

(Get free) Journey to the Orient

Journey to the Orient

Gerard de Nerval

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#1114599 in Books Nerval Gerard De 2012-08-10Original language:English 9.00 x 1.20 x 6.00l, 1.49 #File Name: 0988202603480 pagesJourney to the Orient | File size: 52.Mb

Gerard de Nerval : Journey to the Orient before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Journey to the Orient:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful, challenging bookBy SarahA wonderful, challenging book! Anyone who's picking up Journey to the Orient probably knows what they're getting. This is a pretty good translation, and the most complete English version I've seen, for certain.9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Nerval's Journey to the Orient - Hackjob on a forgotten classicBy Joe KenneyPlease note that my rating is for

this edition of the book, not the complete work itself. Published in France in the 1850s, "Voyage En Orient" is a masterwork of 19th Century Orientalism, with the glib, dandified, and perpetually curious Gerard de Nerval making his way through Cairo and other environs of the Middle East. In its original incarnation the book runs to nearly 700 pages; the full text was translated into English in 1930 by Conrad Elphinstone and published in two volumes by Harcourt Brace as "The Women of Cairo," which was Nerval's original title for the book. Of course this Harcourt Brace edition is long, long out of print. Then in 1972 Norman Glass translated the book into English anew, and his translation at least is still in print, though unfortunately he's gutted the majority of Nerval's narrative. Glass puts his cards on the table in his introduction, stating that modern readers wouldn't wish to read Nerval's digressive descriptions of Cairo, his trip to the Pyramids, and etc, because modern readers are already accustomed to such things via movies and TV. This is ridiculous. For who else would read Nerval's "Journey to the Orient" other than people who WANT to read his descriptions of said things? This book is as niche-market as you can get, yet Glass seems to think it would appeal to the average reader. As if he's translating the French Mark Twain or something. But if this is the only version of Nerval's classic you can easily find in English, it will do - just understand that so much has been lost. Glass picks up the narrative well into Nerval's journey; characters such as his humorous dragoman Abdul appear en media res, with no background material - material which, of course, exists in the unexpurgated version of the story. Regardless, here you will find Nerval trying to act like the locals, buying a slave girl (a feisty Malaysian beauty), researching the Druzes, and listening to dofeueled tales of Masonic mystery. All of it enjoyable, but again, it will only serve to whet your appetite for the full book. In short, this book is an exotic and erotic travelogue which trades on the mysteries of the Freemasons and revels in the pungent smoke of hashish. It is to be read in full, and the reader is directed to that Harcourt Brace edition, which, despite being translated nearly a century ago, still reads as fresh as Glass's more recent translation. You can always get it via Interlibrary Loan if you don't want to shell out the cash for it - copies of the book are a bit pricey on the collector's circuit. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

reducing him to less than manly or intelligent. Is this a version cooked up for the ...By feather pen His journey of 1843 is the only part of real interest: the descriptions of people, their relations, their customs, his accommodations to travel. The novella of the story-teller giving a tale of 'Solomon' is astonishing to a Westerner familiar with the wise Solomon of the Bible, as this tale thoroughly denigrates him, reducing him to less than manly or intelligent. Is this a version cooked up for the 'Mohammedans'? to belittle the wise ones of Judea, to help them feel superior? No doubt it is a tale de Nerval heard at the time. It is unsettling, bombastic, heavily told, almost dull in its elaborations and pontifications. The way he allows Sheba to blather, and never allows any goodness or smarts to Solomon is tiresome, the caricatures are stereotypical and stultifying. The most interesting is his description of his slave, how and why it becomes necessary, how he goes about it, and mainly, the function of protection which on the surface sounds just as the situation might be described by a benevolent Southern home, he makes the institution sound almost good, and might go a long way to explain why it was accepted for so long in Muslim societies (from 700 AD, all across the mid East, the Indian Ocean, the Raj, Persia, Turkey, and of course, Africa), and why the Africans appeared to feel no qualm about capturing and delivering their own folk into slavery for so many centuries. My book was perhaps fuller than those here: it was printed by Moyer Bell from the Library of Congress info., still 'selected' and intro by Norman Glass. Travelogue was fun to read; the story within a story - a struggle.

More than just an account of his travels in Cairo, Beirut, and Constantinople in 1843, Gerard de Nerval's Journey to the Orient is a quest for the unknown. If his narrator seems credulous in his retelling of legends of the origins of the pyramids and the mysteries of the Druzes, it is with this purpose in mind. While the Orientalists of his day were confident of having, in the words of Edward Said, grasped, appropriated, reduced, and codified the Orient, Nerval's Orient remains elusive, impossible to grasp. Poignantly dramatized in the thematic centerpieces of the tales of the Queen of Sheba and the Caliph Hakim, what takes shape in this visionary travelogue, as the author's hopes are alternately disappointed and rapturously renewed, is the story of the artist's search for the ideal.