

## Africa A Biography Of The Continent John Reader

The acclaimed Dictionary of African Historical Biography, the only single-volume biographical work on Sub-Saharan African history, has been expanded and updated to include entries on over eight hundred people important in Sub-Saharan African history up to 1980. The acclaimed Dictionary of African Historical Biography, the only single-volume biographical work on Sub-Saharan African history, has been expanded and updated to include entries on over eight hundred people important in Sub-Saharan African history up to 1980.

Now fully revised and updated, this classic text offers an illustrated and critical narrative introduction to the history of Africa from earliest times to the present. Beginning with the evolution of mankind itself, the book traces the history of Africa through the millennia of the ancient world to the centuries of medieval and modern Africa. The clear and simple language and the wealth of carefully chosen maps and photos combine to make an essential and accessible text.

In 1952, a young Belgian scholar of European medieval history traveled to the Belgian Congo (now Zaire) to live in a remote Kuba village. Armed with a smattering of training in African cultures and language, Jan Vansina was sent to do fieldwork for a Belgian cultural agency. As it turned out, he would help found the field of African history, with a handful of other European and African scholars. "I'm not an ethnologist, I'm a historian!" Vansina was to repeat again and again to those who assumed that people without written texts have no history. His discovery that he could analyze Kuba oral tradition using the same methods he had learned for interpreting medieval dirges was a historiographical breakthrough, and his first book, *Oral Tradition as History*, is considered the seminal work that gave the study of precolonial African history both the scholarly justification and the self-confidence it had been lacking. *Living with Africa* is a compelling memoir of Vansina's life and career on three continents, interwoven with the story of African history as a scholarly specialty. In the background of his narrative are the collapse of colonialism in Africa and the emergence of newly independent nations; in the foreground are the first conferences on African history, the founding of journals and departments, and the efforts of Africans to establish a history curriculum for the schools in their new nations.

Drawing on many years of African experience, John Reader has written a book of startling grandeur and scope that recreates the great panorama of African history, from the primeval cataclysms that formed the continent to the political upheavals facing much of the continent today. Reader tells the extraordinary story of humankind's adaptation to the ferocious obstacles of forest, river and desert, and to the threat of debilitating parasites, bacteria and viruses unmatched elsewhere in the world. He also shows how the world's richest assortment of animals and plants has helped - or hindered - human progress in Africa.

Africa is forever on our TV screens, but the bad-news stories (famine, genocide, corruption) massively outweigh the good (South Africa). Ever since the process of decolonisation began in the mid-1950s, and arguably before, the continent has appeared to be stuck in a process of irreversible decline. Constant war, improper use of natural resources and misappropriation of revenues and aid monies contribute to an impression of a continent beyond hope. How did we get here? What, if anything, is to be done? Weaving together the key stories and characters of the last fifty years into a stunningly compelling and coherent narrative, Martin Meredith has produced the definitive history of how European ideas of how to organise 10,000 different ethnic groups has led to what Tony Blair described as the 'scar on the conscience of the world'. Authoritative, provocative and consistently fascinating, this is a major book on one of the most important issues facing the West today.

Bringing together historians, political scientists, and literary analysts, this volume shows how biographical narratives can shed light on alternative, little known or under-researched aspects of state power in African politics. Part 1 shows how biographical narratives breathe new life into subjects who, upon decolonization, had been reduced to silence - women, workers, and radical politicians. The contributors analyze the complex relationship between biographical narratives and power, questioning either the power of biographical codes peculiar to western, colonial origins, or the power to shape public memory. Part 2 reflects on the act of (auto-)biography writing as an exercise of power, one that blurs the lines between truth and invention.

(Auto-)biographical narratives appear as politicized, ambiguous stories. Part 3 focuses on female leadership during and after colonization, exploring on how women gained, lost, or reinvented "power". Brought together, the contributions of this volume show that the function of biographical narratives should no longer oscillate between romanticized narratives and historical evidence; their varied formats all offer fruitful opportunities for a multidisciplinary dialogue. This book will be of interest to scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds working on the African postcolonial state, the decolonization process, women's and gender studies, and biography writing.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Africa does not give up its secrets easily. Buried there lie answers about the origins of humankind and the dawn of civilisation. Through a century of archaeological investigation, scientists have transformed our understanding of the beginnings of human life, although vital clues still remain hidden. In *Born in Africa*, Martin Meredith follows the trail of discoveries about our human origins made by scientists over the last hundred years, as well as describing the history of scholarship in this incredibly exciting field. He relates the intense rivalries, personal feuds and fierce controversies that shaped the study and perception of Africa, and recounts the feats of skill and endurance that have illuminated thousands of years of human evolution. The results have been momentous. Scientists have identified more than twenty species of extinct humans and firmly established Africa as the birthplace not only of humankind, but also of our own species: homo sapiens, the modern human. Scientific study has revealed how early technology, language ability and artistic endeavour all originated in Africa, and scientists have shown how, in an exodus sixty thousand years ago, small groups of Africans left their birthplace to populate the rest of the world. We all have an African legacy, and in this fascinating and informative book Martin Meredith leads us back to the place where we have rediscovered our common human heritage.

Most of us still know less about Africa's past and peoples than we do about the continent's wild animals. And what we do know is colored by romance - safaris and treks and camel caravans, Solomon's mine and Tutankhamun's curse, the shores of Tripoli and the snows of Kilimanjaro. Yet the ancestor of all humankind may have lived in Africa. The world's longest-lived, literate civilization was African. Through the ages, great civilizations rose and fell in what was once called "darkest" Africa, leaving behind mysterious fortresses and splendid art. Christianity and Islam

battled age-old beliefs - and each other. Traders on camels were followed by explorers in caravels and by a plague of invaders, hungry for ivory and diamonds and the "black gold" of slavery. In just the last half century, independence has swept away the old maps and colonial ways to jar the balance of the world. Here is Africa's story.

In a richly designed work with maps, portraits, and graphics throughout, the award-winning author of the Jumbies series shows readers this underrepresented side of Black history and Black excellence.

For thousands of years, the majestic elephant has roamed the African continent, as beloved by man as it has been preyed upon. But centuries of exploitation and ivory hunting have taken their toll: now, as wars and poachers continue to ravage its habitat, as disease and political strife deflect attention from its plight, the African elephant faces imminent extinction. What will become of these magnificent beasts? As the elephant's future looms ever darker, Martin Meredith's concise and richly illustrated biography traces the elephant's history from the first ivory expeditions of the Egyptian pharaohs 2500 years ago to today, exploring along the way the indelible imprint the African elephant has made in art, literature, culture, and society. He shares recent extraordinary discoveries about the elephant's sophisticated family and community structure and reveals the remarkable ways in which elephants show compassion and loyalty to each other. Elegant, illuminating, and urgent, *Elephant Destiny* offers a beautiful and important tribute to one of earth's most magisterial creatures at the very moment it threatens to vanish from being. Africa has been coveted for its riches ever since the era of the Pharaohs. In past centuries, it was the lure of gold, ivory, and slaves that drew fortune-seekers, merchant-adventurers, and conquerors from afar. In modern times, the focus of attention is on oil, diamonds, and other valuable minerals. Land was another prize. The Romans relied on their colonies in northern Africa for vital grain shipments to feed the population of Rome. Arab invaders followed in their wake, eventually colonizing the entire region. More recently, foreign corporations have acquired huge tracts of land to secure food supplies needed abroad, just as the Romans did. In this vast and vivid panorama of history, Martin Meredith follows the fortunes of Africa over a period of 5,000 years. With compelling narrative, he traces the rise and fall of ancient kingdoms and empires; the spread of Christianity and Islam; the enduring quest for gold and other riches; the exploits of explorers and missionaries; and the impact of European colonization. He examines, too, the fate of modern African states and concludes with a glimpse of their future. His cast of characters includes religious leaders, mining magnates, warlords, dictators, and many other legendary figures—among them Mansa Musa, ruler of the medieval Mali empire, said to be the richest man the world has ever known. "I speak of Africa," Shakespeare wrote, "and of golden joys." This is history on an epic scale.

This is the hardcover scholarly edition of the award-winning English translation of the earliest-known book-length biography of an African woman, and one of the few lives of an African woman written by Africans before the nineteenth century. As such, it provides an exceedingly rare and valuable picture of the experiences and thoughts of Africans, especially women, before the modern era. It is also an extraordinary account of a remarkable life—full of vivid dialogue, heartbreak, and triumph. *The Life and Struggles of Our Mother Walatta Petros (1672)* tells the story of an Ethiopian saint who led a successful nonviolent movement to preserve African Christian beliefs in the face of European protocolonialism. When the Jesuits tried to convert the Ethiopians from their ancient form of Christianity, Walatta Petros (1592–1642), a noblewoman and the wife of one of the emperor's counselors, risked her life by leaving her husband, who supported the conversion effort, and leading the struggle against the Jesuits. After her death, her disciples wrote this book, praising her as a friend of women, a devoted reader, a skilled preacher, and a radical leader. One of the earliest stories of African resistance to European influence, this biography also provides a picture of domestic life, including Walatta Petros's life-long relationship with a female companion. Richly illustrated with dozens of color illustrations from early manuscripts, this groundbreaking volume provides an authoritative and highly readable translation along with an extensive introduction. Other features include a chronology of Walatta Petros's life, maps, a comprehensive glossary, and detailed notes on textual variants.

"An enthralling story . . . A work of history that reads like a novel." — Christian Science Monitor "As Hochschild's brilliant book demonstrates, the great Congo scandal prefigured our own times . . . This book must be read and reread." — Los Angeles Times Book Review In the late nineteenth century, as the European powers were carving up Africa, King Leopold II of Belgium carried out a brutal plundering of the territory surrounding the Congo River. Ultimately slashing the area's population by ten million, he still managed to shrewdly cultivate his reputation as a great humanitarian. A tale far richer than any novelist could invent, *King Leopold's Ghost* is the horrifying account of a megalomaniac of monstrous proportions. It is also the deeply moving portrait of those who defied Leopold: African rebel leaders who fought against hopeless odds and a brave handful of missionaries, travelers, and young idealists who went to Africa for work or adventure but unexpectedly found themselves witnesses to a holocaust and participants in the twentieth century's first great human rights movement. A National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist A New York Times Notable Book

Most histories seek to understand modern Africa as a troubled outcome of nineteenth century European colonialism, but that is only a small part of the story. In this celebrated book, beautifully translated from the French edition, the history of Africa in the nineteenth century unfolds from the perspective of Africans themselves rather than the European powers. It was above all a time of tremendous internal change on the African continent. Great jihads of Muslim conquest and conversion swept over West Africa. In the interior, warlords competed to control the internal slave trade. In the east, the sultanate of Zanzibar extended its reach via coastal and interior trade routes. In the north, Egypt began to modernize while Algeria was colonized. In the south, a series of forced migrations accelerated, spurred by the progression of white settlement. Through much of the century African societies assimilated and adapted to the changes generated by these diverse forces. In the end, the West's technological advantage prevailed and most of Africa fell under European control and lost its independence. Yet only by taking into account the rich complexity of this tumultuous past can we fully understand modern Africa from the colonial period to independence and the difficulties of today.

Little known in the English-speaking world, Burundi is Rwanda's twin, a small Central African country with a complex history of ethnic tension between its Hutu and Tutsi populations that has itself experienced traumatic events, including mass killings of over 200,000 people. The country remained in a state of simmering civil war until 2004, after which Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela took turns as mediators in a lengthy, and eventually successful, peace process which has endowed Burundi with new institutions, including a new constitution, that led to the election of a majority Hutu government in 2005. But there are many problems still to solve apart from ethnic tensions, above all the entrenched poverty of most Burundians, which has seen it designated by NGOs as one of the most deprived countries on earth. Nigel Watt's book discusses the troubled political fortunes of this beautiful, yet disturbed country in the heart of Central



Africa. He traces the origins of its political crises, sheds light on Burundi's recent history by means of interviews with leading participants and those whose lives have been affected by horrific events, and helps demystify the country's ethnic divisions.

Born to Rule is the autobiography of an African-president monarch who does not want to pass away without leaving anything in writing to future generations. The book is more than just the autobiography of a president in that it has responded to all the key issues that most people have been asking about the development and underdevelopment of Africa. It is a seminal contribution to the world's collective knowledge of African and world history. At times it is compellingly incisive, satiric, and tongue-in-cheek and, in some places, trenchantly hard-hitting and humorous in its brutal portrayal of the way Mandzah and, by extension, the African continent, is managed and mismanaged.

An introduction to the complex relationship between African Americans and the African continent What is an "African American" and how does this identity relate to the African continent? Rising immigration levels, globalization, and the United States' first African American president have all sparked new dialogue around the question. This book provides an introduction to the relationship between African Americans and Africa from the era of slavery to the present, mapping several overlapping diasporas. The diversity of African American identities through relationships with region, ethnicity, slavery, and immigration are all examined to investigate questions fundamental to the study of African American history and culture.

Tells the story of the former slave who was the English-speaking world's most renowned person of African descent in the 1700s and is considered the founding father of both the African and the African American literary traditions.

Presents a narrative of the last fifty years of African history, analyzing the factors which account for the political chaos, financial troubles, and civil wars which prevail in many African countries today.

The incredible true account of World War I in Africa and General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, the last undefeated German commander. "Let me say straight out that if all military histories were as thrilling and well written as Robert Gaudi's African Kaiser, I might give up reading fiction and literary biography... Gaudi writes with the flair of a latter-day Macaulay. He sets his scenes carefully and describes naval and military action like a novelist."—Michael Dirda, *The Washington Post* As World War I ravaged the European continent, a completely different theater of war was being contested in Africa. And from this very different kind of war, there emerged a very different kind of military leader.... At the beginning of the twentieth century, the continent of Africa was a hotbed of international trade, colonialism, and political gamesmanship. So when World War I broke out, the European powers were forced to contend with one another not just in the bloody trenches, but in the treacherous jungle. And it was in that unforgiving land that General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck would make history. With the now-legendary Schutztruppe (Defensive Force), von Lettow-Vorbeck and a small cadre of hardened German officers fought alongside their fanatically devoted native African allies as equals, creating the first truly integrated army of the modern age. African Kaiser is the fascinating story of a forgotten guerrilla campaign in a remote corner of Equatorial Africa in World War I; of a small army of ultraloyal African troops led by a smaller cadre of rugged German officers—of white men and black who fought side by side. But mostly it is the story of von Lettow-Vorbeck—the only undefeated German commander in the field during World War I and the last to surrender his arms.

Describes the landscapes, plants, animals, history, and current conditions and ways of life of the continent of Africa.

The first English-language publication of a major history of the Great Lakes region of Africa.

Covers the history of the entire African continent, from prehistory to the present day A Companion to African History embraces the diverse regions, subject matter, and disciplines of the African continent, while also providing chronological and geographical coverage of basic historical developments. Two dozen essays by leading international scholars explore the challenges facing this relatively new field of historical enquiry and present the dynamic ways in which historians and scholars from other fields such as archaeology, anthropology, political science, and economics are forging new directions in thinking and research. Comprised of six parts, the book begins with thematic approaches to African history—exploring the environment, gender and family, medical practices, and more. Section two covers Africa's early history and its pre-colonial past—early human adaptation, the emergence of kingdoms, royal power, and warring states. The third section looks at the era of the slave trade and European expansion. Part four examines the process of conquest—the discovery of diamonds and gold, military and social response, and more. Colonialism is discussed in the sixth section, with chapters on the economy transformed due to the development of agriculture and mining industries. The last section studies the continent from post World War II all the way up to modern times. Aims at capturing the enthusiasms of practicing historians, and encouraging similar passion in a new generation of scholars Emphasizes linkages within Africa as well as between the continent and other parts of the world All chapters include significant historiographical content and suggestions for further reading Written by a global team of writers with unique backgrounds and views Features case studies with illustrative examples In a field traditionally marked by narrow specialisms, A Companion to African History is an ideal book for advanced students, researchers, historians, and scholars looking for a broad yet unique overview of African history as a whole.

This fourth edition of this best-selling core history textbook offers a richly illustrated, single volume, narrative introduction to African history, from a hugely respected authority in the field. The market-leading range of illustrated material from prior editions is now further improved, featuring not only additional and redrawn maps and a refreshed selection of photographs, but the addition of full colour to make these even more instructive, evocative and attractive. Already hugely popular on introductory African History courses, the book has been widely praised for its engaging and readable style, and is unrivalled in scope, both geographically and chronologically - while many competitors limit themselves to certain regions or eras, Shillington chronicles the entire continent, from prehistory right up to the present day. For this new edition, both content and layout have been thoroughly refreshed and restructured to make this wealth of material easily navigable, and even more appealing to students unfamiliar with the subject. National Museums in Africa brings the voices of African museum professionals into dialogue with scholars and, by so doing, is able to consider the state of African national museums from fresh perspectives. Covering all regions of the continent, the volume's thirteen chapters allow for a deep and nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between past and present in contemporary Africa. Taking stock of the shifting museum landscape in Africa, with new players like China and South Korea challenging the conditions of cultural exchange, the book demonstrates that national museums are being rediscovered as important sites of political engagement and cultural negotiation. This is the first book to critically examine the roles national museums in Africa have played in the societies in which they are situated, but it is also the first to consider the roles that national museums might play in current debates concerning the restitution and repatriation of cultural patrimony taken from Africa during the colonial era. Informed by a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective, this ground-breaking book will appeal to anyone interested in museums in Africa. It will be particularly useful to scholars and students working in the areas of museum and heritage studies, African studies, anthropology, archaeology, history, art history and cultural studies.

In *Out of Africa*, author Isak Dinesen takes a wistful and nostalgic look back on her years living in Africa on a Kenyan coffee plantation. Recalling the lives of friends and neighbours—both African and European—Dinesen provides a first-hand perspective of colonial Africa. Through her obvious love of both the landscape and her time in Africa, Dinesen's meditative writing style deeply reflects the themes of loss as her plantation fails and she returns to Europe. HarperTorch brings great works of non-fiction and the dramatic arts to life in digital format, upholding the highest standards in ebook production and

celebrating reading in all its forms. Look for more titles in the HarperTorch collection to build your digital library.

One of history's most multifaceted rulers but little known in the West, Queen Njinga rivaled Elizabeth I and Catherine the Great in political cunning and military prowess. Today, she is revered in Angola as a heroine and honored in folk religions. Her complex legacy forms a crucial part of the collective memory of the Afro-Atlantic world.

Between 1730 and 1750, powerful healer and vodun priest Domingos Alvares traversed the colonial Atlantic world like few Africans of his time--from Africa to South America to Europe--addressing the profound alienation of warfare, capitalism, and the African slave trade through the language of health and healing. In Domingos Alvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World, James H. Sweet finds dramatic means for unfolding a history of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world in which healing, religion, kinship, and political subversion were intimately connected.

Miriam Makeba, a Grammy Award-winning South African singer, rose to fame in the hearts of her people at the pinnacle of apartheid—a brutal system of segregation similar to American Jim Crow laws. Mama Africa, as they called her, raised her voice to help combat these injustices at jazz clubs in Johannesburg; in exile, at a rally beside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and before the United Nations. Set defiantly in the present tense, this biography offers readers an intimate view of Makeba's fight for equality. Kathryn Erskine's call-and-response style text and Charly Palmer's bold illustrations come together in a raw, riveting duet of protest song and praise poem. A testament to how a single voice helped to shake up the world—and can continue to do so.

This volume presents new research and critical debates in African book history, and brings together a range of disciplinary perspectives by leading scholars in the subject. It includes case studies from across Africa, ranging from third-century manuscript traditions to twenty-first century internet communications.

#### Publisher Description

A “profound and soul-nourishing memoir” (Oprah Daily) from an African girl whose near-death experience sparked a lifelong dedication to humanitarian work that helps bring change across the world. When severe drought hit her village in Zimbabwe, Elizabeth Nyamayaro, then only eight, had no idea that this moment of utter devastation would come to define her life's purpose. Unable to move from hunger and malnourishment, she encountered a United Nations aid worker who gave her a bowl of warm porridge and saved her life—a transformative moment that inspired Elizabeth to dedicate herself to giving back to her community, her continent, and the world. In the decades that have followed, Elizabeth has been instrumental in creating change and uplifting the lives of others: by fighting global inequalities, advancing social justice for vulnerable communities, and challenging the status quo to accelerate women's rights around the world. She has served as a senior advisor at the United Nations, where she launched HeForShe, one of the world's largest global solidarity movements for gender equality. In I Am a Girl from Africa, she charts this “journey of perseverance” (Entertainment Weekly) from her small village of Goromonzi to Harare, Zimbabwe; London; New York; and beyond, always grounded by the African concept of ubuntu—“I am because we are”—taught to her by her beloved grandmother. This “victorious” (The New York Times Book Review) memoir brings to vivid life one extraordinary woman's story of persevering through incredible odds and finding her true calling—while delivering an important message of hope, empowerment, community support, and interdependence.

There is a paradox about Africa: it remains a subject that attracts considerable attention yet rarely is there a full appreciation of its complexity. African historiography has typically consisted of writing Africa for Europe—instead of writing Africa for itself, as itself, from its own perspectives. The History of Africa redresses this by letting the perspectives of Africans themselves take center stage. Authoritative and comprehensive, this book provides a wide-ranging history of Africa from earliest prehistory to the present day—using the cultural, social, political, and economic lenses of Africa as instruments to illuminate the ordinary lives of Africans. The result is a fresh survey that includes a wealth of indigenous ideas, African concepts, and traditional outlooks that have escaped the writing of African history in the West. The new edition includes information on the Arab Spring, the rise of FrancAfrica, the presence of the Chinese in Africa, and the birth of South Sudan. The chapters go up to the present day, addressing US President Barack Obama's policies toward Africa. A new companion website provides students and scholars of Africa with access to a wealth of supporting resources for each chapter, including images, video and audio clips, and links to sites for further research. This straightforward, illustrated, and factual text allows the reader to access the major developments, personalities, and events on the African continent. This groundbreaking survey is an indispensable guide to African history.

A History of Africa is a thorough narrative history of the continent from its beginnings to the twenty-first century. Long established at the forefront of African Studies, this book addresses the events of the 1990s and beyond. The issues discussed include: post-apartheid South Africa the prospects for democratization in Africa at the beginning of the new millennium developments in Muslim North Africa including the threat of Islamic fundamentalism economic and social developments including the devastating impact of Third World debt and the provision of debt relief cultural, environmental and gender issues in Modern Africa.

The one hundred year history of how Europe coerced the African continent into its various empires—and the resulting story of how Africa succeeded in decolonization. In this dramatic (and often tragic) story of an era that radically changed the course of world history, Lawrence James investigates how, within one hundred years, Europeans persuaded and coerced Africa into becoming a subordinate part of the modern world. His narrative is laced with the experiences of participants and onlookers and introduces the men and women who, for better or worse, stamped their wills on Africa. The continent was a magnet for the high-minded, the adventurous, the philanthropic, the unscrupulous. Visionary pro-consuls rubbed shoulders with missionaries, explorers, soldiers, big-game hunters, entrepreneurs, and physicians. Between 1830 and 1945, Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, Portugal, Italy and the United States exported their languages, laws, culture, religions, scientific and technical knowledge and economic systems to Africa. The colonial powers imposed administrations designed to bring stability and peace to a continent that appeared to lack both. The justification for occupation was emancipation from slavery—and the common assumption that late nineteenth-century Europe was the summit of civilization. By 1945 a transformed continent was preparing to take charge of its own affairs, a process of decolonization that took a quick twenty years. This magnificent history also pauses to ask: what did not happen and why?

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