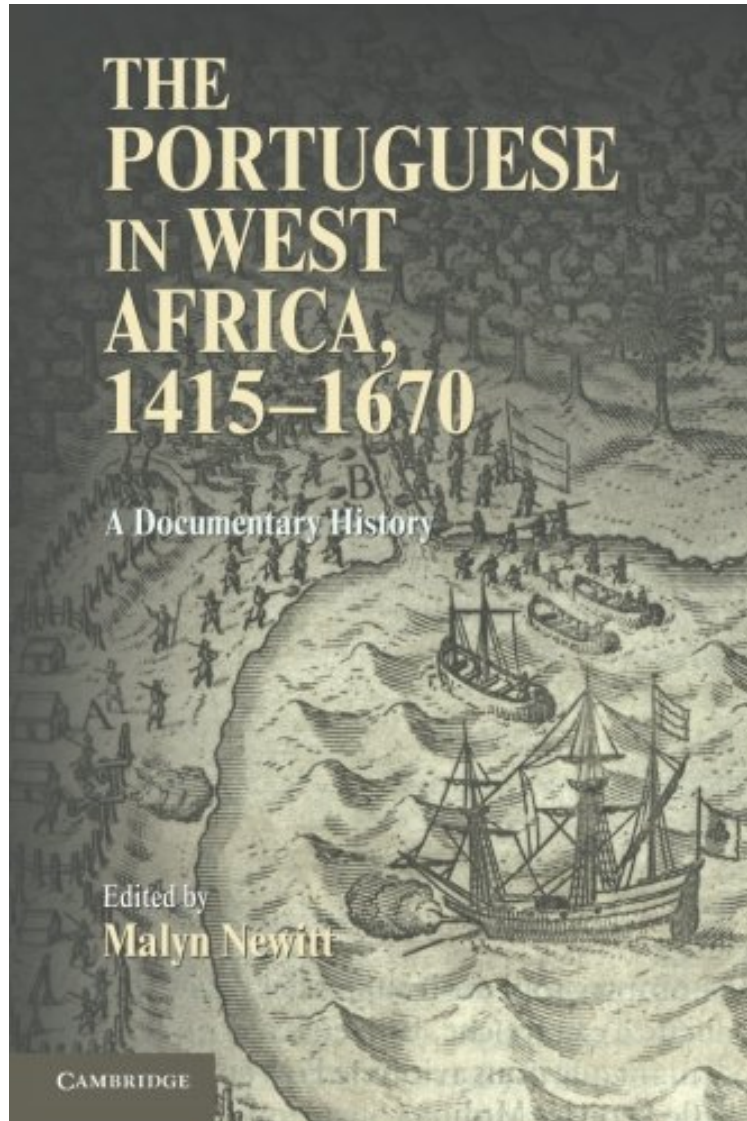


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The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415-1670 brings together a collection of documents - all in new English translation - that illustrate aspects of the encounters between the Portuguese and the peoples of North and West Africa in the period from 1400 to 1650. This period witnessed the diaspora of the Sephardic Jews, the emigration of Portuguese to West Africa and the islands, and the beginnings of the black diaspora associated with the slave trade. The documents show how the Portuguese tried to understand the societies with which they came into contact and to reconcile their experience with the myths and legends inherited from classical and medieval learning. They also show how Africans reacted to the coming of Europeans, adapting Christian ideas to local beliefs and making use of exotic imports and European technologies. The documents also describe the evolution of the black Portuguese communities in Guinea and the islands, as well as the slave trade and the way that it was organized, understood, and justified.

Newitt's Portuguese in West Africa is clearly the best of the recent collections of documents in English about the Portuguese presence in the early modern world. Instructors seeking to include materials about Europe's encounter with Africa before the eighteenth century will find coherent sets of readings here, as well as just enough context to frame effective discussions. And specialists in the history of Anglophone or Francophone Africa should also benefit from the readings on the Portuguese presence in Northwest and West Africa, along with useful bibliographic references." - H-Net"Given the great importance of the Portuguese as sources for the early history of West Africa, it has been a shame that it is impossible to provide students with good translations of the best primary sources. Malyn Newitt has now attempted to do this, in a well produced and translated selection of original sources on the Portuguese sources in West and West Central Africa....On the whole, this book is a useful teaching tool and likely to be useful for a long time to come." - John K. Thornton, Boston University, International Journal of African Historical StudiesAbout the AuthorMalyn Newitt is Emeritus Professor in the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies at King's College London. He is the author or editor of twelve books on Portuguese colonial history, including A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, as well as multiple journal articles.