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CHEIKH ANTA BABOU. *Fighting the Greater Jihad: Amadu Bamba and the Founding of the Muridiyya of Senegal, 1853-1913*. New African Histories Series. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007.

This provocatively titled book is the culmination of Cheikh Anta Babou's research on the life of the well-known Sufi Shaykh, Amadu Bamba, and the Muridiyya *tariqa* (path) he founded in Senegal around the turn of the twentieth century. Babou's work is a welcome addition to the scholarship on the Muridiyya as it fills in many of the gaps left by scholars relying on a French colonial perspective and appealing to an economic rationale for the emergence of this Sufi *tariqa*. By engaging the secondary scholarship on the Muridiyya, as well as examining documents in the colonial archives and paying attention to the underrepresented writings of Murids, Babou brings into conversation the conflicting versions of the history of the Muridiyya to provide a polyvocal perspective.

Babou's first chapter outlines the establishment and expansion of Islam and the tenuous power relations between Muslim clerics and Wolof royalty in the precolonial Wolof states of Senegal. In Chapter Two he situates Amadu Bamba's paternal clerical lineage, the Mbakke, within this dynamic. Chapters Three and Four account for Bamba's emergence from this milieu and elaborate on his own spiritual itinerary in founding the Muridiyya. The remaining three chapters explore French colonial strategies to minimize Bamba's influence and the ensuing *modus vivendi* that enabled peace with the colonizers and a steady growth of the *tariqa*. Babou's thorough and illustrative explanations of Arabic and Wolof concepts develop an intricate and contextualized history not only of the Muridiyya, but also of Wolof society during this challenging historical moment.

Babou argues that Bamba's clerical lineage and pursuit of Islamic *ijaazas* (credentials) were the conditions of his acquisition of symbolic capital, a view that contrasts with many scholars who attribute Bamba's emergence to Weberian charisma and resistance to the French colonial presence. Indeed, Babou's sources suggest that Bamba's most significant resistance was rather to the divisive and oppressive traditions of Wolof rule in the kingdoms of Kajoor and Bawol in west-central Senegal, as well as to corrupting worldly forces that distract the Sufi from approaching God. This is the greater *jihad* to which Babou refers, that of fighting one's own *nafs*, or animal instincts; Bamba's *jihad* is of the soul and not of the sword. Babou also offers a description of Bamba's holistic educational methodology, a characteristic of the Muridiyya that has long been overlooked by Western scholars.

Another of Babou's significant contributions is a reassessment of the date of the Muridiyya's founding, placing it in 1904 rather than 1884, the date often provided by Murids, or the 1886 date provided by scholars who have conflated its origin with the end of Lat Joor's rule of the Wolof kingdom of Kajoor. Babou effectively argues that prior to 1904, Bamba was undertaking the long and arduous process of gathering enough Islamic knowledge, spiritual capital and *baraka* (divine grace) to become more than a disciple himself. It was not until after returning from his forced exiles in Gabon and Mauritania and his acquisition of the Murid *wird* (litany) through prophetic vision that his ascendance to master occurred, thus symbolizing the founding of the Muridiyya. In this same vein, Babou dispels the myth that Amadu Bamba and Lat Joor met prior to the latter's death, in what has often been interpreted as a passing of the torch from Wolof kings to Muslim clerics in the face of colonial domination. Through careful analysis of national archives and Murid hagiographies, Babou determines that this "historical fact" is rather part of a historical memory serving to reconcile the descendants of the oppositional Wolof king with the Murids to whom they adhered thereafter.

Perhaps Babou's most important contribution is his assertion that the Muridiyya is not a monolithic entity, but is composed of individuals with agency who exert their own wills on the realization of Amadu Bamba's ideal. This perspective helps to account for some of the contemporary activities of Murids, which are often considered to be politically and economically motivated, and are heavily criticized by some religious scholars. Babou claims that the constraints brought on by Bamba's arrest, forced exile and ultimate confinement to house arrest in Diourbel left much of the responsibility for the interpretation, adaptation and translation of his ideas to his shaykhs and disciples, an assessment that contributes to an understanding of the *tariqa*'s dispersed configuration today. However, herein lies the one shortcoming of Babou's book: insufficient exploration of the emergence and manifestation of a Murid economic logic. While Babou clearly intends to demonstrate the spiritual and educational motivations of Bamba and his followers, more consideration of the lived articulation of Murid spiritual and temporal projects would have rendered this work more comprehensive.

Babou's revision of Amadu Bamba's life and works is a noteworthy contribution to the corpus of literature on the Muridiyya, and will be of interest to scholars of the Murids and other Sufi orders. His critical approach will also be valuable to historians faced with the challenges of studying the hegemonic narratives found in many colonial archives.

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