

At present the Turkish parliament has accepted a package of constitutional reforms to be brought to referendum, but the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* brought the reform package to the Constitutional Court, which acts to protect the interests of the judicial-bureaucratic system.

In contrast, as the authors point out, the existing military-drafted 1982 constitution is a symbolic stain on Turkish democracy and hinders democratization by ensuring the continuation of Kemalist bureaucratic authoritarianism. Hence, the success of democratic consolidation requires eliminating the authoritarian, statist, and tutelary spirit of the 1982 constitution, which is only possible through the drafting of a new, civilian-made constitution (pp. 114–15). This task, however, would require bypassing the secularist elites who are interested in the preservation of the status quo and oppose any attempt at constitutional reform. This dilemma poses serious questions the authors must reconcile with their basic thesis, which is that a confrontational and dissentious style of constitution making hinders democratic consolidation.

Overall, Özbudun and Gençkaya offer a rich survey of the Turkish constitution-making process as well as legal dimensions of Turkey's EU membership process. Their work nicely connects with the larger body of scholarship on the link between constitution making and democratic consolidation. Hence, this is a timely book for observers of Turkey and the field of comparative politics.

GHISLAINE LYDON, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Pp. 496. \$95.00 cloth, \$76.00 e-book.

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Since E. W. Bovill's *Golden Trade of the Moors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), historians of Islam and Africa have explored the rich economic, social, and cultural history of the Western Sudan, whose wealth and power was based primarily on the trans-Saharan caravan trade. Most have written histories of trade, politics, or religion and almost all have approached the societies of the "Land of the Blacks" within the narrow context of what has frequently been referred to as "African Islam."

Ghislaine Lydon's important new book, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, widens the scope of inquiry in a number of directions. First, while focusing her study on one particular region of the Western Sahara, Wad Nun, Lydon approaches the trade of the Sahara in the spirit of Fernand Braudel's work on the Mediterranean, looking at the desert as a sea that connects two shores, North Africa and the Sahel, within a common, dynamic space (p. 4). As such, she treats "West and North Africa as one region with the Sahara sealing the continent rather than dividing it" (p. 5). In addition to providing a new interpretive lens, this approach helps to subvert a contemporary area-studies paradigm that uncouples "Sub-Saharan" from "North" Africa by treating them as a single unit. Second, rather than focusing solely on the relationship between commerce and the state, Lydon seeks to unpack the everyday workings of commerce and to provide insight into at least some of its social consequences. She utilizes a wide variety of sources including merchants' correspondence, family as well as state archives, religious opinions (*fatāwā*) and Islamic legal texts, colonial travel literature, and perhaps most innovatively, oral histories. The author also focuses on intellectual and commercial life beyond that of the oft-studied urban centers such as Timbuktu. Wad Nun in the Western Sahara is lesser known but formed an important commercial network linking West Africa with a wider world. The result constitutes probably the most nuanced examination of trans-Saharan commerce over a lengthy period of time currently available in the English language.

Lydon's assault on the area-studies paradigm and use of Braudel as an interpretive lens continue the recent trend among scholars of Islam in Africa (Scott S. Reese, ed., *Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004]) to challenge contemporary area-studies models by treating West and North Africa as a single geographic and—in some ways—societal unit connected by commerce, faith, and sometimes genealogy. She accomplishes this in part through an enormously useful overview (in Chapter 2) of the current state of knowledge of human society in the Sahara from prehistory to the mid-19th century. Drawing on recent archaeological, linguistic, and historical scholarship, Lydon paints a vivid picture of the Sahara as a site of continuous habitation and economic importance transcending modern geographic boundaries. In Chapters 3 through 5 the author adds complexity to this picture through a valuable investigation of the intricacies of commerce, ranging from goods traded (from the mundane to the magnificent), caravan and market organization, and methods of exchange and record keeping, to partnerships and alliances and the role of women as commercial actors. This discussion is significant for her thesis in that it demonstrates the continuities that existed across the vast distances of desert, suggesting geographical unity rather than separation.

Although the entirety of Lydon's book is important in its own right, its chief contributions to the literature are found in Chapters 6 through 8, where the focus shifts to the arrangement and regulation of commercial relationships between individuals. Specifically, Lydon argues that although scholars have long recognized the importance of Islamic legal institutions, the law of contracts, and literacy in creating the rich commercial milieu of trans-Saharan trade, they have neglected the very basic human bond these institutions fostered that made trade possible: trust. Lydon argues persuasively that it is in fact trust that functioned as the glue holding trans-Saharan networks together. She notes that although Islamic legal practice and literacy provided the means for traders to engage in complex and widespread business dealings, in the end these mechanisms merely "cemented" trust rather than engender it. Trust, she argues, was intensely personal and only developed gradually "after repeated exchanges" (p. 392). Frequent business transactions between Muslims and Jews who shared a common Abrahamic faith and local custom in matters of commerce indicate the level of trust developed between individuals and communities over long periods of time. It was the "paper economy" of the early modern period, she argues, that ultimately enabled merchants to extend their networks in "concentric circles of trust and trustworthiness" across the Sahara. "In outer circles," she writes, "written contracts witnessed by third parties could cement trust . . . while at the core of the inner circle a simple handshake symbolized absolute trust" (p. 392).

Lydon's book is a valuable addition to both the study of Islamic history and the burgeoning field of global history. Her work provides not only a nuanced understanding of commerce and society in a local context but also an analysis of how that world was shaped by its interactions with a much larger global community through both religion and technology. As such, it represents a valuable contribution to our understanding of the Sahara and its connections to a wider world.

JONATHAN MIRAN, *Red Sea Citizens: Cosmopolitan Society and Cultural Change in Massawa* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2009). Pp. 400. \$52.50 cloth, \$19.60 paper.

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The "global cities" of the 19th century are increasingly coming to the attention of historians of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Jonathan Miran's study of Massawa on the Red Sea coast is a clear example of this orientation and a benchmark to which future studies will

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