

ethnographic observations, and Véronique Porra compares him quite favorably to René Caillié and Gerhard Rohlfs, who traveled to the Western Sudan before and after Barth did. At the same time, Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias notes the unfortunate influence that Barth has had on the interpretation of the history of the Songhay Empire and the Niger Buckle, in great part because he was able to read and copy only parts of the *Tarikh al-Sudan* lent to him for a few days at Gwandu; he then used these hastily compiled notes and transcriptions to compose his historical accounts of the region, all without taking into account the orientations and bias of the author(s) of the *Tarikh*. (Moraes Farias elaborates on this point in his monumental work, *Arabic Medieval Inscriptions from the Republic of Mali: Epigraphy, Chronicles, and Songhay-Tuareg History* [Oxford University Press, 2003]).

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**Bayo Holsey. *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana*.**

Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008. xiii + 280 pp. Photographs. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$21.00. Paper.

*Routes of Remembrance* enriches the historiography of the Atlantic slave trade, especially as it relates to memory. The book examines the silences on this subject in family histories in the coastal towns of Elmina and Cape Coast, as well as in the national narrative of Ghana and in the problematic presentation of this subject in the classroom. These two towns are major tourist attractions for African Americans because of their popular and historic slave castles and dungeons. They also serve in other roles for those interested in diaspora history; they host the biennial PANAFEST festival, a memorial for African diaspora who wish to remember their African heritage, and they are the focus for Emancipation Day, a celebration of the triumph and achievements of diaspora blacks following the end of slavery. While contributing to the discourse on the slave trade and the development of a transnational black identity, Bayo Holsey's work also sheds light on the politics of Cape Coast and Elmina residents. The book is divided into two parts; the first explores the sequestering of the subject of the slave trade, while the second focuses on how the slave trade is remembered in the public arena, particularly among diverse groups of youths in Ghana.

Holsey notes the reluctance of coastal residents to discuss the slave trade beyond its connection to the diaspora because of their awareness of how European and academic discourses have sometimes stigmatized African participation in the trade as evidence of their barbarity and inferiority. This version of history portrays European participation as an "aberration" and the indigenous slave systems as having provided the context for the development of the Atlantic slave trade. Such negative representations of

African participation, Holsey argues, cause coastal people to suppress any discussion of the trade among themselves. Instead of referring to the participation of their ancestors, they acknowledge only that slaves were captured in northern Ghana and brought to the south, remaining silent on their families' direct involvement. Sequestering the trade from their own direct history, contemporary residents of Elmina and Cape Coast prefer to emphasize the towns' former "cosmopolitanism," relying on the past European presence as a source of pride, particularly in the context of their contemporary isolation and poverty within Ghana.

However, Holsey points out that youths are more receptive to discussing this history in the public arena and that they have developed "a critique of racial oppression" that emulates diasporic ones (3). The youth "focus on this web of power itself, one that represented a new global terrain characterized by racial terror, sexual violence, and economic exploitation" (15). The author suggests that the silence of African societies on the subject of the slave trade does not mean that there is no moral condemnation; instead, rituals that illustrate collective memory are performed in its remembrance. Besides describing this indigenous form of collective memory, the book offers a new approach that shows how Africans use European discourse "to challenge global exclusion through the production of images that portray Africans as well positioned within an imagined European order" (12). Holsey suggests that this mastery of European discourse serves as a means of negotiation within the existing white power structure initiated during the Atlantic slave trade. The author argues that this is not only a black diasporic statement, but also a tradition in African societies that has often been overlooked by outside scholars.

This book is an important contribution to studies of the Atlantic slave trade and to the memory of the trade in Ghana. What remains unclear in the author's analysis is the extent to which the Atlantic slave trade was refashioned by the youth as a national or as a coastal phenomenon. Moreover, the youths' critique echoes the condemnation of slavery as a crime against humanity, but assigning culpability for African participation in the trade and its significance in the global system of power still ignores the impact of the trade on Africa itself.

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**Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton. *A History of Nigeria*.** New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xl + 329 pp. Photographs. Maps. Figures. Notes. Selected Bibliography. Index. \$90.00. Cloth. \$24.99. Paper.

This book attempts to provide a general survey of themes in Nigerian history from the earliest times to the present period. A distinctive feature of