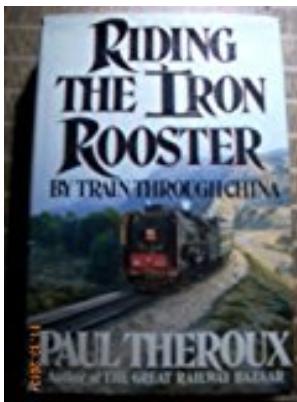


[PDF] Riding The Iron Rooster: By Train Through China

Paul Theroux - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: Riding the Iron Rooster: By T
Author: Paul Theroux
Released: 1988-05-27
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Theroux (The Old Patagonian Express, The Great Railway Bazaar) spent a year exploring China by train, and his impressions about what has and has not changed in the country, as gathered in hundreds of conversations with Chinese citizens, make up a large portion of the book. The Cultural Revolution and the vandalism of the Red Guards have left scars on both the land and the people. Mao's death brought a collective sigh of relief from the population; reforms brought about under Deng Xiaoping have generally been welcomed. Still, this is not a political book.

Whether describing his dealings with a rock-hard bureaucracy, musing over the Chinese flirtation with capitalismthey've "turned the free market into a flea market"or commenting on the process of traveling, Theroux conducts the reader through this enormous country with wisdom, humor and a crusty warmth. Along the way are anecdotes about classic Chinese pornography (forbidden to the citizenry, but all right for "foreign friends"); 35-below-zero weather; the Chinese penchant for restructuring nature; and the omnipresent thermos of hot water for making tea. The last chapter, "The Train to Tibet," deals with the extremes to which the Chinese have gone in their attempts to subjugate the Tibetan people. Theroux develops an understanding of China through his travels, but he falls in love with Tibet. As in his previous works, he gives the reader much to relish and think about. BOMC featured selection.

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From Library Journal Theroux's penchant for train travel is well knownhis Great Railway Bazaar and The Old Patagonian Express are modern travel classics. On his latest jaunt he takes almost a year to crisscross China, traveling on 40 trains from the southern tropics to the wastelands of the Gobi in western Xinjiang to the dense metropolises of Shanghai, Beijing, and Canton. What emerges is a curious melange of ancient and modern: while some things are literally changing overnight, the Chinese still manufacture spittoons and steam engines. For Theroux, traveling is both about peopletheir thoughts, customs, and peculiaritiesand a form of autobiography, and here we learn as much about his own quirks and fancies as we do about the intriguing world of contemporary China. Laurence Hull, Cannon Memorial Lib., Concord, N.C.

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