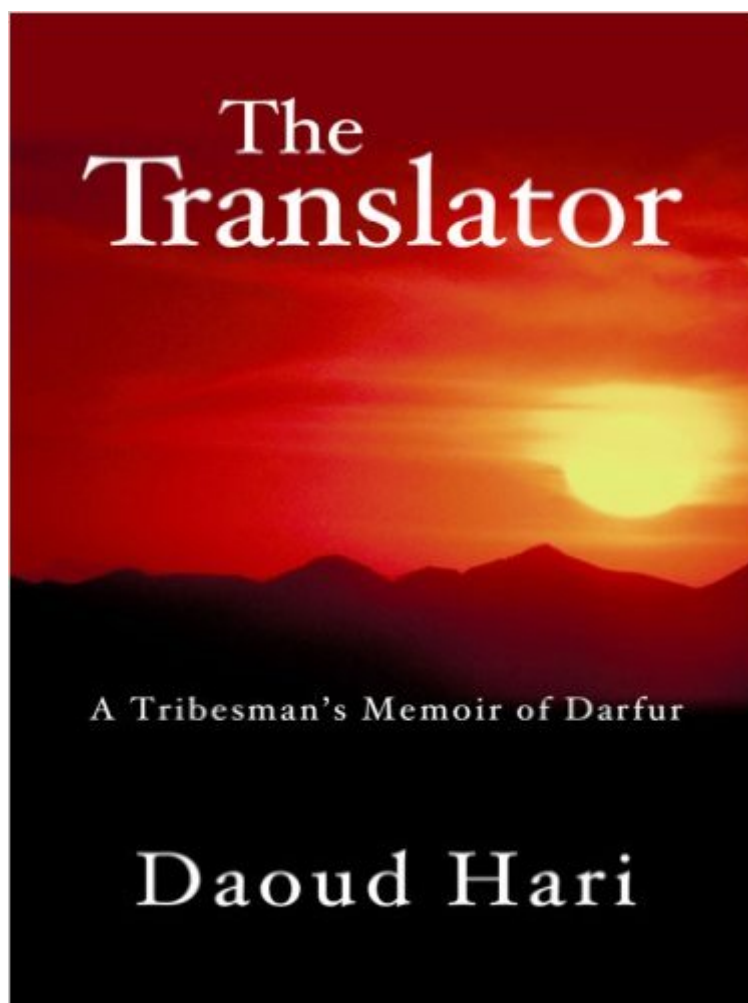# The Translator: A Tribesman's Memoir Of Darfur (Basic)

Synopsis

The young life of Daoud Hariâ "his friends call him Davidâ "has been one of bravery and mesmerizing adventure. The Translator is a suspenseful, harrowing, and deeply moving memoir of how one person has made a difference in the world, an on-the-ground account of one of the biggest stories of our time: the brutal genocide under way in Darfur.In 2003, Daoud Hari, a Zaghawa tribesman, was among the hundreds of thousands of villagers attacked and driven from their homes by Sudanese-government-backed militia groups. Though Hariâ ™s village was burned to the ground, his family decimated and dispersed, he himself escaped, eventually finding safety across the border. With his high school knowledge of languages, Hari offered his services as a translator and guide. In doing so, however, he had to return to the heart of darknessâ "and he has risked his life again and again to help ensure that the story of his people is told while there is still time to save them. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There are a number of compelling memoirs by Sudanese authors such as They Poured Fire On Us From The Sky (2005), What Is the What (2006), and at least 4 more by or about "The Lost Boys" of southern Sudan. As the conflict has moved north and west, like birds flying before the storm, we are now seeing a new wave of heartbreaking memoirs arriving from the Darfur region. Each story is as unique as the person telling it, and all offer a glimpse into a world few know about because western journalists have so much difficulty working in the country, thus making this first-hand narrative by a

native Darfurian a unique and important source.As a young man Daoud Hari witnessed the destruction of his idyllic rural village by modern Russian-made helicopter gunships and, like the logs of a raft breaking apart in the rapids, he and his family spun off in many harrowing directions. Hari decided early on that he would "use his brains and not a gun to make a better life" for himself. After arriving at a refugee camp in Chad, his skill at languages allowed him to work as a translator and guide for westerners on fact-finding trips across the border into Darfur. On about his 7th trip in August 2006 he became embroiled in an international incident with kidnapped National Geographic journalist Paul Salopek, making headlines around the world. Through the help of friends Hari was able to get out of Sudanese jail and move to the United States, where he now works for SaveDarfur.

I was hesitant to purchase this book because the writing seemed very simple as I skimmed the book in the bookstore; however, it is this simple prose that empowers the journey you take with the author. From the opening story of his life being saved by a Journalist to the closing account of the torture and eventual freedom granted to him (don't worry, this doesn't reveal a surprise ending - after all, he did write the book), you feel that you are being told a story in the simple traditional form of an African tribal legend. Sadly, this is no legend!When I read about the little girl killed by a soldier in a horrific way, I wept. When I read Daoud's commentary on why Darfur marriages last so long (they sleep separately), I laughed. What struck me was how much this man and his family has suffered and, yet, he laughs. He can teach us much about suffering and the ability to continue to believe and hope.The more important part of the stories, however, is the part that should make us scream for change in the way we have dealt with this genocide and others like it. It's time to take faster action. When we have to wait until there are over 1000 stories to be heard (in order to decide if it is genocide), there's something VERY wrong with our process.The author makes you feel like you've walked the sandy world in which he grew up. You feel as if you've ridden a camel, pushed a Land Rover out of a ditch, survived a beating and crossed borders illegally for the sake of human life. Why? Because he tells the story in very simple English, which makes you feel your hearing about it all from a child's mind. You connect with the story much as a child envisions she is in a traditional fairy tale. Very powerful!

In the modern Western world, vivid documentary photojournalism plays an important role in how we world learn about major world events. However, when the story is genocide, the visual record can be so horrific that most people instinctually flinch and turn away, unable to bear the sight of so much human suffering. Croatia, Rwanda, Darfur--we are bombarded by harrowing nightmarish images.It is

easy to see why most people might not want to read a book about genocide. But they fail to realize that books work on the brain in an entirely different manner than images. A well-conceived book can promote understanding and provoke action. Take "The Translator: A Tribesman's Memoir of Darfur" by Daoud Hari as an example. Readers would be making a grave mistake if they turned away from this powerful and unforgettable memoir. This book is more than a recounting of genocide. It is a fierce story of heroism and survival--it is also a loving lament to a culture and people on the brink of extinction.This book is definitely not what you might expect. There are no indictments against the international community's indifference. There is no anger--no blame. Instead, there is a calm heartfelt recounting of three years in the life of one tribesman working as a translator for Western journalist covering the story of war-torn Darfur. The years covered are 2003 through 2006. During this period, the author took immense risks to lead first a team of UN genocide investigators, and then six separate teams of Western journalists into dangerous war-torn Darfur. That he has come out of these ordeals alive is a miracle.Daoud Hari tells an incredible story! For the last one-third of the book, I found myself gripping the book, unable to tear myself away before knew what happened.

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