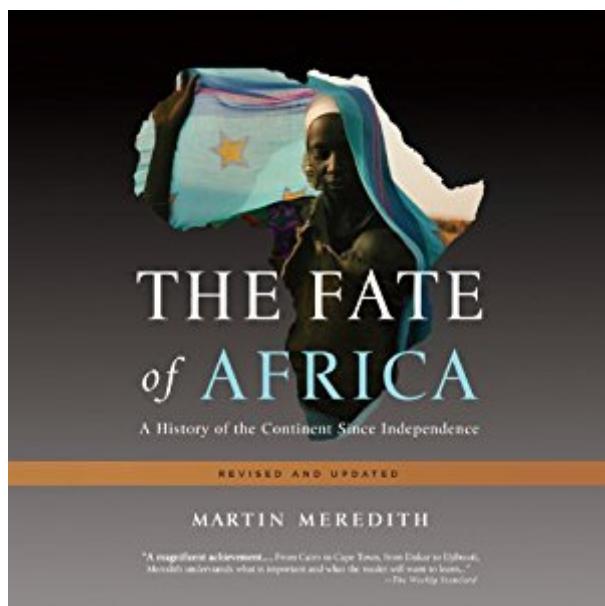


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# The Fate Of Africa: A History Of The Continent Since Independence



## **Synopsis**

Martin Meredith has revised this classic history to incorporate important recent developments, including the Darfur crisis in Sudan, Robert Mugabe's continued destructive rule in Zimbabwe, controversies over Western aid and exploitation of Africa's resources, the growing importance and influence of China, and the democratic movement roiling the North African countries of Tunisia, Egypt, and Jordan.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Martin Meredith's history of Africa since independence provides a critical service to the general reader -- telling clearly and comprehensively what has happened in Africa since 1960. In so doing, he covers an vast amount of material. There are at present over 50 African states, and they vary enormously, in terms of culture, resources, history, and on and on. Meredith discusses all of the major and most of the minor countries individually, moving forward through time in what is a triumph of organization. If I want in future to review the recent history of one or another African country -- or of some cross-border phenomena -- I shall know where to turn. It is probably too much to expect an explanation at the end of this chronicle. Mr. Meredith's history presents a harrowing account of war after war, dictator after dictator, famine after famine, and mass murder after mass murder. They differ from country to country, of course, but the pattern of kleptocracy combined with monomania emerges again and again. At the end, one has to wonder why, and Mr. Meredith does not really present many answers. It may not be possible to do so, but I wish he had tried. Upon finishing this book, I went back to to see if there is another on the same topic -- is Africa's history since

independence really so totally hopeless? I didn't find anything of anything like Mr. Meredith's level of seriousness that presented a less pessimistic view, at least not based on writeups and reviews. For now, I remain stunned, and curious.

Martin Meredith's "The Fate of Africa" is an extensively researched 700 page tome that takes the reader throughout the African continent in the fifty years since independence from the Europeans who colonized them. There are many commonalities among the many countries covered throughout the book such as: hastily drawn and arbitrary European colonial borders, lack of preparation for post-colonial governance, a group of nationalistic leaders who morphed into autocratic leaders more concerned with power and enriching themselves and a narrow band of cronies at the expense of the state and the people. In this way, Africa shares a common fate. Readers should not be scared off by the sheer size of the book as Meredith has a writing style that flows easily. The pages just seem to fly by once one dares to dive in. Readers end up engrossed in narratives of the great hope of independence following colonization, and the disillusionment that often followed with: personality cults, weak economies, war, autocratic states with weak institutions etc. While rulers got rich, the average African was left to a most dismal fate: struggling to survive. Weighty, but worth the time, if one wants to begin to understand Africa.

This book is a great introduction to modern African history and culture. It presents in sufficient detail all the transformations that the countries went through, and it explains important historical factors that continue to influence current culture and social institutions. It is also important to note that the prose is easygoing and captivating. Meredith integrates storytelling to help ground her readers in the historical moment. I highly recommend this book for anyone who is interested in Africa but who grew up elsewhere. It gives a really comprehensive overview of the essentials you need to know.

Since having made short trips to Cote d'Ivoire in 2010 and 2014, I have had much more interest in Africa than previously. I had the privilege of meeting some wonderful people there who I now consider good friends. All that just to say how much I enjoyed reading about other countries in Africa, which is after all a very large continent. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to understand the background of stories we see in the news. I hope some of the people in the US State Department read it.

This was a book I could not put down. I bought it because I was frustrated in not understanding why

there is always a current problem in Africa. This book was one of the few I have ever seen on that had all 5 star reviews. I cannot say enough good about this book. It was a gargantuan fete to synthesize 60 yrs. of history and I think the author did an excellent job. My eyes have been opened to the reasons for the continuing strife and poverty in Africa. It is truly astounding to read about the "leaders" in the African countries written about in this book. The author blames western countries along with the indigenous "leaders" but it is not a bashing of the western powers, I think the sign of a good book is when it makes a person want to read more. I have read two more books about Africa because of this book. I would give this book 6 stars if I could.

useful

If you want to get to grips wth the recent history of Africa then start here. Meredith has skilfully woven a rich and endlessly fascinating (and at times horrifying) narrative of Africa's recent history. One of the best history books I have read and will likely re-read.

I have been reading a fair amount about Africa of late and this book is the single best overall comprehensive overview of Africa as a whole since "independence." The author holds NO "punches." If you want to see how much of a basket case the continent is this is THE book. It is LONG but I really enjoyed learning from it. If you need 1 book to learn about modern Africa, I think this is hard to beat!

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