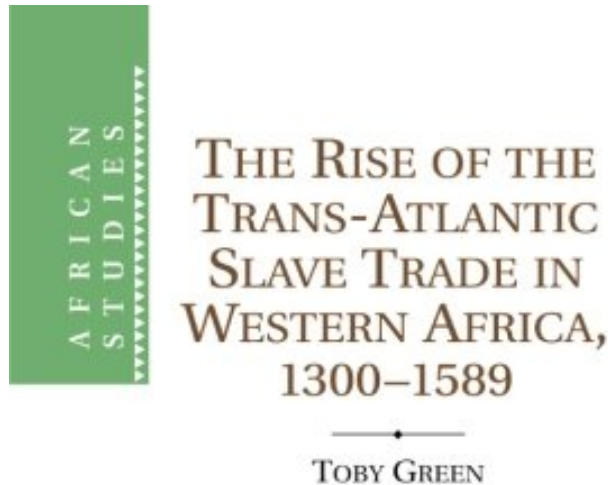


The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589 (African Studies)

Dr Toby Green

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Dr Toby Green : The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589 (African Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589 (African Studies):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Beatriz Everything ok! 0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. A mix of sound research and third-rate analysisBy Ulysse ColonnaThis is a very interesting and even fascinating book but also a deeply flawed one (unless you'd rather see it as deeply flawed but also very interesting).First, the good stuff: Toby Green knows his subject inside out and shares it with the reader with a fair amount of gusto.Reading this book you'll learn about how being kicked out of Iberia led the New Christians to become the linchpins of the early slave trade, how the contraband soon became way more important than the legal side of the trade, how capturing the slave trade away from the North African powers was one of the leading drivers of Portuguese expansion and how the local African entities used that trade to develop their military capacities. The author also manages to never lose from sight the plight of the slaves which makes the trade of human beings unlike any other trade. So just for that mass of information the book is very much worth the read.But... unfortunately, I would not say it is a great book.The main issue is the analysis of the situation provided by Toby Green. Considering the slave trade is also and even above all, well, a TRADE with markets, prices, costs, providers and clients, you'd think that economics would take the front row in the book and that the author would build his case around the question of incentives. But, most of the time, this is not what happens. Simple supply and demand is rarely even mentioned and it several times appears that the author has only a very vague grip on the basics of economics. The author in a flow of sociological jargon explains to his reader that at the root of the rise of the slave trade is in the CULTURE of the groups involved both African and European. According to Toby Green, it is their preexisting world-view and systems of belief that led the Kassanks and the New Christians to build the slaving system, not good ol'-fashion greed. This is akin to explaining a hole by the presence of a shovel next to it, it certainly helped, but someone needs the will to dig first and that will comes from the existing incentives, not from the shovel itself...In summary, in terms of pure research and of erudition, this book is excellent, but unfortunately when it came to the interpretation of his data drinking the sociological kool-aid led the author to write a convoluted, barely understandable and wholly dispensable analysis.3 of 15 people found the following review helpful. careless re detailsBy DiatonicI thought I might purchase the book, but then, in looking at his treatment of various subjects, I found at least one careless error that made me uneasy. He states that Alida Metcalf, the American historian, says that the Portuguese Crown granted a lease of the Brazil trade to Loronha in 1504. But in fact she does not say this since the lease was granted in 1502, not 1504, and she is accurate. A careful historian would not make such an error. He also is not aware of the latest research on the leasing out of Brazil. [There is, however, a great deal of material mentioned and the bibliography is valuable.] That is enough to steer me elsewhere. I also went to see where he teaches, if he does. Apparently he is a free lance historian, not permanently attached to any university.

The region between the river Senegal and Sierra Leone saw the first trans-Atlantic slave trade in the sixteenth century. Drawing on many new sources, Toby Green challenges current quantitative approaches to the history of the slave trade. New data on slave origins can show how and why Western African societies responded to Atlantic pressures. Green argues that answering these questions requires a cultural framework and uses the idea of creolization - the formation of mixed cultural communities in the era of plantation societies - to argue that preceding social patterns in both Africa and Europe were crucial. Major impacts of the sixteenth-century slave trade included political fragmentation, changes in identity, and the reorganization of ritual and social patterns. The book shows which peoples were enslaved, why they were vulnerable, and the consequences in Africa and beyond.

"Many current scholars lay claim to a trans-national and cross-cultural 'Atlantic' history but very few have brought together the detail, scope, and vision of Toby Green. This remarkable book, focusing on Cabo Verde, Senegambia, and Upper Guinea, reveals how Iberian imperial authorities, a New Christian/Crypto-Jewish diaspora, and African economic and political agents combined to produce a wide-ranging early modern order of commerce and cultural identity around the violence of the slave trade." Ralph Austen, University of Chicago
"In this original and thoroughly researched study, Green recasts our understanding of the early years of Africa's engagement with Atlantic merchants. He 'Africanizes' Atlantic history by showing that a cultural framework established in Africa before the Portuguese 'discoveries', which began in the 1440s, influenced the nature of African-European exchanges for more than a century. In so doing, Green crafts a 'culturally centered approach', which stands in contrast to quantitative approaches popular in much recent scholarship. He also shows that a widely held view that a region known as Upper Guinea was relatively unimportant in the early years of Atlantic exchange is incorrect. Patterns set in Upper Guinea shaped the unfolding of the history of the slave trade, of racist ideologies, and of creolization or cultural mixing. Well written and well argued, Green's is a story that had to be told." Walter Hawthorne, Michigan State University, and author of *From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1830*
"Green's book is learned and wide-ranging. It is also deeply humane and marked by an imaginative empathy of rare quality. The result is one of the best and most rewarding works I have read on the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This is a major contribution to West African and Atlantic history and marks Green as a scholar to watch." T. C. McCaskie, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
"[This book] makes a significant contribution to historical understanding of the beginnings of European trade in Africa and places the Cape Verde islands in their rightful place at the centre of this important story.

It will interest scholars of the Atlantic World and a general audience interested in European expansion and maritime trade." *Journal of World History*"A study of an impressive wealth of material." Translated from *Cahiers des Etudes Africaines*

About the Author Toby Green is currently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at King's College London. He has published several books, the most recent of which is *Inquisition: The Reign of Fear* (2009). His books have been translated into ten languages. He is a director of the Amilcar Cabral Institute for Economic and Political Research. His articles have appeared in *History in Africa*, the *Journal of Atlantic Studies*, *Journal of Mande Studies* and *Slavery and Abolition*. Green has also written widely for the British press, including book reviews for the *Independent* and features for *Financial Times*, the *Observer* and the *Times*. He has given lectures at various institutes, including the Universities of Cambridge, Lisbon, Oxford and Paris-Sorbonne; Duke University and the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.