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Book review: 'The Fortunes of Africa,' a
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The Fortunes of Africa is a first-rate introduction to a part of the world about which most Americans know next to nothing, and is an excellent companion to Mr.

Meredith's masterful account of black Africa since independence, *The Fate of Africa*. Like the previous volume, this one is marvelously unsentimental.

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The Fortunes of Africa. A 5000-Year History of Wealth, Greed, and Endeavor. By: Martin Meredith. Narrated by: Kevin Stillwell. Length: 26 hrs and 36 mins. Categories: History , Africa. 4.5 out of 5 stars. 4.5 (107 ratings) Add to Cart failed.

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One of the best books I've read this year has been Martin Meredith's sweeping *The Fortunes of Africa: A 5000 Year History of Wealth, Greed and Endeavour*. It might sound foolhardy, or plain foolish, to try and write the history of an entire continent in one book, and clearly both writer and reader are aware of the chutzpah involved.

The Fortunes of Africa (or, Why Reading
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About The Book In this vast and vivid panorama of history, Martin Meredith, bestselling author of *The State of Africa*, follows the fortunes of Africa over a period of 5,000 years.

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afar. In modern times, the focus of attention is on oil, diamonds, and other rare earth minerals. In this vast and vivid panorama of history, Martin Meredith follows the fortunes of Africa over a period of 5,000 years. With compelling narrative, he traces the rise and fall of ancient kingdoms and empires; the spread of Christianity and Islam; the enduring quest for gold and other riches; the exploits of explorers and missionaries; and the impact of European colonization. He examines, too, the fate of modern African states and concludes with a glimpse of their future. His cast of characters includes

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religious leaders, mining magnates, warlords, dictators, and many other legendary figures—among them Mansa Musa, ruler of the medieval Mali empire, said to be the richest man the world has ever known.

Africa has been coveted for its riches ever since the era of the Pharaohs. In past centuries, it was the lure of gold, ivory, and slaves that drew fortune-seekers, merchant-adventurers, and conquerors from afar. In modern times, the focus of attention is on oil, diamonds, and other valuable minerals. Land was another prize. The Romans

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relied on their colonies in northern Africa for vital grain shipments to feed the population of Rome. Arab invaders followed in their wake, eventually colonizing the entire region. More recently, foreign corporations have acquired huge tracts of land to secure food supplies needed abroad, just as the Romans did. In this vast and vivid panorama of history, Martin Meredith follows the fortunes of Africa over a period of 5,000 years. With compelling narrative, he traces the rise and fall of ancient kingdoms and empires; the spread of Christianity and Islam; the enduring quest for gold and other

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"By telling the little-known stories of six pioneering African American entrepreneurs, Black Fortunes makes a worthy contribution to black history, to business history, and to American history."—Margot Lee Shetterly, *New*

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York Times Bestselling author of Hidden Figures Between the years of 1830 and 1927, as the last generation of blacks born into slavery was reaching maturity, a small group of industrious, tenacious, and daring men and women broke new ground to attain the highest levels of financial success. Mary Ellen Pleasant, used her Gold Rush wealth to further the cause of abolitionist John Brown. Robert Reed Church, became the largest landowner in Tennessee. Hannah Elias, the mistress of a New York City millionaire, used the land her lover gave her to build an empire in Harlem. Orphan and self-taught

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chemist Annie Turnbo-Malone, developed the first national brand of hair care products. Mississippi school teacher O. W. Gurley, developed a piece of Tulsa, Oklahoma, into a "town" for wealthy black professionals and craftsmen that would become known as "the Black Wall Street." Although Madam C. J Walker was given the title of America's first female black millionaire, she was not. She was the first, however, to flaunt and openly claim her wealth—a dangerous and revolutionary act. Nearly all the unforgettable personalities in this amazing collection were often attacked, demonized, or

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swindled out of their wealth. Black Fortunes illuminates as never before the birth of the black business titan.

For too long Africa's mineral fortune has been lamented as a resource curse that has led to conflict rather than development for much of the continent. Yet times are changing and the opportunities to bring technical expertise on modern mining alongside appropriate governance mechanisms for social development are becoming more accessible in Africa. This book synthesizes perspectives from multiple disciplines to address Africa's

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development goals in relation to its mineral resources. The authors cover ways of addressing a range of policy challenges, environmental concerns, and public health impacts and also consider the role of globalization within the extractive industries. Academic research is coupled with key field vignettes from practitioners exemplifying case studies throughout. The book summarizes the challenges of natural resource governance, suggesting ways in which mining can be more effectively managed in Africa. By providing an analytical framework it highlights the essential intersection

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Entrepreneur Martin Meredith
Between natural and social sciences, central to efficient and effective harnessing of the potential for minerals and mining to be a contributor to positive development in Africa. It will be of interest to policy makers, industry professionals, and researchers in the extractive industries, as well as to the broader development community.

Africa is forever on our TV screens, but the bad-news stories (famine, genocide, corruption) massively outweigh the good (South Africa). Ever since the process of decolonialisation began in the mid-1950s, and

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arguably before, the continent has appeared to be stuck in a process of irreversible decline. Constant war, improper use of natural resources and misappropriation of revenues and aid monies contribute to an impression of a continent beyond hope. How did we get here? What, if anything, is to be done? Weaving together the key stories and characters of the last fifty years into a stunningly compelling and coherent narrative, Martin Meredith has produced the definitive history of how European ideas of how to organise 10,000 different ethnic groups has led to what Tony Blair described as the 'scar

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on the conscience of the world'.

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