



# Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa

By Jason Stearns

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**Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa** By Jason Stearns

**A Best Book of the Year- *The Economist* & the *Wall Street Journal***

At the heart of Africa is the Congo, a country the size of Western Europe, bordering nine other nations, that since 1996 has been wracked by a brutal war in which millions have died. In *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*, renowned political activist and researcher Jason K. Stearns has written a compelling and deeply-reported narrative of how Congo became a failed state that collapsed into a war of retaliatory massacres. Stearns brilliantly describes the key perpetrators, many of whom he met personally, and highlights the nature of the political system that brought these people to power, as well as the moral decisions with which the war confronted them. Now updated with a new introduction, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters* tells the full story of Africa's Great War.

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**Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa** By Jason Stearns **Bibliography**

- Rank: #36086 in Books
- Brand: Jason Stearns
- Published on: 2012-03-27
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x 1.25" w x 5.50" l, .90 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 416 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“The best account [of the conflict in the Congo] so far....The task facing anyone who tries to tell this whole story is formidable, but Stearns by and large rises to it.” —**Adam Hochschild, New York Times Book Review**

“[A] tour de force, though not for the squeamish.” —**Washington Post**

“This is a serious book about the social and political forces behind one of the most violent clashes of modern times—as well as a damn good read.” —**Economist**

“[P]erhaps the best account of the most recent conflict in the Congo.” —**Foreign Policy**

“A serious, admirably balanced account of the crisis and the political and social forces behind it... perhaps the most accessible, meticulously researched, and comprehensive overview of the Congo crisis yet.”  
—**Financial Times**

“Impressively controlled account of the devastating Congo war...The book's greatest strength is the eyewitness dialogue; Stearns discusses his encounters with everyone from major military figures to residents of remote villages (he was occasionally suspected of being a CIA spy)...An important examination of a social disaster that seems both politically complex and cruelly senseless.”-**Kirkus**

“Covering the devastating effects of these deadly contests on the Congolese infrastructure, Congolese institutions, and people's lives, Stearns informatively reports on affairs for students of African politics.”**Booklist**

“He is a cracking writer, with a wry sense of understatement...Mr. Stearns has spoken to everyone—villagers, child soldiers, Mobutu's commanders, Kabila's ministers, Rwandan intelligence officers. In these conversations he found gold, bringing clarity—and humanity—to a place that usually seems inexplicable and barbaric. 'Dancing in the Glory of Monsters' is riveting and certain to become essential reading for anyone looking to understand Central Africa.” -**Wall Street Journal**

“Stearns is more concerned with the perceptions, motivations, and actions of an eclectic mix of actors in the conflict—from a Tutsi warlord who engaged in massive human rights violations to a Hutu activist turned refugee living in the camps and forests of eastern Congo. He tells their stories with a judicious mix of empathy and distance, linking them to a broader narrative of a two-decade-long conflict that has involved a dozen countries and claimed six million victims.”-**Foreign Affairs**

“Stearns is a leading authority on the region, having lived there for years working for the United Nations and the International Crisis Group. He has built up a superb knowledge of Congo and how it articulates with its neighbours, particularly Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. He frequently imparts his understanding to journalists far less well-informed than he. And now he has produced a book where he makes the whole

convoluted and confusing war in Congo a little more comprehensible, which is quite a feat. If you want to understand modern Congo then Stearns' book should be required reading.”-**Global Post**

“A brave and accessible take on the leviathan at the heart of so many of Africa's problems... Stearns's eye for detail, culled from countless interviews, brings this book alive... I once wrote that the Congo suffers from 'a lack of institutional memory', meaning that its atrocities well so inexorably that nobody bothers to keep an account of them. Stearns's book goes a long way to putting that right.”**Telegraph**,

“(t)his courageous book is a plea for more nuanced understanding and the silencing of the analysis-free ‘the horror, the horror’ exclamation that Congo still routinely wrings from Western lips.” **The Spectator**,

#### About the Author

**Jason Stearns** has been working on the conflict in the Congo for the past decade, most recently as the head of a special United Nations panel investigating Congolese rebel groups. He worked for the United Nations peacekeeping operation, and as a senior analyst for the International Crisis Group. He is currently completing a PhD at Yale University.

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