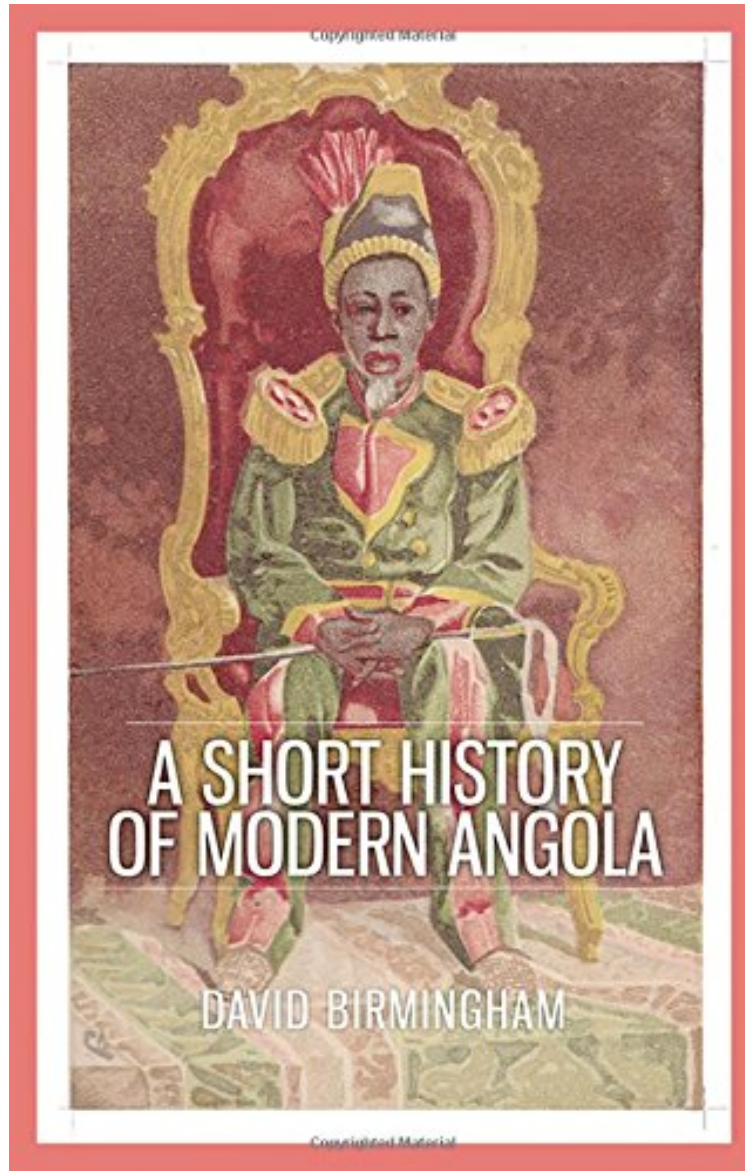


[PDF] A Short History of Modern Angola

## A Short History of Modern Angola

*David Birmingham*

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**David Birmingham : A Short History of Modern Angola** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Short History of Modern Angola:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. but can add that Birmingham's lively writing and general knowledge of recent research on Angolan history and society hold greatBy Katie WheelerDavid Birmingham, a notable and accomplished Historian of modern and pre-modern Africa, has specialized in pre-1750 Angolan history and in Central

African history in the modern era. This work for the general reader is a welcome contribution to what, oddly enough, is a still neglected field- the general history of Angola, in West Central Africa. Angola a country which still receives relatively little media attention in the English-speaking world but more attention from the Portuguese-speaking(Lusophone) media world. Angola has impressive geographical, geological, human and economic potential but has long struggled with a troubled political and social history, including a long colonial war(13 yrs), a civil war(26) years, and recent periods of intensive economic growth and yet massive inequality and elite corruption. I will withhold my final judgement of slim work for now, but can add that Birmingham's lively writing and general knowledge of recent research on Angolan history and society hold great advantages for the author of a little work on a big subject for a general audience. -Professor Douglas Wheeler, Professor of History Emeritus, Univ. of New Hampshire, Durham, NH.

This history by celebrated Africanist David Birmingham begins in 1820 with the Portuguese attempt to create a third, African, empire after the virtual loss of Asia and America. In the nineteenth century the most valuable resource extracted from Angola was agricultural labor, first as privately owned slaves and later as conscript workers. The colony was managed by a few marine officers, by several hundred white political convicts, and by a couple of thousand black Angolans who had adopted Portuguese language and culture. The hub was the harbor city of Luanda which grew in the twentieth century to be a dynamic metropolis of several million people. The export of labor was gradually replaced when an agrarian revolution enabled white Portuguese immigrants to drive black Angolan laborers to produce sugar cane, cotton, maize and above all coffee. During the twentieth century Congo copper supplemented this wealth, by gem-quality diamonds, and by offshore oil. Although much of the countryside retained its dollar-a-day peasant economy, new wealth generated conflict which pitted white against black, north against south, coast against highland, American allies against Russian allies. The generation of warfare finally ended in 2002 when national reconstruction could begin on Portuguese colonial foundations.

"This is a fabulous book, an inspiring work of scholarship that reflects the author's deep engagement with Angola for over half a century. With humour and literary skill, Birmingham condenses several hundred years of compelling history without skipping detail. By the end, you begin to understand why contemporary Angola is like it is." -- Lara Pawson, author of *In the Name of the People: Angola's Forgotten Massacre*"This is an exciting excursion through Angola's past conducted by its most authoritative historian. Already in colonial times as rich as French West Africa and today perhaps the most dynamic economy in Africa, Angola is described through the writings of travellers and the experiences of its people, with no attempt to disguise the traumas inflicted on them by colonial rulers, dictators and warlords." -- Malyn Newitt, Professor of History in the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies, King's College London"Angola is now a key player and power-broker across Africa, and so an understanding of the unique historical forces that have shaped it is more important than ever. There are few outsiders who know the country better than David Birmingham, and he has written a timely and incredibly readable book on this rising power. His great knowledge and insight shines through on every page with vignettes and description which tell the tortured story of Angola's rise to nationhood." -- Toby Green, Lecturer in Lusophone African History and Culture, King's College London and editor of *Guinea-Bissau: Micro-State to "Narco-State"*About the AuthorDavid Birmingham's first book, on the Portuguese conquest of Angola, was published by Oxford University Press in 1965. Since then he has written a dozen other works, including the *Cambridge History of Portugal*, and edited the three-volume *History of Central Africa*, with Phyllis Martin. He taught in African universities and at SOAS before being appointed to the chair of modern history at the University of Kent.