

Muslims And Chiefs In West Africa A Study Of Islam In The Middle Volta Basin In The Pre Colonial Period

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african studies contrary to some accounts is not a separate continent in the world of american higher education its intellectual borders touch those of economics literature history philosophy and art its history is the story of the world both ancient and modern this is the clear conclusion of africa and the disciplines a book that addresses the question why should africa be studied in the american university this question was put to distinguished scholars in the social sciences and

humanities prominent africanists who are also leaders in their various disciplines their responses make a strong and enlightening case for the importance of research on africa to the academy paul collier s essay for example shows how studies of african economies have clarified our understanding of the small open economies and contributed to the theory of repressed inflation and to a number of areas in microeconomics as well art historian suzanne blier uses the terms and concepts that her discipline has applied to africa to analyze the habits of mind and social practice of her own field christopher l miller describes the confounding and enriching impact of africa on european and american literary theory political scientist richard sklar outlines africa s contributions to the study of political modernization pluralism and rational choice these essays together with others from scholars in history anthropology philosophy and comparative literature attest to the influence of african research throughout the curriculum for many knowledge from africa seems distant and exotic these powerful essays suggest the contrary that such knowledge has shaped the way in which scholars in various disciplines understand their worlds eloquent testimony to africa s necessary place in the mainstream of american education this book should alter the academy s understanding of the significance of african research its definition of core and periphery in human knowledge these essays are at once exceptionally thoughtful and remarkably comprehensive not only do they offer an unusually interesting overview of african studies they are also striking for the depth and freshness of their insights this is the sort of volume from which both seasoned regional experts and students stand to learn an enormous amount john comaroff university of chicago these essays provide an important perspective on the evolution of african studies and offer insights into what africa can mean for the different humanistic and social science disciplines many show in ingenious and subtle ways the enormous potential that the study of africa has for confounding the main tenets of established fields one could only hope that the strictures expressed here would be taken to heart in the scholarly world robert l tignor princeton university

this is the second of a two volume work taking stock of the study of africa in the twenty first century its status research agenda and approaches and place it is divided into two parts the first entitled globalisation studies and african studies and the second african studies in regional contexts topics addressed in part one include trans boundary formations and the study of africa global economic liberalisation and development in africa african diasporas academics and the struggle for a global epistemic presence and the problem of translation in african studies part two considers african and area studies in france the us the uk australia germany and sweden anti colonialism and russian soviet african studies african studies in the caribbean in historical perspective the teaching of african history and the history of africa in brazil african studies in india african studies and historiography in china in the twenty first century and african studies and contemporary scholarship in japan

even as symbols of africa permeate western culture in the 1990s centers for the academic study of africa suffer from a steady erosion of institutional support and intellectual legitimacy out of one

many african studies assesses the rising tide of discontent that has destabilized the conceptions institutions and communities dedicated to african studies in vibrant detail contributors from africa europe and north america lay out the multiple contending histories and perspectives that inform african studies they assess the reaction against the white dominated consensus that has marked african studies since its inception in the 1950s and note the emergence of alternative approaches energized in part by feminist and cultural studies they examine african scholars struggle against paradigms that have justified and covered up colonialism militarism and underdevelopment they also consider such issues as how to bring black scholars on the continent and in the diaspora closer together on questions of intellectual freedom accountability and the democratization of information and knowledge production by surveying the present predicament and the current grassroots impulse toward reconsidering the meaning of the continent out of one many african studies gives shape and momentum to a crucial dialogue aimed at transforming the study of africa

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