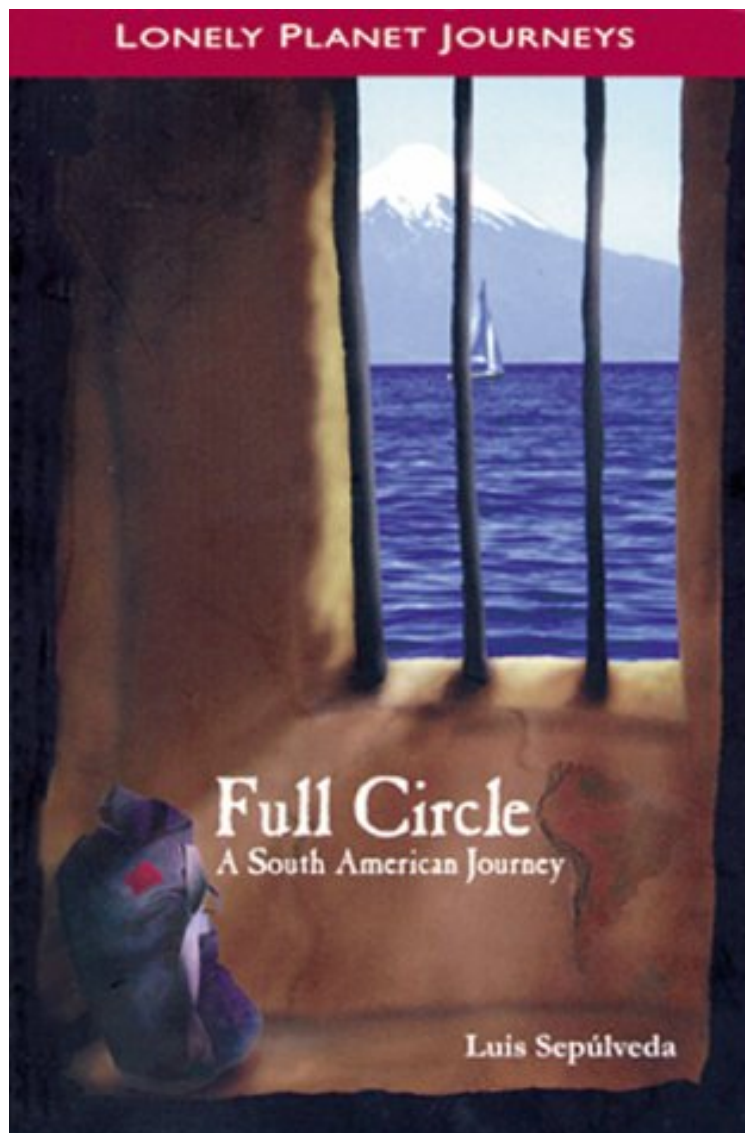


(Read now) Full Circle: A South American Journey

Full Circle: A South American Journey

Luis Sepúlveda

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Luis Sepúlveda : Full Circle: A South American Journey before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Full Circle: A South American Journey:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. ...but in a rather elliptical way. By John P. Jones III Luis Sepúlveda is a Chilean writer who is not particularly well-read in the United States. In terms of other writers from Chile, I've only read some of the works of Isabel Allende, so I decided to expand my horizons. Sepúlveda was born in 1949, and was of that youthful age to live through the days of the Isabel's first cousin (once removed), Salvador Allende, who was

President of Chile until he was removed in a CIA-sponsored coup in 1973. Sepulveda spent two and a half years in prison, under the Pinochet dictatorship that followed the death of Allende. This work is a collection of short stories, sponsored by Lonely Planet, and one of the stories is a rather wry and no doubt autobiographical account of his time in prison, with the usual meathead thugs (with one being an aspiring poet - maybe!) in charge of the prison. He was released from prison, but required to spend numerous years in exile. Sepulveda acquired his leftist leanings naturally, from his grandfather, who was an anarchist. This collection commences with a charming story of the grandfather taking very young Luis around and letting him water down, as it were, the front doors of some churches, invoking the ire of the local priests, for sure. Ah, teaching the young the futile defiant gestures, that can at least feel good, though remedy for societal evils will not be achieved that way, for sure. There are a number of stories from his exile wanderings. In one he is attempting to cross from Argentina into Bolivia, hopefully on his way to Europe, and finds out that the Bolivian police /thugs has him "on the list," not only not allowing him to proceed, but robbing him also. In another, he struggles as a "adjunct professor" teaching in Ecuador's port city of Guayaquil, living with others in similar circumstances and finding the company of the women who "work" the port at least comforting. For me, the most interesting stories are set in Patagonia. In one, with some ingenuity, an old DC-3 which had a crash landing takes to the skies again. In another, a dead "patron" is flown in a small plane to his funeral in a distant city. The stories provide a good feel for this area that is the end of the earth, which is one of the titles to another work of his. Somehow I've gotten this far in life without realizing that it was in Patagonia that Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid ended their days. And in another story, Sepulveda relates meeting Bruce Chatwin, one of the more famous chroniclers in Patagonia (Penguin Classics) of these antipodal regions when the two of them were in Barcelona. The final story is the one that justifies the title. Sepulveda goes "home" to Martos, in Andalusia, and meets the youngest brother of his grandfather, who, like the other brothers, never left home "to seek their fortune." Overall, a pastiche of stories, each with its own merit, but the collection lacks a cohesive theme. 4-stars.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very enjoyable travel writing By erisgeenhoop A very enjoyable book of travel writing, a bit in the style of the great travel writing of Chatwin and Theroux. It is not always clear where autobiography morphs into fiction or should I say magical realism, but that just adds to the wonderful atmosphere of the book. I also wondered at the serenity with which he describes the injustices inflicted on him by the barbarous Pinochet regime and its cruel executors. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. wanderlust reactivated By A. Sahaa very honest and coolly written book. While the narrative appears disjointed at first, one realizes that if the author were to write all the details in chrono sequence, given that he has been travelling for years, it would have been several fat volumes. This is not strictly a travelogue in the sense of day 1 we did this, day 2 that happened.. rather, it's a collection of incidents and events that took place in the course of the author's travels, that illuminate life in the various places he has been. I feel like hitting the road again, with no fixed destination in mind, no final goal, timeless...

Part autobiography, part travel memoir, "Full Circle" brings us the distinctive voice of one of South America's most compelling writers. Chilean Sepulveda takes us on a "journey without itinerary", meeting extravagant characters and extraordinary situations, from sleepy tropical towns to the landscapes of legendary Patagonia.

From Library Journal Sepulveda (*The Name of the Bullfighter*, LJ 7/96), a novelist exiled from Chile in 1975, opens this personal narrative with the advice of his grandfather to visit his birthplace of Martos, Spain. His life-long journey begins in Temuco, a Chilean prison, where he was a political prisoner for three years. Surprisingly, he does not harbor anger or bitterness from the experience. Later, he is a miserably poor professor in Ecuador and then holds a curiously surreal job writing the memoirs of a wealthy haciendado whose widowed daughter hopes to marry him to her daughter to preserve the family line. His experiences in Patagonia are the most interesting, beginning with his acquaintance with Bruce Chatwin, the Englishman whose book on Patagonia is considered a classic in travel literature. Eventually, he arrives in Martos, where he meets his grandfather's brother and is able to bring his journey "full circle." This book has a decidedly South American tone, seeing magic and wonder where most North Americans do not. Recommended for cosmopolitan travel collections. ?Mary Ann Parker, California Dept. of Water Resources Law Lib., Sacramento Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: Spanish