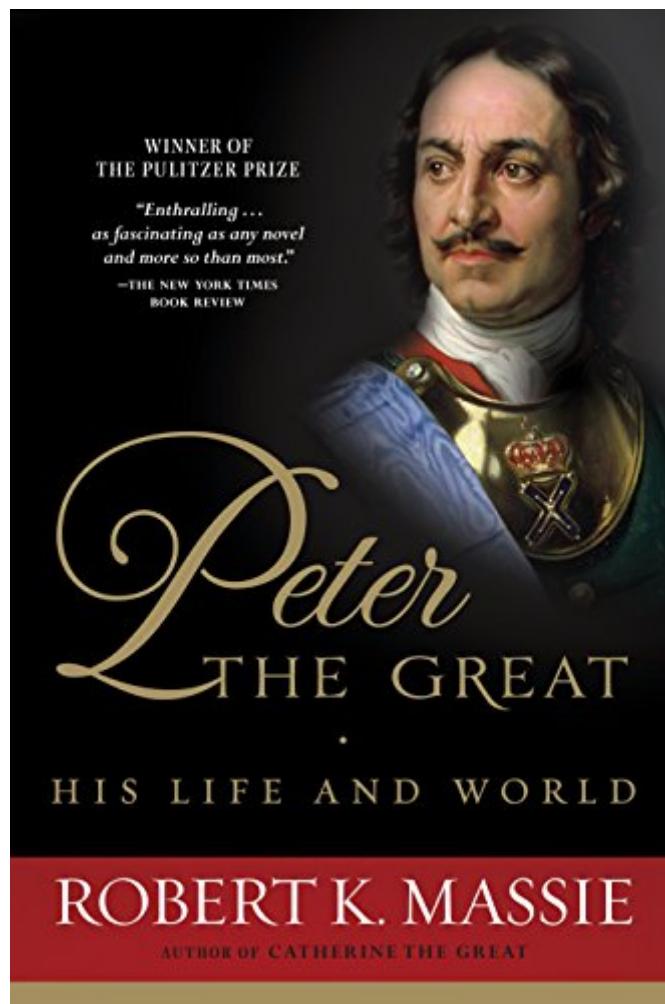


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Peter The Great: His Life And World



Synopsis

"Enthralling...As fascinating as any novel and more so than most!"THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEWAgainst the monumental canvas of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe and Russia, unfolds the magnificent story of Peter the Great. He brought Russia from the darkness of its own Middle Ages into the Enlightenment and transformed it into the power that has its legacy in the Russia of our own century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Excellent ... He did bring European technology and values into a backward, isolated Russia at considerable cost in lives and treasure. A brilliant guy with low brow tastes and manners who valued a hands on approach to everything. Carpentry. Ship building. Women. Torture. A guy who enjoyed the common touch and regular folks and preferred to go about incognito... Except for his size, who would notice? A man of considerable physical presence and strength and a quick study. He attracted first rate minds like Leibniz, whom he considered out of touch.. Quite a family man until he grew weary of you or you disobeyed him. Unforgiving in matters he considered of great principle in

which case blood was no barrier to being dispatched. He lead his military in battles and damn the cost. Not the sort of guy you would say "No" to twice. Had an irresistible charm and an overwhelming personality that didn't take No for an answer. Great party guy, too. When he laughed, everyone laughed. When he partied, everyone partied and no one left until he said so. His excesses aside, he made Russia a great power... His contributions manifold.

Robert K. Massie has an almost uncanny ability to take you back in time. Peter the Great does this with magical ease. We get to know the child, the youth, the man and the Tsar, with all the details we need to form a relationship that lasts as long as this long masterpiece does. As in all of his historical biographies he brings the times and the individuals that made the greatest impact on who we are today to the forefront. He defines actions, humanity, foibles and strengths with the skill of a novelist. He draws you into the actions of Peter from shipbuilding to war-making, along with his eccentricities which are many. All of Massie's historical novels should be a must read for individuals who are interested in the past, and I would recommend this book to everyone who loves a fantastically well written book about a man who still resonates in our own time.

Visited Moscow and Petersburg last year. My only regret is that I did not read this book before going. It enriched my appreciation for what I saw and heard from guides beyond measure. It also helped me understand the part of Soviet/Russian history (Cold War to the present) that I have lived through. It also is filled with wonderful verbal portraits of other key European and Eastern leaders of the time. This book is for anyone who loves a great story wonderfully told.

I am still reading this book, but I have found a very easy, entertaining read. In addition to Peter the Great, the book (I guess the "and World" part) covers the major European monarchs of the time. I have learned so much about the leaders of 17th - early 18th century Europe that I never knew, without much work on my part!

Robert Massie's writing is always gripping. I have read two of Massie's other books, and decided to read Peter the Great even though I wasn't particularly interested in this period of history. Wish I had read it sooner. The insights into Russia's character and history are particularly relevant for today's world.

Perhaps no Russian leader has been as much of a driving force within his own nation and the world

of his times than the Romanov Tsar who ruled Russia two centuries before our own: Peter the Great (1672-1725). In his Pulitzer Prize-winning biography "Peter the Great: His Life and World," historian Robert K. Massie masterfully chronicles the life of this mercurial, complex, and paradoxical man who became the greatest Tsar in Russian history, and perhaps one of the greatest figures in all of European history. Massie's brilliant narrative depicts Peter as a man who towered, both literally and figuratively, over his world. When he reached full adulthood, he stood six feet seven inches tall. He was a man possessed with many paradoxes... an absolute autocrat who disdained the glitter, trappings, and ceremonial pomp of his royal station, preferring instead a simpler, more unadorned lifestyle. Forced to abandon his formal education at an early age, he continued his education informally, becoming largely self taught and reasonably literate in the process. He derived his greatest pleasures from working with his hands. It was he who built, almost single-handedly, the first boats of what would eventually become the Russian navy; it was also he who laid the plans for, and personally built much of the Russian city which now bears his name: St. Petersburg. The main thrust of "Peter the Great: His Life and World" is not so much an examination of Peter's personal qualities (although Massie's portrayal of Peter the man is nothing short of masterful), but of how he used the force of his personality to transform Russia, during his lifetime, from a backward medieval kingdom of little consequence into a major European political and military power. Massie devotes the vast majority of Peter the Great to spin a highly detailed, absorbing, and wonderfully written narrative of the events which led to Peter's - and Russia's - evolution. From his "Great Embassy" at age eighteen, when he traveled incognito to all the major western European capitals (becoming the first Tsar to do so), to his numerous wars with the Ottoman Empire (present-day Turkey), to his ten-year long "Great Northern War" with Sweden and its king, Charles XII, Peter is seen as forcing the pace of events throughout Europe, thereby modernizing and expanding Russia and planting the seeds of future greatness for the nation he loved above all else. Robert K. Massie has continued his fine tradition of writing extremely readable, highly entertaining, and factually sound biographies. With "Peter the Great: His Life and World," he completely captures the essence of this towering eighteenth century figure, and does it in such a way as to make him totally relevant to today's readers. This is a biography that's indeed very well worth reading!

Immensely factual, true story about Peter the Great, who opened the ancient Russia to the Western civilization. A masterpiece, blending history with prose in an intelligent, meaningful narrative.

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