a historical perspective to contemporary struggles over the (attempted) privatization of water provision. Musemwa's chapter also focuses on water issues, this time in Bulawayo. As with Bénit-Gbaffou's contribution, the deployment of interview narratives is effective in showing the harsh effects of drought and mismanagement on ordinary residents.

The remaining chapters follow less clearly from one another. Laurent Fourchard ably crosses the Francophone–Anglophone divide in African studies in his chapter, articulating an effective comparison of colonial strategies for dealing with "strangers" in cities of Nigeria and French West Africa. Francesca Locatelli's chapter provides a glimpse into the history and contemporary legacies of Italian colonial urban planning in Asmara, with emphases similar to those of Rodrigues earlier on in the book. Deborah Bryceson's generalized survey of Kampala and Dar es Salaam compares struggles over land rights in these cities. And Maria Suriano's chapter on Mwanza closes the book; building on the literature that has emerged in the last dozen years or so in Tanzanian studies on colonial urban social history, she presents a study on music, identity, and politics, 1945–1961.

As with all conference-based edited volumes, there is some eclecticism and unevenness in approach, and I am uncertain at times about the logic of chapter placement. Several recent Ph.D. recipients hold their own, though, with chapters based on dissertations no less, in a volume that contains pieces by some seasoned veterans and major figures of African urban studies. Moreover, this book's intellectual rigor and regional breadth—both in its stretch across sub-Saharan Africa and its blending of emergent British, French, Belgian, Portuguese, and Italian traditions of African studies—make it a welcome addition to the expanding bookcase of African urban studies.

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Trevor H. J. Marchand. *The Masons of Djenné*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. xvi + 352 pp. Figures. Photographs. Maps. Glossary. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $75.00. Cloth. $29.95. Paper.

Here is a book that puts the *work* back in fieldwork, with dirt left under the fingernails. To learn about construction processes, Trevor Marchand apprenticed himself to masons in Djenné, Mali, exchanging his labor for learning. Local paradigms of practice-based technology transfer permit such education, and Marchand's expatriate status was accommodated in ways that reveal frank curiosity and mutual respect on all sides. Over and above the book's considerable substantive and theoretical strengths, the unusually accessible exposition of this intercultural dynamic will make it well worth teaching.

Djenné is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and has been a crossroads for commerce in goods, people, ideas, and technologies for millennia. Inspiration has navigated the Niger River's lazy loop, crossed the Sahara by camel, and trekked to and from the Atlantic coast. Through local invention and the borrowing of methods and styles, the buildings of Djenné—and especially the justly celebrated Great Mosque, deemed the largest of earthen structures in all of Africa—are avatars of appropriate architecture. That is, they are attuned to the specifics of local materials, climates, cosmologies, and the aesthetic senses that subsume both practical and ideational factors.

The dwellings of Djenné were also a primary model for the "Sudanese Style" recognized and/or invented by French colonial authorities in constructions resonating with the motifs and scientific ideologies of Art Deco that graced the "African" pavilions of world's fairs and administrative buildings across French West Africa. While architectural conservation and replication are of deep significance in Djenné—and to none more than the masons that Marchand introduces to us—things do not sit still in the Inner Delta of Mali any more than they do elsewhere in the world. Contemporary structures are often set off by the newest technological interventions and opulent flourishes. What better place for an ethnographer to roll up his sleeves and dig into culture-building?

Marchand brings Djenné's marvelous structures to life, for his vividly detailed descriptions are based upon his experiences mixing the mortar, toting the bricks, and sitting in the shade to catch his breath. Purposeful—even if endless—tedium leads to pride in homes built for others. That work can be joy is a lesson unto itself, and that work is prayer an even deeper one. The vitality of construction processes is assured by oaths, magical devices, and spiritual interventions that protect the deeply reverent Muslim masons in what can be perilous work, while assuring the success of their endeavors. Indeed, some of the book's most engaging moments reveal how mystical dimensions meet the realities of construction: a facade collapses right where children pass, yet no one is injured because "proper benedictions were made before work" (217). We also meet larger-than-life personalities, such as "the Michelangelo of Djenné"—a seemingly over-the-top exaggeration until one learns of the man's extraordinary abilities. What is most compelling about this study, though, is the passion the masons have for their work, and readers will share Marchand's own passion for his collaboration with them.

The book's many black-and-white photos are superb, and none more so than portraits of Marchand's pals—the best term I can think of for the men handing bricks to and taking bricks from him—that offer visual proof of warm friendship. As explained in Marchand's epilogue, his book is complemented by a remarkable 56-minute documentary, "Future of Mud: A Tale of Houses and Lives in Djenné" (First Run/Icarus Films, 2007). The film was directed by the African art historian Susan Vogel and coproduced by

Marchand Sidibé and Samuel Sidibé, the director of the Malian National Museum. It will be perfect for undergraduates.

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Allan Charles Dawson, ed. *Shrines in Africa: History, Politics, and Society.* Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2009. Distributed by Michigan State University Press. Africa: Missing Voices series, no. 5. xvii + 210 pp. Figures. Maps. Photographs. Notes. References. Index. $39.95. Paper.

This book is a set of ethnohistorical and archaeological essays on the general theme of how African shrines serve as "cultural signposts" for ethnic, territorial, and social boundaries. Four of the six essays are thematically coherent because they all focus on the northern Ghana region. The two remaining chapters examine shrines on the Cameroonian–Nigerian border and saints' tombs in Morocco. The concept that serves as a touchstone (or perhaps shrine?) for the authors in this collection is the seminal work of Igor Kopytoff on the dynamics of social frontiers, settlement patterns, and ritual authority in Africa. Such a model suggests that much of Africa's mosaic of identities, languages, and social forms results from cycles of social segmentation, mobility, and consolidation. This volume identifies shrines as part of this process, and demonstrates that they mediate both territorial and ritual relationships between first settlers and subsequent immigrants.

The first four chapters stick close to the ground, both literally and theoretically. The contribution by Judith Sterner and Nicholas David examines ceramics in the Mandara mountains of northern Cameroon and northeastern Nigeria. The authors show that the differences in social organization among the Sirak, Sukur, and Gudur polities result in different pottery shrines and therefore different archaeological remains. A second chapter by Tim Insoll, Benjamin Kankpeyeng, and Rachel MacLean seeks to supplement Meyer Fortes's work on the oral traditions of the Tallensi of northern Ghana with archaeological reconstruction of settlement patterns. They discuss the "ritual objects" found in preliminary excavations at the Nyoo shrine and suggest some of the clay objects' social contexts. Allan Dawson's essay on "earth shrines" among the Konkomba people, also of northern Ghana, shows how this group continues to focus on a large baobab tree at Yendi, despite their having been pushed away from that area several centuries ago. The author interprets Konkumba discourse about maintaining ritual practice at Yendi as the idiom of current identity politics and old territorial claims. Charles Mather's chapter on the ethnoarchaeology of compound abandonment attempts to outline how archaeologists might recognize shrines when excavating sites in northern Ghana. Unfortunately for future scholars in the region, he finds that shrines are unlikely to end up