


Memoirs: Fifty Years of Political Reflection

By Raymond Aron

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Raymond Aron has won the respect and admiration of leading figures from all spheres of twentieth-century life and from all points of the political spectrum. An independent thinker who was often called the lone voice of reason in the heat of political conflicts, Aron became well known for his bold, penetrating ideas. His dispassionate, probing analyses of international affairs, ethnic conflicts, social and economic problems, and contemporary history have become increasingly influential in the U.S. and foreign arenas of political discourse and public policy.

Whether working with the Free French in London during World War II, voicing early support for the reconstruction of a devastated post-war Germany, or offering new insights on peace and war in a nuclear age, Aron consistently brightened areas of inquiry by his capacity for cogent and forthright reflection. In the foreground of many of the most important political events of the twentieth century, he developed relationships with other similarly engaged figures such as Charles de Gaulle, Jean-Paul Sartre, Andr Malraux, and Henry Kissinger, all of whom appear in his prizewinning Memoirs.

Aron stimulated debate and elicited strong attachments in his roles as journalist, author, adviser, and professor in philosophy, political science, and sociology in Europe and the United States, where he contributed to periodicals such as the NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE, COMMENTARY, and FOREIGN AFFAIRS. Since his death in 1983, Aron's brilliant works of social and political philosophy have found an increasingly large following among younger readers whose appreciation can only deepen with this behind-the-scenes glimpse of the man and his thoughts.

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Memoirs: Fifty Years of Political Reflection By Raymond Aron Bibliography

- Rank: #1905817 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Holmes and Meier Publishing
- Published on: 1997-07
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.75" h x 5.75" w x 1.75" l, 1.55 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 509 pages

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Philosopher, critic, professor, and journalist, Aron left an indelible mark on French and European intellectual life. First published in France in 1983, the year of Aron's death, these memoirs recount the author's eventful life, from his school days with Jean-Paul Sartre to his association with Henry Kissinger. In between, Aron's many careers saw him teach in Germany in the early 1930s, spend World War II in London with the Free French, and then return to Paris as a successful author and journalist. These thoughtful and often brilliant memoirs should be in most library collections.

- Ian Wallace, *Food Research & Development Centre Lib., St. Hyacinthe, Quebec*

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Review

"Aron's magnificent MEMOIRS belongs to the twentieth century. . . . The cautionary shadows cast by his temperament remain: his fear of the irrational forces in history, now being channeled into race and ethnic conflicts; his skepticism and doubt about ideologies and claims to final truths; and his ethic of responsibility as the guide for those who tread the path of politics, even to save souls." -- *Daniel Bell, New York Times Book Review*

"Aron's recollections take the reader through fascinating worlds in a fascinating way. For better or for worse, they don't make intellectuals like this anymore. . . . He has left a document that reminds us of a vital truth: that the proper concern of intellectuals is the struggle to see reality, even if they are not always successful." - *New Republic*

Aron's greatest legacy, to his students and to his readers . . . was teaching them how to think about history, politics, and society. . . . To me, he was the salt of the earth." -- *Stanley Hoffman, New York Review of Books*

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: French

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tenesha Little:

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Nicholas Gober:

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