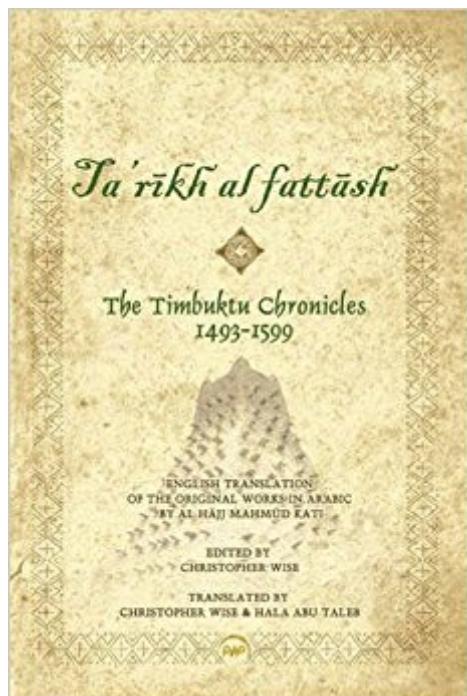


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Timbuktu Chronicles 1493-1599, Ta'rikh Al Fattash



Synopsis

Some five hundred years ago, the Askia Muhammad founded the Songhay Dynasty of the Askiyas, which flourished for more than a century in Sahelian West Africa. The Askia Muhammad administered his kingdom from Gao, Mali, although many of his most loyal followers were located in Timbuktu, Mali. The Timbuktu based scribe al hajj Mahmud Kati was a close friend of the Askia Muhammad, who accompanied the famous Songhay leader during his pilgrimage to Mecca. The Tarikh al fattash is an eyewitness account of the rise and fall of the Songhay Empire, told from Kati's perspective as a key participant in many of the most important events in the era of the Askiyas. Wise's *The Timbuktu Chronicles, 1493-1599* is a translation of the Octave Houdas and Maurice Delafosse's rendition of the Tarikh al fattash, which was compiled from three versions of the text that surfaced in the early twentieth century, and that were edited by Houdas and Delafosse in 1913. It includes a new introduction by Wise, as well as the original introduction and scholarly notes of Houdas and Delafosse. Although long valued as the most important historical document of the medieval period, Kati's chronicle is also a literary achievement that is comparable to the writings of figures like Chaucer, Rabelais, and Montaigne. Wise's introduction and study questions accompanying this translation provide contextualizing information for the non-specialist. The Tarikh al fattash is essential reading for all students of African literature and history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Thanks... to Wise and Abu Taleb for resurrecting Tarikh al-Fattash, This fifteenth century text is a marvel of literature and history and its availability in this excellent English translation will provide an important new treasure for those who are interested in the history and civilization of Islam." --

Ricardo Rene Laremont "Wise's new volume with its very readable translation and helpful introduction performs an important service for African literary studies." -- Fallou Ngom "This five hundred year old chronicle [is] the best, the most significant and the most useful on the Songhay empire." -- Toyin Falola, University Distinguished Professor, University of Texas at Austin

"Christopher Wise deserves both our admiration and gratitude for making available to the wider world this five hundred year old chronicle--the best, the most significant and the most useful on the Songhay empire. The premodern is connected with the modern; old Africa and new Africa are blended; and texts and interpretations are united to understand the past, to teach about the past, allowing us to reflect more profoundly on an era that we continue to hold in awe for its achievements, the endurance of its ideas, the brilliance of its scholars, and the grandeur of its institutions." -- Toyin Falola, University Distinguished Professor and the Frances Higginbotham Nalle Centennial Professor, University of Texas at Austin, and the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Chair of Modern Africa At-Large, Benue State University, Nigeria

The book is a compilation of original manuscripts written by Indigenous Africans in Pre-Colonial Mali about 500 years ago. I think it is simply WONDERFUL to FINALLY have such a work translated into an accessible language, like English. It would allow the Western world, and the world at large to finally see that ancient academic enterprise is as old in Africa as the continent itself -- and that knowledge DID NOT come to Africa through the colonization of Europeans.

This book is a Amazing eyewitness account of the life and glory of the Great and Powerful Songhai Kings of Mali and Timbuktu. IT also tells the eastern origins for the African tribes dwelling along the Niger River. Starting from the rise and triumph of King Askia the Great to the fall of the Songhai Empire this book gives all the details needed and it is a must have.

I just completed the Tarikh al Fattash, a history of the Songhai empire written by Al Hajji Mahmud Kati over 500 years ago. It is very refreshing to read the history of a people written by those people without the second guessing and slight insults usually injected by those writing from outside the culture. Much of Cheikh Diop's information for his book Precolonial Black Africa was referenced from this book and the Tarikh al Sudan. The Fattash is a must read for anyone interested in West African history and/or contemplating writing sword and soul based on the Sahelian Empires.

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