Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Pereejo’s work is preceded by an erudite présenta-
tion which represents a fundamental guide to reading the Fath al-samad. But the introductory essay goes beyond the text itself, locating the work in the intellectual milieu of West Africa and comparing it with other similar works, i.e., the biographical-hagiographical entry on al-Sanūsī (d. 1490) included in the Ṣayl al-ibtihaj by Aḥmad Bāba (d. 1627) and the al-Ṭarāʾif wa-l-talāʾid by Muḥammad b. al-Mukhtar al-Kuntī (d. 1825–1826). Furthermore, the editors provide an accurate synthesis of the previous studies on the Caliphate which benefits substantially from two unpublished Ph.D. dissertations, by William A. Brown and by the Malian scholar Muḥammad Diagayété, that are difficult to access, but crucial for any study on this topic.

In sum, L’inspiration de l’éternel is an important contribution to our still limited historical and literary knowledge of the Masina Caliphate, a state that has long been overshadowed by its more famous neighboring centers, Timbuktu, Sokoto, and the Tukuleur “empire” of ʿUmar Tall. The edition and translation of L’inspiration de l’éternel, as well the introductory essay, locates the work in the path of those great scholars who have disclosed to a wider public the first works of West African Arabic literature, such as Octave Houdas between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries or John O. Hunwick later on.

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Making and Remaking Mosques in Senegal begins by presenting historical maps of the country of Senegal and Dakar city, its modern-day capital, along with figures of the mosques, women’s spaces, and the different zawiyas (Sufi gathering places) of Dakar contributed by the distinguished

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9 On these works, see Hunwick et al., Arabic Literature of Africa, 27 and 113.
geographer Eric Ross. These geographical mappings draw the reader’s attention to the importance of Senegal’s historically geostrategic location on the Sahelian and Saharan routes. Author Cleo Cantone is preoccupied with delineating the “links between architecture, gender, and identity, how they play one off against the other and how they transform areas of discourse through the medium of built form” (p. 15).

This book is an outstanding survey of the historical and social motifs that characterize Senegal’s Islamic architecture. Cantone adopts an approach that is neither overly defensive nor Orientalist. She successfully synthesizes the constructions of Muslim identity in a diverse and multi-ethnic nation by exploring facets of Muslim Senegalese identity through the lens of mosque architecture. The varieties and intertextualities of contemporary mosque architecture arose from a history of amalgamating various styles. The author traces precolonial styles in Islamic architecture through colonial-era mosques, then details the modern and contemporary art of making mosques in Senegal. At the end, she highlights the versatility of the architecture and demonstrates women’s agency in creating space within mosques.

Employing a chronological socio-architectural approach, Cantone traces Sudanese architectural styles and their counterparts in Futa Toro from the fifteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries in chapter 1. She discusses the precolonial trading ventures of Europeans in Senegal and highlights the architectural typology of the Umarian mosques, which date to the mid-nineteenth-century era of al-Hajj Umar. The stylistic construction of Umarian mosques relates to the broader family of Sudanese mosques, a building tradition going back several centuries. It is noteworthy that these mosques have a military demeanor that manifests a material expression of opposition to European intervention and domination. Due to scant references to this period, Cantone employs “European travelogue and an ethnolinguistic analysis to differentiate the various ethnic groups, their geographical setting and the distribution of local nomenclature to identify specific mosque types” (p. 21). This methodology draws more heavily from colonially generated descriptions than the indigenous historiography in which Muslims describe their mosques on their own terms.

The book’s second chapter is a critique of the French colonial phase and its impact on the architecture of mosques in Senegal as well as on the formation of modern Senegalese identity. European intervention in Africa created several binaries: “inferior” African versus “superior” European, “Northern” versus “Sub-Saharan” African, and “white Islam” versus...