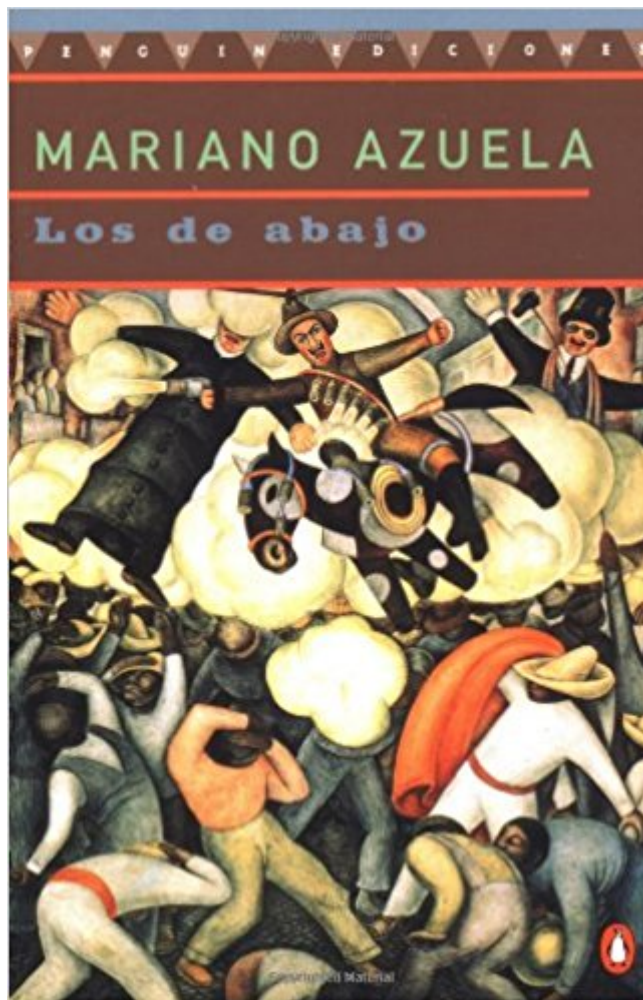


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Los De Abajo



Synopsis

In this deeply moving picture of the turmoil of the first great revolution of the twentieth century—the Mexican Revolution of 1910—Azuela depicts the anarchy and the idealism, the base human passions and the valor and nobility of the simple folk, and, most striking of all, the fascination of revolt—that peculiar love of revolution for revolution's sake that has characterized most of the social upheavals of the twentieth century. *Los de Abajo* is considered "the only novel of the Revolution" and, since the spring of 1925, has been published in several languages and more than twenty-seven editions. Azuela's writing is sometimes racy and virile, sometimes poetic and subdued, but always in perfect accord with the mood and character of the story.

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Customer Reviews

Text: Spanish

Mariano Azuela, the first of the "novelists of the Revolution," was born in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, Mexico, in 1873. He studied medicine in Guadalajara and returned to Lagos in 1909, where he began the practice of his profession. He began his writing career early; in 1896 he published *Impressions of a Student* in a weekly of Mexico City. This was followed by numerous sketches and short stories, and in 1911 by his first novel, *Andrés Pérez, maderista*. Like most of the young Liberals, he supported Francisco I. Madero's uprising, which overthrew the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, and in 1911 was made Director of Education of the State of Jalisco. After Madero's

assassination, he joined the army of Pancho Villa as doctor, and his knowledge of the Revolution was acquired at firsthand. When the counterrevolutionary forces of Victoriano Huerta were temporarily triumphant, he emigrated to El Paso, Texas, where in 1915 he wrote *The Underdogs* (*Los de abajo*), which did not receive general recognition until 1924, when it was hailed as the novel of the Revolution. Azevedo was fundamentally a moralist, and his disappointment with the Revolution soon began to manifest itself. He had fought for a better Mexico; but he saw that while the Revolution had corrected certain injustices, it had given rise to others equally deplorable. When he saw the self-servers and the unprincipled turning his hopes for the redemption of the underprivileged of his country into a ladder to serve their own ends, his disillusionment was deep and often bitter. His later novels are marred at times by a savage sarcasm. During his later years, and until his death in 1952, he lived in Mexico City writing and practicing his profession among the poor.

La actitud de muchos lectores hoy en día con respecto a *Los de abajo* me parece un poco injusta. Muchos hablan de la importancia histórica de la novela, pero después sugieren o dicen explícitamente que no vale la pena leerla. Para mí es una lástima, porque *Los de abajo* sigue siendo una novela entretenida con temas que todavía se pueden apreciar. En vez de seguir una trama recta, *Los de abajo* es una novela de episodios breves e intensos. La novela contiene varias secuencias memorables, como la primera, en la cual el ejército mexicano quema la casa de Demetro Macías, un revolucionario infame, y otra al final, cuando Macías se encuentra con su esposa y su hijo después de años de guerra. Además, la novela desarrolla varios temas provocativos. Para mí, lo más interesante es la corrupción gradual de los revolucionarios, quienes empiezan a adoptar los rasgos indeseables de sus enemigos. Otro tema recurrente que me parece fascinante es la ignorancia casi total del soldado común con respecto a las políticas de la revolución: los revolucionarios están luchando contra los caciques y otros que los han abusado, pero al fin de cuentas solo saben vagamente por qué (y para quién) luchan. A menos que se sepa muy bien el español histórico de México, recomiendo comprar una edición crítica (la de Cítedra es excelente) porque muchos personajes hablan en un dialecto del norte de México, que incluye varios arcaísmos y formas gramaticales que ya no se usan.

Text is loaded with colloquialisms from the period as well as regional to certain Mexican States. Some of the language is no longer in use today, but this gives the story added literary license. You would expect greater character development; especially of the female characters, but then, what do

expect if the author was embedded with the revolutionaries and risked his own life on a daily basis. What if he was constantly on the run, would he have had the time to put more effort and development into the novel?

This book is a rather remarkable portrayal of the daily experience of foot soldiers in Northern Mexico during the revolution of 1910-20. It shows the motivations and the self-deceptions that are often part of the mix of idealism and wish for social and/or personal change or benefit, which are often part of what drives those who participate in acts of collective violence. In some ways, it could describe the intentions of those involved in the current struggles in the same area.

I am also taking a class on this book which I have enjoyed both a lot....great history because I live right here in El Paso Texas where most of this theme develops.....great history book!!!!

Great classic literature, one of Mexico's greatest writers.

LeÃ- "Los de Abajo" cuando estudiaba la secundaria en MÃ©xico. La secundaria fue la Ã©poca en que descubrÃ- la literatura semicontemporÃ¡nea mexicana, incluyendo los libros de Rulfo, este libro, los de Octavio Paz, Como Agua Para Chocolate de Laura Esquivel, etc. Cada uno de Ã©stos libros es diferente y estÃ¡ relacionado a la vez. Los recomiendo todos. Los de Abajo es un libro con la voz del pueblo, con las esperanzas y desilusiones de 'los de abajo'. Es un libro con un hÃ©roe diferente y universal a la vez. Es un libro, que como mexicano, hay que leer. Recomiendo que los interesados en la RevoluciÃ³n Mexicana lean los libros de historia y las novelas revolucionarias, porque sÃ- lo asÃ- se podrÃ¡n identificar con lo que sucediÃ- y con las motivaciones de las diferentes partes.

great book.

Written in and yellowed but very readable and otherwise in good condition...it's the words that really count, and the availability.

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