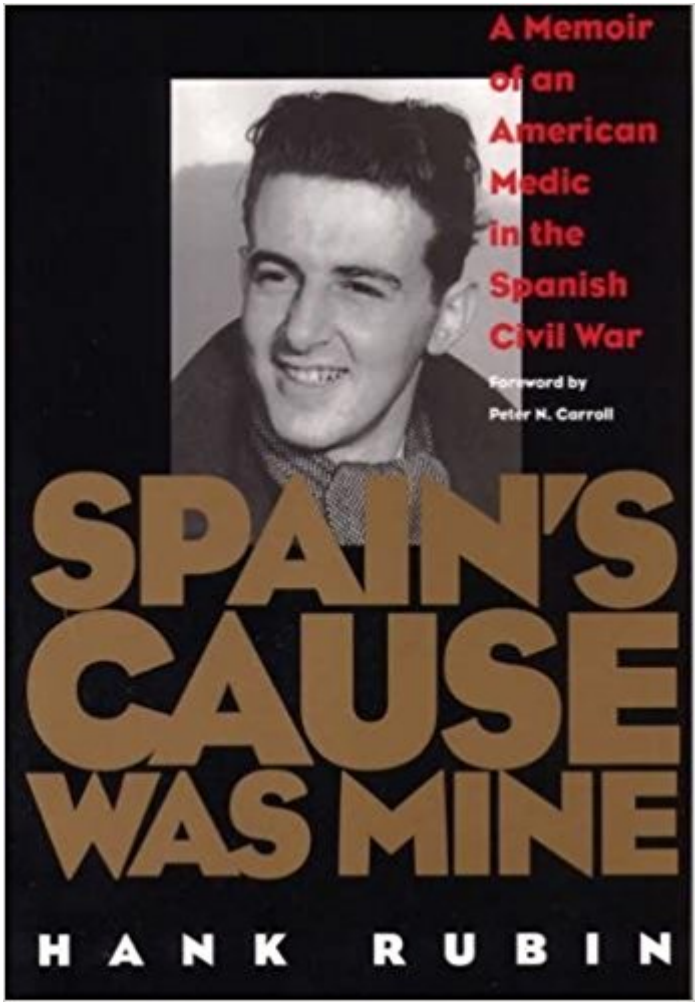
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Spain's Cause Was Mine: A Memoir Of An American Medic In The Spanish Civil War



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Synopsis

“No man ever entered earth more honorably than those who died in Spain.Ã¢â ¬Â•—Ernest HemingwayÃ Â In 1937, Hank Rubin, a twenty-year-old Jewish pre-med student at UCLA, volunteeredÃ Â for service in the International Brigades combating fascists in the Spanish Civil War. In his illustrated memoir, Rubin reflects on those events, making no apologies for his youthful impulsiveness, bravado, and ideology, but recalling the heroics and sufferings he witnessed and experienced in Spain, as well as the disappointing treatment he received upon his return.Ã Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This brief memoir of the Spanish Civil War by an American who volunteered with the International Brigade builds up steam slowly but does eventually become quite gripping. Rubin takes a full third of the book just to describe how difficult it was to get to Spain in 1937 and then devotes additional space to an unsurprising description of his basic training. Following that, though, he offers a detailed look at a war-ravaged country as he describes his journey through separatist Catalonia to join republican positions closer to Madrid. In repeatedly evoking the political climate of the times, stressing the effect of the world’s reluctance to act to save Spain from fascist dictatorship, Rubin spares neither his own country nor the Vatican. Initially part of a combat unit, Rubin contracted hepatitis as a result of repeated bouts of dysentery (a subject that, along with his finally remedied virginity, Rubin is perhaps too frank about) and was sent to an army hospital, where he eventually stayed on as a medic (despite the fact that he hadn’t had a chance to complete his pre-med studies

back home), witnessing firsthand the awful residue of battle. Among the most moving scenes is his unvarnished description of how he helped a mortally wounded soldier in terrible pain to die by injecting air into a vein. In the book's brief epilogue, Rubin discusses the prejudices he encountered when he returned to America following the collapse of the Republic and how, despite his almost immediate return to combat in WW II, suspicions about his loyalty shadowed him. Many saw the republican cause as identical with communism, which oversimplifies the war to the point of absurdity. Rubin has not rewritten Hemingway's or Orwell's masterpieces on the Spanish Civil War, but his contribution is moving, angry, and deeply convincing. (5 b&w illustrations, not seen) -- Copyright Ã Â©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

“[Rubin] tells the gripping story of the seventeen months that he served in the International Brigades, sometimes as a soldier, mostly as a medical officer who gave blood transfusions to the wounded and who helped develop the triage system thatÃ¢â ¬â„¢s used in hospitals today.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â “SpainÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Cause Was Mine is about RubinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s own personal journey—by bus and boat and train—from Los Angeles to Barcelona and back to Los Angeles. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s also about his own rite of passage, his coming of age as a young man—his initiation in battle and bordello—growing a mustache, becoming a lieutenant, and making love for the first time.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â “For readers who donÃ¢â ¬â„¢t know the complex and often tangled history of the Spanish Civil War, RubinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s memoir is an excellent place to begin.Ã¢â ¬Â•—The [Santa Rosa] Press Democrat“SpainÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Cause Was Mine is not just a soldierÃ¢â ¬â„¢s account of battles lost and won, but a moving and important book that offers a fresh look at the unforgettable journey that the author and his comrades took, a journey that spans most of this benighted century, and is not yet concluded.Ã¢â ¬Â•—The Volunteer “This engaging memoir gives us a glimpse not only of RubinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s experience but also of the young men and women who left their homelands to fight for the Spanish Republic. All were not ideologues. Like Rubin, they volunteered for various reasons: they were young men and women seeking adventure, fighting fascism, and searching for the elusive sense of self.Ã¢â ¬Â•—Lancet Ã Â “[Q]uite gripping . . . . [RubinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s] contribution is moving, angry, and deeply convincing.Ã¢â ¬Â•—Kirkus Reviews

Beautiful book ...Love the size and texture, good for tables.

I have not finished reading the book, but I like what I have read. I think it is a well-written and frank memoir.

I would not even put this book out anywhere. For me there was nothing of interest here. you can get better images of the internet.

One of my main historical interests is the Spanish Civil War and the role played in it by the International Brigades to combat Franco's Nationalist forces. I read "Spain's Cause Was Mine" a couple of years ago, but I recently revisited it and was once again struck by the humanity, nobility and idealism of Hank Rubin. Any historian of the International Brigades will tell you, that a good number of volunteers were college students. Rubin begins his account by retelling how, while sitting on the steps of the UCLA library, someone approached him and asked him if he would like to fight in Spain. He replied 'yes.' So begins his journey from college student to volunteer, to medic, to casualty, and cecoming ultimately, survivor. Rubin provides a simple yet poignant narrative of what went through his mind and what all the volunteers had to face in combat. While initally, disappointed that he was not assigned to front-line duty, he came to appreciate his role behind the scenes. This actually, allowed him to absorb it all and put down his thoughts in writing.Rubin writes about some of the brutal campaigns from Brunete to Teruel and GraÃƒÂ en. He also places the Spanish Civil War in an international context, noting Germany and Italy's aid to Franco's troops and the US position of maintaining an embargo against the Spanish Second Republic. To anyone knowledgeable about the Spanish Civil War, this isn't anything new. However, coming from an actual participant, who was fully aware of his own government's indirect complicity in causing the demise of the Spanish Second Republic, it is worth reading.I was touched by a poem written by Rubin following the death of a comrade at arms, who he was unable to save in the medic tent. It captures fear, hesitation and pain that too often accompanies any soldier who goes off to war. I quote it here: "From far away, from Everett on the Puget Sound with the peace of its water the serenty of its green hlls you came from so far to a dusty plain, to mountains without peace. You expected to fly to strike the enemy boldly from the sky, guns roaring your strong hands guiding your plane, triggering your guns. Instead you had to fight on foot, did you ever expect to die? To have a bullet in your head? To suffer your guts torn apart? And was it worth it? Was the pain too much? Was there even pain for you? Was the cost of death too high?This is an excellent memoir from someone who participated in an event that far too many Americans are unaware of. I recommend this to anyone interested in learning more about the Spanish Civil War. Other recommended books along this vein: Peter Carroll's "The Odyssey of

the Abraham Lincoln Brigade," and "American Commander in Spain," by Marion Merriman and Warren Lerude.

The book is an inpsiration. Its allows you to escape to younger years and the joys of youths' freedoms. I've had the hard copy for over 30 years. It is the only book I choose to display.

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