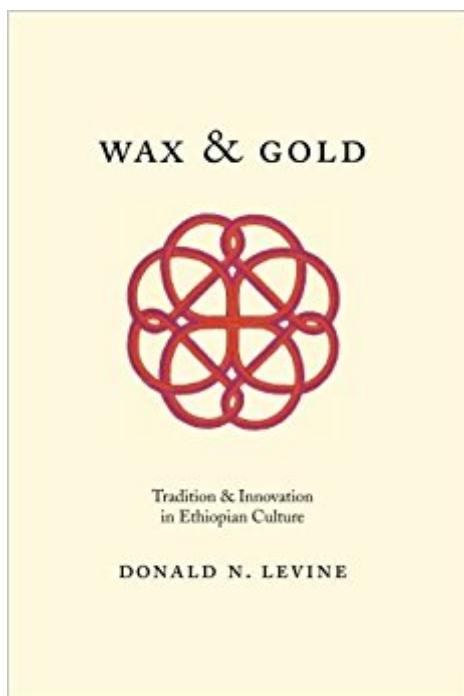


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Wax And Gold: Tradition And Innovation In Ethiopian Culture



Synopsis

In Abyssinian poetry, the *wax* is the obvious meaning, the *gold* is the hidden meaning. In *Wax and Gold*, Donald N. Levine explores mid-to-late-twentieth-century Ethiopian society on the same two levels, using modern sociology and psychology to seek answers to the following questions: What is the nature of the traditional culture of the dominant ethnic group, the Amhara, and what are its enduring values? What aspects of modern culture interest this society and by what means has it sought to institutionalize them? How has tradition both facilitated and hampered Ethiopian efforts to modernize? Enriched by the use of Ethiopian literature and by Levine's deep knowledge of and affection for the society of which he writes, *Wax and Gold* is both a scholarly and a personal work.

Book Information

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"A superb book." (New Yorker) "A classic work of area studies." (Robert D. Kaplan, New York Times) "Ethiopia's abiding problem is the symbiosis of her autochthonous civilization with the demands of an uncompromising modern world. . . . Nobody has yet described the dilemma, its origin, its magnitude and possible ways of resolving it with greater ability and understanding." (Times Literary Supplement) "Both a sociological work and an entertaining travel narrative." (Chicago Tribune) "The literature on Ethiopia is conspicuous for the absence of studies attempting to combine comprehensiveness of coverage with true analytical depth. [Wax and Gold] fills this gap and does it so effectively that for most readers sampling it will be equivalent to discovering a new world. . . . Not to be missed." (Library

Journal) "An important, insightful, and excellent book. . . . With remarkable freedom, virtuosity, and success [Levine] forays from his own base as a sociologist into the domains of anthropologists, psychologists, historians, and linguists." (American Journal of Sociology) "Levine performs the most ancient scholarly task well, that of the sage, who leads us to see the eternal wisdom hidden behind the veil of everyday concerns." (American Sociological Review)

Donald N. Levine is the Peter B. Ritzma Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, where he served as dean of the College from 1982 to 1987. He is the author of several books, including *Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of a Multiethnic Society* and *Powers of the Mind: The Reinvention of Liberal Learning in America*, both published by the University of Chicago Press.

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It's stunning to me that someone would comment that this book is academic and that it is not useful because it is 32 years old. I guess we should throw out all literature from before the year 2000. Kant, Simmel, Marx, Kierkegaard, Plato, the Constitution, Tolstoy, useless I suppose. Friend, if you are looking for a trashy novel you are in the wrong section of the bookstore. This is the classic sociological work on Ethiopia written by the renowned sociologist, Sensai, peacemaker and warrior Professor Donald Levine. This is the work that renowned author and historian Robert Kaplan recently cited to in a New York Times editorial as holding the key to peace in the Middle East.

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