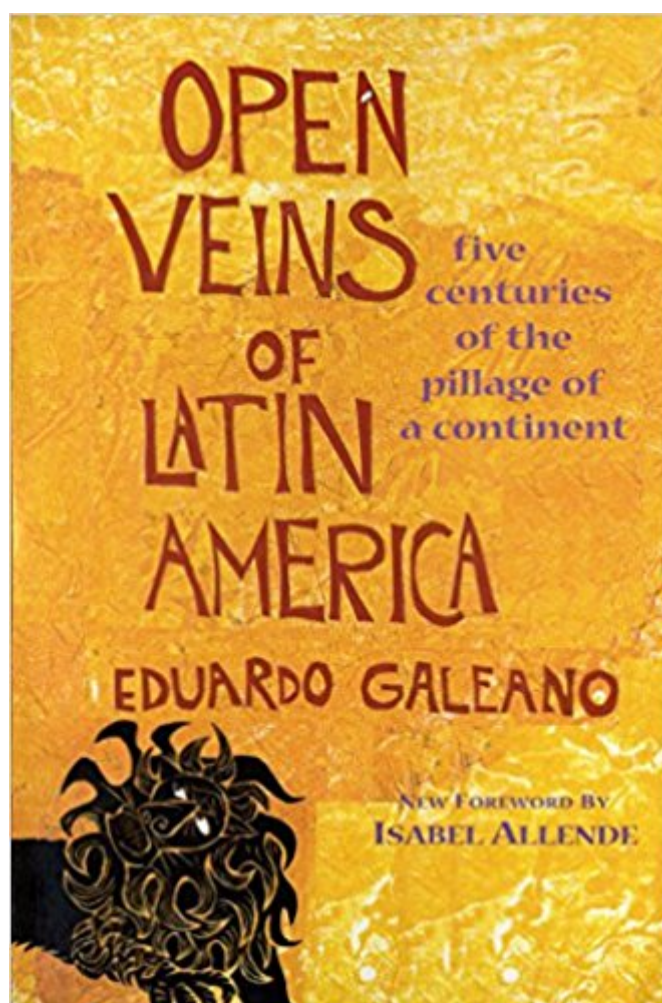


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Open Veins Of Latin America: Five Centuries Of The Pillage Of A Continent



Synopsis

Since its U.S. debut a quarter-century ago, this brilliant text has set a new standard for historical scholarship of Latin America. It is also an outstanding political economy, a social and cultural narrative of the highest quality, and perhaps the finest description of primitive capital accumulation since Marx. Rather than chronology, geography, or political successions, Eduardo Galeano has organized the various facets of Latin American history according to the patterns of five centuries of exploitation. Thus he is concerned with gold and silver, cacao and cotton, rubber and coffee, fruit, hides and wool, petroleum, iron, nickel, manganese, copper, aluminum ore, nitrates, and tin. These are the veins which he traces through the body of the entire continent, up to the Rio Grande and throughout the Caribbean, and all the way to their open ends where they empty into the coffers of wealth in the United States and Europe. Weaving fact and imagery into a rich tapestry, Galeano fuses scientific analysis with the passions of a plundered and suffering people. An immense gathering of materials is framed with a vigorous style that never falters in its command of themes. All readers interested in great historical, economic, political, and social writing will find a singular analytical achievement, and an overwhelming narrative that makes history speak, unforgettably. This classic is now further honored by Isabel Allende's inspiring introduction. Universally recognized as one of the most important writers of our time, Allende once again contributes her talents to literature, to political principles, and to enlightenment.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A dazzling barrage of words and ideas.-HistoryWell written and passionately stated, this is an

intellectually honest and valuable study.-Library JournalA superbly written, excellently translated, and powerfully persuasive exposé which all students of Latin American and U.S. history must read.-Choice

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...and things have only gotten worse. As a Mexican, to read this book in 2015 in light of privatization moves by the current government and the frantic antics north of the border to get the TPP passed on fast track only rubs salt in the wounds. We have learned nothing and are on the brink of disaster. Galeano should be required reading for all politicians (and citizens alike).

Succinct iteration of all the key variables that explain the ruinous effects of the exploitation of countries with an abundance of natural resources by countries that have developed sophisticated systems for processing and adding value to those raw materials. Rapacious, profit-at-any-means mentalities, the ethic of the ends over the ethic of the means, by insidious companies and countries undermining any chance of the supplier countries partaking in the systemic benefits of economic and health advances. One of the few books that I continue to read and re-read. Floods of emigrations from Latin America, and by metaphor Africa, Middle East, South Asia are explained in "Whack Upside the Head" insights. Leaders of any country facing challenges from floods of immigrants must, yes MUST, read this book.

Not certain why Galeano recently repudiated his work in *Open Veins*. Most of the statements he makes in the book are well known to history and not particularly controversial. Whether or not they recommend a socialist solution to Latin America's numerous ills is a whole other debate. I never thought Galeano was necessarily advocating such a solution as he recounts the various ways Latin American countries have been exploited by large capitalist concerns over the years. I did enjoy his writing style, more so than some of his other works. It's helpful, I think, to know some of the basic historical facts about the various Latin American nations before reading this book or you won't understand much of it. Like reading *Mein Kampf* without any knowledge of postwar German politics at the time. In my case, it really supplemented and reinforced many of the things I've been reading and learning. Like *The Prize*, Daniel Yergin's opus about the history of oil, I only wish he had continued on into the present day.

I strongly believe that this book should be read as part of the American curriculum on one day. Although noticeably biased, it offers an insight into the forgotten history of Latin America. This book also does it in a way that it is easy to digest the information through poetic language that adds feelings to the words that describe the sometimes atrocious history of Latin America.

The five stars are for the research that went into this book. Although the author has no solutions to pose, it is worthwhile to make public the price that is paid in human misery for corrupt, self serving governments and institutions, keeping in mind that these entities are made up of people, first and foremost. They are not faceless! Also, I was surprised to see who those corrupt, self serving governments include. They are not just the third world governments. They are the industrialized governments and corporations also. When we have better information, we can make better choices at the voting booths and in the products we buy (or not). That is what this book gave me, better information and a chance to see how individual decisions shape global dysfunction. After reading this book, I can no longer claim ignorance.

This was my first comprehensive introduction to the intersecting military and economic warfare patterns used by colonizing forces (the international world of finance acting through the government of the dominant nations) in Latin America. The first edition was written in 1973 and published with a new forward in 2005. The continuity between 73 and 05 is revealing. Now, in 2015, with the same forces of colonization/imperialism at it again in Ukraine and Iraq, whilst also attempting to pull Venezuela and Iran into the inhuman mess, I am thrilled to have Eduardo Galeano's clear exposition of the methods used to hand, as then I can see clearly that these methods are still primary levers of domination. A must read, I'd say, for people interested in outpacing capitalism ... although it is long, somewhat repetitive story with many deeply troubling descriptions (I needed to do plenty of processing to allow the story sink in). Thanks, Eduardo, for telling this story in plain language too ...

I am astounded as how much I didn't know about how we (Europeans and Americans) treated South America. The Spanish were very short sighted, and ferocious. All the other colonial powers that came along took their big chunk. Poor south America. They started with so many natural resources, and were basically fleeced to the level of poverty. It makes me very sad. Nothing to do, but understand what they have been through and hope they can pull themselves out of their

poverty. the Europeans and American also assassinated all the leaders in the past who had a vision of how to right the situation. Unfortunately this continues today. Maybe those who read this book, and understand what has one before, can help stop the rape of South America.

Like everything else I have read of Galeano, this is brilliant - understanding his leftist orientation from the beginning, if you read with an open mind, there is much to be gained from his perspective. Every gringo like me should read all of Galeano before even attempting to opine on Latin American history or politics.

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