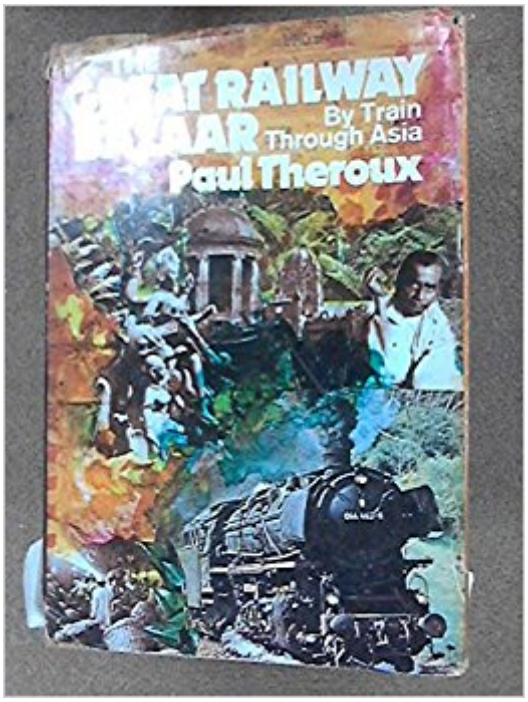
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The Great Railway Bazaar: By Train Through Asia



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Synopsis

The Great Railway Bazaar is Paul Theroux’s account of his epic journey by rail through Asia. Filled with evocative names of legendary train routes - the Direct-Orient Express, the Khyber Pass Local, the Delhi Mail from Jaipur, the Golden Arrow to Kuala Lumpur, the Hikari Super Express to Kyoto and the Trans-Siberian Express - it describes the many places, cultures, sights and sounds he experienced and the fascinating people he met. Here he overhears snippets of chat and occasional monologues, and is drawn into conversation with fellow passengers, from Molesworth, a British theatrical agent, and Sadik, a shabby Turkish tycoon, while avoiding the forceful approaches of pimps and drug dealers. This wonderfully entertaining travelogue pays loving tribute to the romantic joys of railways and train travel. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the most entertaining books I have read in a long while . . . Superb comic detail -- Angus Wilson * Observer * He has done our travelling for us brilliantly * William Golding * He has done our travelling for us brilliantly * William Golding * --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

Paul Theroux has written many works of fiction and travel writing, including the modern classics The Great Railway Bazaar, The Old Patagonian Express, My Secret History and The Mosquito Coast. Paul Theroux divides his time between Cape Cod and the Hawaiian islands. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

There is nothing like a good travel book to relax with after the usual stresses of the day, especially

for those who might never expect to travel through, e.g., India, Japan, and Russia on the Trans-Siberian Express. The publication date of 1975 takes us back to those years when "hippies" were everywhere, including, as Paul Theroux informs us, on trains in exotic places. His descriptions of these personalities (and many others encountered) give us a picture of hardened, selfish, unrealistic individuals presumably on a spiritual quest. As great as this book is, and as highly recommended as it is, the reader's steadfast traveling companion can only be the author and what he sees and experiences, and Theroux sees through a glass very darkly. Travel experiences in retrospect have what can be identified as their highest and lowest points, highest meaning a moment of realization, a discovery of human goodness and genuine spirituality that brings the potential for a true change in outlook regarding human beings and human conditions. Theroux's books lack these latter nourishing views of life, so that the reader becomes as tired as he does near the merciful end of his months-long journey (with his usual heavy consumption of alcohol) on the Siberian Express, with everything utterly boring, and with time passing painfully slow The account has to be honest about "the way it is," but at one point Theroux is telling all of the insipid travelers he encounters that he is a dentist, in order to avoid engaging them about his lifework, causing one poor fellow to consult him about his decaying teeth. Theroux advises him to seek treatment as soon as possible, and gives him two aspirins.The author may not be able to be called a "misanthrope" in the strict definition of the word, but he comes close. So this is our traveling companion in the otherwise "great railway bazaar," and there is no letup in the way that he sees and experiences life.

A fine and often disturbing book - remember it's several decades old. But be warned: the kindle edition is full of mispunctuations and resulting misspellings and gibberish that appear to be the result of uncorrected computer scanning. For $10 customers should be entitled to something better.

Incredible descriptive detail of a journey few people would undertake. He is a fearless traveler, yet the overall tone of his many travel narratives is of a quality of lonliness, rather than satisfaction. Perhaps, in choosing to travel alone with the benefits the singular travel can enjoy, his perceptions have nothing to bounce again. A side benefit of this book is Theroux's many reference to other books and authors. The next book to read is Theroux's romp around the coast of England, The Kingdom By The Sea.

Fascinating journey by an author who writes well and with humor, although he is rather narrow minded, which can spoil the magic and the fun.

I’m going to be another to pile on and state how frustrated I am in paying full-book price for a Kindle edition only to find so many typos it looks like my teenager is texting the book to me. Really, a couple of more experiences like this and I’ll reaquaint myself with used book stores, at least "paper publishers" have proof readers.That said, I did enjoy the story. It didn’t get going until Theroux was leaving Turkey, but his impressions of India and points east were fun to read about. He was really hard on Afghanistan, which makes me wonder why we’re still there, forty years later when nobody’s opinion of the country and its hopelessness seems to have changed. It would be interesting to read what Theroux would write if he repeated his trip through Vietnam, now that the war has been over for nearly forty years. The desolation and emptiness of eastern Russia makes me glad I live here.

Missed your chance to tour Asia by rail in the 1970’s? Paul Theroux gives the reader the experience without having to endure the hardships. And there are many.As a boy, Paul Theroux seldom heard a train go by without wishing he were on it. After following his dream of exploring many countries of the world by rail, this book focuses on Asia and is considered a classic of travel writing.Things grey and dull leaving London turn increasingly bizarre as he continues East on the Orient Express, The Teheran Express, The Kyber Mail, on through India to Singapore and Japan, linking with the Trans-Siberian Express. The dedication he writes is "to the lost ones, to the cohort of the damned, to my brethren in their sorrow overseas . . ." The reader comes to understand what these grim words mean as his journey unwinds. He writes with a steady, tolerant eye, focusing on the extremely varied characters with whom he shares his club and sleeping cars.

I like that Theroux presents a balanced view of the places that he travels. You get the good and the bad.

In his first travel novel, and the book that made him famous, Paul Theroux writs about his four and a half month journey from London to Kyoto and back. His first choice is to use trains (air only in emergencies), but he also uses whatever means of transport he can find. He is a keen student of humanity and does not shy away from describing his own struggles and idiosyncrasy. A gripping tale of an intrepid journey

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