

BOOKS RECEIVED

War on the Savannah. The military collapse of the Sokoto caliphate under the invasion of the British empire, 1897-1903 by Risto Marjomaa. Helsinki: The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters 1998. 305 pp. ISBN 951-41-0849-3.

This book is a study of the British conquest of the Sokoto caliphate primarily from a military point of view. The political context of the war having already been widely researched, the author sets out to study it as point of comparison for warfare as conducted by military organisations based on extremely divergent material foundations as well as different goals and values. The focus is on the spheres of strategy, battlefield tactics, weaponry and the background and motivations of the troops involved.

The work is based on field reports and letters from both sides, given the surprising amount of military sources from both sides of the conflict; as well as on memoirs and eyewitness accounts.

The book is divided into five main parts. The nine major battles of the war are discussed in detail, together with general chapters on strategy and tactics.

People are not the same. Leprosy and identity in twentieth-century Mali by Eric Silla. Portsmouth, NC: Heinemann / Oxford: James Currey 1998. xi, 220 pp.

This account of leprosy in colonial and post-colonial Mali draws on an extensive collection of life histories. It brings together the transformation of 'leper' identities with changes in medical and social responses to the disease. Thus, it places issues such as stigma, marginality, begging and migration into a historical understanding. Leprosy

sufferers, outcasts in their villages, often migrated to treatment centres in Bamako and other towns. Here they formed self-conscious communities which empowered them socially and politically. The main parts of the book discuss, respectively, the colonial encounter, and the transition to post-colonial Mali.

Islam et islamismes au sud du Sahara, ed. by Ousmane Kane and Jean-Louis Triaud. Paris: Karthala 1998. 331 pp.

This is a collection of articles from the first ten volumes of our sister publication, *Islam et sociétés au sud du Sahara*. It sees itself, however, not just as a collection, but as a coherent volume around one theme. As the title indicates, the focus of the articles selected is the contemporary period, but, so the editors, ‘un contemporain au croisement de la longue durée historique et de l’interrogation politique’. Compared to the journal versions, the articles are only corrected to bring them up to date. In addition to a new introduction to the theme by the editors, the twelve articles touch in particular on contemporary developments in Sufism in Senegal (Kane and Villalón, Loimeier), Nigeria (Gray), and East Africa (Constantin); on Mahdists in the Sudan (Prunier) and Nigeria (Sulaiman), and on Islamists / reformists in society in Burkina (Kouanda, Cissé), Nigeria (Kane), Sudan (Prunier), and Senegal (Gomez-Peres); as well as extensive bibliographies and overviews (Hodgkin, the editors).

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