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**THE RIVER CONGO: The discovery, exploration and exploitation of the world's most dramatic river**

by Peter Forbath  
Harper, 1977, 404 pp. \$15  
L of C 77-3749  
ISBN 0-06-122490-1

"Congo: the two sudden syllables beat on the imagination like a jungle drum . . ." Peter Forbath's prologue sounds like the start of a penny dreadful. But the story of the Congo often justifies florid prose. Long after the 15th century, when a Portuguese captain discovered the river's mouth, the Congo basin was the scene of extraordinary adventuring on the part of European explorers driven by ego and religious obsession to search for the true sources of the Nile in East Africa. (Some, like David Livingstone, died without knowing that the real achievement had been to discover the Congo's headwaters.) The story has its heroes and martyrs, including the imposing black reformer, Affonso, who ruled the Kingdom of Kongo in the early 16th century, and Beatriz, the black Jeanne d'Arc, burned at the stake in 1706. But the Congo is also synonymous with almost unrelieved savagery—at least 4 million slaves taken from the region by the Portuguese, at least 5 million people slain during the personal rule of the so-called Free State by Belgium's Leopold II (1895-1908).

**KRAAL AND CASTLE: Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa**

by Richard Elphick  
Yale, 1977, 266 pp. \$17.50  
L of C 76-49723  
ISBN 0-300-02012-0

When Dutch sea captain Jan van Riebeeck established the first trading post at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652, he found there a friendly, brown-skinned, pastoral people. One hundred years later, with white settlement a fact, the Khoikhoi, known to the Dutch as Hottentots, were gone—the first victims of racial conflict in South African history. Yet there had been no genocide and no enslavement. The Khoikhoi, who had only recently changed from a hunting to a pastoral economy, succumbed to a combination of subtle economic and social forces that are carefully traced in this study by a young historian at Wesleyan University. The Dutch takeover of grazing land, recruitment of adult males into menial wage labor, venereal and other ailments to which the Khoikhoi were not immune—all fundamentally undermined their traditional society. Once they were gone, the stage was set for the continuing conflict between white South Africans and the Bantu tribes, unre-