

land's history would probably have been similar to that of the Transkei" (6). The successful rebellion and resultant return to British imperial rule led, ironically, to increasing autocracy within the chieftainship and severe economic neglect, but also to the persistence of Basotho independence from white-dominated South Africa and the apartheid system.

A great strength of the book is Sanders's thorough assessment of the strengths and character flaws of each of the principal protagonists. These include leading Basotho chiefs like Letsie, Lerotholi, Maama, Masupha, Jonathan, and Nehemiah; resident Cape and British officials like John Austen, Charles Griffith, Joseph Orpen, Emile Rolland, and Major Charles Bell; Cape leaders like Gordon Sprigg; and the eccentric sojourner, General Charles Gordon. For the period from the beginning of Cape rule through the aftermath of the Gun War, Sanders systematically portrays the conflicting interactions and strategies among the rival segments of the royal dynasty, among the equally fractious colonial officials in Basutoland, and among the competing rival leaders and factions in the Cape.

The core chapters of the book thoroughly document the Gun War battles on three fronts. The final third focuses on the disruptive impact of Masupha's obdurate refusal to comply with peace settlements. Such settlements represented almost complete Cape capitulation, but would compensate loyalist Basotho and thus compromise Lesotho's and his own independence. Masupha's eventual defeat by Lerotholi's forces signaled the end of an era of resistance and the beginning of a long interlude of British rule and not altogether benign colonial neglect.

Sanders has produced a definitive work about Cape rule in Lesotho that also makes a major contribution to understanding Southern Africa history and the complexities of colonial relationships and strategies in general.

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**Ghislaine Lydon.** *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. xxviii + 486 pp. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Notes. \$95.00. Cloth.

*On Trans-Saharan Trails* focuses on a commercial network operating between the southern Maghreb and West Africa. It eschews facile oppositions between northern and sub-Saharan Africa, offers insights into the organization of trans-Saharan trade, and seeks to understand the role of Islam in facilitating commerce in a decentralized political context. Lydon's research is prodigious: she consulted Arabic materials in more than thirty-five public and private collections and conducted interviews with more

than two hundred informants. In a sophisticated analysis of her sources, she notes that “orality is in all forms of evidence” (46), a perspective that leads to insightful readings across the grain of her texts.

The commercial network under study is based in the Wad Nun region of southern Morocco. Organized by the Tikna confederation of Hasaniya Arabic-speakers and their allies—others claiming Amazigh (“Berber”) identities as well as Jewish merchants residing at the Wad Nun market town of Guelmim—the trading diaspora moved cloth, salt, slaves, tea, paper, and other commodities across the Sahara. The events of the tumultuous nineteenth century—including religious wars in West Africa and European imperialism on both sides of the desert—added to the challenges: Saharan merchants innovated in response to these hazards, organizing smaller, more mobile caravans in place of the larger ones that crossed the Sahara in earlier centuries. Lydon also demonstrates that some Saharan women organized commercial operations at market towns, traded across the Sahara by proxy, managed the estates of their dead husbands, and, in a few cases, actually traveled with the caravans. The book also provides fascinating discussions of the links among commerce, Islamic revival, and cultural practices such as Muslim burials and tea-drinking.

Lydon argues that trust among Saharan merchants was bolstered through the writing of contracts and other Arabic documents. She employs the term “paper economy of faith” to reference a cluster of religious values and social practices, including Arabic literacy and the jurisprudence of Muslim legal scholars, which gained salience during an era of Islamic revival and reform. Lydon situates expanding contractual relations in a context in which texts functioned as material representations of oral agreements and Muslim scholars invoked Islamic legal principles placing authority in oral testimony over documents. Given that witnesses could be separated by thousands of miles, litigants and Muslim scholars pursued various strategies in an effort to resolve disputes. Lydon concludes that even as written contracts encouraged trust between trading partners, the authority of oral testimony over documents constrained the founding of enduring collaborative enterprises along the lines of European firms. Lydon’s insights on the “paper economy of faith” are multiple, although she might have investigated more fully the broader implications of growing Arabic literacy at a time of Muslim revival in the Sahara.

This amply documented and well-conceived book merits a broad readership. Its wide scope and detailed analysis of trans-Saharan trade sets a new standard. Its discussion of women’s commercial activities is most welcome and should inform future research. Lydon’s reflections on the connections among trust, commerce, literacy, and Islamic law reveal the complex cultural dynamics underlying the generalization, based on Abner Cohen’s seminal essay “Cultural Strategies in the Organization of Trading Diasporas (in *Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets West Africa*, Oxford, 1971),

that Islam provided a “blueprint” for trading diasporas. This book is a most deserving inaugural recipient of the American Historical Association’s Martin A. Klein Prize in African History.

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**M. W. Daly, *Darfur’s Sorrow: The Forgotten History of a Humanitarian Disaster*.** New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 2nd edition. xxii + 376 pp. Figures. Maps. Glossary. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$85.00. Cloth. \$24.99. Paper.

*Editor’s note:* The first edition was published as *Darfur’s Sorrow: A History of Destruction and Genocide* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

In *Darfur’s Sorrow*, Martin Daly does a masterful job applying history to a crisis that has become synonymous with suffering and conflict in Africa, much as Rwanda and Biafra were in earlier generations. At first, considering the subject of this book, Daly’s background may seem odd. He is fundamentally a historian of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1898–1956), the Sudanese equivalent of the colonial period. Indeed, he is successor to P. M. Holt, author of *A Modern History of Sudan* (1961), later editions of which Daly has co-authored (6th ed., Longman, 2011). Their book is rooted in the records produced by British administrators during the Condominium and supplemented by a very thorough reading of the secondary literature on the Sudan.

One might assume that the dynamics of Darfur would be best explained by historians like Lidwien Kapteijns doing research based on extensive oral work among the people. That said, Daly does make extensive use of the recent historical literature on Darfur, but his thorough knowledge of the Condominium system lets him paint a rich picture of the skeletal system of administration established between the fall of the Darfur Sultanate in 1918 and the independence of Sudan in 1956. Two striking themes emerge in chapters on the Condominium era: the vestigial nature of the administration that left Darfur with only a tiny number of people with nontraditional educations; and a clear record of declining rainfall and desertification that would serve as the foundation of strife and population movements that spurred the conflict of the early twenty-first century.

The process of desertification and the resulting shifts of population are crucial in providing a meaningful historical foundation for the conflict between agrarian people such as the Fur and pastoral ethnicities such as the Baqqara Arabs, a conflict so often simplified as one between “black” Africans and “Arabs.” This ecological baseline for the conflict is very similar