



Fire from the Mountain

Omar Cabezas

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Omar Cabezas put forth his memoir of his time in the FER and the FSLN during the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua against Somoza's National Guard. He detailed his work in the student movement creating a network of the people and later described what he went through to train and become a guerilla fighter.

Fire from the Mountain Details

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Author : Omar Cabezas

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From Reader Review *Fire from the Mountain* for online ebook

Coti Chemi says

Culturally incredible

Diana Abalos says

Outstanding. Extremely well-written, regardless of reader's ideology.

Sebastián Vallejo says

si alguna vez usted quiso cambiar el mundo y se perdió en el camino, vale la pena leerlo para recuperar los intangibles de ese querer ser revolucionario

Rachel says

For Sandinistas, there is no such thing as a grey area. And being an American, especially the type of American inclined to read books about Sandinismo, I initially found Cabezas's overwhelming confidence in the propriety of his actions to be somewhat off-putting. Ultimately, it took me a couple of chapters to get pulled in, but once I found the book's rhythm, I was incredibly moved by Cabezas's account of his clandestine work in the 1970s.

I'm definitely glad I read this book in Spanish, even though it was a tough read due to its colloquial nature and persistent use of slang. I don't usually read Spanish with a dictionary close at hand, but it was more or less necessary for this book; still, if you can read Spanish or are up for a challenge, I would certainly recommend doing so here.

tukanman says

Lei este libro cuando fue recién publicado, aun estaba en la Nicaragua de la revolución Sandinista. Aun estaba la magia de lo nuevo, lo místico de la guerrilla. Muchas de las experiencias que cuenta Omar en su *Memorias* ya las había escuchado yo en boca de la experiencia de otros guerrilleros que pelearon en esa sangrienta guerra fratricida, pero que fue necesaria. Ya no queremos otra guerra como esa en Nicaragua, aunque muchos encuentren este relato inspiracional, entretenido, un buen libro, etc.,. No olvidemos que este libro no se hubiera escrito sino hubiera existido una familia dictatorial sangrienta en el poder por 40 años en Nicaragua Y que la sangre de más de 50,000 personas fue derramada en ese conflicto. Que no se vaya a repetir ese doloroso error histórico en la Nicaragua liberada, que Daniel Ortega no repita ese error y que

hayan elecciones transparentes la proxima vez en Nicaragua.

El libro es contado en un estilo puro nicaraguense sin muchos rebuzques literario; me encanto hace muchos años, y me volvio a cautivar de nuevo esta vez que lo relei.

Felicidades Comandante Omar Cabezas.

Sam says

Amazing story of the transformation from university student to full-fledged guerrilla. Candid recollections. Even if you skip everything else in this book the chapter entitled 'Reasons For Living' is a must-read for anyone interested in how isolation and time itself eventually changes a person. And how a single thing can unravel the final tie to the past, underscoring why we must have a firm belief in a cause or goal to keep from losing ourselves when that umbilical cord is broken.

Gijs Grob says

Autobiografisch relaas van Omar Cabezas over zijn tijd als Sandinistisch frontsoldaat in het achterland van Nicaragua, in de jaren zeventig. Er wordt in het boek praktisch niet gevochten, en zelfs de confrontaties met de nationale garde van dictator Somoza zijn schaars. Veeleer gaat het over de ontberingen die hij in de bergen heeft meegemaakt.

Cabezas is opvallend eerlijk en beschrijft met veel kleur alle ellende van zijn bestaan als guerillastrijder. Zijn proza is zeer vertellend, als een enorme woordenstroom, en hij spreekt je als lezer direct aan, alsof je in dezelfde ruimte naar hem zit te luisteren. Deze schrijfstijl maakt dat je er even moet inkomen, maar als je er eenmaal gewend bent, dan sleurt Cabezas je mee zijn herinneringen in.

Kusal Perera says

Loved reading it. Originally written in Spanish and translated into English, it still carried the beauty of the style of writing Cabezas had written in. Its his life as a student leader turned guerilla fighter that he has written with plenty of personalisation, which gives the writing so much "life". The interest I had in translating it into Sinhala, is yet not extinguished. May do it some sudden day.

Brendan says

one of the most inspiring memoirs i've ever read. the story of omar cabezas, who leaves a comfortable life as a university student to join the sandinistas and take up arms against a ruthless, despicable u.s. supported dictator (somoza). testament to the fact that no matter what the odds people can overcome. an excellent introduction to the story of the sadinistas and revolution in nicaragua. plenty of great detail about the arduous nature of everyday life for guerillas.

Linda Abhors the New GR Design says

Okay, as testimonials go (and I've read most of them from Central and South America). Autobiographical, so I didn't study it in depth, as I did some mediated texts. I did have the opportunity to meet him in Madison, though, and spent an evening in someone's house where he was the invited guest. That was a hilarious night; he's very funny and entertaining (not that you'd know it from the book or its subject matter).

Andrew says

How Nicaragua has changed. Last weekend, I visited the northern mountains of Nicaragua. They were quiet. The towns spoke of conservatism and most of the mountains were at least partially deforested with cropland and grazing herds nearly everywhere. Wild wilderness and desperate revolution has been replaced with a certain degree of tranquility, even domesticity.

Omar Cabezas' work is critical in appreciating this transformation and understanding the deep trauma within Nicaraguan society wrought by the Somoza dictatorship and the resultant civil war. While I have read several accounts of the Sandinista guerrilleros, this was perhaps the most personal and insightful. This is the true insiders account--written only a few short years after--of what life was like as a rebel fighter in the jungles of Central America in the 1980s.

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El Bombín says

Hermoso. Una crónica a la historia del triunfo del pueblo, un viaje a la guerrilla y un puño cerrado al corazón.

Jim Smith says

inspiring!

Renee says

It was okay for a memoir, but I didn't really enjoy it.

Eleni says

I read this because I'm living in Nicaragua and am interested in the time period of the Revolution. I should have challenged myself and tried to read it in the original Spanish because I think it suffered a bit in

translation, which made it seem sort of dated at times. (It is written in a post-Molly-Bloom-Yes-I-Said-Yes, Post-Beat, stream-of-consciousness style which also seems old-timey to me but was charming at the same time. Sort of like when you go to a bar decorated to look like someone's late 70s/early 80s rec room.)

Anyway, Cabeza's over the top, frenetic, informal style make this an engaging, interesting reading experience which offers lots of often too-close-for-comfort insight into the guerrilla experience. It is the opposite of nuanced and unbiased--you never see a bad or even a conflicted guerrilla, there's never any suggestion of any alternatives to armed struggle, and when his girlfriend/babyMama breaks up with him he doesn't spend a minute thinking it must have been hard on her having his child alone and not seeing him for years. But this isn't a history book, it's a personal account and an rollicking, informative, fast-paced one that made me hope I never get Jungle Leprosy.
