

## Recommended Reading

### COLONIAL ERA

***King Leopold's Ghost*, by Adam Hochschild** - A detailed account of the genocidal plundering of the Congo by the Belgian King in the 1880s. Hochschild also discusses the international battle, joined by Mark Twain, The Archbishop of Canterbury, and Roger Casement, among others, to expose and halt the massacre. "Hochschild's outstanding study, unmatched by any other work on the Congo, reveals how all Europe and the USA contributed to the making of King Leopold's holocaust of the Congolese people. Perhaps the most startling fact about Adam Hochschild's new book is that the subject remains so unfamiliar. Even in this century of genocide, how can the deaths of some 10 million people have gone unnoticed?"

***Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe** - One of Chinua Achebe's many achievements in his acclaimed first novel, *Things Fall Apart*, is his relentlessly unsentimental rendering of Nigerian tribal life before and after the coming of colonialism. First published in 1958, just two years before Nigeria declared independence from Great Britain, the book eschews the obvious temptation of depicting pre-colonial life as a kind of Eden. Instead, Achebe sketches a world in which violence, war, and suffering exist, but are balanced by a strong sense of tradition, ritual, and social coherence. Deceptively simple in its prose, *Things Fall Apart* packs a powerful punch as Achebe holds up the ruin of one proud man to stand for the destruction of an entire culture.

***The Scramble for Africa*, by Thomas Pakenham** - A dramatic telling of the imperialist struggle over Africa, a quick and violent grab for territory in which Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, and Italy vied for power and markets. In a mere 34 years the European powers carved up an entire continent. Pakenham offers an engrossing-and appalling-narrative of panoramic scope

***Ake: The Years of Childhood*, by Wole Soyinka** - An extraordinarily vivid recreation of a happy, middle-class, quintessential African childhood. "I know of few better illustrations of Baudelaire's statement about the child: for him, everything is new, he is always exhilarated"-New Society

***Out of Africa and Shadows on the Grass*, by Isak Dinesen** - A reissue of the book that inspired the critically acclaimed movie version. With classic simplicity and a painter's feeling for atmosphere and detail, Isak Dinesen tells of the years she spent from 1914 to 1931 managing a coffee plantation in Kenya.

### COLONIAL TO POST-COLONIAL TRANSITION

***The Polsonwood Bible*, by Barbara Kingsolver** - This is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it -from garden seeds to Scripture - is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa. The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy.

***Coming to Birth*, by Marjorie Oludhe MacGoye** - Marjorie Macgoye is among Africa's most distinguished novelists, highly praised by critics and often regarded as the "mother of Kenyan literature." In this quietly powerful and eminently readable novel, Macgoye deftly interweaves the story of one young woman's tumultuous coming of age with the history of a nation emerging from colonialism.

## POST COLONIAL ERA

***Introduction to African Religions*, by John S. Mbiti** - This revision of a standard text (LJ 7/75) provides an excellent overview of native religion in Africa. It also offers a useful and up-to-date list of books for more advanced reading, questions for each chapter, and a collection of wise sayings to illustrate oral tradition. The comprehensiveness of the treatment of where African religion is found, the discussion of its god, spirits, and cosmology, and of how human life is related to the religion make this book especially helpful to those familiar only with religions having sacred scriptures. Highly recommended for all libraries, whether or not they have the earlier edition.

***Africa*, edited by Martin & Omeara** - It is an attractive and scholarly book...and provides an excellent introductory overview of the continent in the past and the present.

***What Is Africa's Problem?*, by Yoweri K. Museveni** - This collection of Museveni's writings and speeches lays out the possibilities for social change in Africa. Working with a broad historical understanding and an intimate knowledge of the problems at hand, Museveni describes how movements can be formed to foster democracy, how class consciousness can transcend tribal differences in the development of democratic institutions, and how the politics of identity operate in postcolonial Africa. Museveni's own contributions to the overthrow of Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko and to the political transformation of Uganda suggest the kind of change that may sweep Africa in decades to come. *What Is Africa's Problem?* gives a firsthand look at what those changes might be, how they might come about, and what they might mean. Yoweri K. Museveni is president of Uganda.

***The Famished Road*, by Ben Okri** - Winner of the 1991 Booker Prize, this phantasmagorical novel is set in the ghetto of an African city during British colonial rule, and follows the story of Azaro—a "spirit-child" who has reneged on a pact with the spirit world—and the travails of his impoverished, beleaguered family.

***Notes from the Hyena's Belly*, by Nega Mezlekia**- In this powerful memoir, Nega Mezlekia recalls in vivid detail his boyhood in the arid city of Jijiga, Ethiopia, and his bold journey to manhood during the 1970s and 1980s, his country's most turbulent period. *Notes from the Hyena's Belly* teems with the smells, sights and sounds of life in the Horn of Africa—its violent, ingenious humans and its underworld of screeching monkeys, lions and hyenas. Part autobiography and part social history, this is an unforgettable portrait of a world where the boundaries of credulity are challenged daily. Out of this rich, sundrenched land where modern corruption rides ancient custom like a predator, Mezlekia crafts a world elegant in its aridity, extreme in its absurdity and vast in its ironies.

***AID to Africa*, by Carol Lancaster** - Why, despite decades of high levels of foreign aid, has development been so disappointing in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, leading to rising numbers of poor and fueling political instabilities? While not ignoring the culpability of Africans in these problems, Carol Lancaster finds that much of the responsibility is in the hands of the governments and international aid agencies that provide assistance to the region. The first examination of its kind, *Aid to Africa* investigates the impact of bureaucratic politics, special interest groups, and public opinion in aid-giving countries and agencies. This balanced but tough-minded analysis does not reject the potential usefulness of foreign aid but does offer recommendations for fundamental changes in how governments and multilateral aid agencies can operate more effectively.

## OTHER

***Long walk to Freedom*, by Nelson Mandela** - Nelson Mandela is one of the great moral and political leaders of our time: an international hero whose lifelong dedication to the fight against racial oppression in South Africa won him the Nobel Peace Prize and the presidency of his country. Since his triumphant

release in 1990 from more than a quarter-century of imprisonment, Mandela has been at the center of the most compelling and inspiring political drama in the world. As president of the African National Congress and head of South Africa's anti-apartheid movement, he was instrumental in moving the nation toward multiracial government and majority rule. He is revered everywhere as a vital force in the fight for human rights and racial equality. *Long Walk to Freedom* is his moving and exhilarating autobiography, a book destined to take its place among the finest memoirs of history's greatest figures. Here for the first time, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela tells the extraordinary story of his life - an epic of struggle, setback, renewed hope, and ultimate triumph, which has, until now, been virtually unknown to most of the world.

***Six Feet of the Country*, by Nadine Gordimer** - This slim, arresting collection of seven stories from one of South Africa's preeminent writers, portions of which have appeared elsewhere, is set in and near Johannesburg. The title story tells of a black who has traveled hundreds of miles from his native Rhodesia to start a new life in Johannesburg, where there is the promise of work. Tragically, however, he dies, as do many of the natives, who struggle under the harsh circumstances. The man's family and people plan to provide a proper burial, but their meager means cannot provide a proper grave - "six feet of country." There are other stories of love between men and women, white for black, black for white; and the anguish of the common people of this country, black and white, is presented with humanity and a discerning eye and ear. Gordimer is particularly adept at showing the frailty of mankind, the heartache of simple people trying to live, to work, and to find love and warmth.

***The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, by Jeffrey Sachs** - Sachs came to fame advising "shock therapy" for moribund economies in the 1980s (with arguably positive results); more recently, as director of Columbia University's Earth Institute, he has made news with a plan to end global "extreme poverty"--which, he says, kills 20,000 people a day--within 20 years. While much of the plan has been known to economists and government leaders for a number of years (including Kofi Annan, to whom Sachs is special advisor), this is Sachs's first systematic exposition of it for a general audience, and it is a landmark book. For on-the-ground research in reducing disease, poverty, armed conflict and environmental damage, Sachs has been to more than 100 countries, representing 90% of the world's population. The book combines his practical experience with sharp professional analysis and clear exposition. Over 18 chapters, Sachs builds his case carefully, offering a variety of case studies, detailing small-scale projects that have worked and crunching large amounts of data. His basic argument is that "[W]hen the preconditions of basic infrastructure (roads, power, and ports) and human capital (health and education) are in place, markets are powerful engines of development." In order to tread "the path to peace and prosperity," Sachs believes it is incumbent upon successful market economies to bring the few areas of the world that still need help onto "the ladder of development." Writing in a straightforward but engaging first person, Sachs keeps his tone even whether discussing failed states or thriving ones. For the many who will buy this book but, perhaps, not make it all the way through, chapters 12 through 14 contain the blueprint for Sachs's solution to poverty, with the final four making a rigorous case for why rich countries (and individuals) should collectively undertake it--and why it is affordable for them to do so. If there is any one work to put extreme poverty back onto the global agenda, this is it.

***The Heartbeat of Indigenous Africa – A Study of Chagga Educational System*, by R. Sambuli Mosha** - Dr. Mosha was the Program Officer of Global Alliance for Africa's Tanzanian office and Tumaini Center.

***Mandela, Mobutu, and Me: A Bittersweet Journal of Africa*, by Lynne Duke**

***Lonely Planet East Africa (Travel Guide)*, by Mary Fitzpatrick, Nick Ray, and R. Parkinson**

***The Covenant*, by James A. Michener**

***Where There Are No Doctors - A Village Health Care Handbook*, by David Werner**