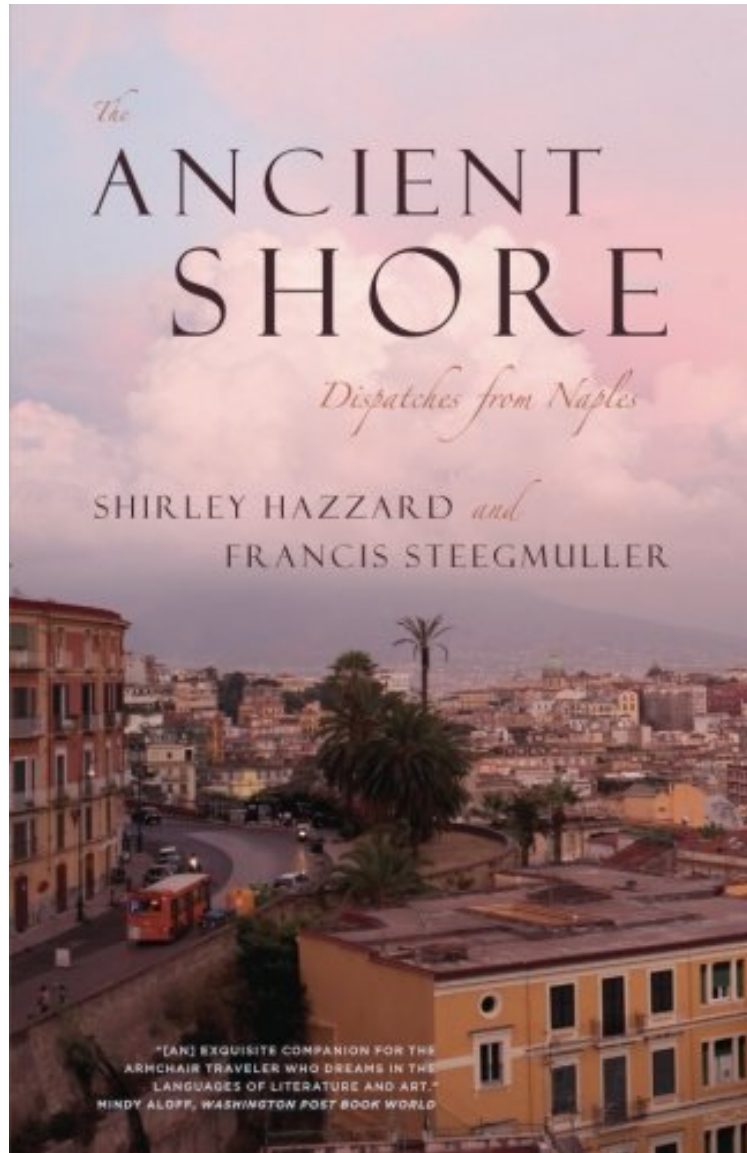


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The Ancient Shore: Dispatches from Naples

Shirley Hazzard, Francis Steegmuller
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Shirley Hazzard, Francis Steegmuller : The Ancient Shore: Dispatches from Naples before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ancient Shore: Dispatches from Naples:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Highly visual in languageBy RuthI love Shirley Hazzard's writing style - she is vivid in descriptions, adding to my limited imagination and expanding my view point. It is interesting that she writes in the first person as a man, yet one does not get the feeling of femineity or overt heroism. There is good

balance although tedious plotting. It's a very good read. 16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. *Canta Napoli* By D. R. L. F. Ms. Hazzard and Mr. Steegmuller have written a most astute and heart-warming book about Naples, Italy. They have felt the pulse of Naples, the temperament of the locals and written about it in beautiful prose. Naples is always a mixture of chaos and calm; of shouting and respect; of colors and light. As they write, ". . . Neapolitans move among their extraordinary architecture as in a natural element: Even the grandest edifices are not "monuments" but expressions of temperament in their nobility, their strangeness or sweetness, their theatricality." Thankfully Naples is still relatively unvisited by hordes of tourists and remains our personal, secret jewel. Thank you to these authors for capturing its essence and loving (most) all of it ! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A beautiful book. By Jennifer Having lived in a suburb of Naples for two and a half years I could relate to much of what was written. The writing is so poetic and delicious that you will want to reread some of it to others just to enjoy it again. I only wish I had read this book before I moved to Naples so I could have pondered that unique perspective before facing the angels and demons that awaited me.

Born in Australia, Shirley Hazzard first moved to Naples as a young woman in the 1950s to take up a job with the United Nations. It was the beginning of a long love affair with the city. *The Ancient Shore* collects the best of Hazzard's writings on Naples, along with a classic New Yorker essay by her late husband, Francis Steegmuller. For the pair, both insatiable readers, the Naples of Pliny, Gibbon, and Auden is constantly alive to them in the present. With Hazzard as our guide, we encounter Henry James, Oscar Wilde, and of course Goethe, but Hazzard's concern is primarily with the Naples of our own time—often violently unforgiving to innocent tourists, but able to transport the visitor who attends patiently to its rhythms and history. A town shadowed by both the symbol and the reality of Vesuvius can never fail to acknowledge the essential precariousness of life there, as the lover of Naples discovers, the human compassion, generosity, and friendship that are necessary to sustain it. Beautifully illustrated by photographs from such masters as Henri Cartier-Bresson and Herbert List, *The Ancient Shore* is a lyrical letter to a lifelong love: honest and clear-eyed, yet still fervently, endlessly enchanted. Much larger than all its parts, this book does full justice to a place, and a time, where nothing was pristine, except the light. *Bookforum* Deep in the spell of Italy, Hazzard parses the difference between visiting and living and working in a foreign country. She writes with enormous eloquence and passion of the beauty of getting lost in a place. Susan Slater Reynolds, *Los Angeles Times* The two voices join in exquisite harmony. . . . A lovely book. *Booklist*, starred review

From *Booklist* *Starred * Hazzard is a highly acclaimed Australian novelist, her most recent book the celebrated and provocative World War II novel *Great Fire* (2003); the late Steegmuller was a renowned Flaubert scholar and Hazzard's husband. Their book speaks in two different voices, Hazzard writing about the city of Naples as a victim of the still-active Mount Vesuvius, about why sensitive people gravitate to Italy, and about travel as a personal pilgrimage. Steegmuller, on the other hand, writes more personally, about a mugging he experienced in crime-prone Naples a few years back. But the two voices join in exquisite harmony to celebrate those of us who first came to Italy in the 1950s and were more than lucky; we were blessed. Blessed, that is, with indelible impressions, for the day was an adventure of discoveries, mortal and immortal, inward or external, and occasionally somber. A lovely book. --Brad Hooper [An] exquisite companion for the armchair traveler who dreams in the languages of literature and art. . . . A love letter to an ancient Italian city by the sea. . . . By temperament, I incline toward the understated appreciations of art and people I find in *The Ancient Shore*. . . . Such passages, simple as they are, constitute the unalloyed traces of love.