



Stalin: The Kremlin Mountaineer (Icons)

Paul Johnson

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From Reader Review Stalin: The Kremlin Mountaineer (Icons) for online ebook

Monica Somesan says

Scurta, concentrata si foarte interesanta

Razvan Zamfirescu says

Spicuri din recenzia finala care se gaseste pe blogul meu

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Ce s? zic, Johnson î?i preg?te?te bine terenul când anun?? c? voluma?ul este scris doar ca s? le explice celor tineri cine a fost Stalin pentru ca amintirea sa s? nu dispar? în cea?? ?i ace?tia s? uite de el.

Acesta fiindu-i scopul declarat, autorul se scoate instant. ?i astfel purcede la scriere unei biografii în doi timpi ?i trei mi?c?ri.

Nu am aflat nimic nou. Ba chiar m-am enervat c? Johnson ascunde anumite lucruri (vezi venirea la putere a lui Stalin ?i luptele intestine ale mi?c?rii comuniste ante ?i post Lenin, de exemplu) ca s?-?i fac? via?a mai u?oar? de-a lungul c?r?ii. Axat pe ciud??enile lui Stalin ?i pe cruzimea lui deosebit?, el schi?eaz? conturul unui individ care a marcat cu crimele sale istoria umanit??ii, transformându-l într-un fel de bau-bau incredibil de lipsit de veridicitate. Parc? e un personaj dintr-o band? desenat? acest Stalin al lui Johnson. Sau poate doar mie-mi pare a?a...

.....

Ionicescu Alexandru says

Lucrarea lui Johnson, desi de mici dimensiuni, este extrem de interesanta si de cuprinzatoare. AUtorul ne poarta prin tainele vietii lui Stalin, tatusul de Kremlin. Copilaria zbuciumata, tineretea marcata de activitatile ilegaliste, ascensiunea spre varful piramidei comuniste si maniera cruda, intransigenta prin care a pastrat puterea sunt cateva dintre temele asupra carora se apleaca Johnson. Desi uneori imperfect sau incomplet, Johnson creioneaza un Stalin usor digerabil, pe intelesul tuturor.

Caglar Koca says

I wasted four hours of my life on this book, which is nothing but a propaganda with no organization whatsoever. In biographic works, one would expect either a chronological or thematic organization. This

book has none. It jumps from Stalin's relationship with Lenin to Stalin's relationship with Jews in the same paragraph. Similarly, as the previous paragraph describes events of 1948, you can find yourself in 1936 in the next paragraph. In this manner, this book resembles a high school project.

At this moment, I want to make one thing clear: No one likes Stalin. My review is not to save him from humiliation or to justify his actions for class warfare. My review is simply academic.

We all know from more reliable sources that Stalin has been a harsh autocrat. Some actions of his, like the Great Purge, are even well documented. The author uses these pieces of information and disperses his gibberish among them. He rarely offers sources. One of his sources is Robert Conquest. He quotes Conquest on "the only case of a purely man-made famine"; while he deliberately ignores Irish Potato Famine and Bengal Famines. Both of them intensified due to British taxation policy, and the latter cost lives of 100 millions. Even though what Stalin did was no different than others, his actions are judged while others ignored.

The book also has so many contradictions. At one point you learn that Stalin read many classics and owned 20.000 books, the author even claims it is a large collection. Later, you learn that although he had 20.000 books, no one has ever seen him read one. A few pages later, Ribbentrop offers a gift of "Mein Kampf", which according to the author Stalin had already read. As one can see, even Stalin's reading habits are not well established.

Just in the famines, the author goes a great deal to absolve capitalism while bashing socialism. He claims no one in tsarist Russia, not even the tsar himself is as free as someone in Britain or the US. This is obviously propaganda, as only rich are free in those countries.

I believe, reading from wikipedia may give more objective information than this book. It is four hours of my life that I wasted and I urge everyone not to do so.

Rick says

Too short but informative all the same

Too short but informative all the same

The title is curious and never explained. We never really find out what drove Stalin or made him unique. We are told he was a dedicated Marxist and then ideology disappears altogether from the essay. The dominant impression is that Stalin was a unique kind of psychopath, but that psychology formed the background of his twisted actions, not dogma. I give it four stars because I admire any attempt to compress this story in a few pages. The fact of Stalin's life needs to be widely known and Johnson is correct that it is not.

Noah Goats says

If you go into Stalin: The Kremlin Mountaineer expecting a full length biography, well, you're bound to be disappointed. But if you read this with the knowledge that it's not really a book at all, it's more of just a longish essay, you'll find a lot to like about it. This is a short, well written, and engaging biography written

by the author of classics of history like Modern Times. It's a very good primer or refresher on Stalin's life.

Ana says

A short overview of Stalin's life, written in a very clear and simple style, useful if you want to get details about his beliefs, behaviour and the meaning of some of his political decisions.

Tyler Wood says

Typical Paul Johnson. He has a point of view and doesn't try to hide it. Lovely writing style about a unlovely but scarily fascinating historical figure.

Vderevlean says

O biografie bun?, scurt? ?i gîndit? special pentru a ar?ta lumii un monstru politic. Nu e un must al biografiilor lui Stalin, îns? e o recapitulare potrivit? ?i o bun? introducere pentru cei curio?i ?i pasiona?i, afla?i la început de drum.

Cum citesc c?r?i de istorie doar ptr a-mi reaminti lucruri din ?coal? ?i ptr a plasa literatura cum trebuie :) ptr mine a c?zut perfect. sunt cateva lucruri pe care nu le stiam, sunt si controverse rezolvate lejer din motive de spatiu, probabil. insa raman la impresia ca e un volum potrivit pentru oricine.

Matt McCandless says

Fast read. Interesting. Who knew Stalin was a bank robber.

Denielle says

This was everything I thought it would be.

I started to take interest in politics late in my life but I've always had a fascination for dictators and the way they came into power. It always amazes me the type of people they were before the power and how it corrupted them over time.

I admire Stalin for his brilliance. I honestly believe that he could have stayed in power longer had he not started to lose his mind.

It seems as though a great number of these monsters lived around the same period in time and though I admire their mindset its really horrific to think they did those things to their own people.

These are things we learn from so as never to have them repeated.

Tammam Aloudat says

This is the first book I read of Stalin that hasn't really concerned itself with historical context and politics events but with the personality and actions of the man himself. I liked that as almost all else I read shows Stalin as an iron figure, unemotional and unshaken. He apparently was fearful and shaken and his cruelty might come in part from that.

This little book concludes, like almost any account that isn't a blind nostalgic hallucination by an ex communist, that Stalin has been one of the worst tyrants in history. He caused untold death and pain to people he hated as well as to people who were supposedly his friends and comrades.

A few things were new to me. One is how Lenin was the one who started setting up the terror machine and how Stalin cannot even take credit for inventing it. Also how fragile he was, how scared, and how insecure.

A little book worth reading.

Jeremiah Lorrig says

Short and sweet. Highlights the brutality and success of the Soviet leader.

Glen says

This was an excellent, compact read that contains the usual punctilious research I expect from Johnson along with his flair to compose a very readable narrative. I've read other books about Stalin and the 20th century tyrants and this one rates high on the list for three reasons: 1. It is equitable in its treatment of the man despite the author's stated disdain for him, 2. it is captivating in the way it explains his rise to power 3. it limits the focus to the man himself instead of extrapolating on the Soviet system or other aspects of Russian history at that time.

If someone wants a very good introduction or just a concise overview of one of the 20th centuries infamous personalities then I highly recommend this book.

Bill Hurme says

A brilliant, quick read

This short, highly readable life of the monster, Stalin, is brilliantly written, edited and presented. In addition to being an historian, Paul Johnson is a masterful story teller.

