

[PDF] Sacred Hunger

Barry Unsworth - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Sacred Hunger
Author: Barry Unsworth
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Pages: 640
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly This vast, vividly realistic historical novel follows the crew of a slave-trading vessel from its Liverpool shipyard through days at anchor bartering human cargo on the Guinea Coast, then on beyond the slaver's disease-ridden and mutinous Middle Passage. With an epic ambition that seems suited to its 18th-century setting, Unsworth (*Stone Virgin*) takes on a big theme--greed, the animating "sacred hunger" of the title--but at the same time fills his huge canvas with the alternately fascinating and horrifying details of shipboard life, colonial plunder and power struggles, the London clubs of absentee sugar lords, even a pidgin Utopia created by slaves and seamen on unclaimed Florida coast. Deftly utilizing a flood of period detail, Unsworth has written a book whose stately pace, like the scope of its meditations, seems accurately to evoke the age. Tackling here a central perversity of our history--the keeping of slaves in a land where "all men are created equal"--Unsworth illuminates the barbaric cruelty of slavery, as well as the subtler habits of politics and character that it creates. As intricate as it is immense, this masterwork rewards every

turn of its 640 pages. (July) one with a continuing fascination for readers and authors alike-- Unsworth illuminates its cruel ties and miscarriages, its floggings and murders, as well as the subtler habits of politics and character that it creates. As intricate as it is immense, this masterwork rewards every turn of its 640 pages.

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From Library Journal With its graphic depiction of the 18th-century slave trade and a society driven by the desire to maximize profit regardless of the human cost, this new novel by the author of *Pascali's Island* (Penguin, 1988) offers a dark view of human nature clearly relevant to our own time. William Kemp hopes to recoup his losses in cotton speculation by entering the Triangular Trade. As ship's doctor, his nephew Matthew experiences firsthand the horrors of shipboard life, ultimately leading a revolt that lands the crew and remaining slaves on the southeastern coast of Florida. Here they try to establish "a paradise place," but events force Matthew to conclude that "nothing a man suffers will prevent him from inflicting suffering on others. Indeed, it will teach him the way." Though the pace drags at times, taken as a whole this is a masterful effort that delivers an important message. Highly recommended for both public and academic libraries.

- *David W. Henderson, Eckerd Coll. Lib., St. Petersburg, Fla.*

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