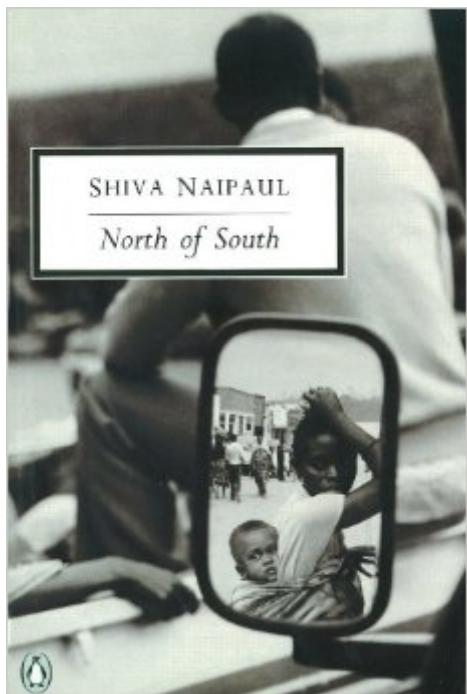


The book was found

North Of South: An African Journey (Classic, 20th-Century, Penguin)



Synopsis

North of South: An African Journey (Classic, 20th-Century, Penguin).

Book Information

Series: Classic, 20th-Century, Penguin (Book 837)

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Customer Reviews

I'm trying very hard to figure out how I can review this book without coming across as an ignorant, bubble-headed liberal or a rabid racist. Hmm... I don't think it's going to happen. North of South, by the late Shiva Naipaul, is essentially a travelogue of a trip to parts of Africa in the 1970's, specifically Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. Welded to the descriptions of people and scenery are sharp observations on class, racism, government and colonialism. Naipaul's eye misses nothing during his travel, and his anecdotes are both humorous and sad. It was interesting to see that this guy is the brother of V.S. Naipaul, who recently won a Nobel Prize for Literature. Anyway, this book is not going to be found on the syllabus of any black studies classes anytime soon. North of South reveals Africa in all of its glory: degenerate, corrupt and lazy. What really stands out is how Africans have taken Western ideas and applied them to their own situations, often with laughable results. Take the case of Tanzanian Socialism. Naipaul can barely contain a chuckle at the absurdity of this situation. Almost everyone he meets praises the administration, but almost no one has any true sense of what it's all about (to be fair, the same could be said for most nations). The corruption is truly astonishing. Bribery abounds everywhere, especially at border crossings, where tourists are routinely harassed and threatened with imprisonment if their papers aren't in order. A story in which Naipaul is conned when he gets a shoeshine is a good example. Not only does the guy ruin his

shoes, he tries to overcharge him in the process. Naipaul constantly has to shell out the bucks to get even the most basic services, if he gets them at all.

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