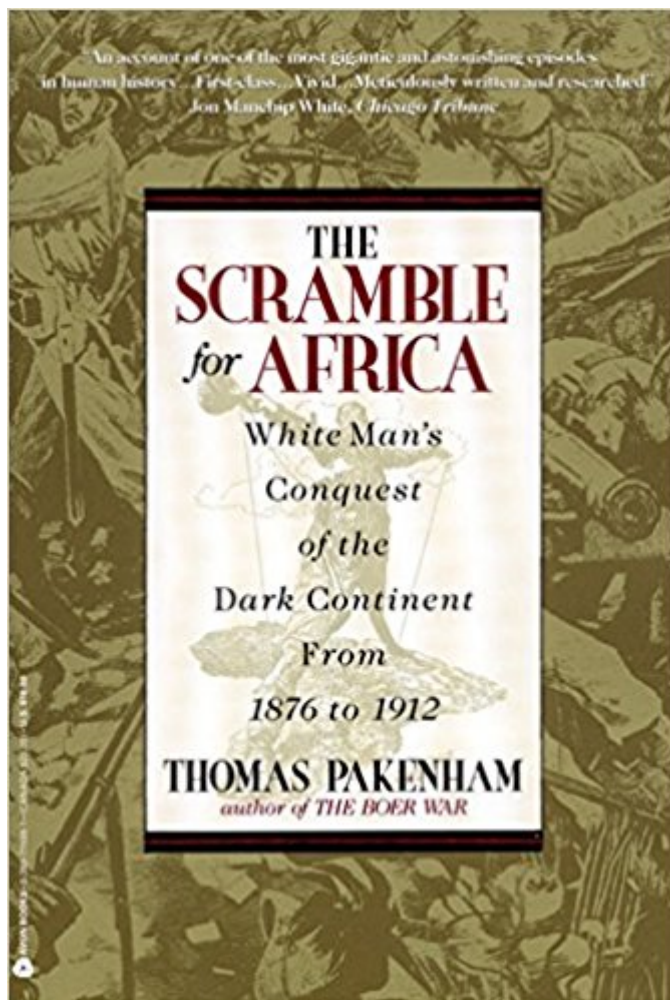


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The Scramble For Africa: White Man's Conquest Of The Dark Continent From 1876 To 1912



Synopsis

From the rear cover of this 738 page book: "A phenomenal achievement, clear, authoritative and compelling.....Thomas Pakenham's fine book tells the story of this particular gold rush with admirable and judicious poise....Contains some of the best-known episodes of 19th-Century history as well as some of the most mythologized and colorful characters the world has ever seen.....Livingstone and Stanley, Brazza and Rhodes, Kitchener and Gordon, Lugard and Jameson.....Highly readable." and "Taking the entire continent as his canvas, Pakenham has painted a picture of heroism and horror. He writes both with compassion and with an effective combination of detachment and judgement. A splendid book."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In scarcely half a generation during the late 1800s, six European powers sliced up Africa like a cake. The pieces went to Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Belgium; among them, they acquired 30 new colonies and 110 million subjects. Although African rulers resisted, many battles were one-sided massacres. In 1904 the Hereros, a tribe of southwest southwest, if not a country name Africa, revolted against German rule. Their punishment was genocide--24,000 driven into the desert to starve; those who surrendered were sent to forced labor camps to be worked to death. In a dramatic, gripping chronicle, Pakenham (*The Boer War*) floodlights the "dark continent" and its systematic rape by Europe. At center stage are a motley band of explorers, politicians, evangelists, mercenaries, journalists and tycoons blinded by romantic nationalism or caught up in the scramble for loot, markets and slaves. In an epilogue Pakenham tells how the former colonial powers still

dominate the economies of the African nations, most of which are under one-party or dictatorial rule. Photos. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In his excellent study of the Boer War (*The Boer War* , LJ 11/1/79), Pakenham demonstrated his ability to handle a great mass of material and a complicated subject in a fashion that produces a readable, highly credible account. Here he turns those same skills to good effect in the infinitely more complex issue of the European exploitation of Africa, which followed close on the heels of exploration of the so-called "dark continent's" interior. The result is a sweeping narrative, refreshingly old fashioned in its appreciation of the fact that imperialism did have some virtues, which offers as good an introduction to the "scramble" as has ever been written. Essential for both public and academic libraries.- Jim Casada, Winthrop Coll., Rock Hill, S.C. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have read much about Africa. As for the colonial period, this book pulls it all together. The author does an excellent job of covering a wide span of history, including military campaigns, political strategy and intrigue and a host of contributing factors to provide a detail review of how colonialism occurred and what drove it across the face of Africa. I would love to see another installment by Pakenham of the subsequent period, addressing the drive for independence and its resulting successes and unfortunate failures.

Fascinating, detailed, disturbing - the greed, horror and brutality of colonialism laid bare. You cannot forget what you have read here.

This book fills in the foundations of what we are seeing being acted out in such places as Rwanda and the Sudan. These are results of European powers rolling into ancient lands, and grouping their peoples all together to form Western style entities in the form of colonies. Ancient tribal rivalries were damped down by European military power. With the independence movements which began between the World Wars, along with the inability of the Western countries to be able to commit the necessary manpower to hold command, the colonies were disbanded. The tribes are fighting each other again. However, this time they are armed with half learned lessons in finance, manipulated democracy and other unfortunate examples such as genocide. This book will show the reader how it all began and why it could never last. There is no way to know how the atrocities being committed

in Africa will end, if the people of the former colonies will ever know ongoing peace or what direction the resolution of the bloodshed will finally take. However, at least after finishing this book, the reader will understand from whence the anger came.

It would be an understatement to write that Thomas Pakenham embraced an ambitious project in crafting a comprehensive, single-volume history of the European colonization of Africa over the course of some four decades a century ago. Few authors could have succeeded after having bitten off so much. Fewer still could have made it accessible to the layman and an immensely enjoyable read at that. Pakenham is the rare talent able to pull off such a feat. The story Pakenham tells involves countless actors, but at the center of the great conquest from beginning to end is the Belgian King Leopold, whose imperial actions, clothed in the righteous language of development and humanitarianism, did more than anyone else to spur on the exploration and exploitation of Africa. As Pakenham describes him, "Leopold was a Coburg millionaire, a constitutional monarch malgre lui, a throwback from the age of absolutism, with the brain of a Wall Street financier and the hide of an African rhinoceros." From his ostentatious palace at Laeken, Leopold kept a close eye on developments in the exploration of Africa and saw in it his great opportunity to make a fortune, all in the name of the "3 Cs": Christianity, Commerce, and Civilization. The "3 Cs" served as the foundation for most European imperialist of the time - Henry Stanley, his rival Pierre Brazza, Sir George Goldie, Frederick Lugard and others. A twenty-first century cynic could argue that the European intervention in Africa was motivated by capitalist greed, pure and simple. But Pakenham argues that a genuine desire to help the continent develop through the guiding light of Christianity was a central and perhaps the most important motivating factor in the decision to engage in African adventures by key elements in London, Paris and elsewhere. That said, commerce provided the extra pull that made large-scale action inevitable. After the early reports from Livingstone, himself a genuine and sincere Christian humanitarian, Africa captured the fascination of Europe with the potential of untold riches in this last unexplored frontier on earth. Indeed, the early years of "the Scramble" resembled a stock market bubble as investors rushed in motivated primarily by the fear of losing out by dithering on the sidelines. One of the more surprising aspects of European colonialism in Africa, especially the British in the early years of the Scramble, is how much they conquered with such little direct government investment. London frequently leveraged private enterprise to do the heavy lifting on the ground and direct foreign investment to develop the local infrastructure. Companies were given charters by London and had the exclusive right to make their fortunes under the protective flag of the British Empire. The most notable examples were Sir George

Goldie's Royal Niger Company that exploited the trade in modern day Nigeria and Cecil Rhodes' various enterprises mining diamonds and gold in the republics of South Africa. The difficult part about Pakenham's "Scramble" is that there are so many actors over so many decades operating on so many fronts that it is a challenge to keep everything straight - Isandlwana, Adowa, Majuba, Khartoum, Fashoda, Omdurman, etc. But Pakenham's prose is so engaging that the reader becomes absorbed and presses on. In sum, "The Scramble for Africa" is a delightful read and a great overview of an unprecedented exercise in foreign domination and exploitation, the legacy of which we very much live with today. Much of the material is presented at a high level. For instance, Pakenham has also authored an authoritative 500-page history of the Boer War, an event that is covered in "The Scramble" in a mere 25-page chapter late in the book. So those with an interest in specific episodes of African colonialism will be better served with more focused works, but no other book will piece all the parts together so well.

I read this good book, here in Brazil. This book has many excellent parts, such as: 1-Page 433: "Their dominant themes were the threat to the lives of the Christian missionaries, the need to maintain the suppression of the slave trade, and the damage to Britain's honour if the country reneged on her pledges. It was an old familiar crusade, the one for which Livingstone and Gordon and Bishop Hannington had died - the crusade against Muslim slave traders." 2-Page 439: "Impressed by his exploits in battle, Tippu Tip gave him back his freedom. Then for several years he served as Tippu's lieutenant in the upper Lomani, hunting slaves and ivory, like others loyal to the Arabs, with a pack of obedient cannibals. (Troublemakers were distributed as rations)". Such as another reviewer wrote, the big problem of this book is to be very biased. It is very biased and focused in England's imperialism. About Portugal and Spain imperialism in Africa, there's almost nothing. As I show above, this book writes the truth about XIX Century's African slavery: an Islamic business. At the same time, in one page, this book when talking about blacks in South Africa, describes them as "servants", not slaves, the real condition of them. Even with these failures, this book is a good choice to learn about the Scramble for Africa.

Traditional formal education omits all but a passing mention of the effects of colonialism on Africa. Pakenham's approach to the topic was spectacular: this book reads like a historical thriller, complete with intrigue, political trickery and maneuvering, proxy fighting and direct combat. Reading this book put many present day political and cultural issues into context for several African countries. This book is abound with practical facts and a great narrative style.

EXCELLENT BOOK. AUTHOR MAKES THE HISTORY OF THE TIME VERY INTERESTING. ONE REALIZES THAT THE PRESENT UNREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA IS BUT A REPEAT OF EVENTS IN THE LAST HALF OF THE 1800'S. THIS WOULD MAKE AN EXCELLENT MINISERIES FOR TELEVISION. THE BRITISH SHOULD DO THE MINISERIES AS THEY DO A BETTER JOB OF MAKING HISTORICALLY ACCURATE MOVIES.

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