



## Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal: Disciples and Citizens in Fatick (African Studies)

*By Leonardo A. Villalón*

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The Sufi Muslim orders are the most significant institutions in Senegalese society. While Islamic political groups are often accused of destabilizing African states, Leonardo Villalón argues that these brotherhoods have played a crucial part in making Senegal one of the most stable and democratic of African countries. Focusing on a regional administrative center, he combines a detailed account of grassroots politics with an analysis of national and international political forces. This is a major study that should be read by every student of Islam and African politics.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

"...deserves a wide readership among Africanists, political scientists, and students of Islam." Choice

"...Leonardo Villalón makes an excellent contribution to what has become, in recent years, the dominant issue in African political studies--the relationship between state and society....an important and well-researched book. Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal is a must for all scholars interested in Senegal and African politics." Comparative Politics

"...[an] exemplary study....[a] beautifully researched study, rich in oral as well as documentary material." African Affairs

"The theoretically dense discussion of this issue, and the rich analysis of Islam in Senegal makes this book a significant example of the sort of case study useful for introducing students to Islam." Religious Studies Review

"...[an] intricate and intriguing study....This monograph deserves a wide readership among Africanists, political scientists, and students of Islam." Social & Behavioral Sciences

"...an important contribution to the study of the relationship of religion to politics in Senegal and more generally in the Third World." Robert Launay, American Journal of Sociology

"Through skillful use of sources and his own adroit analysis, Villalón develops his thesis convincingly....The work is useful for political scientists....Recommended for graduate students and specialists." Stephen Haarmon, Mesa Bulletin

"The author persuasively argues that Sufi brotherhoods, especially the Murid sect, have comprised the critical element in the Senegalese state's stability, exceptional in West Africa....Villalón's major work, should appeal to all Africanists interested in the social sciences." African Studies Review

"...both case study and broad statement on African politics...provides some excellent synthesis and insight into the situations of the major Senegalese brotherhoods...Villalón has given us a richly textured, well-recounted description and analysis...Islamic Society will stand for some time to come as a model of research, as case study and broadly relevant statement, and as a thorough exploration of state-society relations. It would constitute a useful study for classes in African politics." International Journal of Middle East Studies

"This book is an excellent addition to the corpus of work on Senegalese Islam in particular, as well as to our knowledge of state-society relations in Africa." Roy Dilley, Journal of Religion in Africa

### From the Back Cover

The Sufi Muslim orders to which the vast majority of Senegalese belong are the most significant institutions of social organization in the country. While studies of Islam and politics have tended to focus on the destabilizing force of religiously based groups, Leonardo Villalón argues that in Senegal the orders have been a central component of a political system that has been among the most stable in Africa. Focusing on a regional administrative center, he combines a detailed account of grassroots politics with an analysis of

national and international forces to examine the ways in which the internal dynamics of the orders shape the exercise of power by the Senegalese state. This is a major study that should be read by every student of Islam and politics as well as of Africa.

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