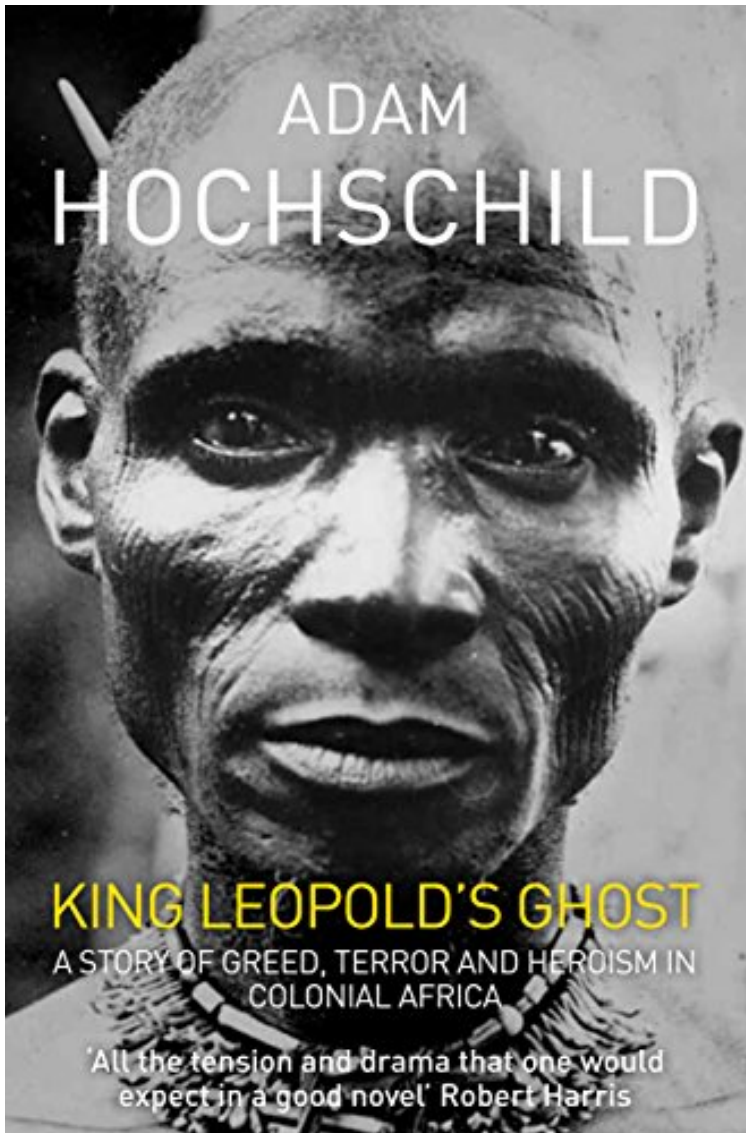


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King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa (English Edition)



Par Adam Hochschild
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Par Adam Hochschild : King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa (English Edition):

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWINNER OF THE 1999 DUFF COOPER PRIZE. 'Brilliant .. this book must be read and re-read' Neal Ascherson'. 'A hundred years ago, enlightened people in the western world were outraged by a holocaust in Africa which left millions dead. Denunciations thundered from speaker's platforms around the US and Europe. One open letter to The Times was signed by 11 peers, 19 bishops and 75 MPs. Viscount

Grey, Britain's foreign secretary, declared that no overseas issue had so intensely aroused the British public for 30 years. Conan Doyle wrote a pamphlet on the Congo atrocities which sold 25,000 copies in the first week alone. Yet today not one person in a thousand could say what the fuss was all about, unless, of course, they have read this amazing book.' Tariq Ali, Financial Times 'Fascinating ... brilliant and gripping' Mail on Sunday 'An exemplary piece of history writing: urgent, vivid and compelling' Literary .com King Leopold of Belgium, writes historian Adam Hochschild in this grim history, did not much care for his native land or his subjects, all of which he dismissed as "small country, small people." Even so, he searched the globe to find a colony for Belgium, frantic that the scramble of other European powers for overseas dominions in Africa and Asia would leave nothing for himself or his people. When he eventually found a suitable location in what would become the Belgian Congo, later known as Zaire and now simply as Congo, Leopold set about establishing a rule of terror that would culminate in the deaths of 4 to 8 million indigenous people, "a death toll," Hochschild writes, "of Holocaust dimensions." Those who survived went to work mining ore or harvesting rubber, yielding a fortune for the Belgian king, who salted away billions of dollars in hidden bank accounts throughout the world. Hochschild's fine book of historical inquiry, which draws heavily on eyewitness accounts of the colonialists' savagery, brings this little-studied episode in European and African history into new light. --Gregory McNamee From Publishers Weekly Hochschild's superb, engrossing chronicle focuses on one of the great, horrifying and nearly forgotten crimes of the century: greedy Belgian King Leopold II's rape of the Congo, the vast colony he seized as his private fiefdom in 1885. Until 1909, he used his mercenary army to force slaves into mines and rubber plantations, burn villages, mete out sadistic punishments, including dismemberment, and committ mass murder. The hero of Hochschild's highly personal, even gossipy narrative is Liverpool shipping agent Edmund Morel, who, having stumbled on evidence of Leopold's atrocities, became an investigative journalist and launched an international Congo reform movement with support from Mark Twain, Booker T. Washington and Arthur Conan Doyle. Other pivotal figures include Joseph Conrad, whose disgust with Leopold's "civilizing mission" led to Heart of Darkness; and black American journalist George Washington Williams, who wrote the first systematic indictment of Leopold's colonial regime in 1890. Hochschild (The Unquiet Ghost) documents the machinations of Leopold, who won over President Chester A. Arthur and bribed a U.S. senator to derail Congo protest resolutions. He also draws provocative parallels between Leopold's predatory one-man rule and the strongarm tactics of Mobuto Sese Seko, who ruled the successor state of Zaire. But most of all it is a story of the bestiality of one challenged by the heroism of many in an increasingly democratic world. 30 illustrations. Agent: Georges Borchardt. First serial rights to American Scholar. Author tour. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.