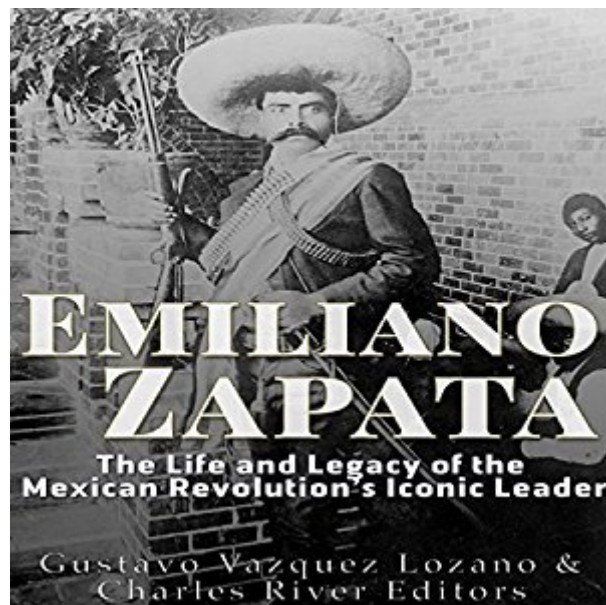




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Emiliano Zapata: The Life And Legacy Of The Mexican Revolution's Iconic Leader



Synopsis

A little more than 100 years ago a Mexican peasant named Emiliano Zapata gathered a rural army from the plantations and villages of southern Mexico, seized the lands of the haciendas, and began to distribute them among the peasants of Anenecuilco, his hometown, in the state of Morelos.

Outraged and impatient with the ceaseless destitution of the indigenous peoples at the hands of the landowners, he had decided to take justice in his hands. His flag was Liberty and Justice, the exact opposites of the two burdens that had tyrannized the rural population: work in semi-slavery conditions and immense inequality. Zapata, who in a few years assembled a popular army of 25,000, was a unique case in the history of Mexico. His country's past had consisted of opportunist generals revolting against the government seeking not to make justice, but to seize power.

Conversely, Zapata was not interested in politics or power plays, except in their most practical and immediate form: to distribute land among the peasants; to allow them to work in peace; and to defend their gains by force of arms. Thus, it was only inevitable that in his time, he was seen as a menace, someone to get rid of in order to return to peace and order. Nearly a century after his death, Zapata remains an opaque figure. To call oneself a Zapatista in Mexico can get a person in trouble, yet he led one of the peasant rebellions most studied by scholars. Historians have produced biographies that portray him as a hero, such as John Womack in the 1960s, and that of his successor and closest aide, Gildardo Magaña, who wrote one shortly after Zapata's death.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Emiliano Zapata: The Life and Legacy of the Mexican Revolution's Iconic Leader.

To be honest I had never heard of Emiliano Zapata, I remember reading about a Mexican revolutionary movement called Zapata back in the 90s or so. This man was truly a revolutionary because he believed in the rights of the peasants and was determined to ensure that peasants in his community were fairly treated. He wrote through others a document called Justice and Law that affirmed his beliefs that the majority of the Mexican community was impoverished because their land was taken from them. He could become president or dictator of Mexico but he was not interested in the bureaucracy that was part of governing. His story is quite interesting and some of his beliefs were ultimately endorsed by politicians in the future. To the wealthy class he was a bandit and nowadays he would be a terrorist. This book is quite interesting and if one is interested in the heritage of Mexico then they should include this book in their library.

This book left me with mixed emotions for this extra-ordinary man. He clearly was a radical and a social fighter, he would probably would be called a terrorist today, or at least he would be called a bandit... wait, he was labeled as bandit in his own time, the Attila of Mexico, a rapist of women, but the peasants loved him, not to mention the scholars of Latin American studies in American universities. How much of it was true, the good and the bad? This book explores both sides of the famous icon. I am sorry for the death he had. The world needs more bandits like him.

Zapata was courageous and thoughtful. He loved the land and his people. Reforms are difficult to enact and even harder to sustain. He tried and was slain.

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