



The World and Africa: Inquiry Into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History

W.E.B. Du Bois

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An Inquiry into the Part which Africa Has Played in World History. A new edition of this classic work with essays, written after 1955, on the new African nations.

The World and Africa: Inquiry Into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History Details

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Sheila says

This book blew my mind. Just imagine if you had never learned anything about Europe in school. You know the name of the continent, but you're not sure where England is, or Italy. Someone says "Napoleon" or "Queen Elizabeth" and you say, "Who?" That's the state of US education when it comes to Africa. Thanks to mass media, when most folks hear "Africa" they think "poor," or "tribal wars." So, when you read a history of Africa that cuts like a knife and frees your mind of all the racial stereotypes and CIA-driven disinformation you have been fed about this great and powerful continent it is like reading an "alternate history," a fiction or fantasy. But it is the truth.

W.E.B. Du Bois was a brilliant scholar (the first African American to earn a PhD at Harvard in 1895) and an internationally renowned communist. This panoramic history gives you the background to understand what is going on in Africa today. The poverty and war in Africa is not the result of ignorance and lack of technology but rather, calculated exploitation and US and European political and military maneuvering. We are so trained to expect "objectivity" in scholarly works that it is a breathtaking shock to hear Dr. Du Bois's scathing comments. Du Bois is doing the work of a true teacher: to light the road to justice.

Note: if you have a visual or reading disability and have access to BARD, you are in for a real treat! the BARD audio version of this book is narrated by the great African American actor, Earle Hyman! A truly amazing and uplifting reading.

Ifanyi says

Probably one of the most important documents of the twentieth century, this book clearly and meticulously traces the colonial roots of the modern world and associates their economic underpinnings to their major roles in the slave trade. This book lives as one of the last pieces literary evidence of major government and private organization's slave trading roots.

Not surprisingly, it is rare, even in its re-published form.

This book unrelentingly withholds no names, clearly cites dates, places and the sometimes the very transaction of slave-traders representing governments, banks, and other businesses.

A must read.

Lisa says

I think that this book was a bit difficult for me because of the style in which it was written, and because of it's intent as a primer for American (probably white) progressives in the 1920s and 30s. DuBois, like many other Black progressives of his time, tried out many different ideologies - socialism, Pan-Africanism, liberalism, and so forth - and while this book in particular doesn't ascribe to any particular ideology - it's more of a laundry list of African nations, territories, exports, GDPs, and a short history of colonialism from

its inception to its current state, it was geared towards a progressive/socialist audience and I found it a bit difficult to digest not because it was too 'political' but because it read more like a ledger than a social history. Certainly that was helpful in some ways, especially in terms of understanding the expropriation of African natural resources and labor that comprised colonialism up through the early 20th century, but I don't know that I got a sense of the major players, or a real sense of what DuBois was working to convey, which was the vast crime that was colonialism and slavery, not only on the level of it's crimes against human dignity, but it's effect upon the physical landscape of the continent, and the riches that were expropriated by Europeans over the centuries. DuBois lists which European nations were in possession of what territories beginning at what time, and what the GDP of each region was in 1920s currency. As I said, very useful information even in the current time period, but a bit difficult to digest. I found myself reading pages two or three times and still not processing the information. I am looking forward to reading more of DuBois's work, perhaps some of the more ideological in character. I don't usually like to privilege one over the other, but it is difficult to gain knowledge when you're not really processing the information presented.

Bob says

Although published in 1947, this book has a freshness of vision for me that many contemporary books lack. This is a serious look at Africa's contribution to and place in the world. I was particularly interested in the way Du Bois saw the "scramble for Africa" and the resulting colonial conflicts as a key cause in the First World War.

Sananaa says

This book made me rethink a LOT of things I thought I understood about the world, Africa, religion, Dubois... it was a great eye opener for me.

Msbongi says

In order to understand who we are as a people we must understand where we came from. W.E.B Dubois gives a painstakingly concise history of Africa and her place in the world.
