



# Eastern Horizons

*Levison Wood*

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**BY THE AUTHOR OF *WALKING THE HIMALAYAS*, WINNER OF THE 2016 EDWARD STANFORD ADVENTURE TRAVEL BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD**

**'Download Levison Wood's Silk Road odyssey, *Eastern Horizons*, onto your splash-proof kindle. Then read on a sun-lounger, between dozes, wishing you were doing those terribly adventurous things - which being secretly glad you're not.' Duncan Craig, *Sunday Times***

Levison Wood was only 22 when he decided to hitch-hike from England to India through Russia, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, but he wasn't the conventional follower of the hippy trail. A fascination with the deeds of the early explorers, a history degree in the bag, an army career already planned and a shoestring budget of £750 - including for the flight home - he was determined to find out more about the countries of the Caucasus and beyond - and meet the people who lived and worked there.

EASTERN HORIZONS is a true traveller's tale in the tradition of the best of the genre, populated by a cast of eccentric characters; from mujahideen fighters to the Russian mafia. Along the way he meets some people who showed great hospitality, while others would rather have murdered him...

This book confirms that Levison Wood, Winner of the 2016 Edward Stanford Adventure Travel Book Of The Year Award, has indeed 'breathed new life into adventure travel ' (Michael Palin)

## Eastern Horizons Details

Date : Published November 2nd 2017 by Hodder & Stoughton

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Author : Levison Wood

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Genre : Travel, Nonfiction, Travelogue

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## From Reader Review Eastern Horizons for online ebook

### Vicky says

Has made me long for some adventure!

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### Adrian Cusniriuc says

This book will make any person that has backpacked crave it again.

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### George Foord says

I read this book in 3 days! It was absorbing to read and was written really well. A really good book to read would recommend this to anyone.

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### thereadytraveller says

I was a bit hesitant to read this book, given the events that he wrote about happened quite some time ago, but I need not have fretted. Eastern Horizons is another superb read from Wood and cements his place, for me, as one of the best travel writers walking around right now (excuse the pun). Wood's writes in his normal extremely easy to read, genuine style and his story recaptures all of the youthful exuberance of someone setting out on one of their first major travel adventures. Well recommended for all.

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### Julian Walker says

An early insight into his ability to travel, observe and get into situations which might best be avoided.

As usual with his books, a read which quickly transports you from your chair (or wherever you are reading), with a nice mix of people, culture, history and adventure.

All I can say is 'thank goodness he lost his wallet as a teenager' (the book will explain the significance of this).

A crackling read, up to his usual standard.

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### Kate Smith says

I loved this book so much, I felt like I was following Levison on his journey and meeting the many different people he met on the way.

## Paula says

What a book this is, packed with facts, humor and the struggles and sacrifices made to accomplish this fantastic achievement (one of many) I can't recommend this book enough, it's almost as if your right there with him walking it. Superbly written by a thoroughly likable educated and extremely interesting chap. Hope you enjoy it as much as I did (the documentaries were pretty awesome too)

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## Paul says

Sometimes it is the little things in life that make the biggest differences. Having snuck into Alton Towers to save some cash, Levison Wood then lost his wallet with all his money in... Dismayed and penniless, he was shocked, to say the least when it dropped on his doormat with a note from the army officer who had found it. Wood wrote back to say thank you and to ask about a career in the services; a reply was swiftly forthcoming with six pages of notes that detailed recommendations and suggestions to optimise his chances of getting in and the final sentence was the recommendation; above all, travel...

Which is why he found himself at the age of 22 setting off a journey to hitch-hike from Nottingham across Russia with a friend, before heading south alone to follow the route taken by people for millennia, the Silk Road. He was inspired to follow this route after finding a book called the Great Game in the library whilst he should have been researching something else. This book told the tale of Arthur Conolly who in 1839 tried to see if it was still possible to travel along this legendary road.

His budget of £750 was stretching the definition of shoestring fairly thin, especially as he was hoping to fly home rather than hitchhike back again. His companion in Russia was Jon Winfield, a friend who shared a love of the open road too. Wood's Russian leg would take him from Calais to Stavropol via St Petersburg and he would drink more vodka than was definitely healthy for him, but as they approached Georgia, the first of the Caucasus countries Jon decided to head home., with the ominous message that he didn't want to hear about Levison on Al Jazeera.

Having heard all the horror stories from the Russians about the Georgians, he finds them warm and welcoming and find that the loathing that they have for each other is mutual. Leaving the country to pick up the Silk Road from Turkey and would head into Iran. It is a country of contrasts, with the theocratic mullahs having the most influence and the population committing their own individual acts of defiance. Next was the most dangerous part of his journey, into Afghanistan; this was in 2004, and the country was still under American occupation with battles still happening between the mujahideen, the Americans and the Taliban. The people were resigned at the time to another war taking place in their country but still were as hospitable as they could be given the circumstances. Surviving Afghanistan, Woods crosses the Khyber Pass and into Pakistan the penultimate country on his trip, before reaching the beaches of Goa at journeys end.

It was a journey that had a significant impact on his life. He did join the army as an officer in the parachute regiment and served in various theatres before leaving and becoming a journalist and photographer, but adventure travel is what he has become best known for. This latest book, about his experiences hitchhiking across Russia and the middle east, is I think his best yet. It may not have the freshness of his walks across Africa, Central America and the Himalayas, as it was written from the notes and journals that he kept, but he has matured as a writer and it shows in this book. 4.5 stars

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### **Judith Finnemore says**

Having been a bit of a global traveller myself, I was looking forward to this book a to, especially as I heard the author speak at a book festival. Travelling on a very tight budget is one thing but the early part of the book got a bit bogged down in off-your-face descriptions of nights and days on vodka. Perhaps that explains why he, occasionally, lost patience with places and just moved on. The experience, as written, isn't terribly well balanced. The last country, India, is rushed in at the end. I have the feeling it is the 'macho' element that sells the books rather than their contribution to good travel writing of the sort Palin provides. Unlike Charlie Boorman's books, it doesn't make me want to ht the road again.

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### **Nick says**

An engaging and well-written and honest account of what might be called 'hard travel' as opposed to the softer variety most of us experience. Levinson is a fun companion and we are with him all the way.

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### **Apratim Mukherjee says**

This book was,I think, a challenge to write for Levison Wood,as this adventure of his, took place thirteen years before he wrote the book.Further this journey was not televised either.But Levison Wood,the writer,does a very good job.I could virtually see Afghanistan,Iran,Georgia etc in front of my eyes.Further the text and the narrative don't let you keep the book down.The only problem I found is that some parts had been brutally edited out.There was no mention of his overland journey from UK to Poland.Hence I rated the book four stars.

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### **Amy says**

Thank goodness for Levison Wood for going on these journeys when so many of us-- for whatever reason: age, gender, sanity-- may not be able to do such an undertaking. Traveling overland 10, 000 miles from Estonia to India, Wood brings back adventure travel to its 18th and 19th century heyday when exploration for Europeans was so new. Wood revives the wonder in the world around us and gives us a glimpse into peoples who remain a mystery to much of the world. During his voyage, which he modeled after traveler Arthur Connelly, Wood straddles the boundary of being completely immersed in ancient cultures and chafing under the interference of the modern world and tourist. He captures the highs of travel and its lows of loneliness; anyone who has found themselves alone and vulnerable in a foreign land will relate.

What I appreciate about his observations about the people he meets is that recounts them as they are-- with all of their biases, angles, hospitality, and friendship. He doesn't editorialize or try to fix the worlds problems. He just explains what he sees and shows us what life is like elsewhere.

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### **Daniel Ralph says**

5\*. His first travel book, but not written until some time afterwards. Inspiring for anyone.

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### **Martin says**

Very good. His best book.

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### **Ruth Emily says**

I love Levison's books and TV series' ... he always makes me feel incredibly guilty for not having travelled more and for turning my nose up at the thought of slumming it in cheap hostels and the like! This was another fantastic read from Levison and a very interesting insight into how he travelled pre-TV crew and at such a young age. However, I felt there were important parts of the journey he skimmed over... he talks throughout the book of how much he is looking forward to reaching Goa and then gives you nothing at all when he gets there! The ending felt super rushed and for that, he loses a star. Otherwise, well worth a read and I can't wait to get my hands on his next book!

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