

## THE MURID COMMUNITY OF DAROU MOUSTY

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*Sufism and Jihad in Modern Senegal: The Murid Order.* By JOHN GLOVER. Rochester: The University of Rochester Press, 2007. Pp. viii + 236. No price given (ISBN 978-1-58046-268-6).

KEY WORDS: Senegal, colonialism, Islam.

In this work John Glover has provided a full and often fascinating account of the Murid community of Darou Mousty, founded just before the First World War by Ibra Faty or Maam Cerno Mbacke, the younger brother and confidant of Amadu Bamba. In this, he follows upon the work of James Searing, his mentor at the University of Illinois Chicago, who published '*God Alone is King*': *The Transformation of Wolof Society, 1860–1928* (2002). Whereas Searing used the experience of Darou Mousty to show the beginnings of the Muridiyya, Glover takes the community up to the 1950s on the strength of extensive interviews with participants, including descendants of the original settlers.

Glover challenges colonial and Orientalist notions of Sufism and Sufi orders as antiquated, derivative and hostile to modernization. He shows the ability of Maam Cerno and his successors, and the community as a whole, to adjust to changing conditions in the Senegalese economy. He adopts the framework of spiritual and social capital, and the ability to transform these into economic capital, rather than the more Weberian notion of charisma applied by the main sociologist of the Murids, Donal Cruise O'Brien.

Darou Mousty was founded by Maam Cerno in 1912 in a relatively uninhabited zone of southern Cayor, to the north of the main Murid centers of Touba and Mbacke in eastern Baol. It was at this time that Amadu Bamba was brought out of his third exile in northern Senegal to a situation of house arrest in Diourbel, a small French administrative center and market on the main rail line running through the peanut-producing zone. Maam Cerno had been Bamba's most trusted disciple during the years of exile, and his move to Darou Mousty constitutes one of the earliest examples of Murid expansion. The portrayal of Maam Cerno and his relations with his older brother is one of the achievements of Glover's work.

The early sections and framework of the book pose problems. Glover chooses to place his work in the long history of Islamic expansion in West Africa, ranging as far afield as the Sokoto Caliphate and as far back in time as the Empire of Ghana. Most of the time he deals with Sufism and reformers as separate streams of Islamic initiative. He uses the old formula of quarantine, elite and majority phases for islamization, derived from Humphrey Fisher and other earlier commentators. This may be relevant for a general treatment of islamization in West Africa, but doesn't help with the Senegambian context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in which the Muridiyya and the Darou Mousty community emerge.

He does move to a more relevant context in Chapter 2, in analyzing efforts both to establish Islamic states in Senegambia – particularly by Umar Tal, Amadu Sheku Ba and Ma Ba Jakhu – and to maintain the old monarchies, such as Kajoor in the person of Lat Joor. This is particularly useful for the reflection on Amadu Bamba and his younger brother. Glover – quite correctly I think – follows Searing in concluding that the Murid founder came away with a negative view of the political domain and states, whether they were ostensibly 'Islamic' or 'traditional'. This reflection is pursued with more depth and insight in a new work which has just appeared: Cheikh Mbacke Babou's *Fighting the Greater Jihad. Amadu Bamba and the Founding of the Muridiyya of Senegal, 1853–1913* (2007).

The strength of the book lies in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, which trace the emergence of Bamba and Maam Cerno, to whom Bamba entrusted the care of the burgeoning community during his long years of exile, and then the rise to prominence of Maam Cerno as the leader of Darou Mousty, one of the directions of expansion of the Muridiyya. Here Glover is at his best in putting to use his interviews with members of the community, including a few early settlers, and combining these with occasional archival references. We see the community's adaptation to the changing economy; production of food as well as cash crops; and the diplomatic and political skills used to avoid incorporation into the main Murid centers of Baol and Diourbel and the political and religious leaders who dominated them.

In this book, John Glover adds important new dimensions to the understanding of the emergence of the Muridiyya, and carries the story of Darou Mousty well beyond that of his mentor Searing.

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### KWAME NKRUMAH AS AFRICA'S 'BLACK STAR'

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*Black Star: A View of The Life & Times of Kwame Nkrumah*. By BASIL DAVIDSON. Oxford: James Currey, 2007. Pp. 225. £14.90, paperback (ISBN 978-1-84701-010-0).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, biography, decolonization.

Basil Davidson, author of *Black Star: A View of The Life & Times of Kwame Nkrumah*, is a distinguished public historian, who has written some of the most readable, and very valuable, books about Africa. The 2007 edition of the author's classic book on Kwame Nkrumah (first published in 1973) has benefitted tremendously from a new and impressive foreword written by Emmanuel Kwaku Akyeampong, as well as a four-page laudable oration given by Dr. M. C. Horton, Orator of the University of Bristol, from where Davidson received the Doctor of Letters degree (*honori causa*) in 1999. Apart from Davidson's very detailed discussion of the life and times of Nkrumah, as contained in his re-issued book, Akyeampong's new foreword provides readers with a fresh overview of some of the Ghanaian leader's salient attributes, all of which combined to make him stand out as a great Pan-Africanist in the realm of world politics and history, and includes Akyeampong's assessment that Nkrumah, as a true visionary, was indeed ahead of his times. Additionally, he describes Davidson's book as 'an inspired portrait of Nkrumah as Davidson shares Nkrumah's vision for Africa and Nkrumah's diagnosis of the systemic liabilities of colonialism and the burden of the colonial legacy on the post-colonial state' (p. 2).

Akyeampong agrees with Davidson's prediction, which was published a few years after Nkrumah's 24 February 1966 overthrow in a police-cum-army *coup d'état*, 'that historians would judge Nkrumah more favorably and appreciate his stature and overall importance' (pp. 2–3). He succinctly sums up: 'Nkrumah comes alive in *Black Star*: his bookishness, charming personality, his unease with women, intense loyalty to close friends, his enormous capacity for work ... *Black Star* humanizes Nkrumah in important ways, and the reader gains a new understanding of a great man, but still a man' (p. 5).