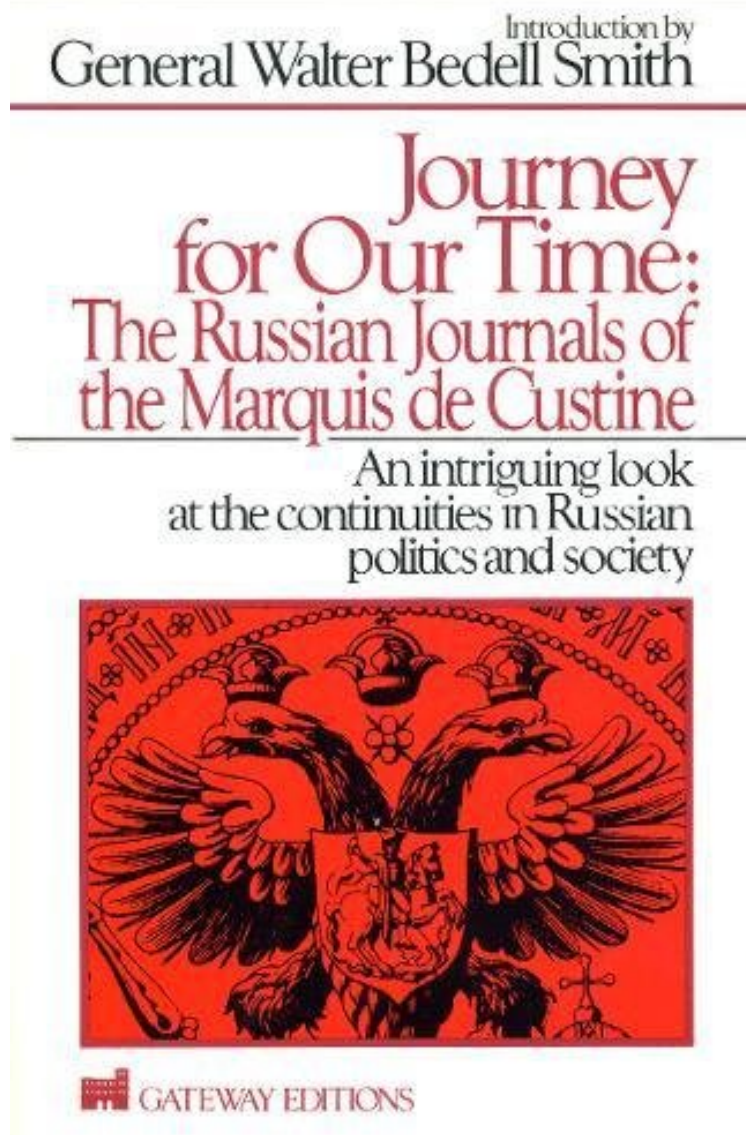


Journey for Our Time: The Russian Journals of the Marquis De Custine

Astolphe Marquis de Custine
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Astolphe Marquis de Custine : Journey for Our Time: The Russian Journals of the Marquis De Custine before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Journey for Our Time: The Russian Journals of the Marquis De Custine:

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Accurate and DisturbingBy C. DavisGeneral Bedell Smith is one of

the towering giants of World War II. Not only was he an effective combat commander, but he was the staff officer that made Marshall and Eisenhower as effective as they were in managing the United States first effort at taking the lead in a multi-national, world wide war against fascism. So when he recommends, "Journey for Our Time: The Russian Journals of the Marquis de Custine" as the definitive book on Russian culture, it carries some weight. This book is very disturbing in at least two ways. First, the actual traits of Russian society which seem to be less than pleasing and have remained constant across imperial Russia, the USSR, and the modern Russian state. Second, the actual style of the book which cites the misfortunes of the "elite" in Russian society while actually blaming the average Russian as being the one making the bargain of freedom for conquest. It just goes to show one that the French Revolution can take the aristocrats out of France, but apparently nothing will take a love of the aristocracy out of the Frenchmen. Ultimately, that is the point of this book. There are some cultures tend to have fundamental traits that change little over time regardless of the technological or political wrappings that are draped across them. As Americans, we tend to believe that we are a collection of beliefs and that as such, nothing that fundamentally affects those beliefs is a permanent piece of our cultural identity. In the end, only an outsider can tell us if this is true. Does de Custine have a message for us about 21st Century Russia? Sadly, the answer may be yes. 6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Love of serfdom vs love of freedom. A travel treat. By Buenoslibros.es "As soon as the prince withdrew, they assumed an easy air, resolute manners and a bold demeanor which produced an unpleasant contrast to the complete self-abnegation they had effected an instant before". This book give us another reason to stop generalizing when we criticize the French. As a happy surprise I have found myself admiring another Frenchman (another exception to the rule?), in the mode of Tocqueville, or perhaps even Jean-Francois Revel, this amusing down-to-earth traveler from France (despite the high class his title conveys, of Marquis) lets us get to the bone of Russian society, from the god-like Emperor to the servile serfs. The chronicle of this travel is even amusing, despite the gravity and danger it entails by writing so freely while inside Russian territory, because the man never stops from being human; he is not talking as a reporter or historian, or even as a cultivated representative of the French aristocracy: he is a man well aware of the tacit dangers of being a foreigner in Russia, a lover of freedom among servile creatures. Most of all it is just plain fun to read. There are so many similarities along the book with Soviet Russia (for that matter with any period of Russian history): "It is only with this people -at least I believe it is so- that one has seen martyrs in adoration before their executioners!" Ring a bell with the still crowds of Stalin-worshippers in Russia and Russialite Europe? "My astonishment and dismay increase in seeing the tyrant's dementia spread so easily to the men who submit to tyranny; the victims become the zealous accomplices of their executioners." M. Custine's astonishment and dismay is like that of Middle-American and the South today who see their country given away to Government by a an elite class of millionaire socialists. M. Custine talks with people, writes down the impressions, the fears, the lies, the cynicism, things that really happen but they want say to a foreigner (or even to themselves, because in Russia everybody knows without anybody saying). Love of freedom, from a Frenchman v. love of servitude by the Russian, that is the subject of this little known gem of a book. 5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Russian equivalent to DeTocqueville's Democracy in America By S. Watson Having read this book many times I can state that it is the source for many theories on Russian culture today. During the time it was written it was popular for the French aristocracy to travel throughout the world and write journals as to what they observed. This is obviously how DeTocqueville wrote Democracy in America (any first year poli sci student will know his work). Taking that as a baseline and then reading Journey for our Time you will be able to get a good look at the Russian mindset and better understand the troubles that are still plaqueing their peoples and nation.

Presents the penetrating and timeless observations from the Marquis's 1839 trip to Russia.

Language Notes Text: English, French (translation)