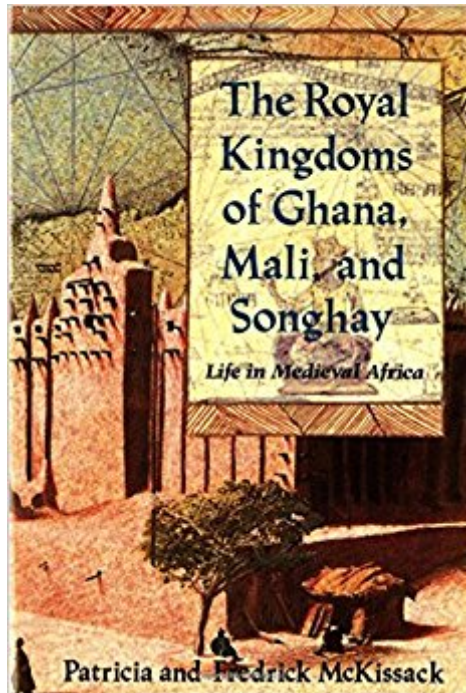


The book was found

The Royal Kingdoms Of Ghana, Mali, And Songhay: Life In Medieval Africa



Synopsis

For more than a thousand years, from A.D. 500 to 1700, the medieval kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay grew rich on the gold, salt, and slave trade that stretched across Africa. Scraping away hundreds of years of ignorance, prejudice, and mythology, award-winning authors Patricia and Fredrick McKissack reveal the glory of these forgotten empires while inviting us to share in the inspiring process of historical recovery that is taking place today.

Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

The McKissacks (Sojourner Truth: Ain't I a Woman?) continue to illuminate aspects of African American heritage with this introduction to three major kingdoms of medieval Africa: Ghana, Mali and Songhay. Based on folklore, contemporaneous accounts and modern scholarly research, their discussion covers the origins, customs, people and political history of these civilizations, which flourished from approximately A.D. 500 to 1700 but which until recently have been neglected by historians. Because much of the available information about medieval Africa is sketchy at best, the narrative is sometimes confusing, especially when the authors combine divergent theories or rely on myth and legend to fill holes in the historical record. Still, their volume contains insightful information about an important period in both African and world history and explores such complicated issues as African involvement in the slave trade and the role of religion in establishing, shaping and destroying bygone kingdoms. A timeline, notes and extensive bibliography encourage further

reading. Ages 10-14. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Grade 5-7-The McKissacks describe the West African civilizations that flourished between the years 700 C.E. to 1700 C.E. A chronological account is given of each successive kingdom, and there is also substantial information about the social history of Mali and Songhay, e.g., education, the treatment of women, religion, and arts and crafts. The relationship between Islam and politics, and the interplay between traditional and Islamic customs in Mali and Songhay are highlighted. The authors have attempted something unique with their inclusion of indigenous and contemporaneous historical accounts (by such historians as Leo Africanus and Ibn Battuta), as well as in their substantial use of oral history. While this makes for an interesting perspective, it prevents the line between history and mythology from being clearly drawn. For example, in the story of Sundiata, visits from a powerful king in the magical form of an owl are not distinguished from the factual dates that Sundiata ruled Mali. This might limit the usefulness of the book to situations in which adults are able to help students think critically about the text. Adequate but uninspired photographs of ancient artifacts and modern people with traditional life styles illustrate the text. Unfortunately, the maps do not make clear the geographical relationships among the three kingdoms (they existed at different times, and in each case the territory of the earlier kingdom was wholly or partly subsumed under the later kingdom). The helpful notes discuss the validity of certain bibliographical sources. The informative time line links events in Africa to those in other parts of the world, and the bibliography is impressive. In spite of its limitations, this title will be an important addition to most collections. Susan Giffard, Midtown Ethical Culture School, New York City Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Having this book has greatly enriched our lessons on Africa and the royal kingdoms of Mali and Songhay. Ghana we were already very acquainted with, however, Mali and Songhay has really surprised us. Take a chance and buy this book its especially excellent for African courses and homeschooling curriculums.

This very readable volume that outlines the groundings of West African medieval history focusing on three kingdoms that made a lasting impact on world history through their knowledge systems.

Currently using in our homeschool co-op's history class. Great resource.

Good book

Great book. Very informative and clearly written

Can't wait to read about these royal kingdoms.

I'm doing research for a movie screenplay. I wanted the facts, but not an intellectual thesis on the subject. This book fits the bill. It is written in terms anyone can understand.

This is one of the best books that I have read about the western Sudan empires.

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