



Pragmatism in the Age of Jihad: The Precolonial State of Bundu (African Studies)

Michael A. Gomez

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Bundu is an anomaly among the precolonial Muslim states of West Africa. Founded during the jihads which swept the savannah in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it developed a pragmatic policy, unique in the midst of fundamentalist, theocratic Muslim states. Located in the Upper Senegal and with access to the Upper Gambia, Bundu played a critical role in regional commerce and production and reacted quickly to the stimulus of European trade. Drawing on a wide range of sources both oral and documentary, Arabic, English and French, Dr. Gomez provides the first full account of Bundu's history. He analyzes the foundation and growth of an Islamic state at a crossroads between the Saharan and trans-Atlantic trade, paying particular attention to the relationship between Islamic thought and court policy, and to the state's response to militant Islam in the early nineteenth century.

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