
A Mosque in a Mosque

Some Observations on the Rue Blanchot Mosque in Dakar & its Relation to Other Mosques in the Colonial Period

Cleo Cantone



Édition électronique

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesafriaines/15253>

DOI : [10.4000/etudesafriaines.15253](https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesafriaines.15253)

ISSN : 1777-5353

Éditeur

Éditions de l'EHESS

Édition imprimée

Date de publication : 28 juin 2006

Pagination : 363-387

ISBN : 978-2-7132-2090-6

ISSN : 0008-0055

Référence électronique

Cleo Cantone, « A Mosque in a Mosque », *Cahiers d'études africaines* [En ligne], 182 | 2006, mis en ligne le 01 janvier 2008, consulté le 02 mai 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesafriaines/15253> ; DOI : [10.4000/etudesafriaines.15253](https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesafriaines.15253)

Cet article est disponible en ligne à l'adresse :

http://www.cairn.info/article.php?ID_REVUE=CEA&ID_NUMPUBLIE=CEA_182&ID_ARTICLE=CEA_182_0363

A Mosque in a Mosque. Some Observations on the Rue Blanchot Mosque in Dakar and its Relation to Other Mosques in the Colonial Period

par Cleo CANTONE

| Editions de l'EHESS | *Cahiers d'études africaines*

2006/2 - 182

ISSN 0008-0055 | ISBN 2713220904 | pages 363 à 387

Pour citer cet article :

—Cantone C., A Mosque in a Mosque. Some Observations on the Rue Blanchot Mosque in Dakar and its Relation to Other Mosques in the Colonial Period, *Cahiers d'études africaines* 2006/2, 182, p. 363-387.

Distribution électronique Cairn pour Editions de l'EHESS .

© Editions de l'EHESS . Tous droits réservés pour tous pays.

La reproduction ou représentation de cet article, notamment par photocopie, n'est autorisée que dans les limites des conditions générales d'utilisation du site ou, le cas échéant, des conditions générales de la licence souscrite par votre établissement. Toute autre reproduction ou représentation, en tout ou partie, sous quelque forme et de quelque manière que ce soit, est interdite sauf accord préalable et écrit de l'éditeur, en dehors des cas prévus par la législation en vigueur en France. Il est précisé que son stockage dans une base de données est également interdit.

Cleo Cantone

A Mosque in a Mosque

Some Observations on the Rue Blanchot Mosque in Dakar & its Relation to Other Mosques in the Colonial Period

Very little to date has been written about the mosques of Dakar in particular and Senegal in general. The aim of this paper is therefore to present some aspects of the earlier *Dakarois* mosques in an attempt to explore their historical and stylistic evolution through an analysis of two major sources: contemporary images and archival documentation. Thanks in particular to the collaboration of Georges Meurillon of Images et Mémoires¹, I have been able to piece together a tentative chronology for these mosques. As this is only a part of my thesis (Cantone 2006), I have selected a certain style of mosque whose earliest dated prototypes are found in the great mosques of Saint-Louis and rue Blanchot in Dakar. The principal unifying elements of this type of mosque, as we shall see, are their close resemblance to church architecture but also their building material, masonry.

Before the colonial period, we have to rely on European explorer literature from which we derive some of the earliest written descriptions of architecture in West Africa. In 15th century Ca' da Mosto signalled the lack of “*constructions en dur*” and ascribes this to “absence of industry” on the part of the natives. As with accounts by other European travellers, the main problem with da Mosto's description is its reliance on the coastal area coupled with a total lack of knowledge of the African interior with its own particular architectural tradition—the so called “*style soudanais*”². It was

-
1. This organization, based in the Institut de Géographie in Paris, hosts an impressive collection of old postcards of the French colonies and includes most of the mosques discussed in this paper.
 2. Although this term was created by anthropologists towards the beginning of the 19th century, it is still widely used today to describe a phenomenon that pertains to West Africa (formerly known as the Bilad al-Sudan) where a particular type of architecture emerged in the territory that spans several African countries, including Mali, Burkina Faso, the north of Ghana and Côte-d'Ivoire and the north-east of Senegal (DOMIAN 1989). Ironically, Domian's title shows up the very characteristics that Europeans considered worthy enough to be called a tradition, ignoring the more “humble” north-eastern Senegalese architecture mentioned above.

not until much later in 18th and particularly 19th centuries that explorers ventured inland and “discovered” the renowned cities of Timbuktu, Djenné and Gao—to mention some of the great cities of the Malian Empire.

Yet Senegal’s legacy of adobe architecture in the valley of the River Senegal is repeatedly excluded from its wider family found in the regions usually associated with the *style soudanais* (Sylla 2000: 11). Although this type of architecture does not fall within the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that the reason for this omission might well lie in the Euro-centric perception of urban or monumental traditions that obfuscated less grandiose building traditions—a view that has up until recently dominated the field of architectural history in the western Sudan. This may also serve to explain why the French authorities when seeking inspiration for the construction of the Saint-Louis and Dakar mosques in mid to late 19th century did not look for local prototypes, rather produced a “hybrid”³ style in keeping with the colonial enterprise, that is to say a style that combined elements from the more “civilised” Muslim world⁴, with Christian elements.

The lack of “monumental” architecture in the coastal region of Senegal is explained in a variety of ways. Traditionally, according to Abdou Sylla (2000: ch. 1), in Senegal as in Africa, there was no caste that specialized solely in architecture. All members of the community joined in the process of building, therefore the only requirement is the time needed to dedicate to a given building project, and this necessarily has to occur during the dead or dry season. Secondly, materials used for construction are those locally available—generally clay, more rarely stone and more frequently, bamboo and straw, etc. The “precariousness” of these materials necessitates a re-construction programme roughly every five to ten years, depending on the material.

As far as the other materials are concerned, stone is rarely used towards the East of Senegal where it can be obtained from the Guinean mountains; clay is most widely used throughout the country with the exception of the groundnut basin in the central region, where fine sand and strong winds make it difficult to obtain an *aggloméré*⁵, hence straw and leaves are generally used. In the southern and eastern regions, where forests abound, plant-based materials are used alongside clay by the Manding, Peul, Malinke, Soninke and Bassari ethnic groups. In the North of the country, where rainfall is rarer, the most commonly used materials are wood and clay.

-
3. “The *hybrid*, an entity created out of crossing two dissimilar entities, entered post-colonial theory as a term descriptive of cultural and racial mixing generated by colonialism. [. . .] The hybrid is one of colonialism’s unintended consequences [. . .], the product of cross-breeding between the metropolitan and the colonial”, in P. A. MORTON (2000: 13).
 4. See letter addressed to the Governor General dated 11 April 1938 in ANS 19 G6 where “*l’islam civilisé*” is defined as belonging to the Hidjaz, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt.
 5. A construction material composed of a mixture of mineral and vegetal elements.

The Tukuleur, for instance, use these materials and construct geometrical forms conforming to the so-called *soudano-sahelian* style.

The nature of such constructions using perishable materials is that they need repeated maintenance at regular intervals, or they have to be entirely demolished and reconstructed. On the one hand, life-style plays a part in how buildings are constructed—depending on whether the inhabitants are sedentary or nomadic; on the other hand, the natural environment shapes the building according to what it offers. It is thus that:

“Les peuples sénégalais n’ont pas, à l’instar d’autres peuples, laissé des monuments et des vestiges grandioses et durables comme en Europe et dans les autres régions du monde” (Sylla 2000: 13).

The advent of new building materials namely cement at the beginning of the 20th century had a huge impact on Senegalese architecture. Cement appeared alongside colonization and the result was the adoption of the colonial model in local architecture. Religious buildings were not least affected and were to experience a construction boom between 1910 and 1950⁶. This was the particularly the case under al-Hajj Malick Sy, leader of the Tivaouane branch of the Tijaniyya who was credited with having built no fewer than 30,000 mosques! (Sylla 2000: 14).

History professor M. Gueye, UCAD⁷, looks at this problem from a different angle. According to him, there were no “proper” mosques before the colonial period maintaining that, *avant c’étaient des poulaillers*. The 17th and 18th centuries, which were marked by the rise of the Atlantic slave trade, were turbulent times when *marabouts*⁸ warred against the warrior class known as the *Tieddo*. As a result, the increasingly powerful *Tieddo* destroyed many mosques, hence the lack of buildings dating to this period, furthermore, because they were built in perishable materials, they have left no trace. Rather than signifying an absence of industry, this type of construction in straw was deliberately designed to be makeshift due the lack of security that prevailed in the region until the advent of the French occupation.

Gueye expounds his theory by saying that it was not customary to display one’s wealth both in personal dwellings and in religious buildings so as not to attract the enemy’s attention⁹. Thus, to build a beautiful mosque

-
6. This is documented as being the case by P. MARTY (1917: t. 2, 31-32). Many village mosques consisted of unroofed bamboo enclosures, sometimes covered by corrugated iron roofs or were simply marked by a row of stones.
 7. Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar.
 8. The marabouts lead a campaign against the slave-trading traditional aristocracy (1673-1677) which was crushed with the help of French arms (GELLAR 1995: 5).
 9. He further noted that during fieldwork in the Central African Republic he came across the same situation, *i.e.* that the wealthy Senegalese population in this region deliberately concealed their wealth and that this was particularly evident in their buildings. Interview at UCAD, 6 January 2004.

amounted to being ostentatious however, with the climate of security that reigned in colonial times it became possible to build using durable materials. He concludes that the earliest such mosques built in the “Oriental” (*i.e.* Middle Eastern)¹⁰ style are the two mosques built by Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba—one in Diourbel and the other in Touba. These mosques were in fact built in ca 1925 and ca 1927 (after his death), respectively, well after the construction of Saint-Louis Nord and rue Blanchot, discussed below.

In any case it seems flawed to look for the earliest prototype of the Senegalese mosque in the Murid *tariqa* (pl. *туруq*, Arabic) as it is one of the most recent *туруq*. Rather, one should look at the Lébou community who were the original inhabitants of Cap Vert and who mostly belong to the Qadiriya, Tijaniya and Layenne *туруq*. Although little documented, the history of Lébou mosques follows the same pattern as pre-colonial mosques in the region. Initially they were made of straw thatch and later they were replaced by “cases” made of wooden planks and later this mode of construction gave way to buildings in masonry with tiled roofs.

The French Administration played an important part in the “revolution” of building techniques, so much so that they passed several decrees banning construction using perishable materials. Yet, in spite of the heavier cost of building *en dur* the local community was far from discouraged to build or rebuild their mosques using masonry. Moreover, local *marabouts* repeatedly made petitions soliciting financial assistance from the French Authorities on order to undertake such projects. Records of these petitions are documented in the ANS¹¹ from around the 1930s, before that, they have almost certainly been lost¹². What follows is therefore a reconstruction on the basis of literary, visual and oral material of the mosquée Blanchot—a building which has known a number of significant extensions since its construction in around 1885.

Spatial and Chronological Situation of two Early *Dakarois* Mosques: La mosquée royale and La petite mosquée

Ca’ da Mosto’s 15th century account of his travels to West Africa provides a description of the royal mosque in the Peninsula of Dakar. Having befriended the king of Cayor¹³, he describes his visit to the king’s mosque:

10. Possibly the most obvious markers of this type of mosque are the dome and minaret.

11. Archives Nationales du Sénégal.

12. Saliou M’Baye, Director of the Archives Nationales du Sénégal believes this is the case.

13. In a note on p. 86, CA’ DA MOSTO (1895) explains that Boudamel or Bour Damel means the reigning sovereign and in this case the king of Cayor.

“[. . .] la mosquée, là où ils font oraison, et laquelle devers le soyr (ayant fait appeler ses Azanaghes ou Arabes qu’il tient ordinairement en sa maison quasi comme prêtres, les quels sont ceux qui l’instruisent en la loy mahometane) il entroyt dans une *court* avec aucuns Noirs des principaux dans la mosquée [. . .]”¹⁴.

Piecing together literary evidence, it appears that the so-called *mosquée royale* described by Ca’ da Mosto above almost certainly corresponds to the one described three centuries later by French settlers. Indeed, the first map drawn by the French where the mosque appears is dated 1853¹⁵. Here Dakar was still known as a village and an approximate location of a number of key sites includes the religious mission, to the north-east of the peninsula, the sister’s mission further down near the eastern coast and opposite the mosque and residence of the chief of the *presqu’île* in an area called Tanne.

When le père Engel visited the royal mosque 29 December 1862, he wrote a letter in which he describes it as being situated opposite the building of the *établissement des Sœurs*¹⁶:

“La ville offre un aspect bien curieux; c’est un véritable labyrinthe de rues et d’impasses, de tours et de détours; les palais de la capitale ne sont que des misérables *cases en paille*; la plus splendide n’a peut-être pas trois mètres de superficie. Les rues sont si étroites, qu’il faut y marcher à la file, et encore, dans certaines la soutane touche aux deux côtés.

La mosquée a été *construite par les Français*; c’est un bâtiment qui a peut-être 2 mètres de haut, 4 de long et 3 de large. Vous pouvez entrer à votre aise, personne ne vous en empêche. Les ornements ne sont point brillants; les quatre murs d’une grande simplicité, une vieille chaise qui sert de trône au roi, qui est en même temps premier marabout, et voilà tout. Voyant un coran dans le coin de la mosquée, j’en arrache deux feuilles, dont je vous envoie un morceau ci-joint. Heureusement que personne ne m’a vu, car c’est un crime que le marabout ne m’aurait pas pardonné. En sortant de la mosquée, après quelques pas, nous nous trouvons en face de la demeure royale; c’est une *maisonnette en pierre*. Elle est due à la générosité d’un commandant de la division navale, qui l’a faite construire sur la demande de Monseigneur. Elle peut avoir 4 mètres de long sur 3 mètres de large et 2 de haut.

D’après ces dimensions, vous pouvez déjà voir que les pièces ne doivent pas être nombreuses. La même salle sert à la fois de salle d’attente, d’audience, de conseil, de réfectoire, de cuisine, et même de poulailler” (J. Charpy 1958: 337, n. 236)¹⁷ [my emphases].

14. CA’ DA MOSTO (1895: 98-99). The reason why I have emphasised “*court*” is because this probably consisted of no more than the space between dwellings in a compound. There is no evidence that mosques in this area and during this period were equipped with courtyards.

15. Signed by L. Faidhairbe, 20 March 1853 in J. CHARPY (1958: plan n. 2) (Archives FOM, *Sénégal*, XII 12 D).

16. This establishment is figured on the 1862 map by the Governor Pinet-Laprade in C. FAURE (1914). The map, however, does not indicate the presence of the royal mosque.

17. Note that the measurements of both the royal mosque and the king’s dwelling are exactly the same. This could possibly mean that they were built by the French at the same time—between 1853 and 1858.

I have emphasised the following points: the indigenous dwellings were (still) built of straw at the time when French had begun their occupation of the city, however, the mosque built by the French can be identified as being the one drawn by Pierre Loti in 1873 (Farrère 1948: 97) whose skeleton appears in two maps dated 1858 and 1862¹⁸ and that this, therefore, was most likely to have been the first mosque to be built *en dur* in Dakar. Also of significance, the king's residence is said to have been built by the French and the material used is stone. Although structurally and stylistically it is described as being very spartan, consisting of a unique poly-functional space, its construction material clearly displays greater opulence than a straw dwelling. The location is clearly the same as the royal residence, which is described as being opposite the mosque.

Could this be the same mosque that appeared in the map dated 1858? Unfortunately, this map provides a street layout with the names of parcels of land named after their proprietors. In the absence of road names, it is difficult to determine its precise location in the city. Opposite the mosque and slightly to the south of it, is the Place du Commerce, which may well be where the Place Kernel was subsequently situated as can be seen in Laprade's 1862 street plan (Faure 1914). None of the names correspond with the names given on the 1853 map but this is not surprising considering it dates from five years earlier. What seems to point to the fact that the ground-plan of the mosque on this 1858 map corresponds exactly with that on Laprade's 1862 map, which in turn fits the literary description made by Père Engel. In all probability, the king's mosque figured on the 1853 and 1858 maps was reconstructed by the French in masonry (P. Marty 1917: 31)¹⁹ and was sketched by Loti in 1873. The question remains: when did they build the royal mosque? If it was standing in 1853, then this preceded the foundation of Dakar in 1857 and begs a second question, why did the French build it for the king of Cayor? (Ba 1976).

When French had officially taken possession of Dakar the inhabitants of Gorée started purchasing parcels of land on the peninsula out of pure speculation. However, this worried the French who wished to reserve some of the land for public buildings:

“Les zones le long de la côte, sur une largeur de 81 m, sont destinées à être réserves foncières et doivent être vidées des constructions en paille et en terre” (Sinou 1993b: 51).

18. Both maps are contained in CHARPY (1958: plan n. 5) by Pinet-Laprade in 1862 (Archives FOM, *Sénégal*, XII 12 a). In this particular map the street-plan of Dakar is superimposed onto the layout of the existing buildings, including the *mosquée de Dakar*.
19. Marty tells us that most village mosques were built of straw or consisted of bamboo enclosures or even a simple row of stones. These are the so-called *jakka*, the *jaama* or Friday mosques were generally built of wooden planks covered with thatched roofs. The floors were often covered with clean sand (p. 32). However, he does go on to cite some examples of constructions made of *pisé* or masonry (*ibid.*).

Since the royal mosque was not situated far from the coast and it may have been for this reason that the original straw building was substituted with a *construction en dur*. Assuming the French rebuilt the king's mosque, the construction of this mosque preceded that of the church planned in 1870 as indicated on a map whose Index (*légende*) marks a site for the church with the note "to be built" (Charpy 1958: plan n. 9)²⁰. Nevertheless, no mention is made, nor does a ground-plan appear of the little mosque sketched by Loti in 1873. Loti's drawing depicts the mosque as a low-walled enclosure with a squared *mihrab* and an external "L"-shaped wall projecting from one of the walls forming an outer semi-enclosed space where old men are shown to be seated. It is this very projection that distinguishes the mosque's plan and which we see in the ground-plan on Laprade's 1862 map. Loti calls it *La mosquée de Dakar* and he goes on to say that it conforms to a more generic type of Senegalese mosque:

"Les mosquées du Sénégal sont partout d'une grande simplicité, des *enceintes de murs blancs*, le plus souvent à *ciel découvert*, et sans aucune prétention architecturale" (Loti 1947) [my emphases].

This would suggest that this was probably not the only mosque—but probably the most notable one at the time—"Dakar en possède une dans ce style"—and that therefore it had been built of more durable materials to replace the royal mosque. The fact that the walls were whitewashed does not necessarily imply that they were all the result of French involvement. According to Peter Mark, Fernandez provides some of the earliest descriptions of the style later referred to as Luso-African architecture saying that the houses of the rich were whitewashed both inside and out. Nevertheless, the practice of whitewashing is not confined to Europeans, he continues, for the Mande whitewashed their buildings from as early as 16th century (Mark 2002: 161).

By and large, mosques in Senegal up to mid-19th century were largely unroofed enclosures built in either vegetal materials or masonry. Usually, these very basic structures were replaced by buildings in wooden planks or bricks whose roofs were sometimes covered in tiles, but more frequently in corrugated iron and were known as *cases* or *baragues* (Marty 1917: 32)²¹. From the turn of the 20th century, however, the introduction of new building materials by the colonial authorities coupled with decrees issued by the French administration, engendered new possibilities in architectural

20. (Archives GGAOF 5 D 4) drafted on 18 April 1870.

21. "Dans les villes et escales des fleuves et voies ferrées [. . .], on trouve généralement un édifice cultuel plus imposant, qui porte le nom de *diouma*, et sert le vendredi pour toute la population de la cité. C'est une grande et belle baraque en planches ou en briques, reposant sur un soubassement bâti et recouvert de tôles ou de tuiles. Un petit minaret, en forme de mirador, s'élève à quelques mètres de la mosquée [. . .]"

form and this was not least manifest in Muslim religious architecture. The sections that follow will concentrate primarily on this period and the effects of these changes on mosques.

The Extensions and “Mutations” of rue Blanchot—the First Monumental Mosque of Dakar

The turn of the 20th century saw a phase of greater experimentation with mosque design based on models of colonial architecture. One type of mosque reflected domestic colonial architecture²²—namely the veranda house—and the second borrowed heavily from religious architecture in the form of the double square bell-tower church. Because Blanchot conforms to the latter type (fig. 1), I have chosen to concentrate on mosques that bear a stylistic resemblance to churches, of which, amongst other reasons, we have two earliest extant exponents, namely Saint-Louis Nord and rue Blanchot.

FIG. 1. — LA MOSQUÉE BLANCHOT IN CA. 1910
Courtesy of G. Meruillon, Images et Mémoires



Between 1880s when it was built and 1950s the Blanchot mosque underwent several extensions. The first occurred somewhere 1908-1914 and consisted of an extension on the main façade as well as two porches on the lateral facades (fig. 2).

22. This type of wooden mosque has been superseded with more permanent structures. The homogeneity of their style is undeniably linked to the colonial veranda house (SINOÛ 1993b: 317) and is discussed elsewhere in my thesis (CANTONE 2006).

FIG. 2. — THE FIRST EXTENSION OF BLANCHOT IN CA. 1914
 Courtesy of G. Meruillon, Images et Mémoires



Two different postcards show this extension: in the first the mosque is surrounded by a palisade fence, whereas in the second this has been replaced by a wooden fence and in addition, on the left hand minaret under the clock is a distinctly Christian cross-like motif, which seems to disappear in later images.

The second major change occurred at a much later date when the original facade of the mosque was concealed by another facade. The new facade is correctly aligned with the roads rue Carnot angle Félix Faure, yet this is only an outer shell protecting the original building within. Several other extensions consist of two storeys and a large section for women on the Félix Faure side. According to Diagne's oral testimony, it appears that:

"Il y a eu deux extensions sinon trois même—c'est lors de la deuxième extension qu'ils ont prévu une place pour les femmes mais à un moment donné cela est devenu très étroit pour elles et la responsabilité d'augmenter la place pour les femmes m'a été confiée et c'est moi-même qui ai choisi le côté Félix Faure et on a augmenté la dimension pour que les femmes y puissent prier"²³.

Although the dating of these extensions is not mentioned, the changing position of the space allocated to women gives us further evidence of the different stages in the mosque's expansion. The first space to be allocated to women was likely to have been the lateral porches²⁴. When the outer

23. Interviewed in Dakar, January 2004.

24. This assumption is made by making a parallel with the contemporary mosque of Saint-Louis Nord. The porches appear in this mosque after 1925.

shell that enclosed the original mosque was built, sometime in the early 1930s, the female section used to be situated to the right of the original entrance in an enclosed room. The place where the women now pray is situated behind this room and is accessible by a separate door, which means men and women do not share the same door. This space—screened off by a wooden partition—is twice the size of its predecessor²⁵.

Once the second extension was made, that is when the original building became engulfed by the newer building, the women were given a small room to the right of the old mosque. Later, and this is presumably what Diagne is referring to, they were allocated a larger room further towards rue Félix Faure. This corresponds to a third extension further south along the rue Félix Faure carried out in the early 1930s (fig. 3). The fact that he was in charge of the space allocated to women suggests that this was a recent evolution as suggested by the women's requests for more space.

FIG. 3. — THE 1930S EXTENSION OF BLANCHOT
Photo by C. Cantone



Dating of Blanchot is made all the more problematic by virtue of the fact that ground-plans on contemporary maps do not always correspond with the changes that can be perceived on postcards. For instance, the fence that surrounds the mosque sometimes consists of a low whitewashed wall, whereas in other images it appears to be a wooden fence. In one postcard, however, the wooden fence has clearly been placed around the existing low wall with metal grills. Some decorative elements in the form of white floral

25. Today the mosque is only used for Friday prayers but neither the presence of women nor the extension to their prayer space is proof that a space used to be reserved for them in the original mosque (CANTONE 2006: ch. 5).

motifs with six petals in round medallions against a dark ground appear on postcards dated around 1907. In a slightly later postcard, the mosque is preceded by a lamppost which indicates electricity was introduced in around 1910 (Delcourt 1983: 71).

In Faure's map (1914: 163), the mosque on rue Carnot still appears in its original form, that is without its subsequent extensions as its plan is oblique and not in line with the two roads, rue Carnot and rue Blanchot. Although he mentions the plans for building a cathedral (which was not built until 1936), no mention is made of the construction of the main mosque on rue Blanchot whose date coincides with the building of the Dakar-Saint-Louis railway, completed in 1885.

Marty dates the mosque of Dakar as it stood in his day to around 1885 and its twin in Saint-Louis to 1848:

“Dakar et Saint-Louis, capitales de la colonie, renferment les deux plus jolies mosquées. Elles ont été bâties sous l'égide de l'administration” (Marty 1917: 33).

The land for the construction of the Saint-Louis mosque²⁶ had been donated by the indigenous community who also raised the funds to build it. In addition, the Administration donated:

“Une indemnité d'entretien de 500 francs par an était accordée par l'Administration pour ces édifices, jusqu'au moment de la séparation des Églises et de l'État” (Marty 1917).

The law of the *séparation des Églises et de l'État* was passed in 1905 which coincided with the demolition and reconstruction of the church of Sacré Cœur originally built in 1879-1880 and situated on the Place Protet (fig. 4). Up until then Dakar consisted of twelve *peng* or districts which included Tiedème²⁷, M'Bott, Dieko (rue Gambetta)²⁸, Kaye, Gouye Salane. According to Diagne's oral testimony, there were six main Friday mosques: Blanchot, Tierigne (near marché Tilène), rue Gambetta, Rebeuss, Geultapé and the Great Mosque of Dakar. Up until 1925, there were three of these

26. Contrary to this information, the Répertoire des Archives, Séries H à T compiled by Charpy gives us a *projet de mosquée* in 1837. Although the section on buildings runs from 1829 through to 1920, no mention is made of the Dakar, rue Blanchot mosque.

27. There is still a mosque in this district, now the marché Sandaga, which is said to have been founded in 1904-1905. The present building dates from the 1980's and the women's section from '90s.

28. These are extracts from the Archives nationales pertaining to this district: “Ce quartier est situé dans la partie nord-ouest du village de Médina (région du cimetière musulman). Il a été installé en 1928. Ce quartier possède deux petites mosquées en cours de construction en dur. Celle dont il s'agit est l'une d'entre elles (parcelle 1033 du lotissement de Médina).” Letter by Guoye on 29 October 1937 in *Affaires religieuses*, 19G6 (17), Archives Nationales du Sénégal.

mosques: Blanchot, Gambetta and Medina, which leads us to assume that the other three were built at a later date (Daramy d'Oxoby 1925: 123)²⁹.

The division of the city of Dakar was to undergo substantial modification when the French decided to settle in the Plateau, situated in the most ventilated part of the Cap Vert Peninsula. To this end, they ordered large sections of the indigenous population, mostly composed of the Lébou ethnicity, to move out of the Plateau. Not only were entire villages relocated but houses were literally lifted and carried to their new location³⁰. Even the name of the original village was transferred. Thus, for instance, the village of Ngaraf *s'est replié sur Tound*, and Thiérigne was moved further north towards the rue Blanchot. In 1858 Alteyrac issued a decree where *il avait prescrit de faire des alignements dans le village de Caye et aux environs* and he backed this up by adding that it was thenceforth forbidden to build without the permission of the director of the Ponts et Chaussées (Faure 1914: 141). It was thus that the indigenous population—mostly composed of the Lébou—gradually started to move their villages further towards the north-east of the city in the area called the Medina.

FIG. 4. — OLD POSTCARD OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN DAKAR (1879-1880)
Courtesy of G. Meruillon, Images et Mémoires



In 1889 a Commission was set up to study the question of the separation of residential areas for the two communities—the “civilised” colonisers and

29. Here the Imams of the above-mentioned mosques: Imam El-Hajd Moustapha Diop (Blanchot), Imam Sérigne M’bor (Gambetta) and Imam Amadou Sembène (Medina).

30. There are postcards showing people carrying their houses in the Annexes des Archives du Sénégal.

the “uncivilised” colonised peoples. In a decree dated 21 June 1905 the Lieutenant Governor of Senegal ordered that permission was required in order to erect a building and a ban on building with non-durable, local materials such as *pisé*, *banco*, *torchis*, *paillotes*, *carbone bitumé*, *clayonnage*, etc. Even the use of wood was restricted and confined to buildings raised on stilts (*piliers*), which had to come 1.50 m off the ground and the void created under the house was to be left empty (Seck 1970: 131).

In note 5, Seck (1970) specifies that the area implicated by the decree went from the avenue Gambetta up to rue Faidherbe, from here to the rue Blanchot and from there to the avenue de la République and from the latter to Liberté and from there to Lazareth. However, the decree of 1911 was far more radical in that it no longer accepted buildings that were not made of durable materials between rue Blanchot and Bay of Bernard. This meant that wooden buildings henceforth were also banned. This ban combined with the outbreak of the 1914 plague was to cause the complete separation of the two communities: the final justification is that the disease emanated out of the African quarters and consequently all buildings made of precarious materials had to be destroyed and replaced by permanent buildings—those who refused were forced to move to the Medina, the newly created district for the indigenous population.

Dakar was therefore reconfigured and henceforth consisted of two sectors: the shanty-town that was situated in the Medina and the modern part of the city was concentrated in South East (Seck 1970: 128). In effect, the division between the modern and the old city was equally a segregation of the white the black communities. Population growth was one of the reasons for the segregation nevertheless it appears fairly obvious that the French were interested in the location of the peninsula which had access to the port.

It would appear that the decrees banning constructions in perishable materials did not discourage the Muslim community from building nor from rebuilding their places of worship. Because of the grater cost involved in constructing such buildings, the leaders of local communities would appeal to the French authorities for funds. However, this depended on the administration’s attitude towards their subjects, as Gouilly observes:

“[. . .] l’administration coloniale française, après avoir favorisé ouvertement l’islam pendant de longues années, venait d’aviser qu’il était d’implantation somme toute récente sur la côte occidentale d’Afrique et que la préservation des cultes, des coutumes ou des formes sociales indigènes, servait mieux les desseins de la France. L’Afrique occidentale connut le mythe du bon fétichiste au moment où l’Afrique du Nord connaissait celui du bon Berbère” (Gouilly 1965: 533).

Indeed, Marty already commented that in the early part of the 20th century, the administration was weary to give out funds. Furthermore, in later documents the French clearly state that their budget was insufficient to meet all demands and they started to limit financial contributions towards the

purchase of materials. In correspondence relating to mosquée Dakar Medina, quartier Diéko, a letter dated 12 March 1937 states that:

“Cette construction a été destinée à remplacer une mosquée *en bois* située rue 29 bis [. . .]. Il est possible de donner une *subvention minime* pour aider à la construction de cette mosquée. On peut cependant craindre que les notables de Dakar [. . .] demandent la même participation pour les nombreuses mosquées de quartier qui existent dans notre ville. Si vous le désirez, je ferai remettre à M. Assane N’Doye une somme de 100 francs environ”³¹ [my emphases].

Presumably the administration could do little in turning down such requests for they had themselves issued the decree institutionalising *les constructions en dur*. On a more ideological level, the French were keen to preserve good relations with their Muslim subjects and this is the primary motive for their initial enthusiasm and support for the construction of the Great Mosque of Dakar, a project that was started by laying the first stone in 1937 and later abandoned and finally resumed after Independence in 1960. Although beyond the scope of this paper, the various stages in the construction of the Great Mosque of Dakar embody the fraught relationship between the “Motherland” (France) and her “children” (the African population).

Thus, the colonisation of Senegal moved through different stages: commercial interest dominated the early years of French settlement, this was followed by a religious mission to convert the natives to Catholicism symbolized by the construction of religious establishments and the church and later by the conciliatory spirit which on the one hand promoted the building of mosques but on the other hand, underlying these diplomatic gestures was the aim to morally subjugate and control the indigenous population.

Like its predecessor in Saint-Louis, the construction of the church in Dakar in the late 1870s must be viewed precisely in this context. As Pinet-Laprade’s report to the governor in 1862 clearly indicates, the church constituted a priority for the administration. Laprade emphasised that the construction of the church would occupy the most beautiful district of the town and act as a focal point for the white community along with other important public buildings for the greater benefit of the white population. At the same time, as missionary work intensified, so did building religious and adjoining educational establishments for teaching Christianity to local children.

Perhaps the construction of the “twin” mosques of Saint-Louis and Dakar aimed to be singular imposing monuments that would “content” the Muslim majority while at the same time unite them in a single congregation that would be more easily controlled. This plan would seem to have backfired when, in the years that followed, numerous small local mosques were built and the financial assistance of the administration was sought. Indeed, contrarily to the predictions of Monseigneur Benoit Truffet who wrote in 1847 that the advance of “our holy religion” would cause the retreat of the Muslim religion and that the latter would eventually disappear altogether:

31. From the Cabinet du Gouverneur général in ANS, 19 G6.

“Le Cap-Vert est le point extrême que le mahométanisme ait atteint vers le couchant: c’est là que commencera son mouvement de retraite vers l’Arabie, son berceau, et plus tard sa tombe” (Faure 1914: 94).

Stylistic Similarities between Blanchot, la mosquée Nord de Saint-Louis and Other Mosques in Senegal

The building of the church and mosque of Saint-Louis in mid 19th century constitute two important milestones in colonial policy towards the Muslim population of the colonial capital. It was in the interest of the colonial administration to erect both these buildings on opposite sides of the island of Saint-Louis in order to emphasise the division between the white Christian and the black Muslim populations. To reinforce the notion of the superiority of Western versus African civilization and “white” (in this case North African) versus Black African Islam, the mosques of Saint-Louis Nord and Blanchot bear an unmistakable resemblance to church architecture. This led Gouilly to conclude that the cathedral of Saint-Louis was the progenitor of both mosques:

“La plupart des mosquées construites à la fin du XIX^e siècle et au début du XX^e, Yoff, Camberène, N’Gor, Gorée, M’Bargny, Ouakam, rue Blanchot et Maginot à Dakar, sont autant de répliques de la cathédrale Saint-Louis, le double clocher fait place au double minaret, le fronton est surmonté d’un croissant qui correspond à la croix” (Gouilly 1965: 532).

Yet the style of the cathedral of Saint-Louis inaugurated in 1828 is considerably different from that of the Great Mosque. It was not only the first church of West Africa, but was also the first important public building to be built outside the fort built on the island by the French. Interestingly, the Catholic mission successfully managed to persuade the *métis* population—most of whom were indoctrinated into the Catholic faith at an impressionable age—to contribute to build the church. It was located in the southern part of the island of Saint-Louis mostly inhabited by the Christian population.

The material used in the cathedral is baked brick but its style is overtly neo-classical. Its façade is flanked by two square bell towers with rounded arched windows; a projecting porch covers the main entrance with a raised triangular pediment supported by square columns with squared capitals. Engaged pillars are used on the lower body of the façade below the bell towers—a feature that was common on contemporary neo-classical architecture in Europe as well as in the colonial cities of West Africa.

Keen to maintain favourable relations with the numerous marabouts in the city, the French administration approved the construction of the Saint-Louis mosque. This was due to the fact that they were influential with regards to the population of the Islamised kingdoms of the interior. Furthermore, realising the increasing influence of the Catholic missionaries had on

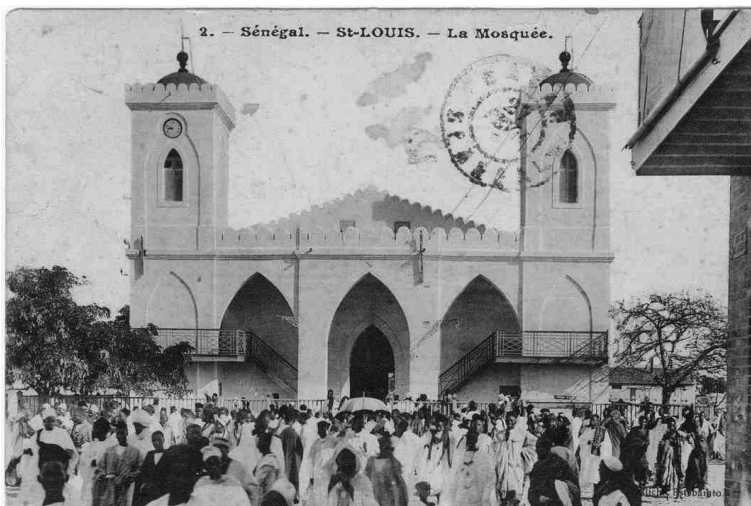
the local population, according to the colonial archives, the marabouts became “jealous” and claimed a parcel of land to build a mosque which was granted in 1938³².

Writing to the Governor back in December 1836, the Commissaire de la Marine states that:

“Je demeure convaincu que la construction d’une mosquée au Sénégal est un premier pas vers le progrès dans cette colonie”³³.

Camara after Boilat, the first priest on the island, maintains that the Great Mosque of Saint-Louis was commenced around 1825 and completed in 1847 (Camara 1968: 47; Sinou 1993a: 136). The mosque could easily be mistaken for a church: the bell towers are transformed into double squared minarets, the arches on the windows and arcades on the front veranda are pointed instead of semi-circular, and the towers are crowned by two small domes. Contrarily to the church, the façade of the mosque is topped by a Classical pediment and the towers, moreover, are surrounded on their lower part by a balustrade—both these features are repeated on *mosquée Blanchot* and on other similar-style mosques as will be illustrated below. Subsequent modifications and extensions to Saint-Louis did not radically transform its original form (fig. 5)³⁴.

FIG. 5. — SAINT-LOUIS DU SÉNÉGAL. LA GRANDE MOSQUÉE



32. ANS, P III in A. SINOU (1993a: 134).

33. Quoted from C. HARRISON (1988: 7). It is worth adding that at this stage the French administration wished to implement the same strategies with regards to mosque-building as it had some in Algeria (SINOU 1993a: 136).

34. In an old postcard (Collection générale Étienne-Lagrange, n. 129 from the Archives photographiques Congrégation Saint-Esprit, Paris) the mosque appears

As we have just seen, both *mosquée Blanchot* in Dakar and *mosquée Nord* in Saint-Louis possess a certain monumentality that bears a close resemblance to church architecture, and moreover, in both buildings the ground-plan is deeper than it is wide. Lusophone churches in Africa as well as in Brazil share the same architectural vocabulary³⁵. What is extraordinary about this church-like mosque type is its endurance through time and space: further examples can be found in Conakry, Guinea that probably dates to the late '20s.

In a 1925-1930 postcard labelled "*Conakry-La Mosquée*"³⁶ the same architectural features are present: double two-tiered minarets flank the façade with a raised sloping pediment but what is most interesting is the projecting porch and veranda on the main façade: the central arch of the projecting entrance is also surmounted by a miniature sloping pediment just like the main facade of the cathedral of Saint-Louis. But the key to finding the link between the style of these three mosques in northern part of Senegal and Guinea may be found elsewhere.

While searching through the *Annexe des Archives Nationales du Sénégal*, I came across three photographs of two mosques—one called *Dionewar* (fig. 6) and the other *Bassoul* (fig. 7)—both named after villages situated in the Islands of the Saloum³⁷.

FIG. 6. — THE MOSQUE OF DIONEWAR
Courtesy of ANS



with the same lateral galleries as in the 1914 extension of *Blanchot*—unfortunately, we have no date for the card. In the 1980's the then President Abdou Diouf made another prayer room adjacent to the old building. This newer addition includes a dome.

35. A mid-seventeenth century chapel in Luanda, Angola, for instance has a raised triangular pediment and two lateral verandas and has two storeys as in *Dionewar* (ELLEH 1997: 188) and in the case of Brazil (DE SOUZA 1999).

36. Found in the collection of *Images et Mémoires*.

37. The islands of the Saloum are situated at the mouth of the River Saloum, southwest of Kaolack in Southern Senegal.

Although it is impossible to date them merely from this photographic evidence, stylistically there are grounds for comparison with the Saint-Louis Dakar mosques. First, the façade of the Bassoul mosque is characterised by twin square minarets, a raised triangular pediment and a tripartite porch. It also features a veranda along its northern side (and presumably the same applies to the southern side)—something we find in the extension of Saint-Louis and on the first extension of Blanchot as well as at Dionewar. Thus there seems to be a confluence in stylistic and structural elements: in the Dionewar mosque, the windows are in the distinctive pointed arch form we find in Blanchot and its twin minarets are similarly surmounted by rounded cupolas. The minarets at Bassoul are two-tiered, marked by a balustrade whereas at Dionewar they are three-tiered and would have been surrounded by balustrades as traces on the right minaret still show.

FIG. 7. — THE MOSQUE OF BASSOUL
Date unknown. Courtesy of ANS



Exceptionally, the mosque of Dionewar is surmounted by a bulb-shaped dome, the same kind as the ones in the 1938 mosque of Kaolack (fig. 8).

The larger dome is situated right behind the western façade, and two smaller ones are placed in front of the two shorter minarets, towards the eastern façade. The shape of the dome is echoed in the arcades on the front porch at Kaolack, the central arch is larger than the two flanking ones and they are supported by square columns. Balustrades span both lateral facades, which are divided into sections—each filled by a window or a door—by means of vertical bands. All openings are surmounted by horse-shoe arches filled with geometrical motifs in bas-relief just like the outer shell of *mosquée Blanchot*.

FIG. 8. — THE MOSQUE OF KAOLACK (1938)
 Courtesy of La Congrégation du Saint-Esprit



The pediment on the façade is distinct from the others as it is stepped with scalloped edges³⁸. On the lower tier of the minaret, the stepped motif of the gable is reflected in the stepped blind arches that contain two shuttered windows. These motifs are common motifs in 1930s architecture, for instance in the Cathedral of Dakar and in the *Service d'hygiène* (fig. 9) also in Dakar but also it is worth mentioning that these motifs which seems to make its appearance in Senegal in the late 1930s hark back to architectural trends in the Métropole and what is more the stepped motif is used on the cupola of a very significant building in Paris in 1931: the *Musée des Colonies* (Morton 2000: 299, fig. 7. 14).

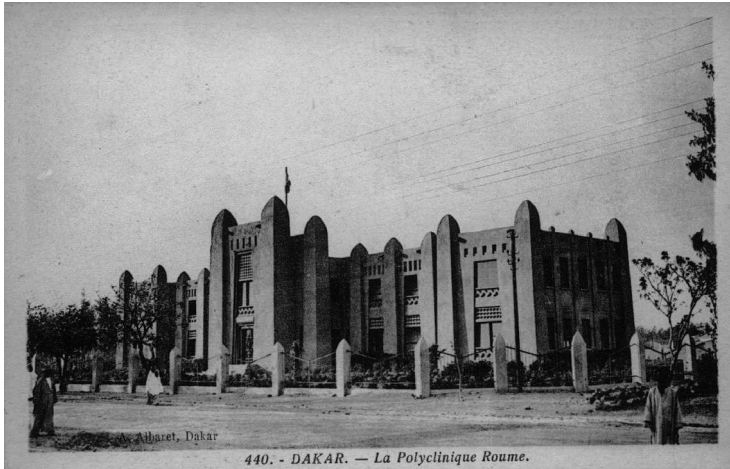
The mosque has four square minarets, two tall ones on the front façade and two squat ones on the eastern façade. The shorter ones are trimmed with zigzag crenellations as found on the towers of mosquée Blanchot. The taller ones are surmounted by two smaller towers following the scheme of the Kutubiyya minaret of Marrakesh; here, however, on the upper tier of the minarets at Kaolack, the smaller upper tower is pierced by a window with lace-like claustra work as is the overlying horseshoe arch³⁹.

Despite the black and white photographs, it is possible to make out that Dionewar is painted in a darker tone around the window frames and also simple double bands cut the minaret much in the same manner as the balustrades function to break the height of the minaret. Here the remnants of

38. This feature can be found on colonial houses in Thiès, Rufisque, not far from Dakar as well as on a mosque in the Medina which may be the one mentioned by Diagne, mosquée Tierigne.

39. This is replicated in the Almohad-style Great Mosque of Dakar built in 1960.

FIG. 9. — LA POLYCLINIQUE ROUME À DAKAR



a balustrade can be seen on the right hand minaret, next to the upper window. On the façade, too painted strips create a frame above the main entrance containing two stars against a whitewashed ground.

Bassoul is simply whitewashed and trimmed with balustrades, both around the roof and screening the verandas. The verandas are characterised by their segmental arches supported by squared columns with squared plinths—closely resembling the columns and plinths on the mosque of Conakry mentioned above. What connects the mosque of Conakry with the church of Saint-Louis is the pitched roof as well as the classical motifs of the decor. In addition, all the mosques described possess the double minaret towers derived from church architecture. It therefore becomes apparent that this typology of mosque was conceived according to an idea—albeit an eclectic one—of what mosque should look like. The question of the number of minarets is a case in point as Berthet remarks:

“[. . .] contrairement à la pratique généralement suivie, *deux minarets* [my emphasis] symétriques de part et d’autre du narthex ont été prévus. Ce choix aurait été arrêté à la demande des autorités religieuses musulmanes. [. . .] du point de vue esthétique d’ailleurs le souvenir des deux tours symétriques de l’ancien palais du Trocadéro incite à quelques appréhensions que le talent des concurrents [. . .] grâce à de plus heureuses propositions entre les minarets et la masse qu’ils flanquent.

Quant à la forme même des minarets, elle dépend traditionnellement du rite. Dans le rite malekite, pratiqué de l’Afrique Occidentale française à l’Afrique du Nord, les minarets ont une section carrée. Il serait nécessaire de le préciser à la suite de la citation extraite du livre de M. Ricard, pour éviter que certains concurrents ne recherchent l’originalité en établissant des minarets cylindriques qui ne pourraient, à mon opinion, être retenus dans ce pays, à moins, bien entendu, d’un avis contraire des autorités religieuses qui ne sont liées en cette matière par aucune prescription coranique formelle, mais seulement par une coutume”⁴⁰.

40. Letter dated 24 May 1940 to the *Inspecteur général des Travaux publics*, ANS.

Although the correspondence refers to the approval of the construction of the Great Mosque in Dakar, the remarks are pertinent with regards to the majority of mosques built from the mid 19th century onwards in Senegal. Most are endowed with paired minarets, with the exception of small *jakka* or daily prayer mosques. The question then arises whether the proliferation of the doubled minaret “copies” the earlier mosques of Saint-Louis Nord and Blanchot. But in order to establish whether the design of these colonial mosques was the doing of the French or whether they were built by local masons trained by the French, we need to return to the trajectory of the Afro-Brazilian or Luso-African mosque in order to come to grips with what is essentially a heterogeneous style.

In the case of the Afro-Brazilian mosque, evidence points to repatriated slaves who had engaged in masonry in the New World and then transferred their skills back to the motherland. The vibrant use of colour and decoration are what distinguishes their style from traditional, local mosque architecture. At the same time, Christian inspiration can be found in the bell-towers turned into minarets, the cross replaced by the Islamic *hilal* (Arab. crescent) and the internal galleries used by the aristocracy have been turned into women’s prayer areas (Hallen *et al.* 1988: 22-23).

Hallen traces the Afro-Brazilian mosque type to Baroque church architecture in Bahia, Brazil: up to the 17th century, Jesuit missionaries had stipulated that churches should be austere, unadorned buildings with pitched roofs. But as plantation owners started making significant donations for the construction of churches, they employed Black and mulatto artisans and craftsmen to build more extravagant buildings. The new style of church borrowed from earlier Portuguese prototypes consisting essentially of a “pedimented central structure flanked by two bell towers” (*ibid.*: 17). The walls would either be whitewashed or painted in pastel colours, windows were arched, cornices pronounced and the surface of the external walls became increasingly ornamented with elaborate floral and vegetal motifs and even “the roofs of bell towers evolved from flat-sided pyramids into rounded cones and then curved bulbs” (*ibid.*). Other elements such as the balustrades derived from Bahian domestic architecture and were used especially on minarets and also spanning the entire façade; the tops of windows were crowned with semi-circular arches filled with coloured glass or this was rendered realistically with paint.

The Afro-Brazilian mosques of Benin, Lagos and Porto Novo start to appear in the early 20th century. According to Hallen the oldest of such mosques is the Central mosque of Porto Novo which was begun in 1910 and completed in 1935 (Sinou & Oloude 1988: 128, 131). The façade of this grandiose mosque epitomises the Afro-Brazilian synthesis: the triangular pediment embellished with scrolled trimmings; the gable is decorated with floral and vegetal motifs; fluted pilasters divide the façade into four parts: the central entrance with a window on either side of it. Two towering

square minarets situated on the eastern façade flank the main façade when viewed from the front⁴¹. The building has two storeys, the upper one being reserved for women.

It is clear from the style of Saint-Louis Nord and Blanchot as well as from the above-mentioned mosques, that an architectural typology exists. Nevertheless, because of the lack of evidence that Afro-Brazilian slaves were repatriated to the Senegambia in the 19th century, this leaves the hypothesis of local masons trained in the French school who undertook the building of the Senegalese mosques. The architect of al-Hajj ‘Umar, Samba N’diaye, is a good example of a mason who had learned his trade during his ten years stay in Saint-Louis before entering the service of al-Hajj ‘Umar in 1850. Although he built numerous *tatas* (fortified villages) for al-Hajj, it is not impossible that he should have worked on the building of the Great Mosque (1825-1848) of Saint-Louis prior to his engagement with the Tukulur leader (Bah 1984).

The mosque of Bassoul on the other hand, it is possible that repatriated slaves travelled northwards from the Blight of Benin or Lagos in Nigeria to Senegambia. Thus, the Afro-Brazilian mosque which took shape further down the West African coast was then propagated to other parts of West Africa. It is not surprising, therefore, to find similar elements in more contemporary mosques as far away as Senegal (Hallen & de Benedetti 1988; Sinou & Oloude 1988).

*

Although the main problem lies in dating the buildings discussed here, it is possible to make certain conclusions on the basis of style. Essentially, it would seem that from the beginning of the 20th century some very heterogeneous styles emerged in mosque building. Given the new possibilities of building with durable materials, the masons and craftsmen (or perhaps the engineers) of these buildings took the basic form of the Christian church—characterised by the pitched roof and the square bell towers—and elaborated it by fusing Muslim architectural elements—such as the *mihrab* (Arab. prayer niche) to form the hybrid colonial mosque. Thus the phenomenon of *hybridisation* consists in amalgamating two different styles or “entities”: Christian and Muslim elements.

The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London.

41. In 1950 further extensions were made and another minaret added—and is round rather than square.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BA, O.

1976 *La pénétration française du règne de Birima N'Goné Latyr à l'intronisation de Madiodo Dèguène Codou* (Dakar: O. Ba).

BAH, T. M.

1984 "L'impact de la guerre sur l'habitat dans l'Afrique noire précoloniale", *Cultures et développement*, XVI (3-4): 485-502.

CA' DA MOSTO, A.

1895 *Relation des Voyages à la Côte occidentale d'Afrique, d'Alvise Ca' da Mosto, 1455-1457* (Paris: Leroux).

CAMARA, C.

1968 *Saint-Louis du Sénégal: évolution d'une ville en milieu africain* (Dakar: IFAN).

CANTONE, C.

2006 *Making and re-Making Mosques in Senegal* (London: SOAS, University of London).

CHARPY, J.

1958 *La Fondation de Dakar* (Paris: Larose).

DOMIAN, S.

1989 *Architecture soudanaise. Vitalité d'une tradition urbaine et monumentale: Mali, Côte-d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana* (Paris: L'Harmattan).

DARAMY D'OXOBY, J.

1925 *Le Sénégal en 1925* (Paris: Larose).

DELCOURT, J.

1983 *Naissance et croissance de Dakar* (Dakar: Clairafrique).

ELLEH, N.

1997 *African Architecture: Evolution and Transformation* (New York: McGraw-Hill).

FARRÈRE, C.

1948 *Cent dessins de Pierre Loti* (Tours: Arrault).

FAURE, C.

1914 *Histoire de la presqu'île du Cap-Vert et des origines de Dakar* (Paris: Larose).

GELLAR, S.

1995 *Senegal: An African Nation. Islam and the West* (Oxford: Westview Press).

GOUILLY, A.

1965 "Les mosquées du Sénégal", *Revue juridique et politique*, XIX: 531-536.

HALLEN, B. & DE BENEDETTI, C.

1988 "Afro-Brasilian Mosques in West Africa", *MIMAR*, 29: 16-23.

HARRISON, C.

1988 *France and Islam in West Africa, 1860-1960* (Cambridge: CUP).

JORGE DE SOUZA HUE

1999 *Uma visão de arquitetura colonial no Brasil (A View of Brazilian Colonial Architecture)* (Rio de Janeiro: Agir).

LOTI, P.

1947 "Correspondant et Dessinateur, 1872-1889", in C. W. BIRD, *Quelques fragments inédits du Journal intime recueillis* (Paris: Impressions P. André).

MARK, P.

2002 "*Portuguese*" *Style and Luso-African Identity: Precolonial Senegambia, 16-19th centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

MARTY, P.

1917 *Études sur l'islam au Sénégal*, 2 t. (Paris: Leroux).

MORTON, P.

2000 *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture & Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge, Mass.-London: MIT Press).

SECK, A.

1970 *Dakar, métropole ouest-africaine* (Dakar: IFAN).

SINOÛ, A.

1993a *Comptoirs et villes coloniales du Sénégal* (Paris: Karthala-Orstom).

1993b "Sénégal", in J. SOULILLOU (dir.), *Rives Coloniales. Architectures de Saint-Louis à Douala* (Paris: Parenthèses-Orstom).

SINOÛ, A. & OLOUDÉ, B.

1988 *Porto-Novo, ville d'Afrique noire* (Marseille: Parenthèses; Paris: Orstom).

SOLIER, G.

1956 "Le programme social de l'habitat", *L'Architecture française: Afrique occidentale française*, 165-166: 6-9.

SYLLA, A.

2000 *L'architecture sénégalaise contemporaine* (Paris: L'Harmattan).

ABSTRACT

The impact colonialism on Senegalese architecture produced a new type of mosque. Constructed in durable materials and consisting of an amalgam of church architecture and North African elements, this model was to be adopted in many parts of West Africa; on an ideological level, it would appear that such a style was used to perpetuate the notion of the superiority of “white” or Arab Islam over local “black” Islam. Between mid-1920s and mid-1930s, however, Christian references were abandoned in favour of a more “Islamic” repertoire giving rise to another stylistic fusion: Islamic elements are integrated with the latest trends of “modernist” styles issuing from the Métropole. In this context, la mosquée Blanchot’s numerous extensions and transformations provide a visual record of these evolutions.

RÉSUMÉ

Une mosquée dans une mosquée. Quelques observations sur la mosquée de la rue Blanchot à Dakar et ses relations avec les autres mosquées pendant la période coloniale. — L’impact du colonialisme sur l’architecture sénégalaise a produit un nouveau type de mosquée. Construite à partir de matériaux durables et alliant l’architecture des églises à des éléments nord-africains, ce style semble avoir été utilisé pour perpétuer la notion de supériorité de l’islam « blanc », ou arabe, sur l’islam « noir ». Toutefois, entre le milieu des années 1920 et le milieu des années 1930, les références chrétiennes ont été abandonnées pour laisser place à un répertoire plus « islamique », donnant ainsi naissance à une nouvelle fusion artistique : les éléments islamiques sont intégrés aux dernières tendances des styles « modernistes » issus de la métropole. Dans ce contexte, les nombreuses extensions et transformations de la mosquée Blanchot nous offrent un témoignage visuel de ces évolutions.

Keywords/Mots-clés: Senegal, Dakar, Saint-Louis, rue Blanchot, architecture, church-like appearance of French Modernist school, colonial period, durable materials, hybrid style, impact of colonialism, colonials mosques/Sénégal, Dakar, Saint-Louis, rue Blanchot, architecture, École moderniste française, période coloniale, matériaux durables, style hybride, impact du colonialisme, mosquées coloniales.