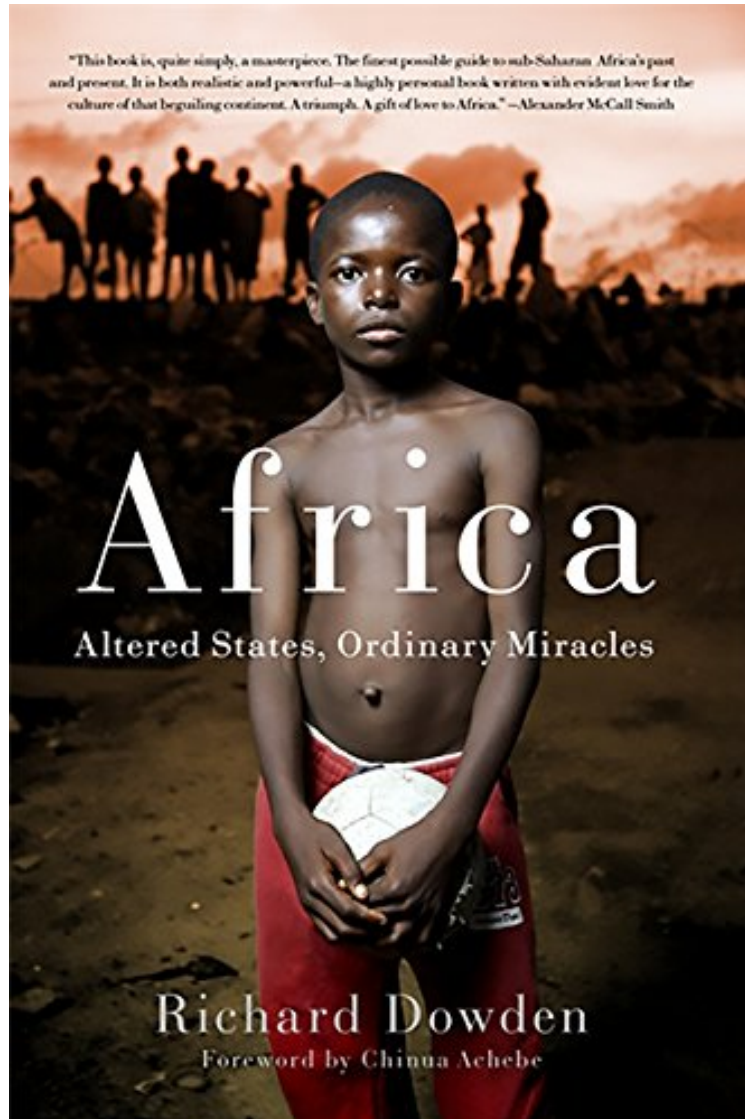


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Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles

Richard Dowden

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Richard Dowden : Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very informativeBy natThis detail-packed book is a tough read but certainly worthwhile. The author describes how African country after country fell into disaster and calamity after each had become independent from their colonial powers, who had divided up the map of the continent into separate national units with zero knowledge or understanding of the future (usually terrible) consequences. Leadership in country after country fell to the most ruthless and corrupt, and societies declined into truly horrible circumstances

characterized by crumbling infrastructure, deepened poverty, wars, atrocities, and AIDS. Often self-serving interventions by outsiders, including even some aid organizations, only made matters worse. The really amazing aspect of African culture that the author portrays is the attitude of hope that permeates African societies living in circumstances that we in the West would consider unbearable. In the midst of incredible suffering, Africans retain their dignity and their love of family. This book, which is best read in small doses, leaves one with the feeling that if only Africa can put its political house in order, significant progress, maybe even miraculous progress, will be made. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The real thing By Customer Really informative! Has different parts of history that influence the common culture, shows the differences in similarities that Americans like to generalize as "Africa" rather than the vastness and diversity of all the different lands and people. Highly recommend for anyone serious about learning about the different countries. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book to be highly engaging! By Tina Dreffin Dowdens' insight and knowledge of Africa are impressive. Having traveled to most of the countries in Africa as an author, I found his account accurate a quality hard to find in some writers. His criticisms of 'big men', the militaristic Americans, and the Chinese gave me additional insight into the tragedy of Africans against the world. It's pitiful the African leaders care so little about their nations, preferring to bank away AID money in European bank accounts. If you have an interest in knowing the truth about American aid into Africa, this is a must read. I found this book to be highly engaging.

After a lifetime's close observation of the continent, one of the world's finest Africa correspondents has penned a landmark book on life and death in modern Africa. It takes a guide as observant, experienced, and patient as Richard Dowden to reveal its truths. Dowden combines a novelist's gift for atmosphere with the scholar's grasp of historical change as he spins tales of cults and commerce in Senegal and traditional spirituality in Sierra Leone; analyzes the impact of oil and the internet on Nigeria and aid on Sudan; and examines what has gone so badly wrong in Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Congo. Dowden's master work is an attempt to explain why Africa is the way it is, and enables its readers to see and understand this miraculous continent as a place of inspiration and tremendous humanity.

Times UK This book is anecdotal, engaging, realistic, and delightfully up-to-date.