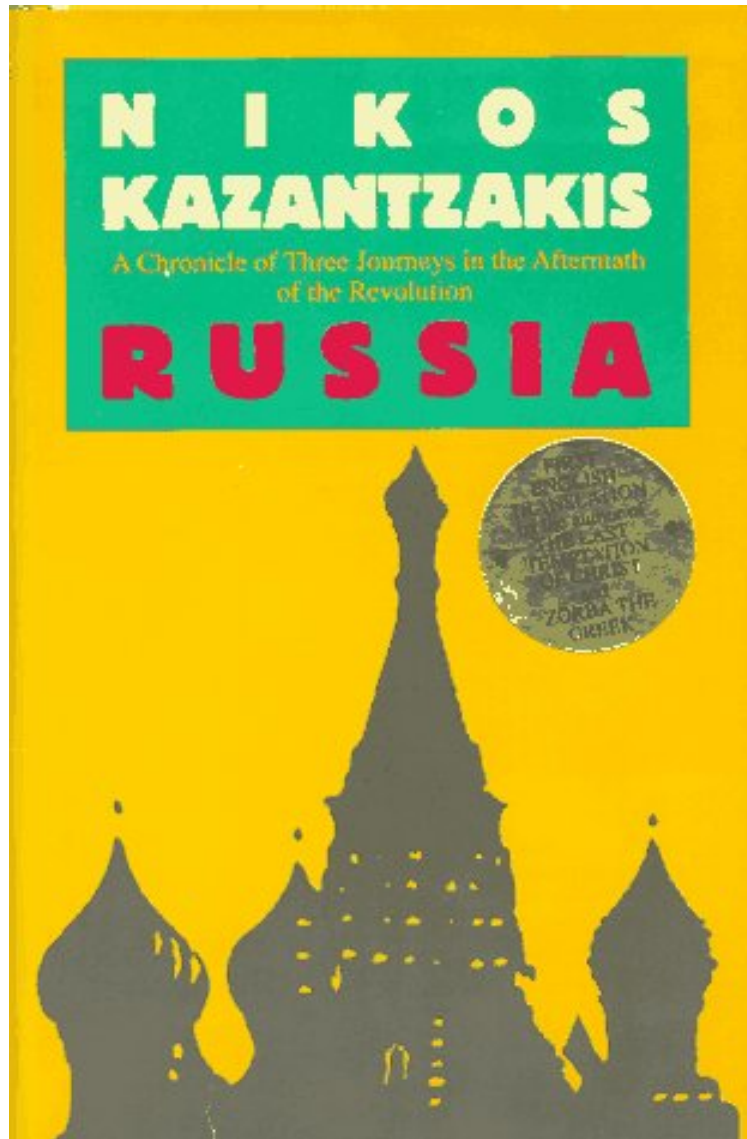


(Mobile book) Russia: A Chronicle of Three Journeys in the Aftermath of the Revolution

Russia: A Chronicle of Three Journeys in the Aftermath of the Revolution

Nikos Kazantzakis

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Nikos Kazantzakis : Russia: A Chronicle of Three Journeys in the Aftermath of the Revolution before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Russia: A Chronicle of Three Journeys in the Aftermath of the Revolution:

Russia is a penetrating account of three long journeys that Kazantzakis made to the Soviet Union between 1925 and 1930. It is a journal that delineates the nature of the greatest upheaval of our time -the Bolshevik Revolution- and its impact on the social and spiritual evolution of mankind. While at the same time that he paints a fascinating picture of the vast land and its possessed leaders: Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, Kazantzakis draws unforgettable portraits of Russia's great writers: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Blok and Mayakovsky.

From Publishers Weekly Kazantzakis, who was later to write *Zorba the Greek*, made three trips to the Soviet Union between 1925 and 1929. Toward the end of this florid travel diary, his Marxist-Leninist faith (which he later renounced) gives way to disenchantment; he spurns Soviet-style communism as godless materialism, a rigid attempt at social control. But for most of the farflung journey, he takes an obtuse, sometimes embarrassingly naive stance on the Bolshevik experiment as he sets down his impressions of schools, the press, censorship, Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, women, the legal system and so forth. There is a penetrating mini-essay on Russian literature and interesting observations of the various ethnic groups that comprise the U.S.S.R. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal What is the point of publishing a translation of this 60-year-old dithyramb to the USSR of the 1920s? The book, which is sketchy and unreliable in its treatment of Russian history and literature, is perhaps best seen in terms of the Greek novelist's own philosophical stance. Kazantzakis viewed Soviet life through the prism of a Marxist romanticism that detected everywhere signs of a new "Russia" (a name he used throughout for the multinational federation). What he actually portrayed, however, was the tragic example of a totalitarian government and activist urban core forcing change from above. His repeated diatribes against food producers as greedy, backward peasants have a peculiar irony just now when Gorbachev's government is trying so desperately to restore the agricultural nexus destroyed in the 1930s.- Mary F. Zirin, Altadena, Cal. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. Kazantzakis, ever the imaginative novelist, weaves folktales and myths into his narrative as well; occasionally the line blurs between the factual and the fanciful. Even so, this is an engaging account of Russia between the revolution and Stalin's murderous regime, filled with fine writing and interesting insight. -- Thomas Gaughan, Booklist