

shantaram by gregory david roberts

Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts: A Journey Through Redemption, Mumbai, and the Human Spirit

shantaram by gregory david roberts is more than just a novel; it's a sprawling epic that captures the essence of life's complexities through the eyes of a flawed yet captivating protagonist. This book has resonated with readers worldwide, thanks to its vivid storytelling, rich depiction of Mumbai's underbelly, and profound exploration of themes like redemption, love, and survival. If you're curious about what makes this book a modern classic or want to dive deeper into its layers, this comprehensive guide will provide everything you need to know.

Understanding Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts

At its core, shantaram by gregory david roberts is a semi-autobiographical novel that tells the story of Lin, an escaped Australian convict who finds refuge in the bustling, chaotic city of Mumbai. The narrative is a blend of adventure, philosophy, and raw human emotion, offering readers a window into an unfamiliar world filled with both danger and beauty.

The Storyline and Setting

Set primarily in the 1980s, the book traces Lin's journey from imprisonment in Australia to the labyrinthine slums of Bombay (now Mumbai). Here, Lin reinvents himself, forming deep friendships, working in a free clinic, and gradually becoming involved with the local mafia. The city is portrayed not just as a backdrop but as a living, breathing character — vibrant, unpredictable, and endlessly fascinating.

Gregory David Roberts' personal experiences as a fugitive and his time spent in Mumbai lend authenticity to the narrative. The detailed descriptions of the city's streets, markets, and diverse communities immerse readers in an exotic world that feels both authentic and cinematic.

Why Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts Stands Out

What makes shantaram by gregory david roberts a standout work in contemporary literature? Several factors contribute to its enduring popularity and critical acclaim.

Rich Character Development

Roberts crafts characters that are deeply human, full of contradictions and complexities. Lin, the protagonist, is both heroic and flawed, embodying the struggle between good and evil within every individual. Supporting characters, from the enigmatic Prabaker to the powerful mafia boss Khader

Khan, add layers of intrigue and emotional depth.

Themes That Resonate

The novel explores heavy themes such as redemption, exile, identity, and the meaning of home. Readers are invited to reflect on the nature of forgiveness and the possibility of change, even in the darkest circumstances. These universal themes, paired with the colorful Mumbai setting, give the story a timeless appeal.

Philosophical and Spiritual Undertones

Beyond the thrilling plotlines, *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts often delves into philosophical dialogues and reflections. Lin's musings on life, fate, and human connections elevate the novel from a mere adventure tale to a thoughtful meditation on existence.

The Impact of Shantaram on Readers and Popular Culture

Since its publication, *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts has influenced countless readers and sparked discussions about cross-cultural experiences and the nature of storytelling.

Connection with Readers Worldwide

Many readers find themselves deeply moved by Lin's journey, relating to his struggles for freedom and belonging. The book's candid portrayal of hardship and hope appeals to a broad audience, transcending cultural and linguistic barriers.

Adaptations and Media Attention

The novel's cinematic qualities have attracted attention from filmmakers and television producers. Various attempts to adapt *Shantaram* into a movie or series have been underway, highlighting the story's visual and emotional potential. These adaptations aim to capture the essence of Roberts' work while bringing the vivid world of Mumbai to a global audience.

Tips for Readers Diving into Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts

If you're planning to read *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts for the first time, here are some

helpful tips to enhance your experience:

- **Prepare for a Long Read:** The novel spans over 900 pages in many editions, so set aside time and patience to immerse yourself fully.
- **Embrace the Mumbai Vibe:** Understanding some cultural and historical context about Mumbai can enrich your appreciation of the setting.
- **Reflect on the Philosophical Passages:** Don't rush through the introspective parts; they add depth and offer valuable life insights.
- **Keep a Notebook Handy:** With many memorable quotes and moments, jotting down your favorite parts can help you remember and revisit key ideas.

Exploring the Real Gregory David Roberts Behind Shantaram

The line between fiction and reality blurs in *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts, as the author's own life story inspired much of the novel's content. Understanding Roberts' background adds a fascinating dimension to reading the book.

From Fugitive to Author

Gregory David Roberts was a convicted bank robber who escaped from an Australian prison and fled to India. His experiences living undercover in Mumbai's slums, working in a free health clinic, and mingling with the city's underworld form the backbone of the novel. After being recaptured and serving time, Roberts eventually turned to writing, channeling his tumultuous past into *Shantaram*.

The Authenticity of Experience

The vivid details and emotional honesty in the book come from Roberts' firsthand knowledge. This authenticity resonates with readers, offering a rare glimpse into a world often hidden from mainstream narratives.

Exploring Mumbai Through the Lens of Shantaram

One of the most captivating aspects of *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts is the way it portrays Mumbai—not just as a city, but as a vibrant ecosystem full of contradictions.

The City as a Character

Mumbai is depicted with all its contrasts: extreme wealth and poverty, tradition and modernity, chaos and order. Through Lin's eyes, we see bustling markets, crowded trains, colorful festivals, and shadowy alleyways. This rich tapestry invites readers to appreciate the city's complexity beyond stereotypes.

The Social and Cultural Fabric

The novel introduces readers to Mumbai's diverse communities, highlighting issues like caste, religion, and economic disparity. These social layers enrich the narrative, providing context for Lin's interactions and challenges.

Why Shantaram Continues to Inspire Readers

Years after its release, *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts remains a beloved book for many. Its enduring appeal lies in the universal themes of hope, transformation, and the search for meaning.

The Power of Storytelling

Roberts' storytelling captures the imagination, combining suspense, humor, and philosophical insight. This mix keeps readers engaged and encourages reflection.

A Testament to Human Resilience

At its heart, *Shantaram* is a story about overcoming adversity and finding redemption in unlikely places. It reminds readers that even in the darkest moments, there is potential for growth and connection.

Whether you are drawn to tales of adventure, fascinated by Mumbai's culture, or seeking a novel with emotional depth, *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts offers a captivating journey that lingers long after the last page.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main plot of 'Shantaram' by Gregory David Roberts?

'Shantaram' follows the story of an Australian fugitive who escapes prison and flees to Bombay,

India, where he becomes involved with the city's underworld, forms meaningful relationships, and seeks redemption.

Is 'Shantaram' based on a true story?

Yes, 'Shantaram' is a novel inspired by Gregory David Roberts' own life experiences, including his escape from an Australian prison and time spent in the slums of Bombay.

What are the major themes explored in 'Shantaram'?

The novel explores themes such as redemption, love, friendship, the clash of cultures, and the complexities of morality within the context of crime and survival.

Has 'Shantaram' been adapted into a movie or TV series?

Yes, 'Shantaram' has been adapted into a TV series, with Apple TV+ producing the adaptation, starring Charlie Hunnam as the protagonist.

Why is 'Shantaram' considered a cult classic among readers?

'Shantaram' is acclaimed for its vivid storytelling, rich depiction of Bombay, and complex characters, resonating deeply with readers who appreciate immersive, character-driven narratives about resilience and transformation.

Additional Resources

Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts: A Deep Dive into a Modern Classic

shantaram by gregory david roberts stands as a monumental work in contemporary literature, blending autobiography with fiction to create a vivid tapestry of adventure, philosophy, and human resilience. Since its publication in 2003, the novel has garnered a global following, praised for its immersive storytelling and intricate portrayal of life in Bombay (now Mumbai). This article explores the multifaceted dimensions of Shantaram, examining its narrative structure, thematic depth, and cultural significance, while also considering its impact on readers and critics alike.

Exploring the Narrative Core of Shantaram

At its heart, Shantaram by gregory david roberts is a sprawling epic that recounts the experiences of an Australian fugitive who escapes from prison and finds refuge in the underbelly of Bombay. The story's protagonist, Lin, navigates a complex world of slums, criminal networks, and spiritual quests. Roberts' firsthand experiences infuse the novel with authenticity, making the city itself a central character.

The narrative's strength lies in its richly detailed setting. Roberts paints Bombay not just as a backdrop but as a living, breathing entity filled with contradictions—beauty and brutality, poverty and vitality, despair and hope. Such vivid descriptions have led critics to compare Shantaram to

other great city novels, like James Joyce's Dublin-centric works or Dickens' London portraits, positioning it as an essential read for those interested in urban narratives.

Characterization and Development

One of the most compelling aspects of *Shantaram* is its complex characterization. Lin evolves from a broken man seeking redemption to a figure who embraces both the darkness and light within himself. The supporting characters, including the enigmatic Prabaker and the philosophical Karla, add layers of nuance and moral ambiguity. These relationships drive much of the novel's emotional depth, highlighting themes of loyalty, love, and betrayal.

The character arcs also reflect the novel's exploration of identity and transformation. Lin's journey is as much internal as it is external, challenging readers to contemplate the nature of self-reinvention in a chaotic world.

Thematic Depth and Cultural Insights

Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts delves into numerous themes, ranging from existential musings to social critique. Its rich tapestry includes reflections on fate, freedom, and the human capacity for forgiveness. Particularly striking is the novel's engagement with the cultural mosaic of India, showcasing its traditions, spiritual practices, and societal complexities.

Crime, Morality, and Redemption

The juxtaposition of crime and morality forms a core tension in the novel. Lin's involvement with Bombay's criminal underworld challenges conventional notions of right and wrong. Roberts does not romanticize crime but rather presents it as intertwined with survival and human frailty. This nuanced portrayal invites readers to question simplistic moral binaries.

Redemption emerges as a recurring motif, with Lin's efforts to atone for his past mistakes driving much of the plot. His experiences in the slums and interactions with marginalized communities shed light on themes of social justice and empathy, offering a critique of systemic inequities within India and beyond.

Spirituality and Philosophy

Another distinctive feature of *Shantaram* is its philosophical undercurrent. The novel incorporates reflections on Hindu and Buddhist ideas, Western existentialism, and personal spirituality. These elements enrich the narrative, providing a counterbalance to its gritty realism. The dialogue between characters often serves as a vehicle for exploring questions about suffering, destiny, and the search for meaning.

Stylistic Features and Literary Techniques

Gregory David Roberts employs a narrative style that is both lyrical and immersive. His prose combines poetic descriptions with fast-paced action scenes, creating a rhythm that keeps readers engaged over the novel's considerable length (approximately 900 pages). The episodic structure allows for a wide range of settings and tonal shifts, from intimate conversations to high-stakes confrontations.

Use of Language and Dialogue

Roberts' command of language is evident in his ability to capture the vernacular and idiomatic expressions of Bombay's diverse population. The dialogue feels authentic, enhancing the novel's credibility. Moreover, the author's use of metaphor and symbolism adds layers of meaning, inviting multiple interpretations.

Comparative Analysis with Similar Works

When compared to other autobiographical novels or narratives centered on India, *Shantaram* stands out for its scope and intensity. Works like V.S. Naipaul's "An Area of Darkness" or Paul Theroux's travelogues share thematic similarities but differ in approach; Roberts opts for a fictionalized, character-driven story rather than pure reportage. This blend of fact and fiction broadens the novel's appeal, making it accessible to both literary enthusiasts and casual readers.

Reception and Impact in Contemporary Literature

Since its release, *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts has enjoyed both commercial success and critical acclaim, though not without controversy. Some critics have questioned the accuracy of Roberts' autobiographical claims, while others applaud the book's emotional honesty and narrative ambition. Regardless, the novel has inspired adaptations, including a planned television series, signaling its enduring influence.

Pros and Cons of *Shantaram*

- **Pros:** Richly detailed setting; complex characters; philosophical depth; immersive storytelling.
- **Cons:** Lengthy narrative may deter some readers; occasional pacing issues; blending of fact and fiction can blur authenticity.

The novel's ability to spark debate about truth in storytelling and the ethics of autobiographical

fiction further enhances its cultural relevance.

SEO Keywords and Digital Presence

The lasting popularity of *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts is evident in its strong digital footprint. Searches related to “*Shantaram* book review,” “Gregory David Roberts biography,” “*Shantaram* themes,” and “*Shantaram* Mumbai setting” consistently rank high on major search engines. This keyword diversity reflects the broad interest in both the novel’s literary qualities and its real-life inspirations.

Conclusion: The Enduring Allure of *Shantaram*

Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts remains a compelling exploration of human resilience and cultural complexity. Its intricate portrayal of Bombay’s underworld, combined with profound philosophical questions, ensures its place as a significant work in modern literature. For readers seeking a narrative that transcends simple genre classifications, *Shantaram* offers a richly rewarding experience that continues to resonate across the globe.

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shantaram by gregory david roberts: *Shantaram* Gregory David Roberts, 2022-10-18

shantaram by gregory david roberts: *The Mountain Shadow* Gregory David Roberts, 2015-10-13 Gregory David Roberts' epic novel, *Shantaram*, introduced millions of readers to a cast of unforgettable characters in the hidden heart of Bombay through Lin, an Australian fugitive, working as a passport forger for a branch of the Bombay mafia. In *The Mountain Shadow*, the long awaited sequel, Lin must find his way in a Bombay run by a different generation of mafia dons,

playing by a different set of rules. It has been two years since the events in Shantaram, and since Lin lost two people he had come to love: his father figure, Khaderbhai, and his soul mate, Karla, married to a handsome Indian media tycoon. Lin returns from a smuggling trip to a city that seems to have changed too much, too soon. Many of his old friends are long gone, the new mafia leadership has become entangled in increasingly violent and dangerous intrigues, and a fabled holy man challenges everything that Lin thought he'd learned about love and life. But Lin can't leave the Island City: Karla, and a fatal promise, won't let him go. A love story of hope, humour, and the philosophical quest for the wisdom of our common humanity, *The Mountain Shadow* is a sublime, all-consuming novel of our extraordinary human struggle for love and faith.

shantaram by gregory david roberts: Shantaram Gregory David Roberts, 2022-10-13 A novel of high adventure, great storytelling and moral purpose, based on an extraordinary true story of eight years in the Bombay underworld 'A literary masterpiece... at once erudite and intimate, reflective and funny... it has the grit and pace of a thriller' Daily Telegraph 'A publishing phenomenon' Sunday Times 'A gigantic, jaw-dropping, grittily authentic saga' Daily Mail 'In the early 80s, Gregory David Roberts, an armed robber and heroin addict, escaped from an Australian prison to India, where he lived in a Bombay slum. There, he established a free health clinic and also joined the mafia, working as a money launderer, forger and street soldier. He found time to learn Hindi and Marathi, fall in love, and spend time being worked over in an Indian jail. Then, in case anyone thought he was slacking, he acted in Bollywood and fought with the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan... Amazingly, Roberts wrote Shantaram three times after prison guards trashed the first two versions. It's a profound tribute to his willpower... At once a high-kicking, eye-gouging adventure, a love saga and a savage yet tenderly lyrical fugitive vision.' Time Out

shantaram by gregory david roberts: Shantaram Gregory David Roberts, 2006 Cuando llego a Bombay no era más que un fugitivo, sin identidad, sin futuro, sin esperanza. Allí conocí el paraíso y el infierno, el amor y el odio, la pasión y la guerra. Y se ganó un nombre otorgado con el corazón: Shantaram. Aterricé en Bombay huyendo de un pasado de crimen y droga, perseguido por la policía tras su fuga de una prisión de máxima seguridad en Australia. Y en sus barrios más miserables, donde los extranjeros jamás se adentran, donde sólo el amor y la lealtad permiten la supervivencia, su existencia cobró auténtico sentido y alcanzó una intensidad que no creía posible. En las calles sucias y llenas de vida de Bombay aprendí el valor de la auténtica amistad junto a hombres alegres y sencillos, como Prabaker, y otros violentos, duros y leales, como Abdullah. Conocí también el goce y el tormento de amar a una mujer excepcional. Y con la misma fuerza sufrí el lado oscuro de la vida: la tortura y el horror en las cárceles indias, la traición, la muerte de los seres queridos... Se hizo un nombre entre traficantes, contrabandistas y falsificadores, adopté sus códigos de honor y forjé con ellos unos lazos que le llevaron hasta las montañas de Afganistán, junto a los mujahidines que combatían a los soviéticos. Ésta es la historia real de la transformación de un hombre que atravesó todos los estadios del espíritu y todas las pruebas del cuerpo. Y es también el relato de una aventura increíble en una ciudad terrible y fascinante a la vez, en cuyas calles caóticas y abigarradas se esconden las verdades esenciales de la vida. Una lectura sensacional. -Publishers Weekly Una primera impresión muestra que se trata de una brillante historia, pero uno también se da cuenta rápidamente de que Roberts es un magnífico creador de personajes. -Booklist 'Una obra maestra, erudita e íntima, reflexiva y divertida, con toda la fuerza y el ritmo de un buen thriller. -Daily Telegraph Una verdadera gigantesca saga. -London Daily Mail Un héroe brutal, apasionado y romántico. -London Telegraph Una voz narrativa capaz de transmitir honestidad, sensibilidad y dejar una profunda huella psicológica. -Australian Book Review

shantaram by gregory david roberts: The City, Second Edition James A. Clapp, 2014-02-10 The City is the best, funniest, saddest, and most thought-provoking compilation ever assembled on the urban scene. James A. Clapp has arranged more than three thousand quotations--epigrams, epithets, verses, proverbs, scriptural references, witticisms, lyrics, literary references, and historical observations--on urban life from antiquity until the present. These quotes are drawn from the written

and spoken words of more than one thousand writers throughout history. This volume, with contributions from speakers, poets, song writers, politicians philosophers, scientists, religious leaders, historians, social scientists, humorists, architects, journalists, and travelers from and to many lands is designed to be used by writers, speechmakers, students, and scholars on cities and urban life. Clapp's text is striking for its sharp contrasts of urban and rural life and the urbanization process in different historical times and geographical areas. This second edition includes four hundred new entries, updated birth dates and occupations of quoted authors, and an expanded and updated introduction and preface. Clapp also added new introduction pages for each section containing pictures and unique quotations. The indexes have also been expanded to include more subjects and cities. The scope of this book is international, including entries on most major and many minor cities of the world. It is noteworthy for its pleasures and as well as its insights.

shantaram by gregory david roberts: *The Spiritual Path* Gregory David Roberts, 2021-03-19 The author of international bestseller, *Shantaram*, takes us on a gripping personal journey of wonder and insight into science, belief, faith and devotion. Drawing on common-sense logic, sacred traditions, inspirations from the natural world and the iconoclastic instruction of his spiritual teacher, Roberts describes the step by step path he followed in search of spiritual connection, one that anyone, of any belief or none, can apply in their own lives. This gripping personal account of the Leap of Faith is a compellingly fresh, new addition to such enduring, spiritually inspiring works as *Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, *The Road Less Travelled* and *The Celestine Prophecy*. From the Author: *The Spiritual Path* is for anyone searching for meaning and connection, for more answers than questions, and for practical help in resetting the spiritual compass. Gregory David Roberts

shantaram by gregory david roberts: *Mysticism in Newburyport* Peter James Ford, 2023-06-11 MYSTICISM IN NEWBURYPORT is a seven-book series revealing ancient secrets from masters of all cultures along with modern-day breakthroughs by scientists and quantum physicists of our times. These tales began flowing after Peter's powerful spiritual awakening in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Newburyport is a quaint little, historic seaport on the coast of Massachusetts heading towards New Hampshire. Peter had been sober in the 12-step recovery program for many years and had recovered from his alcoholism. Peter's love of Nature had brought him to the Newburyport area. This area is rich with Nature's treasures, Native American Heritage and many tales from the tall cargo ships of olden days. High street was lined with homes of these Sea Captains. Peter's awakening had given him new eyes and new highly evolved senses. Peter was to have powerful past lives experience with his Mystery Woman guide named Layne. Layne was a mystic that would tell people things about themselves that there was no way she could know. She would look you in the eyes and tell you your deepest secrets. She also knew about the Earth's electromagnetic grids and helped Peter understand what he was experiencing in Newburyport. Peter's new heightened senses could feel the electromagnet flow of energy and the convergence right below Market Square in Newburyport. Market Square was one of the crossroads for these powerful electromagnet energies that gives life to our planet. Peter was to share the secrets that were revealed to him in his writings.

shantaram by gregory david roberts: *Mystic* Peter James Ford, 2023-10-19 "Mysticism in Newburyport" is a seven-book series revealing ancient secrets from masters of all cultures along with modern-day breakthroughs by scientists and quantum physicists of our times. These tales began flowing after Peter's powerful spiritual awakening in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Newburyport is a quaint little, historic seaport on the coast of Massachusetts heading toward New Hampshire. Peter had been sober in the 12-step recovery program for many years and had recovered from his alcoholism. Peter's love of Nature had brought him to the Newburyport area. This area is rich with Nature's treasures, Native American Heritage, and many tales from the tall cargo ships of olden days. High Street was lined with homes of these Sea Captains. Peter's awakening had given him new eyes and new highly evolved senses. Peter was to have powerful past-life experiences with his Mystery Woman guide named Layne. Layne was a mystic who would

tell people things about themselves that there was no way she could know. She would look you in the eyes and tell you your deepest secrets. She also knew about the Earth's electromagnetic grids and helped Peter understand what he was experiencing in Newburyport. Peter's new heightened senses could feel the electromagnet flow of energy and the convergence right below Market Square in Newburyport. Market Square was one of the crossroads for these powerful electromagnet energies that give life to our planet. Peter was to share the secrets that were revealed to him in his writings.

shantaram by gregory david roberts: Vision Quest Peter James Ford, 2023-12-13 "VISION QUEST" is a book recording the continual soul expansion of the seeker, Peter James Ford. Peter's journey began after a powerful spiritual experience in the little historic seaport in Newburyport, Massachusetts. In Peter's late night meditations which were along the Merrimac River, the boardwalk, the Salisbury Reservation on the Atlantic Ocean, Plum Island, Maudsley Estate State Park, Pow Wow Hill (Native American Burial Grounds) and Old Hill Burial Grounds he was having vivid explosions in his mind of 'seemingly' past life experiences and powerful insights. Peter began seeing the hidden secrets of this quaint little seaport that people never take the time to see. Peter's intuition and senses increased in an almost scary powerful way giving Peter wisdom from unseen sources. The source may be the Akashic Records/Library that is not a physical library but a place in the ethers that contains all the wisdom and knowledge ever known to anyone over the eons. We can access this power through ancient spiritual practices and apparently Peter has done just that. Stories and Tales began flowing from Peter and he wrote his first book. In the last three years Peter has written eight more books and shares everything he has found from his journeys to the inner worlds. Peter wrote a seven-book series under the title "MYSTICISM IN NEWBURYPORT" with an eighth bonus/companion book called "MYSTIC". Now you are holding his new writings in your hands. Peter laughingly calls himself "An Unlikely Messenger" as his younger years were nothing resembling anything spiritual. So, here is the story of just another seeker realizing his divinity and returning to his own heart...

shantaram by gregory david roberts: The Inner Light Sumaa Tekur, 2022-11-22 This book is for those looking to dip their toes, and then some, into the waters of spirituality without getting caught in the whirlpool of spiritual consumerism. The growing uncertainty of the economic climate and ever-increasing anxieties about our health and wellness have made it more urgent than ever before to seek a life of stillness, balance, and perspective. As we adjust to a new reality, our inner world is cracked open to reveal the state of our spiritual health. We are now left questioning the fragility of our egos that crumble in the face of a threat to our assumed identities of work and relationships. The market for spirituality is an endless warren of complex pathways, with each path offering a differently worded routine to reach the same destination. Seekers are enticed with milestones to cross in the form of courses and levels often under the tutelage of a guru. This book shares wisdom on how to wade through the labyrinth of pathways that make up the journey to a more conscious spiritual lifestyle. Rich with anecdotes from the author's own experiences and fellow seekers, The Inner Light is a handy guide to prepare readers—aspirants and sceptics alike—for what to expect when they set out to integrate spirituality into everyday life. This book is for beginners looking to dip their toes, and then some, into the waters of spirituality without getting caught in the whirlpool of spiritual consumerism. The book answers the question: How can I walk this path with awareness to improve my understanding of life? It's for those of us who ask: Where do I even start? What is spirituality?

shantaram by gregory david roberts: Blown Away and Back Again Hannah Bent, 2011-12-08 Blown Away And Back Again finds Hannah Bent dodging traffic and sadhus in Kathmandu; chatting with political exiles in Ilam; sleeping with feral dogs in India's Thar Desert (on vacation no less) and hiking up to Lo Monthang, one of Nepal's most storied and secluded villages in the Upper Mustang region. But in addition to her often unexpected exploits, this book also provides a glimpse into the everyday lives of the people and nation of Nepal, a country so far removed from the First World problems we face in America, yet on the verge of a modernization that will drastically affect the way most people live, work, and think. As Bent shows, while we may commonly

think of Nepal as some sort of idyllic Shangri La or lost, forgotten kingdom, the real Nepal is actually quite the opposite, although no less mystifying.

shantaram by gregory david roberts: The Idea of the City Joan Fitzpatrick, 2009-05-05 This collection of essays emerges from a two-day international conference held at the University of Northampton, UK. It contains the best of the papers presented by 45 delegates from 12 countries (UK, India, USA, Canada, Italy, France, Ireland, Australia, Romania, Japan, Germany, Portugal) involving both established academics and new scholars. The collection is divided into three parts: Part 1: 'Medieval and Early-Modern Cities: Performance and Poetry', Part 2: 'Defining Urban Space: the Metropolis and the Provincial', and Part 3: 'Modern and Postmodern Cities: Marginal Urban Identities'. The chapters explore the nature of the modern city in literature, history, film and culture from its origins in the early-modern period to post-modern dislocations and considers the city as a context within which literature is created, structured, and inspired, and as a space within which distinct voices and genres emerge. Much interest has developed recently on the city and its contexts but there is a tendency to focus on London (for example there is the journal *Literary London: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Representation of London* and the annual *Literary London Conference*, a major conference that has run since 2002). This collection fills an important gap in the market by having a truly global focus. Joan Fitzpatrick's *The Idea of the City* represents a fascinating snapshot of the current state of literary urban studies. Conference proceedings can often seem diffuse or tokenistic, but this collection offers unity on several levels. For a start, many of the contributors ask similar questions of their material, approaching it with an informed awareness of the ways in which the city has been theorised as well as actually traversed from the medieval period to the present. While one would expect work of this type and standard from established and widely-published scholars such as Pamela Gilbert and Julian Wolfreys, it is refreshing to see how new researchers are blending the cartographic with the psychological to raise important questions about the perception, analysis, and mythologisation of urban and metropolitan space. The collection is impressively eclectic, ranging from Petrarch's Avignon to modern Los Angeles, and from 18th century Lichfield to operatic re-imaginings of Venice. As I said, however, the collection is unified at a deep level by the contributors' shared interest in city writing, and by their conviction that there is a complex relationship between space, place, and self. This means that the book would be of use and interest to those working on individual writers (including contemporary novelists such as Niall Griffiths, on whom little has yet been published) and in the more general areas of urban and cultural studies and critical theory. The collection as a whole allows the reader to revisit the ideas of influential works from the previous decade, such as Keith Tester's *The Flâneur* (1994), Sophie Watson and Katherine Gibson's *Postmodern Cities and Spaces* (1995), and Susana Onega and John Stotesbury's *London in Literature: Visionary Mappings of the Metropolis* (2002). It is therefore both a useful round-up of established ideas from various city-centred disciplines, and a starting point for the fresh consideration of enduringly suggestive material. —Dr Nick Freeman, Loughborough University, Author of *Conceiving the City: London, Literature, and Art 1870-1914* In this substantial volume the editor has assembled an international line-up of scholars working on the city from the Renaissance to the present. This is an important and timely work that has depth as well as breadth. Interdisciplinary and cross-period collections like this which straddle several historical periods run the risk of appealing only in part to coherent scholarly communities, but Dr Fitzpatrick has structured the collection in a way which plays to the strength of critics working within particular periods while clearly displaying the latticework of links between the book's strongly marked sections. There is an excellent balance between historical and theoretical readings, between textual and contextual approaches, and between interventions that are author or text based and those that deal with broader themes and issues. The range of contributors is matched by the richness and variety of perspectives. I would strongly recommend this book to students working in the early modern period, and also to those interested in modern developments. It is a comprehensive, intelligently organized and richly researched volume that is likely to be well received, well reviewed and well read. I will certainly be ordering copies for my own University library and including it on

reading lists for future courses. —Professor Willy Maley, University of Glasgow

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groundbreaking collection, leading relational theorists explore core moral and metaphysical concepts, while health law and policy scholars respond by analyzing how such considerations might apply to more practical areas of concern. Innovative and self-reflexive, *Being Relational* brings a powerful theoretical framework to health law and policy studies. In so doing, it makes a bold contribution to scholarship and will appeal to a broad range of thinkers, especially those with an interest in social justice, and who seek to understand the complex ways in which power is created and sustained relationally.

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