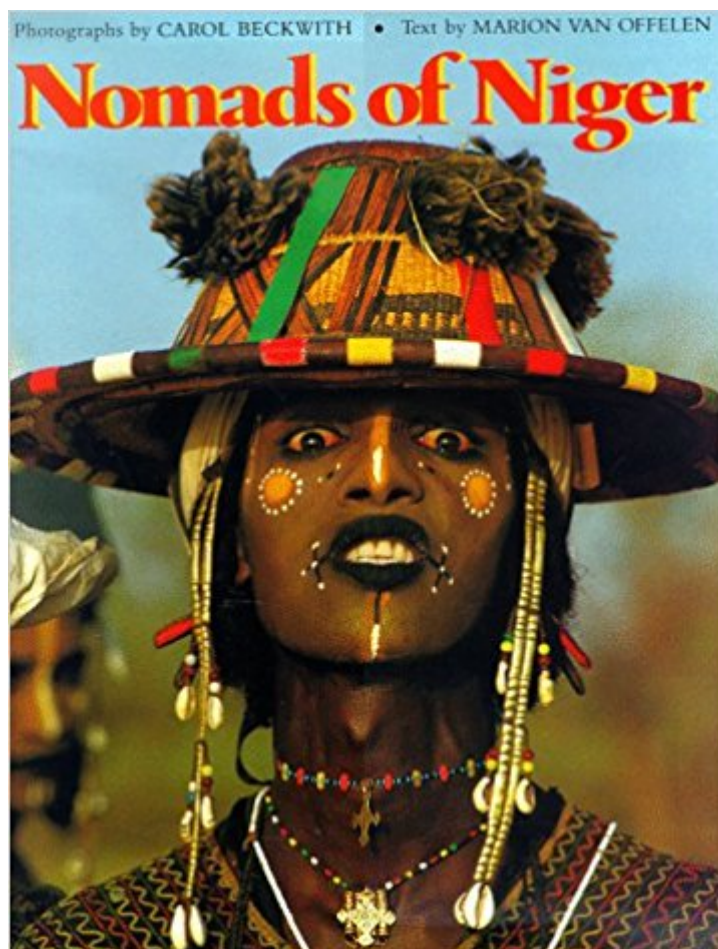


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# Nomads Of Niger



## Synopsis

A photographic celebration of the nomadic Wodaabe of Niger with a narrative that follows a herdsman and his family and kinsmen through one year's journey in parched, sub-Saharan Africa. This volume documents their life, culture, traditions and celebrations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If one picture is worth a thousand words, then the combination of text and images in *Nomads of Niger* adds up to the equivalent of a whole encyclopedia. The cover photograph alone tells you this will be a special journey; before you even reach the title page you've already been treated to several stunning portraits of a nomadic people known as the Wodaabe, "who number among the last nomads of Africa, indeed among the last nomads on earth." The landscape the Wodaabe inhabit is a harsh one: "In central Niger, between the great Sahara Desert and the grasslands, lies an immense steppe, scattered with scrawny bushes and skeletal trees. For nine months of the year hardly a drop of rain falls. The days are torrid, the nights sometimes freezing cold. And the harmattan, the hot wind out of the desert, blows up relentlessly, filling the air with a sandy haze." Across this no-man's land the Wodaabe herd their cattle, migrating north in the rainy season and south again in the dry months and leaving no trace of their travels as they go. Photographer Carol Beckwith spent 18 months traveling with one particular band of Wodaabe, and her photographs concentrate on the family of a herdsman named Mokao and his family. *Nomads of Niger* is more than just a coffee-table book; it is also an informative and highly entertaining account of the lives,

customs, rituals, and taboos of the Wodaabe reminiscent of the best of National Geographic magazine.

Belgian anthropologist Van Offelen banded with American photographer Beckwith to produce this stunning 1983 volume on the Wodaabe, the pastoral nomads of the West African Fulani people. Along with the 144 photographs are numerous line drawings and a healthy portion of Van Offelen's observations. This remains "recommended for area collections and for libraries where there is interest in the decorative arts of traditional societies" ( LJ 12/15/83). Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Nomads of Niger is an excellently written and colorful depiction of the life of the ancient nomadic Fulani or "Peul" people. Belonging to the group known as the Wodabe or Bororo, these nomadic herders of Niger (actually in this case moving into Chad, Cameroon and Central African Republic as well) have roamed for centuries across the sub-Saharan bushland, surviving where few others could. Living very simply, yet loving beauty and esthetics, their intricate culture and open hospitality is fascinating -- especially as it is found in one of the harshest living environments on earth. The authors have done a marvelous job of looking inside this virtually unknown culture, and with admiration and respect depicting it in print and photographs. It should be also noted that the Nomads of Niger was also developed as a National Geographic documentary, and brings some of the unforgettable sounds and action of this culture to life. Don't miss the Geerewol!

Let me begin by saying I really love finding such unique, fine quality books, like this one, and in this regard Abrams never fails to let me down with uniquely topical subject matter exquisitely published at an affordable price. This book details the Wodaabe tribe of Niger in sub-Saharan Africa, and details the daily life, as well as special rituals/ceremonies, of the Wodaabe through a narrative focusing on a particular herdsman, Mokao and his family. I found this format to be interesting, and less dense/academic than other fine books I've purchased from Abrams. The photographer and author both lived with the Wodaabe for 2 years, and the narrative of Mokao's family really connects the reader to these nomadic peoples on a more tangible level than any scholarly essay could (granted the author does, of course, break from the narrative to explain some fascinating particularities of the Wodaabe, so the book is still very informative). The book itself is truly beautiful! The 1983 edition has definitely stood the test of time, and is very affordable (I paid \$4.50 for an excellent edition). Book is like a work of art, and is finely bound in Italy: there is an artistic inlay on

the cover; the chapters are printed on a very grainy, construction-paper (accompanied by line-drawings and maps), while 144 high quality color images are dispersed between the chapters on a contrasting, glossy paper. A unique addition to any library for the price, perfect for lovers of photography or African culture. Also of interest, Abrams produces a similarly topical book detailing the lives of the Hopi tribe of the southeast US (ISBN: 0810910829; printed in a similar format: grainy chapters, great images, authors who truly got to know the people they were writing about).

The book was recommended to us by a noted collector of textiles and the book has exceeded our expectations. It is a noteworthy and wonderful addition to our collection of art books.

Absolutely love this book. A lot of information regarding culture, tradition etc on the different nomadic groups but what I love most are the pictures.

I read the original article in the National Geographic. The photographs in this book are sensational. The book is very well written. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the people of Niger.

Excellent book, well written with beautiful pictures to accompany the text which is very informative re the different tribes and their individual styles of body decoration.

This is a beautiful coffee table book for people who don't know about Nigerien nomads. I love the pictures, and the text is interesting.

"Recording the Past, Supporting the Future", while Ruining the Present. Please do not buy this book. These two photographers are extremely unethical. I've seen them work during a festival in Burkina Faso and it was a disgrace for Western civilization. The aura of absolute entitlement was around Bekwith&Fisher during the multi-day festival as they stood/sat within less than a foot of the performers, covering the performance from all the locals (of which there were thousands and who were much further from the performance at the places designated for spectators). This was equivalent of someone climbing on the stage of the theater performance and standing right in front of the actors the whole duration of the performance. I talked to the organizers and they were upset with such behavior, but their hospitality didn't allow them to ask these women to be respectful. The cost of you being able to see moments of foreign culture are pretty steep here. The cost is ruining

the same moments (except that they mean a lot more) for the people of that culture.

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