

A. G. HOPKINS

AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF WEST AFRICA

Second Edition

ROUTLEDGE



AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF WEST AFRICA

This pioneering and celebrated work was the first, and remains the standard, account of the economic history of the huge area conventionally known as West Africa.

The book ranges from prehistoric times to independence and covers the former French territories, as well as those colonised by the British. It criticises conventional beliefs about economic backwardness, offers an alternative account that explains the particular configuration of poverty that characterised the pre-colonial period, and assesses the consequences of the region's interaction with the wider world – from the growth of the Saharan and Atlantic trades to the rise and demise of colonial rule. This edition contains a substantial new Introduction that discusses the development of the subject during the past 50 years, evaluates the debate over the original interpretation, and provides a valuable guide to additional reading, bringing the reader up to date with current scholarship on the subject, as well as providing avenues for further independent research.

Appearing at a time when the study of African economic history is enjoying a revival and is engaging economists as well as historians, the book fills a large gap in African studies, provides newcomers with a stimulating point of entry into the subject, and contributes to our understanding of wider issues of global underdevelopment.

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