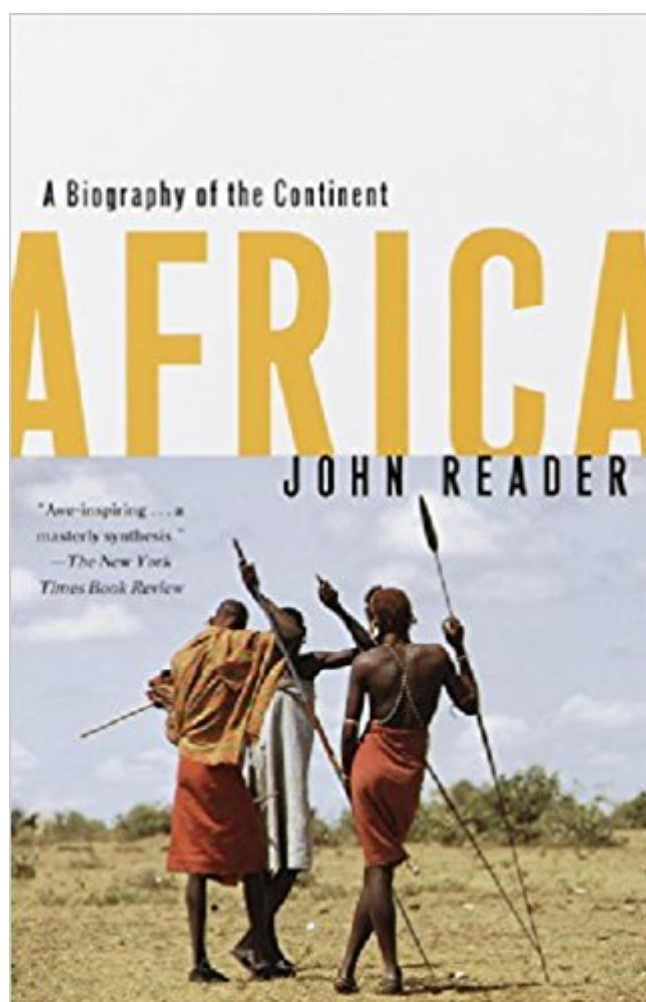


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Africa: A Biography Of The Continent



Synopsis

"Awe-inspiring . . . a masterly synthesis." --The New York Times Book Review
"Deeply penetrating, intensely thought-provoking and thoroughly informed . . . one of the most important general surveys of Africa that has been produced in the last decade." --The Washington Post
In 1978, paleontologists in East Africa discovered the earliest evidence of our divergence from the apes: three pre-human footprints, striding away from a volcano, were preserved in the petrified surface of a mudpan over three million years ago. Out of Africa, the world's most ancient and stable landmass, Homo sapiens dispersed across the globe. And yet the continent that gave birth to human history has long been woefully misunderstood and mistreated by the rest of the world. In a book as splendid in its wealth of information as it is breathtaking in scope, British writer and photojournalist John Reader brings to light Africa's geology and evolution, the majestic array of its landforms and environments, the rich diversity of its peoples and their ways of life, the devastating legacies of slavery and colonialism as well as recent political troubles and triumphs. Written in simple, elegant prose and illustrated with Reader's own photographs, *Africa: A Biography of the Continent* is an unforgettable book that will delight the general reader and expert alike. "Breathtaking in its scope and detail."
--San Francisco Chronicle

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this excellent well written fast paced narrative the author takes us on a whirlwind tour of African history from the dawn of man to the present. He gives us small snippets of African history, wonderful tales and illuminating anecdotes. From the Diamond trade to the Slave trade, the to formation of

modern states, tribal infighting, the arrival of Europeans and the failed states of today this book is a rip roaring wonderful account of Africa. Beautiful portraits are given of African kingdoms and the colonial world as well as the independence movements, this books catches the culture and feelings of a continent. However there is one major hole in this book, one that exists throughout African historical narrative, the complete ignoring of the Islamic slave trade in Africa. According to this read Slavery was endemic to Africa, Africans practiced slavery, slaves were sold at Zanzibar, the Europeans refined the slave trade and then England fought slavery. But there is one thing missing. Who was running Zanzibar, why is there a city in Tanzania called Dar es Salaam. The book almost completely ignores 1000 years of Arab and Islamic penetration, subjugation, slavery and trade that took place all throughout the Sahara and East Africa. The anti-slavery campaign of the British was primarily aimed at ending Arab slave trade in East Africa, since the European slave trade in west Africa had been ended by the 1860s. Arab slave traders were so common and powerful that much of Tanzania and Kenya were depopulated of Africans and the slavers had to reach as far as the Congo for their human cargo(Tipoo Tip was the trader in question). It was the Arab thirst for slaves that propelled Africans into the slave trade.

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