

SECOND EDITION

Book Review

Lucy's People: An Ethiopian Memoir

by Mesfin Tadesse

Lucy's People offers a humane portrait of modern Ethiopia, etched in the recollections of an astounding life.

Humming with heartfelt energy, Mesfin Tadesse's memoirs span a transformative and troubled era. Bright and charismatic, Mesfin cuts his teeth under the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. In horror, he watches the communist Derg coup of 1974, and, alongside his compatriots, struggles to endure the ensuing atrocities. As a headstrong young man, Mesfin must not merely survive, but must do so without

Engaging to the last, *Lucy's People* runs the gamut of human emotion. It strikes the tone of an affectionate elegy, such that it feels, at one moment, warmly descriptive, and at yet another, quietly indignant. In this manner, it weaves between the personal and the political: a feat widely accomplished with playful, acerbic wit. Readers can expect an appetising dose of flavourful detail, but without fear of excessive nostalgia or sentimentality. The storytelling remains consistently inventive, and rewards with gripping vignettes starring spirited personalities. These memoirs thereby tell the story of many – a story of resilient compassion and defiant pride.

The result is compelling; *Lucy's People* skilfully documents an intimate perspective on an ethically complex time and place.

This review was based on a complimentary pre-release copy of ISBN 978-0-6488287-2-3 __Ben Claessens, 2021.



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