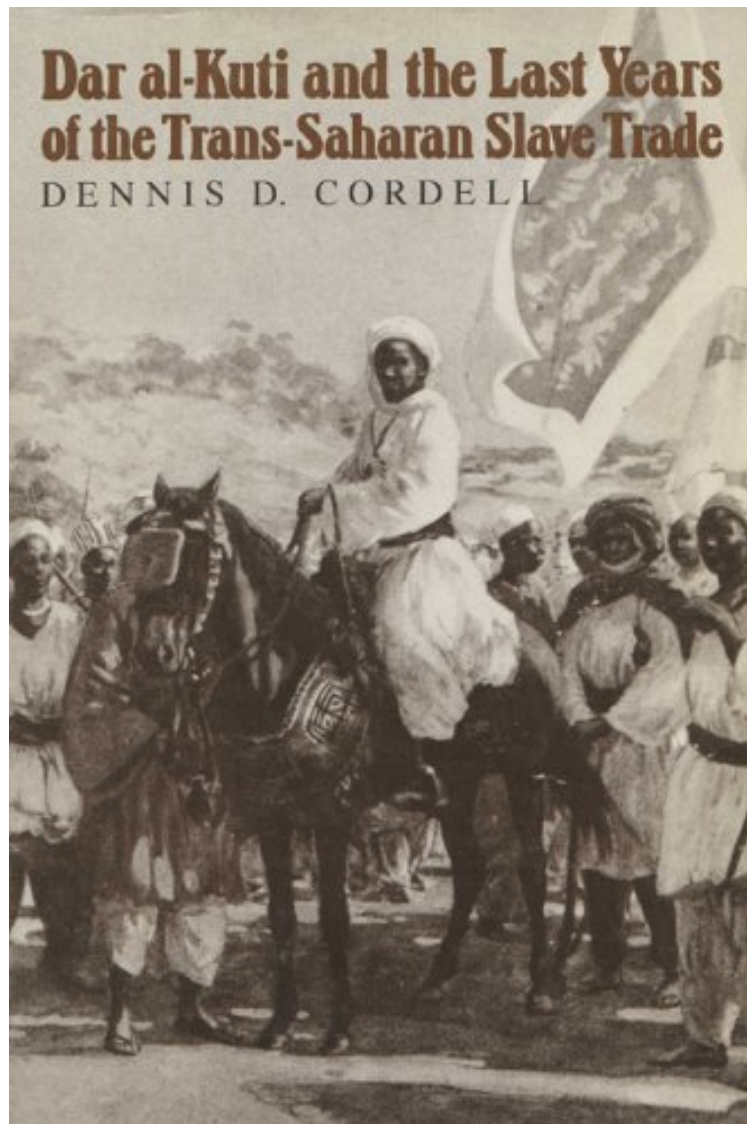


Dar Al-Kuti and the Last Years of the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade

Dennis D. Cordell

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Dennis D. Cordell : Dar Al-Kuti and the Last Years of the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dar Al-Kuti and the Last Years of the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Making sense of the Central African RepublicBy Alfred J. KwakaA recent book review in The Economist held that publicity-wise, the term Heart of Darkness should go to the Central African Republic (CAR) instead of the Congo. Yes. This reader knows of few serious studies about CAR in English other than this great book. The CAR attracted, briefly, worldwide attention in 1977 when its then president Bokassa (r.

1966-79) crowned himself emperor. Today, the CAR is news because of an ongoing, cruel and bloody conflict between its Muslims and Christians. Is this the full explanation? The full extent of the carnage may never be known. What explains the current mayhem and religious hatred?(1) Memories of a long tradition of slavery across much of the African Sahel, particularly in Sudan and Chad, have poisoned relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, and internal north-south relations to the present day: Chad has miraculously remained one nation. But Sudan split in July 2011 into two disaster-prone, separate entities. In the CAR Muslims and non-Muslims appear to have co-existed peacefully from colonial times onwards and continued doing so since independence. For generations resident Muslim Sudanese merchants and traders bought and sold products in the CAR and worked in other capacities, often as citizens.(2) What upset this peaceful co-existence is due, again, to dynamics and events north in Sudan and Chad. Heavily armed, highly mobile, foreign, mostly Arab forces called Seleka recently invaded the CAR, grabbed control of its capital and installed a puppet head of state and cabinet. After months of chaos and lawlessness with impunity, CARs first Muslim president was forced by a conference of regional leaders gathered in Ndjamna, to step down. The CAR is currently the scene of revenge killings of Muslims. The victimization sadly appears to be indiscriminate, with long-established uninvolved Muslims often suffering the fate intended for the Seleka invaders who, retreating will not shun violence either.Dennis Cordell has written an exemplary history of the forces that controlled the territory called CAR before France colonized it in the late 19th century. He focused on the northern Sultanate of Dar al-Kuti and analyzed how it financed itself by trading in slaves, ivory and other goods obtained from further South, with political entities further North in todays Chad and Sudan. The book also covers matters of security, diplomacy and taxation. His tightly argued book has 162 pp. of text in small print and another 119 pp. in annexes and footnotes underpinning what he unearthed through interviews in CAR, with archival records in the CAR, Chad, France and the UK. This is a brilliant history of a small 19th century Sultanate which has deeply impacted on Muslim-Christian relations in one of the least known countries in Africa. It is indispensable for anyone interested in understanding and explaining this sad nation's plight.Professor Cordell has shed light on this blighted countrys dark past but did not live to see the worst of the ongoing mayhem. He passed away on 16 October 2013.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great book!!By Douglas E. SaxonExcellent study of little known area and part of history. The research is thorough and brilliant. Great reading and a fascinating study.