history (Hesseling, 1985), with particular intensity in 1968-1988, 1993-1994, 2011, and 2021-2024. The electoral process almost systematically generates “institutional disorder” (Diop, 2001) and significant “socio-political stress”.

Since 2000, electoral crises have gone beyond the limited scope of simple electoral disputes. They have spread to all other political, economic, ethnic, cultural, and religious sectors. Political crises have become “multisectoral crises” (Dobry, 2009).

According to Michel Dobry, there are two categories of political situations: “routine situations” and “fluid situations”. In Senegal, the former often produce low-intensity political conflicts. These are inherent to political and electoral competition (challenges to the rules of the game, results by the opposition, confiscation of state media by the ruling party, etc.). They do not last very long and are mainly limited to the capital, Dakar. These conflicts most often arise after the publication of results favorable to the ruling party. For example, during the 1988 and 1993 elections, urban violence broke out in Dakar after the official results were published.

The latter produce political crises that are the hallmark of complex political systems. Complexity refers to the multiplication and diversification of actors, the resources mobilized, and the emergence of an increasingly critical public opinion. These are more systemic crises. They go beyond the legal sphere. They mainly affect all other sectors in a logic of “collusive transactions” (Dobry, 2009). They are a “total social fact” (Mauss, 1925), extending their tentacles into all other sectors of society. They are marked by a radicalization of violence or an intensification of the conflict over time and space. These are pre-electoral crises.

Since the first democratic change of government in 2000, there have been no more post-election crises in Senegal. The official results are no longer contested

in the streets. Crises often concern the terms of participation (the issue of a third term and political actors excluded from the electoral competition). From March 2021 to March 2024, Senegal was rocked by a series of extremely deadly riots¹ that impacted all sectors of activity and spread to all major cities.

Nevertheless, these multiple instances of electoral violence, which occurred in “routine” or “fluid” circumstances, never led to a total breakdown in the functioning of political institutions, nor to a complete shift to a praetorian or dictatorial regime. Senegal has never succumbed to the temptation of “authoritarian restoration” (Allal & Vannetzel, 2017). While in Africa, disputes over the fairness of elections often lead to armed conflict (Meledje & Djedjro, 2009), coups d’état, and civil wars, Senegal seems to be an exception. On the contrary, the Senegalese political system has solidified itself through political crises, demonstrating its strong resilience. Described by Diop A.B. (Diop, 2009) as a “phoenix democracy”², Senegal is considered one of the African countries with the longest history of voting. It has been voting since 1848 to elect Senegalese deputies to the French National Assembly and has had universal suffrage since 1879. It is therefore a true electoral democracy that always rises from the ashes, thanks to its dependence on the institutional path.

This raises an initial question: why has the Senegalese democratic model withstood numerous major electoral crises? The answer to this question leads us to identify the key actors responsible for extinguishing the fires of electoral crises. The discussion therefore focuses on the mechanisms for regulating the democratic process, their operationalization, and their effectiveness.

Two major hypotheses are put forward to explain the resistance and resilience of Senegalese democracy in the face of electoral crises: 1) the regulation of mainly post-electoral conflicts is based on the strategic importance of the “Senegalese social contract” and the timid attitude of the constitutional judge in interpreting constitutional norms, in a context of “routine circumstances”; 2) the occurrence of “multisectoral” pre-electoral political crises, in a context of “fluid circumstances,” increasingly leads to “judicialization” and “legalization,” which make the constitutional judge a key player in regulation.

These hypotheses are also linked to a diachronic and synchronic historical approach. This approach makes it possible to understand the continuities and ruptures in the Senegalese democratic model. Path dependency helps us understand how the choices made at the outset continue to shape Senegal’s democratic model: the coexistence of religion and politics, the appointment of Supreme Court justices by the President of the Republic since the election of the first President of the

¹The approximate toll is at least 100 dead and many injured or missing.

²the expression “*phoenix democracy*” is intentionally used as a reference to Alioune Badara Diop’s work—*Senegal, a Phoenix Democracy?* (Dakar, CREPOS-Karthala, 2009). The term is therefore borrowed from his analysis, which characterizes Senegal’s political system as one that recurrently regenerates itself after periods of crisis. Senegal has experienced several crises before or after the elections in 1988, 1993, 2000, 2012, and 2024. These crises have reached extreme levels of severity. However, the country has always managed to overcome them, mainly thanks to the regulation of two key players: religious leaders and the Constitutional Council.

Republic in 1960. Religious leaders uphold Senegalese tradition through the vestiges of direct democracy under the palaver tree. The Constitutional Council embodies the institutional dimension of the modern state. The historical approach makes it possible to track the factors that ensure the continuity of the democratic model over time.

Works known in Senegal refer to the Senegalese social contract. O'Brien's work (O'Brien, 1992), defines this social contract as a balanced relationship between political and religious actors. The former are the guardians of temporal power and the latter of spiritual power. The coexistence, collaboration, and partnership between these two types of actors since independence, in a form of "general agreement", contribute to the preservation of the Senegalese social model.

The question is how the proponents of this "Senegalese social contract" transfer their legitimacy to the political sphere and ensure the preservation of the Senegalese democratic model. The brotherhoods, which have millions of followers ("talibé"), constitute a real social force with strong historical roots. They are a source of social legitimacy for political power. This legitimacy is reflected in voting instructions ("ndiggel"), an axiological discourse of "non-violence", and the promotion of political fatalism, which discredits the violence of opposition parties or "political mediation" actions in a context of serious political crisis.

One of the major consequences of the "Senegalese social contract" before 2000 was the hypertrophy of Muslim brotherhoods in the system of regulating political and electoral conflicts. This reality ensured the continuity of the Senegalese democratic model. However, the Senegalese social contract has evolved considerably since 2000. The over-representation of "worldly marabouts" in the political arena, with the creation of religious or brotherhood-based parties (PVD, PUR), has called into question the financial autonomy of brotherhood leaders. It has contributed to the erosion of the "ndiggel" (Audrain, 2004). The public disavowal of Serigne Modou Kara Mbacké's disciples, calling for a vote for Abdou Diouf on December 31, 1999, definitively buried the popular "ndiggel", as it had been practiced until then.

The second hypothesis concerns the role of legal actors: the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Council. These are key players in the regulation of electoral crises. Indeed, democracy can only function thanks to the existence of democratic institutions. Institutions thus guarantee the free play of democracy. They organize and determine the rules of the political game.

Accused of being under the authority of the political actors in power, the perception of constitutional judges by the population in the organization of elections has evolved since the first change of government. This perception is strongly influenced by the actors who embody constitutional justice³, the political, electoral, economic, and social contexts, as well as the competing political figures. The position of the judge is uncomfortable. He or she faces the dilemma of ensuring strict

³For example, Kéba Mbaye, who served as President of the Supreme Court for 17 years and President of the Constitutional Council from 1990 to 1993, left his mark on the role of constitutional judge.

compliance with texts that are often subject to different interpretations and taking into account the political dimension of conflicts that may block institutions or the organization of elections (Palouki, 2017). The constitutional judge is at the crossroads of law and politics. This makes his or her work more complex (Favoreu, 1994).

At the same time, they cannot engage in politics, but must judge political disputes. Their decisions must be based exclusively on the rule of law, even though the law is strongly influenced by politics. The Constitution, which is their reference text, is a political compromise between the forces at play in the political arena. Their role is to arbitrate political conflicts legally and peacefully. At the same time, these legal decisions lead to political violence. Electoral crises during presidential elections are the most complex. They cause the most damage to constitutional judges and society (demonstrations, civil wars, coups, etc.).

Thus, there is a form of political mistrust of these institutional actors. This mistrust is linked to their historical past and their relationships with political decision-makers. The method of appointing the staff of these institutions creates a climate of suspicion. Electoral judges are most often suspected by opponents of being instruments of the ruling party's hegemonic political project (Diop, 2009).

Their role and power have expanded over the course of history and in a changing environment. Constitutional judges have become a kind of natural receptacle for the many profound transformations in the Senegalese political system. The proliferation of actors, the diversification of approaches, the strategic withdrawal of key religious figures (khalifs) from the political arena, the social appropriation of successive democratic reforms, and pressure from international partners⁴ have greatly contributed to the "juridification" and "judicialization" of political conflicts. There has been an increase in electoral litigation, which has led to greater intervention and importance for the constitutional judge. In 2024, the electoral judge is considered by many to be the "savior" of Senegalese democracy, thanks to two decisive decisions: 1) the decision on the unconstitutionality of the decree postponing the elections; 2) the decision noting the absence of the President of the Republic and setting the date for the presidential election.

2. Religious Leaders and the Constitutional Judge: Regulators in a Fledgling Democracy

In a context of fledgling democracy, the system for regulating political and electoral conflicts rests on two essential pillars: the constitutional judge and the religious leaders at the head of the major Muslim brotherhoods.

2.1. Religious Leaders in the Service of a Democracy without Alternation: Ndigel, Fatalistic Discourse, and Political Mediation

From independence to the first change of government, the relationship between

⁴These pressures relate to compliance with the principles of presidential term limits, fairness, inclusiveness and transparency in elections.

political actors and marabout power was almost symbiotic due to several factors: the friendship between President Senghor and the General Khalife of the Mourides, and the family relationship between President Diouf and Serigne Abdoul Ahad Mbacke.

The context prior to 2000 was marked by fledgling political and social pluralism. This resulted in the hegemonic construction of power (Bourmaud, 2006). The opposition, although diverse, remained weak and unrepresentative. Civil society did not yet have the real autonomy and significant capacity for mobilization that would enable it to act as a “countervailing power”. The strategy for retaining power was based on the principle of “hegemonic stability”. The hegemonic construction of power led to electoral trickery (personalization of power, co-optation, repression, manipulation of electoral rules, etc.), which considerably narrowed the field of competition and the structure of electoral choice (Tine, 2017).

From the 1960s to 2000, the main objective of the ruling power in organizing elections was to preserve peace and national unity. Opponents were considered real threats to national unity. The role of the state was then to unite the heterogeneous historical components, including the religious guardians of tradition and the essence of culture. While the single-party regime was defended from 1966 to 1974, the opening up to political pluralism limited to three parties representing three political currents with Law No. 76-01 of March 19, 1976 was part of this same movement to build the Senegalese nation. Political parties were thus required to uphold this fragile national unity. They could not identify with a race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sect, language, or region that could undermine this national unity.

This configuration, characteristic of a “democracy in transition,” promotes an important role for marabout power in regulation. It consists mainly of legitimizing the electoral majority (through the *ndiggel*) and delegitimizing political opposition, in the name of social peace. The constitutional judge, guarantor of the principles and rules of electoral democracy, confines himself to a positivist and restrictive reading of the constitutional norm. He mainly practices conservative and timid constitutional law in the name of national unity. As a result, he becomes the target of recriminations and violence from the opposition (Diop, 2001).

The behavior of the marabout and the constitutional judge ensures a routine situation (differentiation and empowerment of sectors of activity) that prevents “collusive transactions.” The violence of the opposition is essentially anomic (attacks against symbols of the Republic, public property, and buildings). It is mainly contained within the partisan sphere and remains limited to the capital, Dakar. There is no spillover effect at the national level. Police and judicial repression, aided by religious leaders, quickly curbs the violence. This was the case during the presidential elections of 1988 and 1993.

It was really from 1981 onwards that a full multiparty system was established in Senegal with Law 81-17 of May 6, 1981. Abdou Diouf, who was in power at the time, revised Article 3 of the Constitution relating to the limitation of the number

of political parties. This decision thus marked the first real step towards democracy. Every Senegalese citizen could create their own political party. However, this did not mean a shift from a single party to political alternation. The new political parties were to support the construction of the nation-state. It was therefore a democracy without alternation. This was considered a risk of destabilizing Senegalese society and a threat to national sovereignty and the nascent Senegalese democracy.

The “disincorporation” of power (Delruelle, 2025) as one of the basic principles of democracy clashes in most African countries with the neo-patrimonial nature of power and the appropriation of political space by the president in power. In Senegal, this neo-patrimonialization of power has been less pronounced than in other countries, due to changes in leadership, the first of which involved the transfer of power from Senghor to Abdou Diouf. The organization of regular democratic elections had become a requirement, especially after the La Baule summit on June 20, 1990, to which 37 African countries were invited. It should nevertheless be noted that some countries, such as Benin, began democratic transitions in the late 1980s with the national conference in 1990 and the first free and democratic elections in 1991 (Banégas, 1995).

Most French-speaking countries, including Senegal, were still subject to France’s dictates. For France, organizing elections had become a democratic imperative. In his speech, President Mitterrand stated: “France will link all its efforts to contribute to the efforts that will be made to move towards greater freedom; France will provide normal aid to African countries, but it is clear that this aid will be more lukewarm towards those who behave in an authoritarian manner, and more enthusiastic towards those who courageously take this step towards democratization...” (Mitterrand, 1990). When it comes to democracy, there is a ready-made model: representative government, free elections, a multiparty system, freedom of the press, an independent judiciary, no censorship... Nowhere is there any mention of preparing for political change.

The behavior of the leaders of the brotherhood and the Supreme Court, and later the Constitutional Council, is part of this dynamic. In the 1988 elections, President Abdou Diouf, the incumbent PS candidate, officially won with 73.20% of the vote, followed by Abdoulaye Wade of the PDS with 25.80%. The other two candidates received insignificant scores: 0.75% for Babacar Niang of the PLP and 0.35% for Landing Savane of And-Jéf PADS. The 1988 presidential election is thus considered to be the most violent in Senegal’s political history to date.

The crisis began the day after the results were announced on February 29, 1988. As soon as the opposition learned that the results were unfavorable to them, they claimed electoral fraud and triggered a major post-election conflict.

Nevertheless, the seeds of post-election violence were already present in pre-election speeches and during the campaign. In 1988, before the campaign, candidate Abdoulaye Wade had repeatedly stated that he would not accept the results if they were unfavorable to him. He threatened to set up a parallel government. At

the PDS extraordinary congress on January 2 and 3, 1988, just before the elections, the leader stated that, in the event of fraud, he would prevent voting from continuing and would gather people in front of the Maison de la Radio to prevent the results from being announced.

Students took to the streets and clashed with the defense and security forces. A state of emergency was declared in Dakar by Decree No. 88.229 of February 29, 1988. Some actors called for an end to pluralist democracy. Abdoulaye Wade was arrested along with more than 200 other people, including Boubacar Sall, Ousmane Ngom, and Abdoulaye Faye. They are brought before the State Security Court for violating Articles 80 and 98 of the Penal Code, which concern “acts and maneuvers likely to compromise public safety or cause serious political unrest, discredit public institutions or their functioning, or violate the laws of the country”.

Thanks to the mediation of religious leaders, notably the Mouride caliph Serigne Abdoul Ahad Mbacké, the state of emergency was lifted on May 17, 1988, the religious holiday of Korité, which marks a moment of respite and forgiveness among Muslims. A law was subsequently passed to grant amnesty to Abdoulaye Wade and Boubacar Sall, who had been imprisoned for three and a half months. This axiological rationality of religious leaders committed to defending and protecting peace, but now aware of their electoral weight, enabled them to become key players in the political arena. Abdou Diouf understood the power of the religious khalifs and decided to make Serigne Abdoul Ahad his advisor and staunch ally. In his memoirs, he states that he made quarterly visits to various religious leaders.

The general khalif of the Mourides, Serigne Abdoul Ahad Mbacké, who had succeeded Serigne Fallou in 1968, now wanted to become independent of political power as the spokesperson for the peasant classes and become an independent and powerful player in the political arena. According to Abdou Diouf, the Khalif of the Mourides said to him: “I have no business interfering in the formation of your government. However, I think that in the Interior you need a man of experience and dignity, and I think someone like Medoune Fall would do the job. I have always held him in high esteem and friendship because once, when no one could have imagined that I would one day be caliph, I needed a document from the Family Benefits Fund. He came at night, opened his office, and signed the document for me.” I replied, “I will do it for myself, for you, and for the country.” It was just a suggestion, and I admit that I hadn’t thought about it. That’s how I appointed Medoune Fall. He was the one who usually took on the difficult tasks after Moustapha Niassé left the government (Diouf, 2014).

During the 1988 presidential election, to reinforce Abdou Diouf’s spiritual character, the new khalif declared that anyone who did not vote for Abdou Diouf would have betrayed the will of the Cheikh, the founder of Mouridism. The sacred does not belong to the invisible, but to the real. This relationship between religion and politics is a continuation of the relationship between marabouts and kings in pre-colonial Senegal. In the courts of kings, religious leaders and marabouts played an important role in protecting the sacred dimension of politics with the

sanctity of the sovereign's body. This politicization of religion is more effective in the Mouride brotherhood than among the Tijanes. According to a study published in 1998, 41.6% of Mouride disciples consider the marabout's opinion to be decisive when voting in presidential elections, compared to only 26.4% among the Tidjanés (Maâti, 1998).

After the election, the role of marabout power is to legitimize the ruling power. Through the mobilization of religious discourse, it attempts to convince citizens of the divine nature of Abdou Diouf's election as head of state, "Yalla kofi teK". The idea behind this discourse is to show that the legitimacy of the regime in power is linked not to the outcome of the elections, but to a divine choice that transcends that of the citizens. The aim of this sacrality of power was to control minds and ideas, preventing any hint of reaction.

The 1988 victory was then considered a "political-military-religious conspiracy" by a diverse group of elites, a sort of "historic bloc," which would take control of the state. In 1993, post-election conflict broke out the day after the results were announced. Opposition candidates Abdoulaye Wade of the PDS and Amath Dansokho of the Party for Independence and Labor (PIT) were arrested as part of "a judicial investigation for undermining the internal security of the state."

Thus, during the two elections of 1988 and 1993, the party-state's survival strategy worked thanks to the state's control over marabout power and the Supreme Court. The PS-state, as Abdou Diouf's opponents call it, implemented a series of political strategies to retain power for as long as possible. True democracy through elections emerged with the economic crisis that followed the devaluation of the CFA franc. The desire for change is no longer a requirement of France, but a need of the populations of most countries affected by the effects of the economic crisis and the end of the reigns of two charismatic religious leaders in the political arena: Sergine Abdoul Ahad Mbacké, leader of the Mouride brotherhood in 1989, and Serigne Abdoul Aziz Sy Dabakh, khalif of the Tijanes in 1997. This situation led to the first political change in 2000. Serigne Saliou, the new Khalife of Touba, decided to break with the tradition of Ndiggel, despite his rapprochement with Abdoulaye Wade.

2.2. The Constitutional Judge and the Logic of Positive Constitutional Law: between Politics and Law

The Constitutional Council is the institution par excellence responsible for regulating the political process. It has full jurisdiction over electoral matters. Its decisions are not subject to appeal. Before 2000, as in most sub-Saharan Francophone African states, the constitutional judge was part of the state apparatus, subject to hyper-presidentialism and the defense of national unity.

Although appointed, its members cannot be removed during their term of office. However, the constitutional judge systematically crystallizes all criticism, suspicion, and political tensions. Its decisions (validation of candidacies, publication of results) most often lead to a series of tensions and violence. Already in 1993,

the vice-president of the Constitutional Council was assassinated before the final publication of the presidential election results.

These conflicts involved political actors reduced to two or three candidates in the presidential elections before 2000. In 1988, four candidates ran in the presidential election (Abdou Diouf, Abdoulaye Wade, Mbaye Niang of the PIT, and Landing Savane of AJ PADS), while there were eight in 2000, 15 in 2007, and 14 in 2012. At that time, Senegal had a Supreme Court but not yet a Constitutional Council. The latter was created by Law No. 92-23 of May 30, 1992. It acts as judge of the regularity of elections in the strict sense, judge of morality, and judge of the sincerity of elections. It must authenticate the voting operations and the counting of the results after they have been transmitted by the President of the National Commission for the Counting of Votes (CNRV). The day after the submission of results, the candidates file their appeals, which are examined by the Constitutional Council, which recounts, verifies, and corrects the results.

It should be noted that in 1988, the Supreme Court was unable to certify the regularity of the vote. For example, during the 1988 presidential election, which was held in conjunction with the legislative elections, the provisions of the Senegalese Electoral Code specified that “all citizens must present an identity document, or one of the documents listed exhaustively in the Code, when registering on the electoral roll; they must present the same documents when collecting their voter card. However, at the time of voting, the voter card is sufficient.” This meant that, at the time, voters did not have to present their identity card when voting. This situation was likely to lead to all kinds of possible fraud (creation of false voter cards, voting in place of other voters, displacement of voters, etc.).

The historical neo-institutionalist approach thus shows that constitutional judges favor continuity over rupture. The institutional arrangements required to confront the existing regime were too significant and risked undermining its very existence. Furthermore, the Constitutional Council did not have all the means necessary to ensure the democratic monitoring of elections. In 1993, the results were not announced until March 13, three weeks after the elections. The Constitutional Council thus lost credibility because it did not control the entire electoral process. It quickly withdrew from the post-election conflicts and often declared itself “incompetent” to resolve conflicts, interpreting the Constitution restrictively.

From the 1960s to the 1980s, neo-patrimonial states served a ruling elite. The institutions put in place served to defend the interests of this elite. The aim was to promote democracy, but a democracy with no prospect of change. Political parties were mainly contribution parties. When their actions were in line with the defense of national unity, they were tolerated. Otherwise, they were dissolved and their leaders imprisoned or encouraged to go into exile. It was necessary to control the bodies (Foucault, 1975). To do this, it was necessary to influence minds. The sacralization of power had more value and meaning than judicialization.

The Constitutional Council was only responsible for confirming this legitimacy through sacredness, defended and promoted by the religious authorities. The

judge is delegitimized because, even though he is the guarantor of democracy, he does not have the symbolic means. He is appointed by the political authority. The principle of transparency is therefore not guaranteed. Even if they are acting in good faith, they cannot attest to the sincerity of the elections. In 1993, fraudulent maneuvers in the electoral process led to the resignation of Judge Keba Mbaye and the assassination on May 15, 1993, of the Vice-President of the Constitutional Council, Maître Babacar Seye. The constitutional judge's resignation was justified by the person concerned as a failure in his attempt to ensure the transparency of the electoral process.

According to the judge, "given the role I played in drafting the electoral code as chairman of the Cellular Reform Commission, given all that I expected and what I see today, I consider that I have failed. We must call a spade a spade. I therefore had to draw conclusions and, above all, take advantage of this last chance to get out of this situation, which was created by the decision of the Constitutional Council" (*Sud au Quotidien*, 1993). The ruling regime's victory is protected by the defense and security forces. The elections mobilize fewer actors (very few parties), very few coalitions, and dissent is severely repressed.

From its independence until the late 1990s, Senegal was considered a "democracy without alternation," marked by political appointments, a PS-controlled state, a stranglehold on the audiovisual media, and electoral fraud. The Constitutional Council was supposed to provide cover and legal legitimacy for this form of democracy without alternation. Maraboutic power was responsible for legitimizing the ruling power and managing post-electoral tensions.

3. Religious Power and the Constitutional Council at a Time of Complex Electoral Crises in Senegal: Between Strategic Withdrawal and Adaptation

The year 2000 marked the advent of the first democratic change of power in Senegal. It was also a turning point during which we observed a change in the behavior and roles of the two regulators of the political system: the religious and the constitutional judge.

3.1. The Axiological Rationality of Religious Leaders in the Service of Democracy

The passing of Serigne Abdoul Ahad Mbacke, the quintessential figure of the Ndiggel, on January 19, 1989, the short duration of the caliphate of his successor Sergine Abdoul Khadre Mbacké (11 months compared to Serigne Abdoul Ahad's 21 years), and the passing of Serigne Abdoul Aziz Sy Dabakh in 1997 marked the end of the era of great religious figures. On the political front, the end of the socialist regime after forty years in power was a major turning point. The disavowal of Serigne Mansour Sy, General Caliph of the Tijanes, and Serigne Modou Kara by their disciples opened a new chapter in the relationship between religious and political leaders.

Two trends can be observed in the behavior of religious leaders with regard to politics: first, a strategic withdrawal by brotherhood leaders, marked by a renunciation of voting instructions. Having learned their lesson from the first change of government in 2000, no marabout now gives voting instructions (Samson, 2000). Between 2012 and 2024, the main khalifs of the two main brotherhoods, Serigne Mansour Sy and Serigne Sidy Mokhtar, then Serigne Mountakha and Serigne Mbaye Sy Mansour, had no reason to issue voting instructions. The first of them had been disowned by his disciples in 2000 and did not have excellent relations with the candidate Abdoulaye Wade. The others preferred to stay away from political affairs. Only Serigne Bethio Thioune, a second-tier leader and head of the Thiantacounes, had cashed in his Ndigel in 2012 for the benefit of Abdoulaye Wade. During the Magal de Touba in January 2012, Wade had sent two billion five hundred million CFA francs for a Ndiggel from Serigne Sidy Makhtar Mbacké, which he never received. The 2012 elections were an attempt by Abdoulaye Wade, as in the days of his predecessor Abdou Diouf, to re-sacralize presidential power by seeking a third term. However, unlike Diouf in 1988 and 1993, Wade did not have the unconditional support of the maraboutic power.

Building on their experience in 2000, most brotherhood leaders in 2012 focused their speeches on preserving peace, national reconciliation, calls for unity, denouncing quarrels, violence, and invective, calls for a return to orthodox practices in politics, and the promotion of ethical values.

This paradigm shift has enabled brotherhood leaders to move from the role of committed political actors to that of mediators during electoral crises. Their discourse is now equidistant from the various candidates. They receive them all, pray for them, and offer them advice on promoting peace (Boudon, 1998). Their rationality thus becomes axiological in the service of peace. This type of discourse allows them to regain some of the legitimacy they lost with the opposition parties before the first change of government. In this way, they ensure one of the most important pillars of democracy, namely political stability (Diallo, 2022). Through this stance, religious power joins the ranks of civil society, which until then had embodied the defense of the general interest, while political parties have the goal of gaining and retaining power. However, it should be noted that this strategic withdrawal of religious leaders is linked to the preservation of their position and the interests that go with it, whereas for other members of the families (particularly worldly marabouts), politics has become an opportunity for legitimacy that they do not have in the religious sphere. Their religious family names are no longer sufficient to give legitimacy to the “little marabouts”. However, it does facilitate their access to the political sphere.

Throughout the pre-election political crisis, both in 2012 and 2024, the main leaders of the brotherhoods played this mediating role. Thus, the events of March 2021 saw a significant easing of tensions thanks to the appeal made by these leaders, including the General Caliph of the Mourides. In November 2021, the Unitary Framework of Islam in Senegal (CUDIS) drew up a charter of non-violence for

the local elections. According to its leader, this charter called on “politicians of all stripes to banish visceral hatred between people in the name of their commons belonging to the same people, the same faith that calls for spirituality, a vector of inner peace and benevolence towards others and one’s environment.”

Several political actors signed it, with the notable exception of Ousmane Sonko, leader of the PASTEEF party. During the pre-election crisis of 2024, this stance taken by religious leaders was challenged by Ousmane Sonko, who was committed to his “gatsa-gatsa”⁵ and accused of being a “Salafist” and “anti-confraternity.” To avoid being demonized, Ousmane Sonko’s party finally set up the “Doomu Daara⁶ Patriotes” (MODDAP) movement to show its attachment to the brotherhood families.

On June 6, 2023, five days after Ousmane Sonko was sentenced to two years in prison and sixteen civilians were killed in clashes with the police, the President traveled to Touba at 11 p.m. The subject of the discussions was not disclosed. However, less than a month later, he announced his decision not to seek a third term.

Alongside this reserved stance taken by the leaders of the brotherhoods towards the electoral crises, some members of the brotherhood families have entered the political arena (Brossier, 2013), creating their own political parties or movements or joining coalitions. This is the case for Serigne Moustapha Sy of the PUR, Serigne Moustapha SY Djamil of “Bës Dou Niak,” Serigne Modou Kara of the Party of Truth and Democracy (PVD), Serigne Abdou Mbacké of Darou Mousty “marabout de Sonko,” and Al Amine Dramé of Pastef. Like other political actors, they position themselves in the political arena, playing, depending on the situation, between Coleman’s instrumental rationality and Weber’s axiological rationality.

In 2012, as in 2024, the crisis erupted over the debate on the constitutionality and admissibility of the candidacies of the two outgoing presidents, Abdoulaye Wade and Macky Sall. In 2012, Abdoulaye Wade decided to run after two consecutive terms, arguing that the 2000 election took place under the 1963 Constitution. According to him and his supporters, the January 22, 2001 election did not take into account his first term from 2000 to 2007. The crisis reached its peak on January 28 with the announcement of the Constitutional Council’s decision to validate President Wade’s candidacy.

From 2021 to 2024, the core of the crisis was the issue of incumbent President Macky Sall’s candidacy in the February 2024 presidential election. This crisis had a legal basis: did President Macky Sall have the right to run for a third term? According to his supporters, the 2016 constitutional reform had reset the number of terms of office to zero. Thus, he was only in his first five-year term, following the 2019 presidential election. This debate over a third term led to a deep political crisis proportional to the extent of the delegitimization of Macky Sall’s regime.

Thus, while before 2000, post-election crises were fueled by the Constitutional

⁵Wolof expression referring to the law of retaliation.

⁶Those who come from traditional Koranic schools.

Council's announcement of the results, after 2000, it was rather its post-election decisions that fueled the crisis. This shift in the core of the crises is linked to the maturity of democracy, where the issue is no longer the contestation of results, but inclusive participation in elections. We are thus moving from conflicts to real crises that are longer, more complex, and more interconnected. The two pre-electoral crises of 2012 and 2024 constitute "fluid conjunctures" which, according to Michel Dobry, characterize complex societies marked by the multiplication, diversification, and strengthening of the legitimacy and power of different actors. These are manifested by greater interpenetration and momentary collusion between different sectors of activity: the political sphere (between parties), the judicial sphere (third term), the social sphere (the deaths), the religious sphere, the legal sphere (differing interpretations of "no one may serve more than two consecutive terms"), and the economic sphere (economic effects of the protests).

The two pre-election crises thus became "total social facts", affecting all sectors of society. According to Michel Dobry, "It is the existence, in most modern social systems, of a multiplicity of differentiated social spheres or fields, inextricably intertwined and, at the same time, more or less autonomous from one another, that constitutes the fundamental structural fact for understanding the processes of political crisis that can arise in these systems."

In 2012, Abdoulaye Wade stubbornly insisted on participating in the elections and was severely defeated in the second round by the opposition coalition led by Macky Sall. After a crisis lasting more than three years, Macky Sall decided not to run in the 2024 presidential elections.

In both cases, more and more political actors are vying for votes, parties are forming sometimes disparate coalitions, interests are crystallizing, the issues are becoming more complex, and the democratic aspirations of the people are being expressed more openly thanks to the media and social networks, thus threatening the desire of the three political, judicial, and religious groups to perpetuate their domination. In addition to the traditional actors in routine crises, there are new, more powerful actors such as NGOs and civil society, the media, social networks, and young people. All of them ensure the regularity, transparency, and inclusive participation in elections. This diversity of actors weakens marabout power and reinforces its strategy of focusing on axiological rationality.

In 2012, an unprecedented event marked the rejection of the ruling party by religious leaders. On February 17, the Zawiya Seydi El Hadji Malick Sy Mosque was hit by tear gas grenades fired by security forces who were suppressing an opposition demonstration nearby. This event caused an uproar among the faithful, who denounced the "desecration" of the mosque by the ruling regime. As a result, in 2012, none of the brotherhoods (Tijane, Mouride, Layenne, Khadre, Niassene, etc.) issued voting instructions. In 2024, this tradition was respected despite the duration, depth, and severity of the crisis. The behavior of the brotherhood leaders, maintaining an equidistant position between the main belligerents, defused the crisis and contributed to the preservation of Senegal's democratic model based

on the social contract.

3.2. The Constitutional Council in the Face of Electoral Crises: Political Decisions in a Judicial Form

The two presidential elections of 2012 and 2024 are marked more than ever by two realities: politics seized by the law and the law seized by politics. While in 2012, law seized by politics allowed candidate Abdoulaye Wade to run, in 2024, candidate Macky Sall, seized by law, ultimately withdrew from the race. In both cases, it was the opposition that was declared the winner, thanks to politics seized by law. In 2024, this clash between politics and law left indelible marks⁷ in the regulation of electoral crises.

Historically in Senegal, the purpose of the law seized by politics has been to allow political actors to gain and retain power by any means, including legal means. However, in 2012 and 2024, despite various attempts, the parties and coalitions in power lost these elections. This situation is linked to several factors, notably the pre-election “fluid circumstances” triggered by Presidents Abdoulaye Wade and Macky Sall in their bids for a third term.

In 2011, the Constitutional Council validated Abdoulaye Wade’s candidacy, stating in its ruling that the petitions filed by his opponents were “admissible.” This decision led to accusations by the M23 of corruption against constitutional judges who were serving politics rather than the law. In 2024, the invalidation of Karim Wade’s candidacy also led to accusations of corruption against two constitutional judges. The parliamentary majority joined forces with the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) to set up a parliamentary commission of inquiry.

The judge’s credibility was strongly contested, especially since, throughout the crisis, the justice system had been disrupted due to the multiple convictions of Ousmane Sonko, which prevented him from participating in the 2024 presidential election. In June 2023, the Dakar court sentenced him to two years in prison for “corrupting youth,” forcing him to designate Bassirou Diomaye Faye as his replacement candidate in the 2024 presidential election.

During these two elections, the crisis was fueled by the legal issue of the third term and the judicial issue of Ousmane Sonko’s non-candidacy. While before 2000 the issue was the transparency of elections, after 2000 the crisis focused on the organization of free, fair, and inclusive elections. This shift in the terms of the crisis led to longer, more complex tensions, with the constitutional judge regularly called upon to provide a broader interpretation of the law, as not all the situations that led to the crisis were provided for in the electoral code and the Constitution. This juridification and judicialization of the electoral conflict led to an escalation of the crisis in 2012 and 2024.

Nevertheless, despite their similarities, two major differences mark the pre -al crisis of 2024 compared to that of 2012: the series of convictions of the main op-

⁷By reducing the election campaign from 21 to 12 days, and the 80-day period between the convening of the electorate and the holding of the election.

position candidate, Ousmane Sonko, but above all the decision of the outgoing president not to run for a third term. Before Macky Sall's statement on July 3, 2023, the Constitutional Council, accused of serving Macky Sall's political agenda, had already invalidated Ousmane Sonko's candidacy.

According to the president of the Constitutional Council, in a statement made at a conference in France, the question of Macky Sall's candidacy had been settled since 2016. According to Badio Camara, President of the Constitutional Council: "There was a first term in 2012 and a second term in 2019. In principle, that was it. Except that his supporters pushed the idea that, as he is an indispensable man, he had to stay." He continued: "Macky Sall had settled the issue when, a few months before the election, he solemnly declared to the Senegalese nation that he would not be a candidate in the 2024 presidential election and that he would not seek a third term."

By July 2023, the crisis had already reached its peak. This window of political opportunity opened up by the outgoing president's declaration of non-candidacy freed the Constitutional Council from political influence and, in a burst of resilience in the face of various accusations of corruption, enabled it to take a series of decisions that allowed it to regain its credibility and the confidence of political actors. Other factors have also contributed to strengthening the credibility of the Constitutional Council, notably pressure from the streets and other legal actors, particularly university professors, but also the media. Once Senegal was freed from the core of the crisis, starting on July 3, 2023, the Council now had a clear path to act as the guardian of the Constitution and the Senegalese democratic model. The legal system thus regained the upper hand over the political system when the latter lost its power and legitimacy.

The Constitutional Council then decided to take a series of measures that would counter the anti-democratic tendencies of Macky Sall's regime: Decision No. 1/c/2024 of February 16, 2024, rejecting Law No. 4/2024, adopted by the National Assembly at its session on February 5, 2024, derogating from the provisions of Article 31 of the Constitution. The Constitutional Council argued that the term of office of the President of the Republic cannot be reduced or extended at will depending on political circumstances, in accordance with its established case law. It annulled Decree No. 2024-106 of February 3, 2024, repealing the decree convening the electorate for the presidential election of February 25, 2024.

These elements related to the internal structure of the political problem to be resolved, in particular its political and programmatic complexity (Peters, 2005), add to the complexity of the crisis, which allows the Constitutional Council to strengthen its power in this game of actors, despite the appointment of its members by the President of the Republic, who at the same time has lost power. Public action is therefore a game played by actors in public policy arenas and forums where the victory of some leads to the defeat of others. The end of the Ndiggel, the length of the crisis, and the multiplicity of actors and rationales have favored the Constitutional Council as an institution above all others. In 2024, the Consti-

tutional Council learned from its 2012 decision regarding the validation of President Abdoulaye Wade's candidacy. While in 2011 its decision fueled the crisis, in 2024 its decisions helped to extinguish it.

However, for more than three years, between 2021 and 2024, paragraph 2 of Article 27 of the Constitution, which states that "No one may serve more than two consecutive terms," fueled the crisis without the Constitutional Council settling the debate. This failure to take a decision also contributed to fueling the crisis and giving hope to those in favor of a third term. Was the Constitutional Council not sensitive to the argument that President Macky Sall was indispensable to Senegal?

The Council was particularly sensitive and took into account the opinions of various stakeholders: public opinion, the media, law professors, and the political impasse caused by Macky Sall's candidacy. Caught between a rock and a hard place, it preferred to let time resolve the core of the crisis. In reality, as Palouki mentions (Palouki, 2017), the constitutional decision cannot be considered "pure law," especially since the Constitution itself is a political compromise. When, in its interpretation, it presents principles that it draws from the spirit of the text or that it attributes to it, it makes political compromises according to the situation. Its discretionary and sometimes arbitrary power, above any institution and without possibility of appeal, gives it enough power to interpret the Constitution broadly. The interpretation of the constitutional judge then consists of rendering political decisions in a judicial form.

His series of decisions following Macky Sall's declaration of non-candidacy showed the Constitutional Council's detachment from the partisan considerations of the President of the Republic, positioning itself above the institutions. It thus considers itself the "guardian of constitutional principles" in matters of presidential elections. By demonstrating boldness, it succeeded in subjecting the President of the Republic, to whom it was no longer accountable, to respect for democratic principles.

In reality, the president was already weakened by an unfavorable political context, a lack of candidacy, and tensions with the candidate he himself had appointed. Amadou Bâ, his former prime minister, had fallen from grace. President Macky Sall, who had chosen him as a substitute candidate, was no longer inclined to support him. No longer embodying the presidential institution he was due to leave in less than three months, the president was now subject to a higher institution whose members still had years of service ahead of them under the next president. Aware that he would not be the candidate of the Benno Bokk Yakaar coalition, the members of the Constitutional Council had no reason to stand in the way of the opposition candidates. Indeed, President Macky Sall's declaration that he would not run for a third term eased the political situation. The Constitutional Council took advantage of this to reposition itself.

Macky Sall's decision thus paradoxically strengthened the Constitutional Council. It opened up a path for it to regain its authority over other institutions in the organization of elections. All of Macky Sall's decisions regarding the organization

of the presidential elections after his July 2023 declaration were political decisions to legitimize or delegitimize candidates. From that point on, the Council could now make legal decisions based on the Constitution. Even though its members are appointed by the President of the Republic, their impartiality was guaranteed by their institution.

Thus, in a political system with democratic maturity, when the electoral crisis becomes systemic and leads to collusive transactions, it is regulated by the Constitutional Council. The judges interpret the principles of the Constitution broadly, with the aim of protecting the democratic tradition. This “in extenso” interpretation was more prevalent in 2024 than in 2012, due in particular to the unique context of 2024.

4. Conclusion

Senegal does not have a complete democracy. However, it can at least boast of an electoral democracy supported by actors who are mostly outside the political sphere. While the relationship between religion and power has always been a feature of Senegal’s political history, even before colonization, since independence this relationship has been marked by junctures of legitimization. However, throughout political history and depending on pre- or post-electoral conflicts or crises, the legitimization of politics has taken place either before or after elections. Before 2000, this legitimization took place before elections to demonstrate the sacred nature of power. The Senegalese democratic model is neither idealistic nor linear. Throughout history, it has been subjected to multiple assaults (electoral fraud, seizure of power, manipulation of the electorate, populist rhetoric, attempts at a third term, oppression of the opposition, etc.). This article has highlighted two characteristics of democratic crises in the societies affected. The crises of the two elections in 1988 and 1993 can thus be considered as common crises that in most cases mark the pre-election periods in single-party regimes.

However, the crisis of 2021 to 2024 is one of the crises of more mature democracies where controversies take place before elections. They are characterized by situations of instability in access to the electoral process.

Ultimately, the Constitutional Council does not operate in a healthy political ecosystem. Its legitimacy is too often challenged, to the point of becoming precarious. This undermines its fundamental mission of regulating political and electoral conflicts. In 2024, the window of opportunity opened by the non-candidacy of outgoing President Macky Sall was exploited by the Constitutional Council to better assert its authority as guardian of the Constitution and “savior of Senegalese democracy”. This comes at a time when dignitaries from Muslim brotherhoods are joining the ranks of civil society or entering the political arena.

In reality, these two actors, who have the necessary powers to ensure the continuity of the democratic model, can only exercise their powers when political conditions and the electoral context are favorable to them (recognition of their authority and support by political actors for their brotherhood leaders, exploitation

of political windows of opportunity, independence from political power). In fact, they are subject to two types of pressure: that of political actors and that of public opinion. Their discourse, strategies, and decisions are based on an analysis of the behavior of these two actors. As rational actors, they know how to seize opportunities to guide, influence, or constrain these two categories of actors.

Nevertheless, the current creation of a Directorate of Religious Affairs within the Office of the President of the Republic, as well as the recommendations of the National Justice Conference, tend to re-politicize these two institutions. Religious leaders will now be supervised by the new Directorate of Religious Affairs under the authority of the President of the Republic. In historical neo-institutionalism, institutions develop adaptation strategies to continue to exist. With regard to the Constitutional Council, the National Justice Conference proposes a Constitutional Court that is less legalistic but more open to other benefits. The proposal to diversify the methods of appointing members of the Court also risks creating divisions and affecting the credibility of this institution, which had succeeded in gaining legitimacy among the various actors in 2024. These two initiatives by the new government aim to gain greater control over these two key stakeholders in Senegal's democratic crises. Drawing lessons from the history of political crises in Senegal, the new government is attempting to institutionalize religion in order to better control it and to reduce the "government of judges" by incorporating a dose of politics and civil society. Thus, when politics is banished, it comes back with a vengeance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- (1993). *Sud au Quotidien*.
<https://lequotidien.sn/le-senegal-malade-dune-certaine-maniere-de-faire-de-la-politique/>
- Allal, A., & Vannetzel, M. (2017). Authoritarian Restoration. *African Politics*, No. 146, 5-28.
- Audrain, X. (2004). From the Aborted 'Ndiggel' to the Party of Truth: The Evolution of the Relationship between Religion and Politics through the Career of Cheikh Modou Kara (1999-2004). *Politique Africaine*, No. 96, 99-118. <https://doi.org/10.3917/polaf.096.0099>
- Banégas, R. (1995). Action collective et transition politique en Afrique. La conférence nationale du Bénin. *Cultures & Conflits*, 17. <http://journals.openedition.org/conflits/320>
- Boudon, R. (1998). *The Rationality of Values*. Presses Universitaires de France.
- Bourmaud, D. (2006). The Sources of Authoritarianism in Africa: Ideologies and Men. *International Journal of Comparative Politics*, 13, 625-641.
<https://doi.org/10.3917/ripc.134.0625>
- Brossier, M. (2013). Penser la participation politique par l'impératif religieux: Trajectoires d'engagements musulmans au Sénégal [Thinking about Political Participation through

- the Religious Imperative: Trajectories of Muslim Engagement in Senegal]. *Revue Internationale de Politique Comparée*, 20, 189-211. <https://doi.org/10.3917/ripc.204.0189>
- Delruelle, E. (2025). Democracy and Disincorporation. *Noesis*.
- Diallo, E. H. S. A. (2022). Résistance au pouvoir politique: Les marabouts et les jeunes [Resistance to Political Power: Marabouts and Young People]. In E. H. S. A. Diallo (Ed.), *Sciences et confréries soufies au Sénégal, Approches nouvelles de la violence et de la démocratie [Sciences and Sufi Brotherhoods in Senegal, New Approaches to Violence and Democracy]* (pp. 211-231). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004503212_006
- Diop, A. B. (2001). Electoral Space and Violence in Senegal (1983-1993): Public Order Held Hostage by the Ballot Box. *Africa Development*, XXVI, 145-193.
- Diop, A. B. (2009). *Senegal, a Phoenix Democracy?* Crepos-Karthala.
- Diouf, A. (2014). *Mémoires* (p. 378). Seuil.
- Dobry, M. (2009). *Sociology of Political Crises: The Dynamics of Multisectoral Mobilizations*. Presses de Sciences Po.
- Fall, D. (2007). *Civil Society and Democracy in Senegal*. Master's Thesis, University of Perpignan.
- Favoreu, L. (1994). La légitimité du juge constitutionnel [The Legitimacy of the Constitutional Judge]. *Revue Internationale de droit comparé*, 46, 557-581. <https://doi.org/10.3406/ridc.1994.4889>
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Gallimard.
- Gellar, S. (2002). Pluralism or Jacobinism: What Kind of Democracy for Senegal? In M. C. Diop (Ed.), *Contemporary Senegal* (pp. 507-528). Karthala.
- Hesseling, G. (1985). *Histoire politique du Sénégal. Institutions, droit et société* (p. 437). Karthala.
- Johnson, G. W. (1971). *The Emergence of Black Politics in Senegal*. Stanford University Press.
- Maâti, M. (1998). Electoral Behavior, Politics, and Brotherhood Socialization in Senegal. *Politique Africaine*, No. 69, 53-61. <https://doi.org/10.3406/polaf.1998.6108>
- Mauss, M. (1925). *The Gift: Form and Function of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. PUF.
- Meledje, M., & Djedjro, F. (2009). Electoral Disputes in Africa. *Pouvoirs*, 2, 139-155. <https://doi.org/10.3917/pouv.129.0139>
- Mitterrand, J. F. (1990). *Extrait du discours de François Mitterrand le 20 juin 1990, dans le cadre de la 16e conférence des chefs d'État d'Afrique et de France à la Baule*. <https://www.vie-publique.fr/discours/127621-allocation-de-m-francois-mitterrand-president-de-la-republique-sur-la>
- Ndao, A. (2018). Insurrectional Democratization in Senegal. *RASPOS*, No. 19, 65-89.
- O'Brien, D. C. (1992). The Senegalese Social Contract Put to the Test. *African Politics*, No. 45, 9-20.
- Palouki, M. (2017). The French-Speaking African Constitutional Judge: Between Politics and Law. *Revue française de droit constitutionnel*, No. 111, 641-670. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rfdc.111.0641>
- Peters, G. (2005). The Problem of Policy Problems. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 7, 349-370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13876980500319204>
- Samson, F. (2000). The Role of Religion in the Senegalese Presidential Election. *Afrique Contemporaine*, 194, 5-11.
- Sow, M. (2016). *Media and Political Powers in Senegal: Study of the Transition from a*

State-Controlled Press to Media Pluralism. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Lorraine.

Tine, A. (2017). *Senegal under Senghor and Diouf: A Truant Democracy? A Critique of Political Party Pluralism*. Harmattan.