



Made in Ethiopia

DELVE DEEPER READING LIST



This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Kim Rott, librarian at Sentinel High School in Missoula, Montana, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Made in Ethiopia*

Contributors



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Kim Rott is a retired English teacher and Librarian at Sentinel High School, where she urges her students to read broadly, think deeply, and research wisely. As a “Speaker in the Schools” for Humanities Montana, she teaches Media Literacy to students around Montana. She has a M.Ed. in Library and Information Technology from Mansfield University in Mansfield, Pennsylvania.

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ADULT NON-FICTION

Besada, Hany. *Governance, Conflict, and Natural Resources in Africa: Understanding the Role of Foreign Investment Actors*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021.

Governance, Conflict, and Natural Resources in Africa reevaluates the role that foreign state-owned and private-sector actors play in resource-rich states— whether stable, post-conflict, or fragile— in sub-Saharan Africa. Through research and an analysis of in-depth interviews with local stakeholders in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Ethiopia, Hany Besada explains how foreign state-owned and private-sector corporations have contributed to economic growth at both the national and local levels in different resource-rich countries. This book reveals the unique challenges and opportunities created by these investors, demonstrating that new policies in business practices and operations have the potential to generate sustainable development and positive economic transformation.

Edemariam, Aida. *The Wife's Tale: A Personal History*. Harper Perennial, March 19, 2019.

In this indelible memoir that recalls the life of her remarkable ninety-five-year-old grandmother, Guardian journalist Aida Edemariam tells the story of modern Ethiopia— a nation that would undergo a tumultuous transformation from feudalism to monarchy to Marxist revolution to democracy—over the course of one century.

Born in the northern Ethiopian city of Gondar in about 1916, Yetemegnu was married and had given birth before she turned fifteen. As the daughter of a socially prominent man, she also offered her husband, a poor yet gifted student, the opportunity to become an important religious leader.

Over the next decades, Yetemegnu would endure extraordinary trials: the death of some of her children, her husband's imprisonment, and the detention of one of her sons. She witnessed the Fascist invasion of Ethiopia and the subsequent resistance, suffered Allied bombardment and exile from her city, and lived through a bloody revolution and the nationalization of her land. She gained audiences with Emperor Haile Selassie I to argue for justice for her husband, seek revenge, and secure her children's future. She fought court battles to defend her assets against powerful men, but sustained, in part, by her fierce belief in the Virgin Mary and Orthodox Christianity, Yetemegnu survived. She even learned to read in her sixties, and eventually made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Told in Yetemegnu's enthralling voice and filled with a vivid cast of characters--emperors and empresses, priests and scholars, monks and nuns, archbishops and slaves, Marxist revolutionaries and wartime double agents--*The Wife's Tale* introduces a woman both imperious and vulnerable; a mother, widow, and businesswoman whose deep faith and numerous travails never quashed her love of laughter, mischief and dancing; a fighter whose life was shaped by direct contact with the volatile events that transformed her nation.

An intimate memoir that offers a panoramic view of Ethiopia's recent history, *The Wife's Tale* takes us deep into the landscape, rituals, social classes, and culture of this ancient, often mischaracterized, richly complex, and unforgettable land--and into the heart of one indomitable woman.

Gadzala, Aleksandra W. *Africa and China: How Africans and Their Governments are Shaping Relations with China*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015.

The China-Africa relationship has largely been depicted as one in which the Chinese state and Chinese entrepreneurs control the agenda, with Africans and their governments as passive actors exercising little or no agency. This volume shifts the focus to the African side of the relationship, highlighting how African state and non-state actors increasingly influence the China-Africa partnership– and, in doing so, begin to shape their economic and political futures. The influx of public and private sector Chinese actors across the African continent has led to a rise of opportunities and challenges, which this volume seeks to explore. Through case studies from Nigeria, Angola, Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia, and Zambia– spanning the technology, natural resource, manufacturing, and financial sectors– it demonstrates not only how African realities shape Chinese engagement, but also how African governments and entrepreneurs are learning to leverage their competitive advantages and negotiate China’s growing presence.

Tesfaye, Aaron. *China in Ethiopia: The Long-term Perspective*. Lightning Source Inc., 2020.

This comprehensive study of China-Ethiopia relations examines why China an economic and emerging global power has built relations with Ethiopia and why Ethiopia has responded by singling out China as a partner in its quest for economic development. Using middle-range theory and field research, Aaron Tesfaye focuses on three sets of phenomena: political, economic, and strategic. He explores the following questions: Why are China and Ethiopia building relations at this juncture of globalization? What motivates China's role in helping build Ethiopia's infrastructure, and is Ethiopia's debt to China sustainable? What can Ethiopia offer China in terms of strategic interest in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea littoral, which is now the most sought out area for military bases by regional and international forces? Tesfaye argues that China's ability to meet Africa's tremendous demand for capital and technology is a reflection of its economic and military rise and evidence that the Asian Century has arrived, ushering in a new global reality.

Thanhauser, Sofi. *Worn: A People’s History of Clothing*. Vintage, 2022.

In this panoramic social history, Sofi Thanhauser tells five interwoven stories—Linen, Cotton, Silk, Synthetics, Wool—about the clothes we wear and where they come from, illuminating our world in unexpected ways. She takes us from the opulent court of Louis XIV to the labor camps in modern-day Chinese-occupied Xinjiang. We see how textiles were once dyed with lichen, shells, bark, saffron, and beetles, displaying distinctive regional weaves and knits, and how the modern Western garment industry has refashioned our attire into the homogenous and disposable uniforms popularized by fast-fashion brands.

Thanhauser reveals how the clothing industry has become one of the planet’s worst polluters and how it relies on chronically underpaid and exploited laborers. But she also shows us how micro-communities, textile companies, and clothing makers in every corner of the world are rediscovering ancestral and ethical methods for making what we wear.

Drawn from years of intensive research and reporting from around the world, and brimming with fascinating stories, *Worn* reveals to us that our clothing comes not just from the countries listed on the tags or ready-made from our factories. It comes, as well, from deep in our histories.

Sun, Yaan Ireen. *The Next Factory of the World: How China Investment Is Reshaping Africa*. Harvard Business Review Press, 7 Nov. 2017.

China is now the biggest foreign player in Africa. It is Africa's largest trade partner and infrastructure financier as well as the fastest-growing source of foreign direct investment. Chinese entrepreneurs are flooding into the continent and investing in long-term assets such as factories and heavy equipment. Considering Africa's difficult history of colonialism, one might suspect that China's activity there is another instance of a foreign power exploiting resources. But as Irene Yuan Sun vividly shows, this is a story about resilient Chinese entrepreneurs building in Africa what they recently built in China—a global manufacturing powerhouse.

China's view of Africa—not as a land of poverty, but of potential wealth—is a striking departure from the perspective of the West, particularly that of the United States. Despite fifty years of Western aid programs, Africa still has more people living in extreme poverty than any other region in the world. Those serious about raising living standards across the continent recognize that a new strategy is needed.

Chinese investment presents a tantalizing possibility: that Africa can industrialize in the coming generation. A manufacturing-led transformation would allow Africa to follow in the footsteps of the United States in the nineteenth century, Japan in the early twentieth, and the Asian Tigers in the late twentieth. Many may consider this an outdated path to development, but as Sun argues, it is the only one proven to raise living standards across entire societies in a lasting way. With every new Chinese factory boss setting up machinery and hiring African workers—and managers—that possibility becomes more real.

Combining moving human stories with incisive business and economic analysis, *The Next Factory of the World* will make you rethink both China's role in the world and Africa's future in the global economy.

Thurow, Roger. *Against the Grain*. A Midway Book, Agate, 13 Aug. 2024.

Farmers in some of the world's oldest agricultural regions—Africa's Great Rift Valley, India's Indo-Gangetic Plain, the Highlands of Central America, and the Great Plains of the U.S.—were toiling year after year, only to find that modern industrial agriculture was turning against itself. The very practices once used to grow food were now making it harder to grow food at all. Pesticides meant to protect crops were killing off beneficial biodiversity. Monocropping was draining the soil of essential nutrients. And deforestation was making the land hotter and drier. The environmental consequences of industrial agriculture were compounding—until the very families responsible for feeding the world were facing hunger themselves.

Some farmers, however, took a risk and began working with nature instead of trying to control it. They terraced their land to capture rainwater and prevent erosion; planted a diverse array of crops to restore nutrient balance; replaced chemical fertilizers with organic matter from their own farms; introduced trees and drought-resistant grains; and—perhaps most importantly—showed their communities that these regenerative methods could restore both their land and their livelihoods.

Award-winning author and journalist Roger Thurow traveled to Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, India, Guatemala, Peru, and the United States to document these farmers' stories. *Against the Grain* reveals the urgent conflict at the heart of our most essential human endeavor: feeding the world. Industrial agriculture is stripping the land of its ability to nourish future generations. But as Thurow shows, these

farmers are leading a quiet revolution—one that feeds both people and the planet—and following their lead may be key to solving one of the greatest crises of our time.

ADULT FICTION

Chipanta, Mukuka. *A Casualty of Power*. Weaver Press, 30 Mar. 2024.

Follow the footsteps of Hamoonga Moya, a young man from the Zambian Copperbelt, as he journeys to the bustling capital city of Lusaka in search of a brighter future. From the moment he steps onto the inter-city bus, Hamoonga's life takes a dramatic turn, drawing him into a world of unexpected friendships, intellectual challenges, and moral dilemmas.

As he immerses himself in his journalism studies, Hamoonga confronts urgent questions that extend far beyond the classroom: Should he speak out about the social costs of Chinese-owned mines? Who bears responsibility for the suffering of Zambia's poor—the government or the new corporate owners? In a nation marked by competing priorities and shifting allegiances, Hamoonga finds himself navigating a treacherous landscape where every decision carries weighty consequences.

Outside the academic world, Hamoonga's hopes clash with the brutal realities of greed, international interference, and betrayal. As he's drawn deeper into a web of corruption and deceit, he must face a profound test of loyalty and determine who his true allies are.

With eloquence and insight, Chipanta explores the crossroads of tradition and modernity, capturing the human cost of globalization in Africa. *A Casualty of Power* is a thought-provoking novel that examines the tensions of contemporary Zambian society and confronts uncomfortable truths with unflinching honesty.

Mengiste, Maaza. *Beneath the Lion's Gaze: A Novel*. W.W. Norton & Company, 3 Jan. 2011.

This haunting and unforgettable novel begins in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1974, on the eve of a revolution. Yonas kneels in his mother's prayer room, pleading for an end to the violence that has torn through his family and country. His father, Hailu—a prominent doctor—has been ordered to report to prison after helping a tortured victim die with dignity. Meanwhile, Hailu's youngest son, Dawit, has joined the underground resistance, a decision that will lead to even more unrest and heartbreak. *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* is a powerful story of family, love, loyalty, and sacrifice set during one of Ethiopia's most turbulent eras. It explores how far people will go in the pursuit of freedom—and the steep cost of revolution. Poetic and emotionally gripping, Mengiste's debut is a stirring and tragic portrait of a family caught in the grip of political transformation.

Mengiste, Maaza. *The Shadow King: A Novel*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1 Sept. 2020.

Mengiste's debut, *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, brought Ethiopian historical fiction into the spotlight. Her monumental second novel draws inspiration from her great-grandmother, who, in defiance of her father's objections, answered Emperor Haile Selassie's call for sons to fight Fascist Italy—insisting her younger brothers were too young to go.

In her author's note, Mengiste explains that her ancestor “represents one of the many gaps in European and African history,” namely, the Ethiopian women who fought alongside men.

Set partly in 1974, just before Selassie's fall, the novel follows Hirut, who arrives in Addis Ababa carrying a box filled with “the many dead that insist on resurrection.” Nearly forty years earlier, in 1935, she had been an orphaned servant who followed her master Kidane and his wife Aster into battle. At first relegated to caretaker roles, the women prove themselves as fierce warriors. Hirut eventually

becomes the servant of the titular Shadow King—a stand-in for the emperor, hidden away in England while his people suffer.

Mengiste's characters—shrewd Kidane, militant Aster, a conflicted photographer, a narcissistic Italian commander, and even a haunted Haile Selassie—reflect the deep entanglement of humanity and violence. *The Shadow King* is a powerful, multi-layered novel that sheds light on forgotten stories and the immeasurable cost of survival.

YOUNG ADULT NON-FICTION

Abdullahi, Warda Mohamed. *Warda: My Journey from the Horn of Africa to a College Education*. Bever's Pond Press, 2021.

Set in the rugged shrublands of rural Ethiopia, the contentious neighborhoods of South Africa, and the icy streets of Michigan, *Warda* is the story of a fierce young woman on a tireless quest to become the first member of her family to attend college.

Born in Saudi Arabia to undocumented, ethnic Somali parents living far from their ancestral homeland, Warda Mohamed Abdullahi loses her mother in a tragic accident as an infant and lives apart from her father until she is eleven. As she grows up, she experiences both tragedy and triumph—from staring down a wild leopard to protect her family's livestock to crossing borders and evading immigration officials throughout Africa—before eventually traveling to the United States to start anew.

Warda is a powerful memoir that reveals the injustices embedded in a global system that dictates who may move freely and who may not. At its heart, it is a story of a father's unrelenting pursuit to provide his daughter with opportunities he never had, and a daughter's unwavering determination to achieve her dream of education.

Pendergrast, Mark. *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World*. Basic Books, 9 July 2019.

This expansive history traces coffee's journey from ancient Ethiopia to twentieth-century Seattle, chronicling its evolution as both a beverage and a global commodity. Pendergrast explores coffee's varied uses, its role in shaping global economies, and its growing presence in American homes and popular culture. Through the lens of coffee, *Uncommon Grounds* offers insight into the interconnectedness of agriculture, politics, consumer habits, and international trade.

Thomas, Dana. *Fashionopolis: The Secrets Behind the Clothes We Wear*. Young Readers ed., Dial Books for Young Readers, 15 Feb. 2022.

This young readers' adaptation of *Fashionopolis* introduces middle-grade audiences to the environmental and social justice issues behind fast fashion.

Have you ever wondered where your jeans come from? Or who made your T-shirt—and what happens to it once you outgrow it? From the fibers used to create fabrics to the global production and distribution chains that bring clothes to our closets, every stage of the process has a profound impact on workers, cultures, and the planet.

With accessible language and engaging examples, *Fashionopolis* uncovers the secrets behind the clothes we wear and encourages readers to think critically about sustainability, labor rights, and the future of fashion.

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Holler, Sue Farrell. *Cold White Sun*. Groundwood Books, 1 Mar. 2019.

Based on true events, *Cold White Sun* tells the stranger-than-fiction story of a young boy smuggled out of Ethiopia during political upheaval, beginning a new life from nothing in Calgary, Alberta.

Tesfaye lives behind the secure walls of his family's compound in Addis Ababa. His father is a powerful man, and Tesfaye attends one of the city's best schools. He and his brother, Ishi, spend their days playing soccer, racing chickens, and spying on guests, avoiding both the family goat and their father's volatile temper.

But when rebel forces take over the capital, Tesfaye's life changes drastically. He is moved to the former imperial palace and becomes his father's favored companion, joining him at political rallies and distributing leaflets he doesn't fully understand.

After his father's sudden arrest, Tesfaye must go into hiding, first in his grandfather's village and then in the hands of a human smuggler. What follows is a terrifying, disorienting journey through Kenya, Europe, and finally to Canada, where he is left on a Greyhound bus with ten dollars and instructions to stay aboard until someone tells him to get off. "You are safe now," says the smuggler. "You are in Canada. This country will protect you."

What begins as a harrowing escape becomes a painful search for identity and belonging, as Tesfaye navigates group homes, foster care, and the crushing grief of separation from his family.

Laird, Elizabeth. *The Garbage King*. Macmillan Children's Books, 2003.

Inspired by the true story of a childhood lived on the edge of destitution, Elizabeth Laird's award-winning novel takes readers on an unforgettable emotional journey through the streets of Addis Ababa.

When Mamo's mother dies, he is abandoned in the city's shantytowns. Kidnapped by a child trafficker and sold to a cruel farmer, he eventually escapes and returns to the city where he meets Dani, a rich and educated runaway fleeing his controlling father.

Though from different worlds, Mamo and Dani form a powerful bond as they join a gang of homeless street boys who rely on trust and total interdependence to survive.

The Garbage King explores the lives of children cast aside by society and shows the resilience, loyalty, and strength that can grow even in the harshest conditions.

Wein, Elizabeth. *Black Dove, White Raven*. Hyperion, 31 Mar. 2015.

Emilia and Teo's lives change forever when a bird strike brings down the plane their stunt pilot mothers are flying. Teo's mother dies in the crash, but Em's survives—vowing to raise both children according to Teo's mother's wishes: in a place where Teo won't be judged by the color of his skin.

In 1930s America, a white woman raising a Black adoptive son alongside her biological daughter is met with hostility. Seeking a freer life, Rhoda takes Em and Teo to Ethiopia. They quickly fall in love with the country's beauty and culture—until the looming threat of war with Fascist Italy shatters their peace.

As Ethiopia becomes embroiled in conflict, Em and Teo find themselves drawn into the resistance. Their devotion to each other, their adopted country, and the ideals they hold dear may become either their downfall or their salvation.

In the tradition of *Code Name Verity*, Elizabeth Wein delivers a thrilling, emotionally rich novel that explores friendship, loyalty, and the fierce resilience of young people caught in the tides of history.

BOOKS FOR YOUNGER LEARNERS AND CHILDREN

Adefris, Fasika. *The Gabi That Girma Wore*. Little, Brown and Company, 2024.

Written in the rhythmic cadence of *The House That Jack Built*, this vibrant and lushly illustrated story celebrates the journey of a Gabi—a traditional Ethiopian cloth—while honoring the culture and community that give it life. From the tiny seed to the fluffy white cotton, from the steady hands of the farmer to the swift fingers of the weaver, and from the bustling shopkeeper to the final gift for a loved one, the story follows the making of the Gabi that Girma wore. A joyful, read-aloud tale that highlights the craftsmanship and love embedded in Ethiopian tradition.

Bell, Samantha. *Ethiopia*. Focus Readers: Countries—Navigator Level, 1 Jan. 2025.

This book provides an accessible overview of Ethiopia's history, geography, resources, and culture. The book also includes a special feature focused on climate change and conservation, informative sidebars, a table of contents, a reading comprehension quiz, a glossary, additional resources, and an index. This Focus Readers book is at the Navigator level, aligned to reading levels of grades 3-5 and interest levels of grades 4-7.

Habtemariam, Fitsum Tesfaye. *Our World: Ethiopia*. Barefoot Books, 3 Oct. 2023.

Selam! Enjoy a day in the bustling city of Addis Ababa with a child and her babi. We'll gallop through the park on horseback, enjoy tasty enjera around the mesob, and read Teret Teret before bed. Both author and illustrator draw on their lived experience in Ethiopia to create this charming board book.

Laird, Elizabeth. *When the World Began: Stories Collected in Ethiopia*. Oxford University Press, 17 Aug. 2000.

Award-winning author Elizabeth Laird spent two years traveling across Ethiopia, gathering the traditional stories featured in this anthology. From Muslim communities in the arid deserts of the East to Christians in the cool central Highlands and followers of older faiths in the humid South, each tale reflects Ethiopia's rich tapestry of religions and cultures. This collection features stories about cunning tricksters, brave warriors, ogres, kings, merchants, animals, and more—capturing both timeless wisdom and surprising twists.

Mulat, Worku L. *Andromeda, Princess of Ethiopia: The Legend in the Stars in Amharic and English*. Independently published, 27 Feb. 2021.

Ethiopia has long been home to some of the most legendary figures in history, from early hominids like Lucy to mythic rulers immortalized in global lore. One such tale, drawn from ancient Greek mythology, centers on Princess Andromeda—the daughter of Ethiopian King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia. Her beauty enraged Poseidon, who sent a sea monster to destroy her, but the Greek hero Perseus intervened, rescued her, and married her. Their story was written into the stars as constellations that still grace Ethiopia's night skies.

Beautifully illustrated by Ethiopian artist Daniel Getahun and presented in English alongside Amharic, Tigrinya, and Afaan Oromo, this bilingual edition supports early readers in vocabulary building and fluency. Published by Ready Set Go Books, a project of Open Hearts Big Dreams, the book promotes literacy through culturally rooted stories in readers' heart languages.