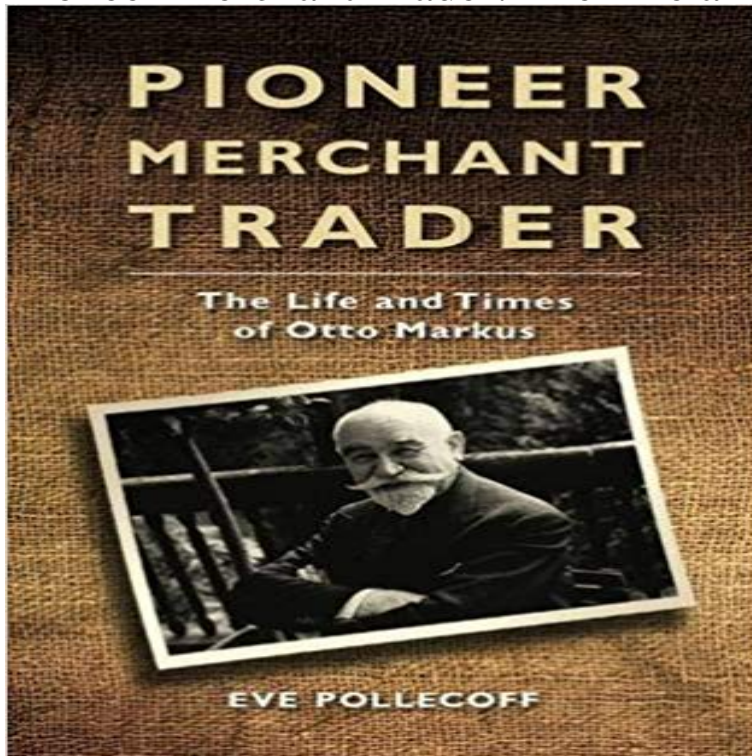


Pioneer Merchant Trader: The Life and Times of Otto Markus



The Scramble for Africa in the 1880s showed European interest in Africa at its most intense and today evokes a picture of the great European powers engaged in a frantic struggle for supremacy and for control of Africa and its resources. Eve Pollecoff here tells the story of Otto Markus - Pioneer Merchant Trader - who established his East African Trading Company in the wake of growing British interest in East Africa: especially Kenya and Uganda. The influence of Markus's company stretched from East Africa to Europe, and to the USA and Brazil, embracing skins and hides, domestic goods, agricultural produce, and the Ford Motor Company agency. The company survived two world wars, waves of anti-Semitism in Europe, and pioneered staple crops for which Africa became famous, especially cotton and coffee. Pollecoff paints an impressive portrait of Otto Markus as a dynamic international entrepreneur, the focus of a large and traditional family, and, above all, the embodiment - perhaps unwittingly - of informal empire.

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