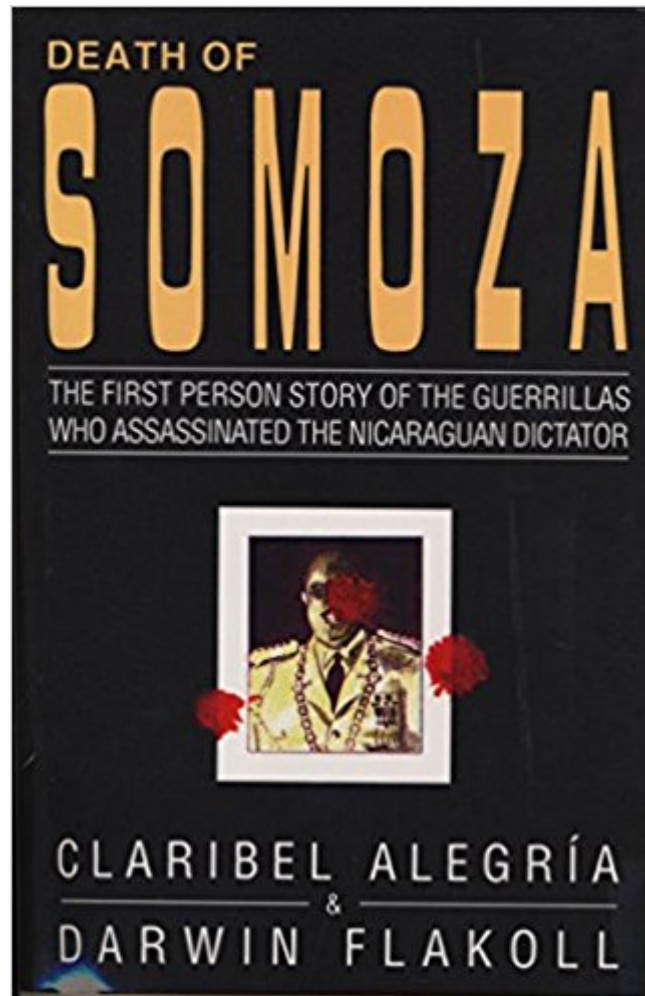




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Death Of Somoza



Synopsis

Death of Somoza reveals the inside story of the assassination of Somoza in Asuncion, Paraguay in 1980. Alegria and Flakoll, on the recommendation of Julio Cortazar, met "Ramon," a leader in the Argentinian Revolutionary Workers' Party (PRT) and with his help were able to interview all the survivors of the commando team that carried out the "bringing to justice" of Somoza. Alegria and Flakoll then rewove these testimonies into a narrative that reads like a thriller, as well as giving a vivid picture of the political and social climate of the time. Enlivened by its colorful cast of characters, Death of Somoza is the definitive account of how Anastasio Somoza Debayle was brought to justice. This story is not an apology for terrorism, but rather the chronicle of a tyrannicide.

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Customer Reviews

If truth is stranger than fiction, historical fact can be just as fascinating, as Alegria and Flakoll prove here. Originally published in Nicaragua and Venezuela, this fast-paced account of the pursuit of the elusive Anastasio Somoza Debayle by his self-appointed assassins (a commando team composed of revolutionary veterans of Argentina's "dirty war"), provides the missing chapter of the Nicaraguan revolution. Because this reads like a suspense novel with elements of espionage, it will be of interest to a curious cross section of readers including military intelligence buffs, mystery lovers and students of Latin American affairs. The text includes many voices of its true-life "characters":

Susana, the young rebel; Ramon, the grizzled freedom fighter; even that of a lamenting Somoza, the deposed dictator?quoted from his book Nicaragua Betrayed, published in 1980. Alegria is an eminent Salvadoran poet, journalist and author of numerous books including Luisa in Realityland

and Family Album. Flakoll, her husband, collaborator and translator, died last year. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

No one has ever known by whom or precisely how Anastasio Somoza Debayle, the repressive Nicaraguan strongman, was assassinated in Asuncion, Paraguay, in 1980, after being forced out of office a year earlier. This book, based on firsthand interviews with the surviving Argentine commando group who carried out the assassination as representatives of the People's Revolutionary Army, conveys their actions in a mix of nonfiction description and fictional dialog. The book effectively reveals interesting points about linkages among revolutionary groups in the 1970s, the disjointed situation in Nicaragua immediately following the Sandinista triumph, and the incompetence of Paraguayan security forces in pursuit of the assassins. Yet the event itself no longer draws much interest. For academic Latin American studies collections. [See also the authors' Tunnel to Canto Grande, reviewed below.]?Ed.]?Roderic A. Camp, Latin American Ctr., Tulane Univ., New Orleans.-?Roderic A. Camp, Latin American Ctr., Tulane Univ., New OrleansCopyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I thought it would be hard to give more than ONE star to a book published by a left wing publishing company about a bunch of communist, thug killers, but it did have a decent story line, although you have to think a lot of it was fictionalized. The story was about the stalking and killing of the former anti-communist president of Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza. It's a short book, only 152 pages, but it moves along (duh, 152 pages!) and might be considered a text book on how to plan an assassination, stalk your prey and eventually work out the best way to kill him. Spoiler alert: the title tells you what happened. What you have to wait to find out is, do they get away, are they killed or captured? What was personally sad was my ambivalence about what would happen to them. I should have been rooting for their destruction, but continued to turn page after page wondering what would come next. The whole Nicaragua story is a sad one; of a country taken over by Castro supplied communist murderers and a government undermined and destroyed by the betrayal by the U.S. and President Carter.

This is an excellent study/read of the killing of President Somoza and how it was conceived, carried out and by whom. I read this book in conjunction with several others to include Somoza's own 1980 account of what occurred in Nicaragua up to his being forced into exile. Alone, each book offers insights, glimpses and accounts that gel when all are read / studied and then cross referenced with

this particular book. Somoza's security in Paraguay was very good and it is remarkable the hit team from Argentina demonstrated the tenacity, patience and skill that they did to finally catch their prey in a moment of weakness / vulnerability. A superb document regarding unconventional / clandestine tradecraft the book should be "must reading" for our Special Forces / Special Operations "hunters/shooters".

Not the best-written book. But the subject sure is interesting.

This slim book of just 152 pages is a virtual mini-manual on the dark art of assassination. It is supposedly written with the help of some of the very terrorists who assassinated Somoza while he was in exile in Asuncion, Paraguay. I believe they wrote this mini-manual in the hope that it would edify those who would attempt to emulate them by assassinating another dictator or some other high value target who employs a protective coterie. I believe that the primary moving force behind the assassination and the penning of this book to be none other than the guerrilla prince himself Fidel Castro of Cuba. Because, when the bay of pigs invasion was launched from Nicaragua Somoza boasted to the Cuban ex-patriot brigade that would land on the beach to 'bring me back a lock of Fidel's beard.' And through 1965 two years after the Cuban missile crisis it was from Somoza's Nicaragua that harassing CIA paramilitary ops were launched against Cuba. So it seems that it was Fidel Castro who came back with a lock of Somoza's hair as a souvenir so to speak.

I just finished this book two weeks ago. It's short and engaging, so for anyone interested in central american history there is no excuse not to read this book. It's a day by day account of the plotting and carrying out of a murder of a man who probably deserved it. All the details are laid out: how they found out where Somoza was, how they got the safe house(which is a great story in itself which I won't reveal), their fears and gaffes, etc. What really struck me was the absence of self-glorification. This group struck down the man who held the record for theft until Marcos and his wife left town about ten years later. You would think they were entitled to a little dance in the end zone, not them though, they were all business about it. So allow me to raise a toast for them. Though this isn't the kind of story that's supposed to warm one's heart, it does satisfy. In this age there are too many examples of dictators either dying of old age at home or living the life of Riley in exile: Stalin, Pinochet, Stroessner, Imelda Marcos, Idi Amin, and that guy from Ethiopia whose name escapes me, and Castro(technically he's neither but the man got away with it and that's my point) to name a few, it's good to know that justice prevails every once in awhile. And I think these people

deserve our praise and more people should read and know this story.

.. without a doubt one of the best testimonials to ever be released to the Latin American revolutionary scene. This one definitely ranks right up there with Ana Guadalupe Martinez' "Las Carceles Clandestinas" and Roque Dalton's "Miguel Marmol". The reader will find the last chapter the best, when Comandante Ramon discusses the nervousness and apprehensions he and the "compas" feel when the moment for action is upon them. I had a hard time putting the book down, and for anyone who has ever lived/traveled in the Central American region and knows the hardships and history of the people well, this short piece is a must have, if for nothing else than its extraordinary retelling of one of the most remarkable events pertinent to the region in the last 50 years.

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