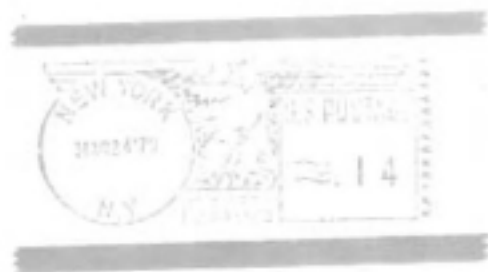




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PUBLICATIONS IN AFRICAN STUDIES AND AFRICAN LITERATURE

John A. Works, Jr. *Pilgrims in a Strange Land: Hausa Communities in Chad*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Population movement is an important development in sub-Saharan Africa. The pilgrimage of the Hausa people by way of the Chad Basin has remained a void in our knowledge until the present study. According to estimates, there are 15 million Hausa in Nigeria, 1.6 million in Niger, and over 100,000 Hausa in the Sudan. The Hausa language is the most widely spoken language in sub-Saharan Africa, and because of Hausa migration it is the *lingua franca* in the larger part of western and middle Africa. The author notes the existence of several categories of Hausa settlements (*zango*, encampments) in sub-Saharan Africa: first, trading groups and the "peddler" merchant; second, Hausa slaves in North Africa owing to forced migration; third, through colonial occupation, other functionaries along with Hausa soldiers recruited by the French as early as 1895 for the Tiraieur Senegalais, some of whom went as far as Madagascar; and fourth, the Hausa pilgrimage which is responsible for an estimated 1.5 million beyond Hausaland.

The pilgrimage, or *hajj*, is expressed in the Arabic concept of *istita'a* to make the voyage. Until the nineteenth century the pilgrimage was reserved for privileged individuals (for example, Mansa Musa of Mali in 1324-25) who took the traditional trans-Saharan trade route through North Africa to Mecca. This route doubles the minimum distance of 2,500 miles. Starting in the seventeenth century Islamic jurists in Andalusia and North Africa sought legal justification for discouraging the *hajj*. The influential Qadiri leader Sidi al-Mukhtar al-Kunti advocated a continuation of this practice in the eighteenth century. Sokoto rulers of the nineteenth century opted for *jihad* instead, a view advanced in Muhammad Bello's treatise *Tanbib*. It was not until the 1930's that a Fulani made the *hajj*.

Innovation in the popular culture of Hausaland brought about change in the direction of the Pilgrim route in the nineteenth century. The disease-free Southern fringe of the Sabil—leading through the central Sudanic states—replaced the trans-Saharan route. New Hausa communities, whom the author calls "westerners," developed in the Chad Basin along the desert's edge to Mecca. The new status as pilgrims enhanced the mobility of those in low esteem in Hausaland. Abéche of Wadai was the first such community stemming from a land grant to a pilgrim in 1870. Messenya, Chekna, Kotoko towns, Yao (Sultanate of Fitri), and Goz Beida were other traditional market towns. The trip to Mecca required a minimum of two years and round trips often lasted for ten years. With the French creation of Fort Laury around 1902, some of the traditional towns declined in importance, especially with the growth of motor and air transport.

The pilgrimage diaspora enhanced, however, a new secondary activity—namely trading—which became linked to the existing Benghazi-Wadai axis well into Dar al-Kuti of Equatorial Africa and on into Zaire. Caravan organization produced interesting and competitive personalities as career entrepreneurs (Maza Waje and Hassan Babalay of Abéche, and *Malam* Haruna of Fort Lamy). The lack of local markets and scattered settlements hampered expanding commercial activity in both the pre-colonial and colonial occupations in Chad. As a result African merchants—foreigners at that—retained control over most long-distance trade transactions for thirty years or longer in the colonial era, despite the presence of some large companies in Chad. The author notes that "... Chad

became a sort of attic in French Equatorial Africa" (p. 176), a territory that discouraged concessions and allowed for colonial neglect.

This is a good book and an original contribution to African history, which covers some earlier and new trends in the field. Chapter four, for example, deals with the uneven and particularistic growth of Chadian Islam over several centuries and is useful for comparative Islamic development elsewhere. There is also data on African economic history and the Comparative "diaspora concept," first introduced by Abner Cohen about the Hausa of Ibadan. The study is not without limitations. Research was restricted to two major cities because of rebel activity in the Chadian countryside. This made additional case studies impossible in the early 1970's, the time of actual field work. The government forbade travel to Chekna only eighty-five miles from Fort Lamy. But Abéche and Fort Lamy served as the centers of the Pilgrim route across the desert edge and contained over 30 percent of Chad's Hausa population. Additional information on the activities of the Hausa outside of these termini would have added to the importance of this work, along with more detail of the pilgrimage and slavery. The author provides, however, rich leads which will allow productive subsequent work on these activities.

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Richard W. Hull. *African Cities and Towns Before the European Conquest*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1976. 138 pp.

Richard W. Hull has again written a significant book in the African field. This work and his previous publication, *Munyakare: African Civilization before the Batauree* (1972), mark him as an important contributor to our growing knowledge of Africa, particularly to the African experience prior to the European period. His contribution in this area is notably important since it documents and illustrates a pre-19th century period which has suffered by comparison to the attention given the post-1800 era. Hull's emphasis upon pre-European developments is thus significant in its illustration of an African story prior to the European's arrival.

The author's emphasis in this recent book is upon an aspect of Africa that has received relatively little attention: urban history. As Hull points out, the existence and nature of a traditional urban society in Africa has suffered from a lack of published attention. It would be hard to challenge the author's statement that "not a single comprehensive work in precolonial urban Africa has been published since Basil Davidson's *The Lost Cities of Africa* appeared in 1959." (Preface, p. ix) Hull's work attempts to fill that void.

Drawing upon a great variety of research stretching across the disciplines of architecture, archeology, sociology, anthropology, and art history as well as history, Hull has written a highly readable synthesis on the nature of Africa's cities prior to the penetration of European civilization and subsequent urbanization. After an introductory chapter, Hull describes the "Origins of Cities and