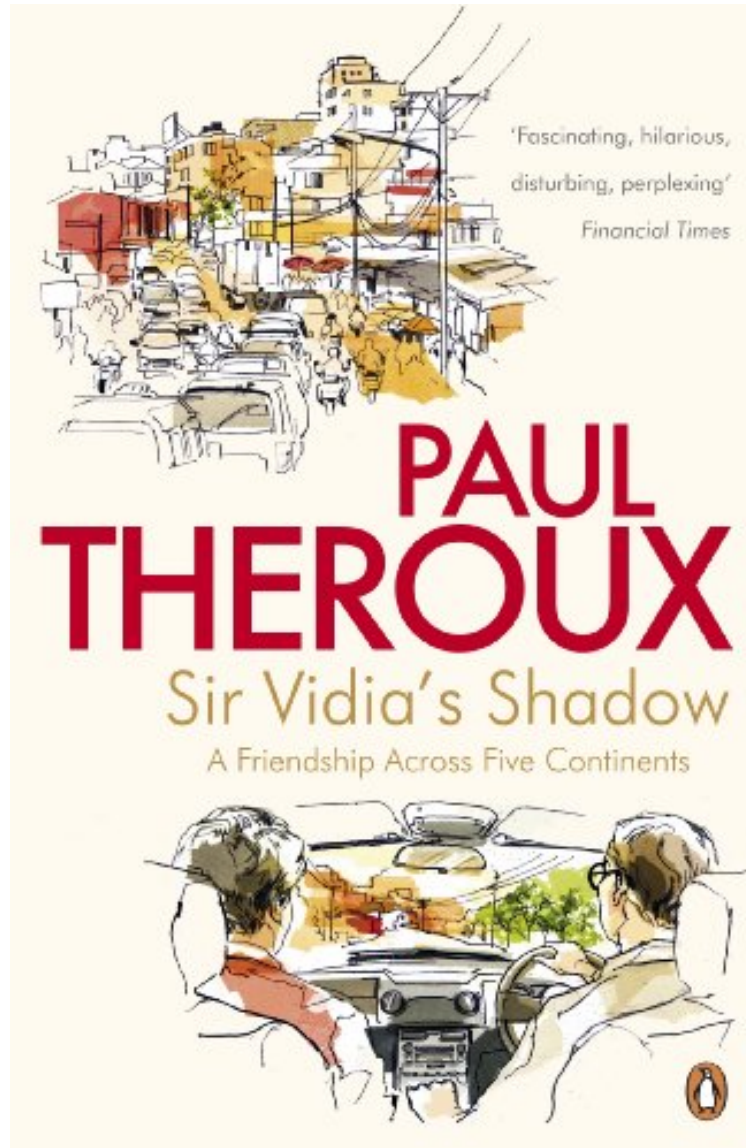


(Get free) Sir Vidia's Shadow: A Friendship Across Five Continents

## Sir Vidia's Shadow: A Friendship Across Five Continents

Von Paul Theroux

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**Von Paul Theroux : Sir Vidia's Shadow: A Friendship Across Five Continents** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sir Vidia's Shadow: A Friendship Across Five Continents:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. I liked Sir Vidia's Shadow better than his travel books!Von Ein KundeTypical of so many in the modern world, I don't allow myself much time for recreational reading, so I am very particular about what I do read.I was introduced to Paul

Theroux's writing when a friend gave me a copy of *Riding the Iron Rooster* after it was published. It led to a new interest in travel writing and since then, I have read all of Paul Theroux's nonfiction travel books. I also have read *My Secret History* and *My Other Life*. How I always find the time to read Theroux's books is a surprise to me -- I truly enjoy them. I ran across the fact that Theroux had published *Sir Vidia's Shadow* here on the site. It was already very late, but I found myself reading every one of the online reviews before going to bed. I didn't know V.S. Naipaul's writing, but had noticed Theroux's criticism publication of his work. All this material online was an enjoyable read, but I wasn't all that interested in Theroux's friendship with this guy. I have just finished reading *Sir Vidia's Shadow* and I enjoyed this book more than any of the others! I'm not going to even begin to try to explain why, but it is a wonderful book that will certainly enrich the lives of those people who take the time to read it. As far as all of the critics' comments, I'd say some of them are looking at this book from a V.S. Naipaul perspective. I fortunately am free of this burden, but I'd say Theroux was courageous being so honest about his friendship with Vidia. I for one respect him for having written it just the way he did.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Misfits together Von Fernando Melendez When properly done I love gossip about great people: their foibles as humans detract not one whit from their accomplishments as artists, or soldiers, or bullfighters, or whatever distinguishes them from mere mortals; evidence of their silliness humanizes them and makes their accomplishments, if anything, more accessible to the common people who admire them. So here is a book by (arguably) the best travel author alive, petulantly describing his conflicts with (arguably) the best living English prose writer. The result is a marvelous tale of adoration, unreasonable expectations, and of a final and total alienation of affections. If this were a fictional story it would lack verisimilitude; but this is reality and one must wonder how these babies managed to leave their playpen long enough to make such powerful literary marks on the world. The book is beautifully written and hard to put down. It shows a clear picture of a wonderfully neurotic Sir Vidia, and a less clear (but still powerful) portrait of the author's evolution as a writer. It is a great entertainment despite the low level quarrels it depicts; it is literary gossip at its very best.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Literary Judas? I think not! Von Jaylee I am surprised by the critics overall reaction to this book. They appear to be more caught up in who it's about, rather than the words themselves. I say leave the former to the gossip columnists and the latter to men women who enjoy literature for its intrinsic value. While I think it helps to be familiar with the writings of both men, it's not necessary. I couldn't put down the book as I sat "fly on the wall" and observed the processes of passion and craft, friendship and scholarly circles. It's like watching someone who can't see you. There is pure poetry, for instance, in the telling of how Naipaul first met his current wife. I don't think the book is petty at all, but a fascinating window into a world of two men who met in relative isolation, supported each other, shared success and were friends to each other before the now well-publicized parting-of-the-ways. Does a great writer have to be a "nice guy"? I don't think so and I don't think that's the point here. It's a well-written and (I think) admiring view of a complex and difficult man and the profound effect he had on the writer's life.

Kurzbeschreibung 'Both unputdownable and utterly engaging' Jonathan Raban, *The Times Literary Supplement* 'I started reading Theroux's *Sir Vidia's Shadow*, the story of his friendship with V. S. Naipaul over thirty years and five continents - its origins, development, and sad, enigmatic termination. I couldn't, as they say, put it down. I don't know of a more revealing study of the peculiar nature of friendship between professional writers, an unstable compound of empathy, solidarity and rivalry. Theroux's portrait of Naipaul . . . may be [his] finest literary creation' David Lodge, *Guardian Books of the Year* 'Thoroughly compelling. We can call it a memoir, or a biographical sketch, but it has more in it - more candour, more intensity, more angry puzzlement - than we would normally expect from either of these genres. I can think of no other book that renders in such merciless detail a still-living public figure' *Sunday Telegraph*.

dePaul Theroux first met V.S. Naipaul, or Vidia to his friends, in Uganda in 1966. Theroux was an unknown writer, while the older Naipaul had already established a name for himself as the author of such classic novels as *A House for Mr. Biswas*. Their unlikely subsequent friendship stretched for more than 30 years and spanned five continents, as Theroux grew in literary stature, with novels such as *The Mosquito Coast* and travelogues including *Riding the Iron Rooster*, and Naipaul went on to secure, among other plaudits, the 1971 Booker Prize for his extraordinary collection *In a Free State*. But then, in 1997, their friendship ended. Snubbed by Naipaul following a chance meeting on a London street, Theroux immediately realised that "his rejection of me meant I was on my own. He had freed me, he had opened my eyes, he had given me a subject." The result was *Sir Vidia's Shadow*, a humorous but often elegiac account of the cantankerous Naipaul, which often reads as much as an account of Theroux's own rise to artistic maturity as a literary memoir of Naipaul. Some of the finest sections of the book deal with Theroux's contrasting experiences to Africa compared with the patrician attitude of Naipaul, and his emergence as a literary figure in London--with the help of Naipaul. At times, *Sir Vidia's Shadow* offers hilarious insights into Naipaul's bizarre and often offensive musings on politics, race and sex, and his selfish and single-minded belief that writing is the only thing that really matters. This is a fascinating book, made all the more intriguing by the nagging feeling that a deeper level of recrimination lies behind Theroux's account than he actually concedes. If Naipaul's rejection of

Theroux allows him to become just another "subject", then how much difference is there in the end between the two writers? In the end, is this really a book about killing the literary father? Only time, and perhaps Naipaul's response, will tell. --Jerry Brotton *Pressestimmen* "A compact, provocative gem of a novel." *Boston Globe* "Vigorous and evocative . . . the kind of story you force yourself to savor slowly though you're dying to find out what happens next." *The Washington Post* "Both unputdownable and utterly engaging." *Times Literary Supplement*