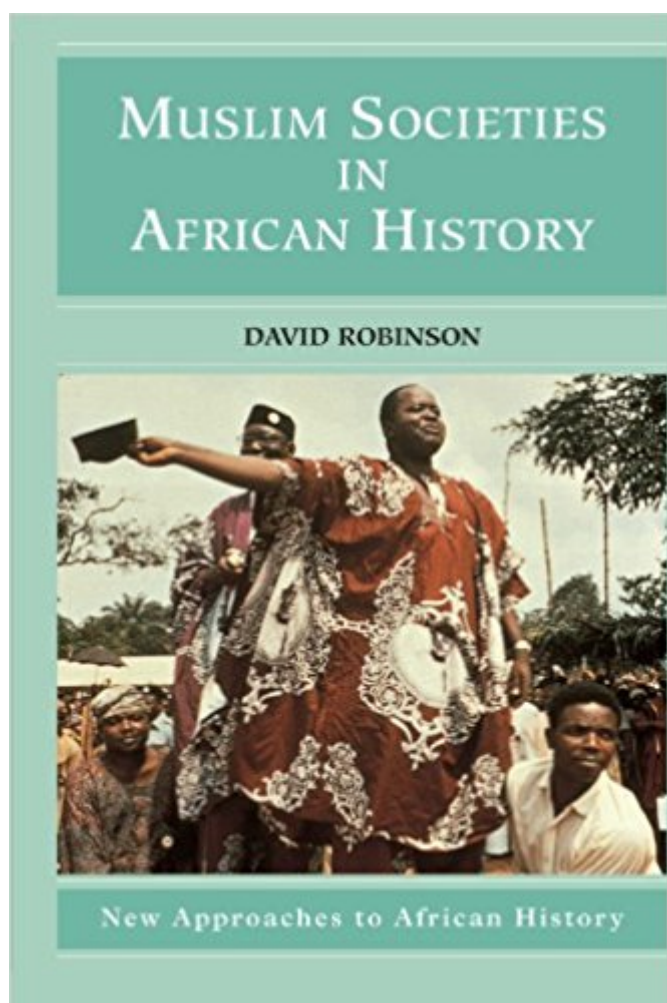


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Muslim Societies In African History (New Approaches To African History)



Synopsis

This book examines a series of processes (Islamization, Arabization, Africanization) and case studies from the Muslim societies of Africa over the last thousand years. In contrast to traditions suggesting that Islam did not take root in Africa, David Robinson depicts the complex struggles of Muslims throughout the continent: in Morocco and the Hausaland region of Nigeria; the "pagan" societies of Ashanti (Ghana) and Buganda (Uganda); and the ostensibly Christian state of Ethiopia. "Further reading" sections suggest how undergraduate readers can pursue research, and illustrations and maps supplement the text.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Undoubtedly, the importance of this publication goes beyond its uniqueness as the first undergraduate textbook to cover the historical spread and appropriation of Islam in Africa in such a comprehensive manner....The greatest strength of Robinson's case studies lies in the questions they raise, questions that are still acutely relevant to Muslim communities today and are at the center of global debates about Islam, both inside and outside Muslim communities."-Rahma Bavelaar, IslamOnline.net

This book examines a series of processes (Islamization, arabization, africanization) and case studies from the Muslim societies of Africa over the last thousand years. In contrast to traditions which suggest that Islam did not take root in Africa, Robinson shows the complex struggles of

Muslims throughout the continent: in Morocco and in the Hausaland region of Nigeria, in the "pagan" societies of Ashanti (Ghana) and Buganda (Uganda), and in the ostensibly Christian state of Ethiopia. "Further reading" sections suggest how undergraduate readers may follow up on the themes of this volume, while illustrations and maps make the processes and case studies concrete.

This book is a great introduction to the history of Islam and Islamic societies in Africa.

One of the issues is while claiming to have a "New" perspective -- and he did, he seemed to continue the old Eurocentric tradition of quoting only from other Europeans. I didn't see much in the way of citing Africans such as Mazrui, Ahmed S Banguara etc. It is hard to truly have anything new from old minds drawn out across White opportunism. (a reoccurring theme in African history). But he did do a relatively progressive job of dealing with the subject. The other issue was it was not heavy enough and I will have to buy someone else maybe that *The History of Islam in Africa*. Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2000. But they do not have it in Kindle. And Kindle is the future. Forget about East Africa that was as another reviewer said almost foreign to this quick overview. But for a quick read and a refreshing Western take (from a non-Muslim) this is okay and if the price was \$10 bucks not a bad investment

This was one of my texts used for my African studies in grad school - excellent resource - I highly recommend this resource

If you are looking for a book that will give the entire history of the African continent this is your book. It begins with how humans are believed to evolve from this area and then moves to ancient Egypt and beyond! It is a required text for my African Civilizations class in college and is extremely informational.

Professor Robinson is one among this nation's better scholars of the history of Islam in West Africa. However, therein lies the weakness of this particular title. This study of Islam in Africa essentially is a work that greatly privileges his region of specialization. Robinson concerns himself with Islam in North and West Africa, while he leaves out entirely any mention of the eastern Sudanic region, as well as Central and South Africa. He devotes scant attention to East Africa, and, where he chooses to include material from there, oddly enough, he directs his readers' attention primarily to Uganda, a part of Africa where Islam arrived only in the past two centuries and where it is still on its periphery.

The far more venerable story of Islam among the Swahili of the East coast, perhaps the oldest Islamic tradition on the continent, barely gets mentioned. Robinson deserves praise for covering some important themes, but even here he falls short because he fails to explore these systematically or in any depth. Readers who look for a narrative that furnishes them with an analysis of the ways Islam was introduced to Africa and its subsequent progress, will also be disappointed. The result of these inadequacies is a work that is spotty in its overall coverage and in the quality of the treatment the author provides his readers. Simply put, there are better works to be found elsewhere.

Islam did struggle in Africa to anchor its roots. Its influence made a huge impact on African subculture. Arts, ethics, architecture, and political ideologies of today are in part remnant of such influence. However, the African tribal psychology did not totally succumb to Islam dogma. Confrontation did happen in the past. And today, such confrontation extends to other segments of our social life. The book refers to this confrontation, and to the ethnic identity of African societies that is still struggling against rigid Islamic view of modernization and contemporary social values. I enjoyed the book. It is not a reflection of my personal opinions, nevertheless it depicts an accurate picture of our social condition, national identity and resistance at a cultural level.

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