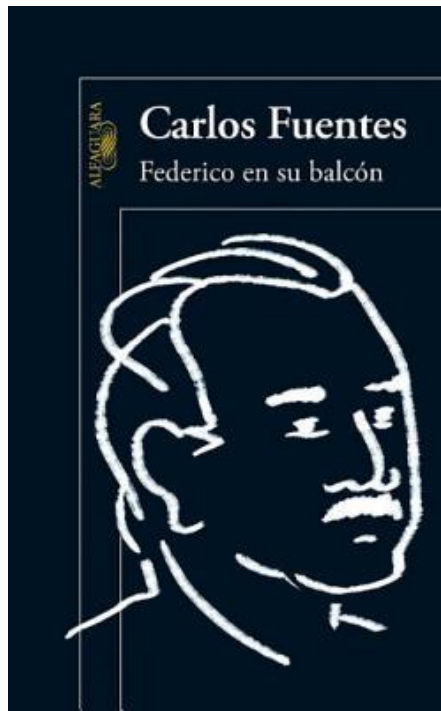




Federico en su balcón

Carlos Fuentes

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Federico en su balcón Carlos Fuentes

The light of dawn is breaking over the impressive balconies of the Hotel Metropol as two legends, Friedrich Nietzsche and Leonardo Loredan, exchange thoughts on power, love, justice, and loyalty. The year could be 2014 or 2016, and the country suffers the ravages of the revolution that has overturned a "perfect dictatorship." Leonardo and Friedrich watch the mob pass by, mindful of the endless spiral of violence it represents and thinking that, perhaps, the horror will never end. Federico en su balcon is a testimony to Fuentes' literary triumph. A definitive lesson on what he stood for, and will continue to represent, as a writer. It is also a verbal self-portrait where the storyteller is multiplied in his characters to create the spiritual and philosophical contradictions that breathed in his soul a dialogue that opens the door to interrogations without attempting to provide decisive answers.

Federico en su balcón Details

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From Reader Review Federico en su balcón for online ebook

Eilin Chang says

Uno de mis escritores latinoamericanos favoritos. Excelente historia y reflexión, es un libro para pensar. Mis circunstancias también estaban en sintonía con los temas de poder, justicia y caos que se reflejan en los personajes que describe, creo que eso influyó en que me impactara tanto personalmente. Lo recomiendo ampliamente, y aunque es un libro corto, vale invertirle tiempo para ir procesando a profundidad los conflictos que plantea.

Libélula de Humo says

"Hay muchas maneras de estar en la historia. A veces la haces, a veces la sufres, a veces nada más la miras..." Página 143.

Este libro me dejó sin palabras en la boca y un millar de pensamientos que no me paran de rondar por la cabeza. Si bien al inicio me costó adaptarme a la forma en la que está escrita la historia, una vez que estuve en sintonía y agarre el hilo simplemente no paré de disfrutarla. No puedo decir de qué va porque honestamente no sabría cómo explicarlo, pero considero que se le debería dar una oportunidad sin prejuicios.

Jason says

At a certain point we who are raised-up in that poststructuralist wing of the Liberal Arts Inc. compound become accustomed to the sentiment expressed especially by the students of Derrida that all that which relates to human enterprise, even (maybe especially) that which would not at first seem so, is text. All is text. Try exclaiming this to a positivist. Prepare to see him riled. But here we are in the arms of Fuentes, on his last excursion of a novel, before going more-or-less gently into that neutral night. This is a novel written by Fuentes along with Fuentes. The work of the artist is always in some sense a taking-counsel-with-self. Only one of the Fuentes-machines is also basically Friedrich Nietzsche. A Friedrich Nietzsche, not THE Friedrich Nietzsche. Or a panoply of Friedrich Nietzsche-functions that are also half of the Carlos Fuentes meditating and mediating this text into existence. Fuentes/Fuentes-Nietzsche is both commenting upon and generating an edifice of fiction, and we do have to consider that maybe if everything is text everything is also fiction. Certainly everything in your fiction becomes fiction when you are writing fiction, but let's not get dizzy w/ tautologies. Fuentes/Fuentes-Nietzsche are amassing a series of fictional narrative blocks around an engagement w/ a subject very, very dear to Latin American fiction: revolution. Because of the bifurcated author-function and its role as a (sometimes irritating) Greek chorus, often po-mo self-reflexive (the fact that this is all in service to a book entitled NIETZSCHE ON HIS BALCONY is explicitly addressed), we are invited to think of this book as text about generating text (which you don't necessarily only do in a book). Fuentes' Nietzsche doesn't really coincide w/ the Nietzsche I personally carry around w/ me (and boy do I ever!), but I appreciate the point, and I do actually love what Fuentes-Nietzsche lays down in the bravura closing threnody. This is a novel about novels and artists. More than novels, then. A novel about text. Text as broadly defined as you are willing to countenance.

Maria says

"...Federico ha muerto! Lo dice Dios."

Creo que Carlos Fuentes nos presenta en *Federico en su balcón* una propuesta bastante interesante. Un diálogo entre el autor mismo y Friedrich Nietzsche en el presente donde, a través de sus personajes y una creciente revolución llena de simbolismos, hace un análisis de lo que el filósofo alemán podría decir de nuestra sociedad hoy en día.

Como admiradora de Fuentes debo resaltar que precisamente es esto lo que más admiro de este gran intelectual contemporáneo, su capacidad de ofrecernos diferentes y nuevas técnicas narrativas que ofrecen una introspección, principalmente, de la historia, el poder y la sociedad del México presente, y que lo llevaron a numerosos reconocimientos literarios a través del mundo. Es un placer abrir un libro de Fuentes y ser sorprendida por una narrativa muy diferente a todo lo demás que previamente hayas leído de él. Sin embargo, no recomiendo este libro como la primera lectura de este autor a quienes están buscando introducirse en este gran representante del "boom latinoamericano". A nuevos lectores recomendaría más buscar *La región más transparente*, *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* o *Aura* por nombrar algunas de sus grandes obras representativas.

"...hay muchas maneras de estar en la historia. A veces la haces, a veces la sufres, a veces nada más la miras..."

7.1.2018

David says

I am a big fan of Carlos Fuentes and was saddened to hear that he died in May 2012. There were two books published posthumously - this one and "Persona". This book was a challenge and yet after finishing it I pondered what it means? I am still not sure.

For most readers, unless you are a die-hard Fuentes fan, you will dislike this book. For the latter, one cannot wonder that he knew this was his last book and so he wrote such a challenging book. The premise is simple. Two neighbors meet and begin talking on their respective balconies at the Hotel Metropol. One is Friedrich Nietzsche and Fuentes himself. As the author tells the story of a political revolution, they debate philosophical issues. Three men, whose political fortunes change almost by each succeeding chapters are at the heart of the story - they are the "leaders" of the revolution. Their political intrigue, the women who are involved, family issues and a very odd story about a Japanese student and a tiger brings out both the highs and lows in this book.

Structurally each chapter is the voice or the story of each of the characters and is frequently reprised by the brief conversation on the balconies. This structure helps direct as to what is happening and at one section, different people tell their version of a crucial event. Fuentes himself tells us that he needs this as stories are linear, but time is not.

The book is very bleak and cynical. The ending has such a good philosophical reflection to ponder (no

spoiler here). This revolution made me think of the Arab Spring which surely must have influenced Fuentes and yet, there were deeper signs here. Is this symbolism for Mexico? Is this what we have become? Fuentes plays on the famous "God is dead" statement that in killing god, Nietzsche could live on philosophically. If you want to be challenged, try this book.

I know I will miss this writer's voice. Adios Senor!

Praveen Mathew says

Rather boring and repetitive, with nothing to take away.

MJ Nicholls says

Master Mexican novelist Carlos "The Don" Fuentes's last novel ends one of the most significant careers in world letters with a spectacular flourish of a whimper. Encountering the pessimist's pessimist Friedrich Nietzsche on his balcony one evening, the two muse on the theory of the "eternal return" (infinite recurrence of the universe), and invent a story of a revolution featuring a cast of strange and beguiling characters. Among them various hopefuls for the vacant position of leader: the idealistic and doomed Saul Mendes, the hopeless Aaron Azar, and two brothers Dante and Leo, one nice one evil (no surprises in who emerges victorious). Split between droll dialogues with Fuentes and Nietzsche and the tales spun, the novel is vibrant with Fuentes's incredible prose, observations (on philosophy, the nature of revolution, politics, fraternal and other relationships), and impeccable structure and economy. A finer career finale one couldn't hope for.

Flor Ortiz says

I'm deeply saddened by the lack of appreciation of this book. Challenging? Yes. Lacking substance in the midst of the complex technique? No. Admittedly, this is a difficult book to read if you have no knowledge of Nietzschean philosophy, since most of the philosophical treatises will be lost on you and the ending will make absolutely no sense, nor will the dialogues where Nietzsche's personal life is embedded as a means of furthering the authorial purpose. I recommend first giving yourself some background into the main purposes that are often embedded by authors when they incorporate Nietzschean philosophy, namely Shaw and the french post modern writers, Sartre and the likes.

Given that you know some Latin American history in the way of tumultuous political endeavors from the cold war up to this day, especially Mexico, you will be able to appreciate the allegory that can be applicable to any post revolutionary stage from the French Revolution up to Che Guevara's purely ideological struggle and how that works out for him. The book is tedious and nonsensical if you miss all of the references he makes to history (hence the choice to make time cyclical and not explicitly applicable to any one place), philosophy, and political figures of the world, specifically Cardenas and some of the other figures that Fuentes alludes to in this book. Be that as it may, to me this is a great example of the development of post modern Latin American literature in the style of magic realism.

rarovar says

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Carlos says

Carlos Fuentes e o Eterno Retorno

Da sacada de um hotel em um país que poderia ser tanto o México quanto qualquer outro, dois homens discutem ideias enquanto observam a sangrenta marcha de uma revolução – que também poderia ser qualquer uma. Em torno desse tênue fio condutor que se tece *Federico em Sua Sacada*, romance que o escritor mexicano Carlos Fuentes concluiu pouco antes de sua morte inesperada, em maio do ano passado.

Federico em Sua Sacada (Tradução de Carlos Nogué. Rocco, 316 páginas, R\$ 39) é um livro de estrutura complexa. A narrativa se divide em quatro seções, cada uma delas com uma citação irônica do hino nacional mexicano. Essas partes se subdividem em capítulos curtos, que se alternam entre o diálogo de dois homens que conversam de uma sacada para outra em um hotel e os pontos de vista de uma dezena de personagens cujas ações formam a história de uma revolução popular deteriorada em ditadura e terror. O “Federico” do título é o redivivo Friedrich Nietzsche, que discute com o narrador temas centrais de sua filosofia ilustrados pela ação dos homens e das mulheres que amam e se matam lá embaixo: o eterno retorno, a vontade de poder e a legitimação da violência.

Enquanto Federico dialoga com um narrador que muda constantemente de identidade (às vezes é outro Federico, à vezes é um duplo de Fuentes, em outro momento é Dante, uma das figuras centrais do livro), desfilam diante de seus olhos os principais personagens da narrativa, figuras que cumprem uma função alegórica no grande teatro histórico – posição que é marcada mesmo pela escolha dos nomes dos personagens. Dante e Leonardo são irmãos aristocratas em lados opostos. Leonardo é conselheiro do poder constituído, Dante é um dos ideólogos do movimento, ao lado de Aarón Azar, advogado de austeridade sombria, e de Saúl Mendés-Renania, revolucionário que tem abertos na carne estigmas que sangram continuamente. Não demora para que o movimento triunfe, e cada um deles, além de outros personagens que gravitam na história, assumam papéis que resumem o declínio histórico de qualquer revolução real, da francesa à soviética, passando pela mexicana: o traído, o traidor, o mártir, o herói, o tirano

As interrelações entre o trio de líderes reproduzirão, aos poucos, tensões históricas que ora remetem à ruptura de Stalin com Trotsky (quando Aarón vota pela desgraça de seu amigo Dante), ora o conflito entre Danton e Robespierre (Aarón é austero e seco como o “incorrutível” da Revolução Francesa, e o próprio Dante é chamado, às vezes, de Dantón, um apelido no aumentativo que reproduz no espanhol o nome da “voz da Revolução”). O arco de personagens, contudo, não é muito desenvolvido, talvez pela própria função alegórica de cada um. A maior exceção talvez seja o sapateiro Basilicato, homem do povo entusiasmado pelo fervor da revolução que vai gradativamente galgando postos na hierarquia do movimento.

Em um romance assumidamente dedicado a transformar o “eterno retorno” de Nietzsche em alegoria, não é de surpreender que temas e inquietações característicos de Fuentes reapareçam neste livro derradeiro. Estão lá acontecimentos suprarreais usados como metáfora para a realidade política latino-americana e a história turbulenta do continente descrita com fartas doses de farsa e sangue – temas comuns ao boom do qual Fuentes foi um dos maiores expoentes e aos quais permaneceu fiel até o fim. Não é um livro fácil, devido à

radicalidade de sua experimentação. Também não é um romance coeso, pois, em determinadas passagens, a confusão instaurada pela narrativa parece menos tributária da vontade do autor do que de uma artesanania deficiente ou apressada – talvez Fuentes ainda pretendesse trabalhar mais no texto após concluí-lo. Mas serve como uma memorável sùmula do trabalho de um dos mais combativos autores latino-americanos

Jared Levine says

Reminded me of Calvino's *If On A Winter's Night A Traveler*, in the sense that it's a metafictional novel about a story where the chapters bounce between the meta and the story—but it also reminds me of Garcia Marquez's *100 Year of Solitude* in that it presents the reader with a detailed fictional history, from its very start to its inevitable end. It's a masterful work—the writing is precise, and meticulously crafted (and well translated).

Well recognizing the excellence of Fuentes' writing, it's hard for me to pinpoint why I didn't like this as much I felt like I wanted to. I think some of the nuances of Nietzsche as a character were lost on me, because I'm not big on him—but also, I found myself more gravitated to the fictional history of the revolution in the unnamed city. While I love metafiction forever and always, I felt like all the character development takes place outside of it. There is no development of Nietzsche or Fuentes* as characters—though the banter is entertaining. I dunno. I guess maybe this isn't the best place to start with Fuentes' work. It was still a really good book though.

Pris López says

¡Federico ha muerto! Lo dice Dios.

Victor Pérez Negrón says

Carlos Nietzsche ha hablado: Revolución, una palabra permea todo el relato, (no lo mejor de Fuentes, sí genial para ser su último publicado), la gran solución para exterminar la opresión y rapacidad de las élites, pero claro, siempre se comerá a sus hijos. Ahí comienza el eterno retorno de Don Nietzsche, todo lo demás es una ilustre elucubración transportado a cualquier triste historia de una nación que experimentado las vicisitudes de abuso cíclico de gobernantes insaciables, siempre insaciables. Sí, el hombre es, una vez más, su único enemigo. Nuestra sombra hasta la muerte.

Adriana says

I was not a fan of this book. I'm sure the fact that it was in Spanish made it challenging enough for me to understand fully but also, I don't think it would have been something I would have picked out. The book was passed on to me by a family friend. From what I understood, there were 2 neighbors who were conversing about a revolution, specifically the key members of the revolution and their demise.

Grant Johnson says

Because we are excrescences of life and gifts for death, Charlotte told herself, and meanwhile we have an obligation to those around us.
