



Soldiers Traders and Slaves: State Formation and Economic Transformation in the Greater Nile Valley, 1700-1885

By Janet J. Ewald

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In the Nuba Hills, on the frontiers of the Islamic Sudan, a dynasty of Muslim warrior kings arose in the eighteenth century. Their kingdom, Taqali, survived as an independent state, resisting conquest by larger empires, and coming under external control only during the twentieth century. Janet Ewald has written the first comprehensive account of the origins and development of the Taqali kingdom.

Ewald shows how events originating far beyond the Taqali massif allowed local Muslim soldiers to become kings of the Taqali in the eighteenth century and then to hold on to their power. But the nature of that power was shaped by the highland farmers who stubbornly and largely successfully resisted the efforts of the kings to parlay their control over the means of production. In this struggle religion became an ideological weapon on both sides, as the Taqali farmers asserted their local beliefs against their Muslim rulers. Political confrontations also bore unintended economic consequences. Ewald's account of Taqali challenges current views on the impact of Islam, merchant capitalism, and Egyptian military administration in nineteenth-century Sudan.

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From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Janet J. Ewald is Associate Professor of History at Duke University. Her articles on African history have appeared in a variety of scholarly journals.

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