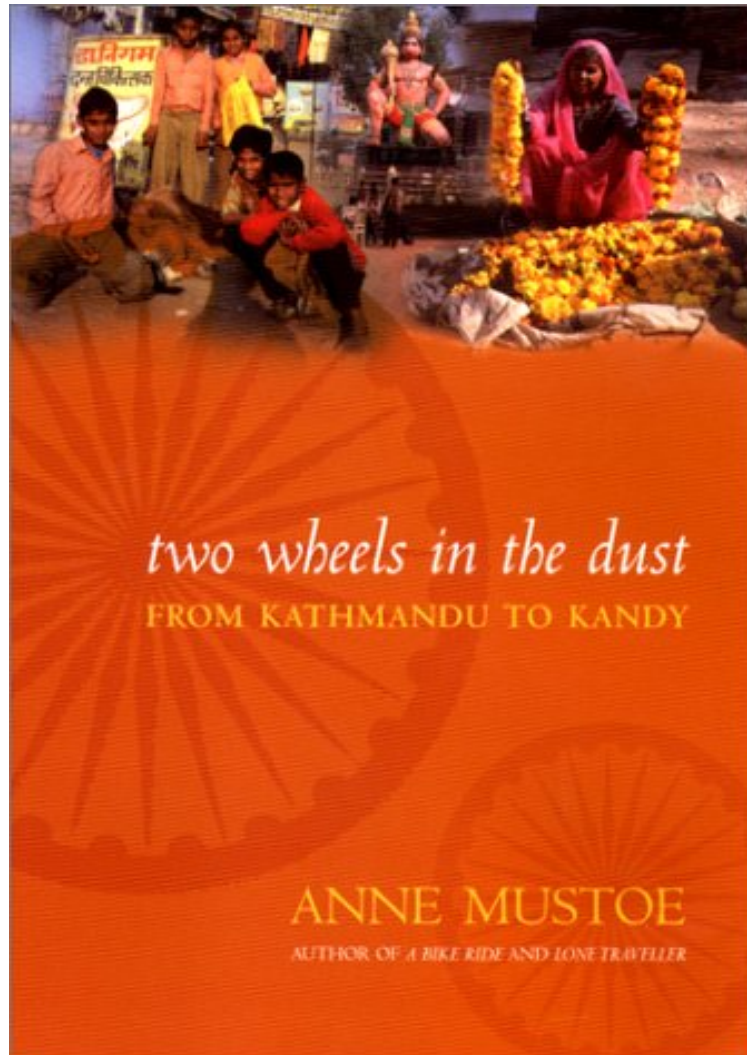


(Read now) Two Wheels in the Dust: From Kathmandu to Kandy

Two Wheels in the Dust: From Kathmandu to Kandy

Anne Mustoe

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Anne Mustoe : Two Wheels in the Dust: From Kathmandu to Kandy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Two Wheels in the Dust: From Kathmandu to Kandy:

16 of 20 people found the following review helpful. 297 pages to gather DustBy Don GunnWell I've read a few books on travelling foreign lands by bike. It seems that more often that not they are written by middle aged women, who are perhaps in more of a transition point in life and are more apt for meaningful self reflection, I dunno. I picked up this book excited that I had found a series of books to get hooked on that would get into travelling remote and wonderful parts of the world by bike and describing the journey. What I found was a big disappointment, that pretty much sums it up right there. I've read 3 other books while trying to slug through this one. I had expected it would be descriptive of

riding through Nepal, India and Sri Lanka talking of the people and sights. This isn't what I found. Mustoe has a knack for avoiding those interesting bits like, ohh describing much about the place at all. The novel paralleled the legend of the Ramayana. Which has an equal portion of the text as her journey does. Unfortunately this text is rather daunting and her journey becomes more involved with the details of how she got to given monuments than what was there or in the rest of the country for example. At times she comes off as snobby, mentioning she's used to not living in luxury and then turning up her nose at the lack of availability of Kingfisher beer in a nation that doesn't drink for example. I was also disappointed a little misled since this wasn't a journey from Nepal through to Sri Lanka, in fact it was a sequence of several trips over many years. Her detail of the way her tourguides pants were pressed is more commonly mentioned than riding through the countryside, which is not the type of detail I was looking for. She has an overlying attitude that this is what she does for a job and offers little more than a narrative, offering little of herself to the reader other than to mention she is from London and is a widow. No more is mentioned. Which keeps the reader at arms reach, and you get less out of it. Would I read another one of her books, maybe someday...if I was stormstayed into an airport or doing time.[I'd recommend Margo Archibald's *Cycling Into Your Soul* over this one]

Beginning in Kathmandu in Nepal, and ending in the tranquil hill town of Kandy in Sri Lanka, Anne Mustoe's amazing journey by bicycle followed the path of the Ramayana's central characters Rama and Sita -- and Hanuman, their divine helper. With her chosen method of transport, she was able to mix and interact with local people; to learn of their customs and daily lives in ways that are closed to the conventional traveller. Rich experiences make up this remarkable adventure, and the book is packed with anecdotes that really bring the journey alive. The Indian subcontinent is explored in all its cultural and spiritual diversity and the story is told with sympathy, humour, keen observation and the relish of the open road.

From Publishers Weekly Who better than a redoubtable English headmistress to teach Americans about The Ramayana, a venerable hallmark text of Hinduism that still animates contemporary Indian culture? And from the seat of a bike, to boot. Mustoe, a 60-something "pensioner" (retiree) whose legs and lungs must be as enviably developed as her sense of adventure, follows by bicycle the route across India taken by the fabled prince Rama, hero of the ancient Hindu epic poem. Mustoe, who has chronicled her global bicycle voyages in *Lone Traveller* and *A Bike Ride*, descends from the mountains of Nepal, birthplace of Rama's wife Sita, and meanders her way (occasionally by local train or plane) across the subcontinent to Sri Lanka, where the virtuous Rama and his 10-headed opponent, Ravana, fought their decisive battle. Mustoe's travel narrative parallels her exposition of the Hindu saga. The stories together comprise a vivid travelogue of India from the perspective of a sympathetic outsider who observes how the nation's deeply rooted faith and social practices make it a unique paradox of ancient and modern. Black-and-white pictures and a map are helpful. Readers interested in travel may appreciate bike and luggage specifications; those curious about Hinduism may long, however, for a glossary to keep the Hindu pantheon and Ramayana characters straight. (Jan.) Forecast: The popularity of Bruce Feiler's *Walking the Bible* as well as the vogue in spiritual travel books may generate extra publicity mileage for this idiosyncratically chatty combination of travel and religion. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "Its brio and optimism are unquenchable" -- *Daily Telegraph* From the Inside Flap India is no place for the faint-hearted cyclist. The streets are jammed with cars, buses, rickshaws, animals, fortune-tellers, barbers, beggars and people sleeping or cooking. In this hectic environment, Anne Musoe found a pocket of calm - a man praying to Hanuman at a roadside shrine. Her curiosity about this magical Hindu monkey-god was to lead her through the entire Indian subcontinent and back three millennia - to the origins of the Sanskrit epic, the Ramayana. Beginning in Kathmandu in Nepal and ending in the tranquil town of Kandy in Sri Lanka, Anne Mustoe's amazing journey by bicycle is told with keen observation and the relish of the open road. Following the paths of the Ramayana's characters, Rama, Sita and Hanuman, the intrepid Ms Mustoe's rich experiences really bring the journey alive, and the Indian subcontinent is explored in all its cultural and spiritual diversity.