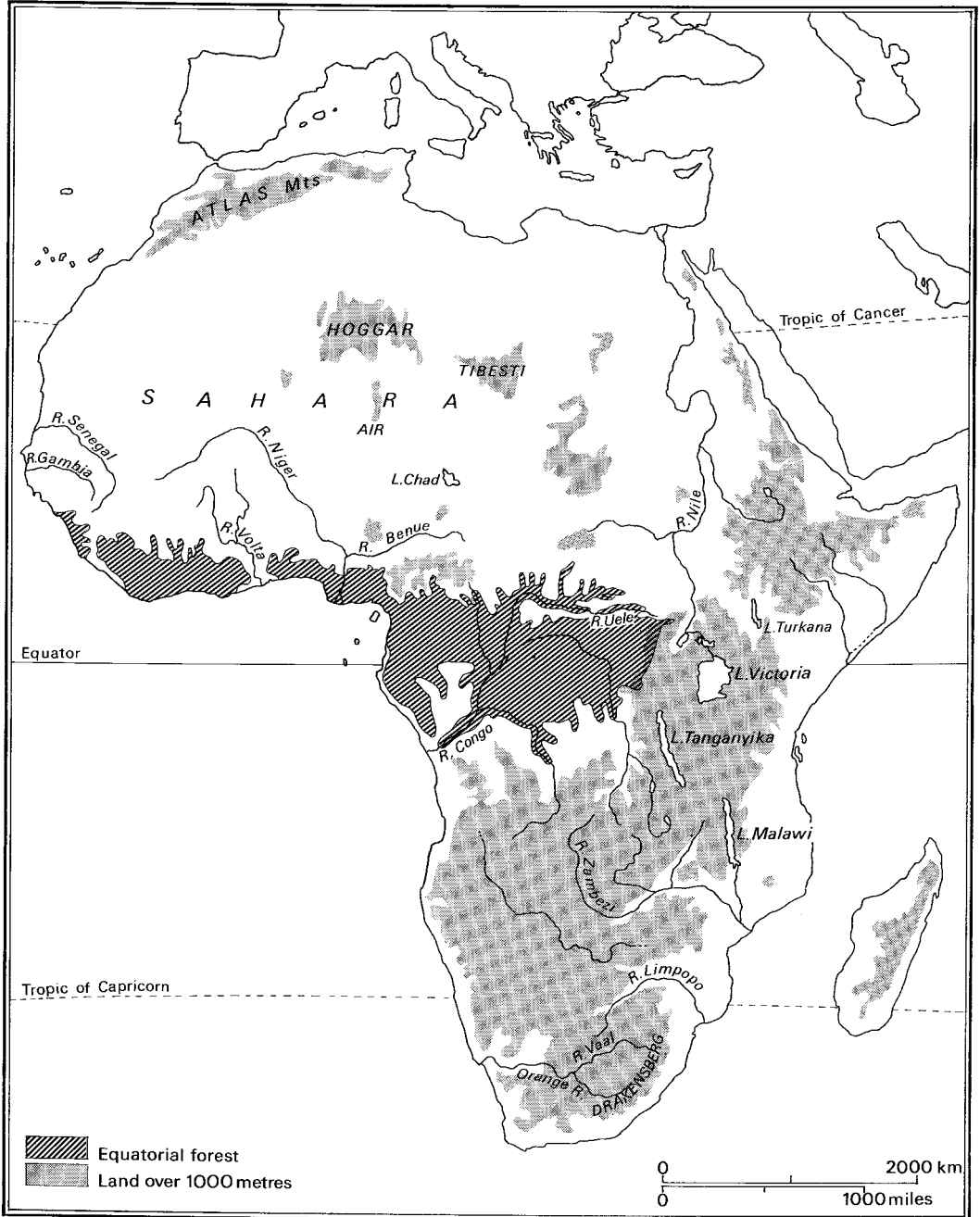


African Archaeology

Research in Africa is now accepted as an integral part of global archaeological studies. As well as providing archaeologists with their oldest material, Africa is also widely recognised as the birthplace of modern humans and their characteristic cultural patterns. Archaeological study of later periods provides unique and valuable evidence for the development of African culture and society, while ongoing research in Africa provides insights relevant to the interpretation of the archaeological record in other parts of the world. In this fully revised and expanded edition of his seminal archaeological survey, David Phillipson presents a lucid and fully illustrated account of African archaeology from pre-history and the origins of humanity to the age of European colonisation. The work spans the entire continent from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope and demonstrates the relevance of archaeological research to the understanding of Africa today.

DAVID W. PHILLIPSON FBA is Professor of African Archaeology and Director of the Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. He is a Fellow of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge.



Frontispiece The principal physical features of Africa

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To Laurel

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D. W. P.

Preface

The aim of this book, as of previous editions, is to provide an overview and guide to an increasingly complex subject. As information accumulates, the need for such an overview becomes even greater, not only for historians, general Africanists and specialists in allied disciplines, or for archaeologists of other continents, but also for Africanist archaeologists themselves, for the days are fast disappearing when any one individual can be expected to be familiar with all periods in all regions of that vast continent.

The book is intended not only to summarise data and their interpretation, but also to serve as a guide to the literature. Unlike many broad surveys, the book therefore contains a comprehensive bibliography. For each major topic I have attempted to cite primary sources, even when their interpretation is now outdated, together with the most recent contributions or evaluations. When a full account of a piece of research has been published, earlier preliminary reports are not cited. Where the full account is still awaited, or where research is ongoing, important data may be scattered among many preliminary reports. Where available, I have preferred to cite publications in English as most readily accessible and comprehensible to the majority of readers. I have not cited unpublished dissertations, conference papers or contributions to informal newsletters. Despite the length of the bibliography, much selectivity has been exercised in its compilation. It is preceded by a brief bibliographic guide, which I hope readers will find useful.

As will rapidly become apparent to the reader, the quantity and quality of research varies enormously between regions, countries, periods and topics. I have tried to even things out. The result is that some parts of the narrative (such as those on Angola) are based on a few minor discoveries, while others (on ancient Egypt, for example) attempt briefly to summarise many decades of intensive specialist research. This imbalance is inevitably reflected in the bibliography.

In this book, use of geographical names has followed, wherever possible, current African usage while seeking to maintain comprehensibility for the non-African reader. Names of countries are given in their current form, with the former Zaïre designated 'D. R. Congo' and its namesake across the river simply as 'Congo'. Care has been taken to obviate confusion between ancient Ghana and the modern republic of the same name which has a different geographical location, and between Benin City in Nigeria and the Republic of Bénin. The name 'Sudan' with a capital 'S' refers to the modern Republic

of the Sudan; spelled with a small 's', 'sudan' refers to the open savanna country which extends across Africa south of the Sahara and north of the equatorial forest.

Names of provinces and geographical features have sometimes been subject to repeated changes and foreigners can find this confusing. In this book, old and new names are sometimes used together, as for the uKhahlamba/Drakensberg mountains or Lake Edward/Rutanzige. Where a new name has become accepted in common international usage, as in the case of Lake Turkana, it is used alone. When referring to archaeological sites, the form used at the time of investigation and first substantive publication has been retained, so that 'Ternifine' is used rather than the new name 'Tighenif', and 'Broken Hill' rather than 'Kabwe'. Similarly, although the South African town formerly known as Pietersburg is now called Polokwane, the eponymous stone-tool industry retains its old name.

This book is the result of four decades' study and involvement in African archaeology. The staff of Cambridge University Press have been unfailingly helpful; an anonymous reader whom they engaged has made many suggestions for the improvement of the text. Numerous friends and colleagues have contributed to my knowledge and understanding although, needless to say, I have not always followed their advice and all errors and omissions are my sole responsibility. By far the greatest contribution has been made by my wife, Dr Laurel Phillipson, whose support – in addition to her own substantial contributions to archaeological research in Africa – has permitted my involvement, whose scholarship has contributed to almost every paragraph of the book, and whose incisive but tactful criticism has immeasurably improved it. With love and gratitude, the book is dedicated to her.

D. W. P.
1 October 2003