

BOOK REVIEW

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956–1958

BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

Reviewed by: Guillermo Proano

“The corderillas of the Andes will be the Sierra Maestra of South America.” —Fidel Castro

Che Guevara’s brand of revolutionary humanism inspired him to write and speak to ordinary people. His works range from *Guerrilla Warfare* to *Socialism and the Man*, encompassing philosophy, battle strategies and political history.

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956–1958 is a personal account of the Rebel Army’s fight to liberate Cuba from the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Each section first appeared as a series of articles printed in the Cuban magazine *Verde Olivo*. The stories are a firsthand account of the crucial years of the Cuban Revolution, starting with the Granma’s landing and ending with the climactic Battle of Santa Clara in the closing days of the war. Guevara retells the stories using pages from his own diary and firsthand accounts from those who fought alongside him.

In addition to the detailed account of battles and events, the book also includes maps and charts as well as a short introduction to key figures in the Cuban struggle. The book opens with Fidel Castro’s speech “Men contribute to History, but History Also Makes Men,” given before the working-class community of San Miguel in Chile, where residents had erected a statue of Che. The following chapters include letters written by Che to numerous people, including a letter written to his father from Che’s prison cell in Mexico, and Che’s final letter to Castro before embarking on his mission to the Congo.

Episodes is interesting as both a historical document and a profile of the personalities involved in Revolutionary Cuba. It shows us how the men and women of the Rebel Army were transformed by their experiences and how the rebels forged a political leadership capable of guiding the first socialist revolution in the Americas.