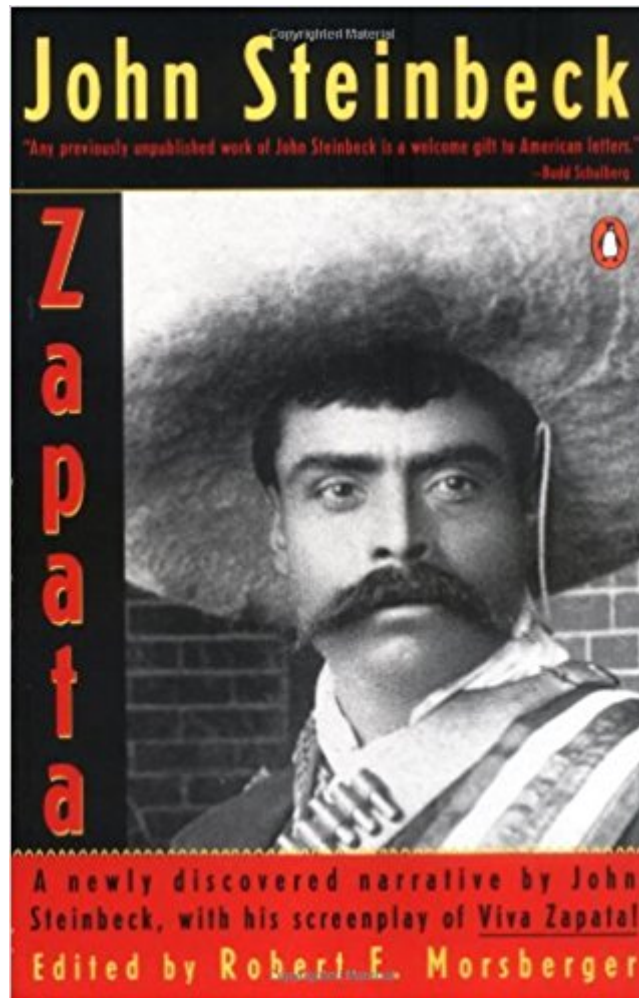




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# Zapata



## Synopsis

Before there was *Viva Zapata!*, the acclaimed film for which John Steinbeck received Academy Award nominations for best story and screenplay, there was the original Zapata. In the research library of UCLA, James Robertson unearthed Steinbeck's original narrative of the life of Emiliano Zapata, "the Little Tiger," champion of the peasants during the Mexican Revolution. This story, upon which Steinbeck based his classic script *Viva Zapata!*, brilliantly captures the conflict between creative dissent and intolerant militancy to give us both a timeless social statement and an invaluable work of art. This new volume includes the screenplay, with copious notes by the film's acclaimed director, Elia Kazan, as well as Steinbeck's captivating narrative.

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## Customer Reviews

Steinbeck was nominated for an Academy Award in 1952 for his screenplay, *Viva Zapata!* The film, based on the life of Mexican peasant revolutionary Emiliano Zapata, stars Marlon Brando, Anthony Quinn, and Jean Peters and is the only original work Steinbeck wrote for the screen. The original story upon which Steinbeck based his script was recently uncovered in a UCLA research library. The two versions are presented together here, and they complement each other well. The original story is more of a preliminary treatment and differs substantially from the screenplay. Steinbeck, who was fluent in Spanish, spent years in research, collecting oral histories from Zapata's contemporaries and veterans of the revolution and obtaining information not available in any other written record. His screenplay is superb drama on its own and is enriched by the historical

framework. Recommended for academic libraries and large film collections.- Marianne Cawley, Kingwood Branch Lib., Tex.Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Nobel Prize-winning author John Steinbeck is remembered as one of the greatest and best-loved American writers of the twentieth century. His complete works are available in Penguin Modern Classics. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm not sure, exactly, who the intended audience for this book is; nevertheless, I suspect that it is included in numerous college syllabi for courses in film criticism and various "soshe" classes around American politics and social activism. That the editor, Robert E. Morsberger, contributed numerous articles to and, I believe, edits the Steinbeck Review lends weight to this suspicion; not to mention the included critical essay by the man that occurs between the original screen play and the actual screen play. In addition to these two plays, preceding them is a word picture that Steinbeck drew to describe to the movie's eventual director and producer Steinbeck's own vision and intention for the film. While having the actual mechanics of a screenplay laid out before one's eyes is interesting to one who hasn't seen the like, this would be true regardless of the underlying story. It just happens in this case to be Zapata, which happens to be the only screenplay Mr. Steinbeck wrote entirely by himself. As to this book, we are essentially presented with three versions of the same story. That this is a bit repetitive is obvious and, frankly, my advice is to read the first two treatments and then go watch the movie. For those of you expecting more of a story about Zapata (or even a biography), based upon the numerous rather puzzling reviews here indicating this is the case, you will be disappointed. For, this is a story about a film script, or screenplay, the subject of which is Emiliano Zapata. It does not pretend to be either a history or a biography: It is an adventure story with political/socio-economic overtones, that roughly hews to historical events and figures. One thing this book is GREAT for is the appendix which includes the entire oeuvre of Steinbeck's filmic career. It is highly informative and will send the most eager of us on to other works by this American Classic. Three stars because this book's true audience is quite narrow and the broader audience is likely to be disappointed, one suspects.

This was an interesting read. A good part of it is the screenplay itself, but that was indicated in the description so there were no surprises in that respect. It was nice to see Steinbeck writing down his thoughts about Mexico and his opinion of Zapata and the revolution. I enjoyed that very much. I recommend this book to anyone interested in writing screenplays or anyone who is a student of

Steinbeck or the Mexican Revolution. It is a shame to learn that Viva Zapata was not made the way Steinbeck wanted, and it could have been a great film instead of just a so-so film. I wish they'd have given Steinbeck free reign and gotten John Huston to direct. That would have been a film up there with The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, alas, that didn't happen.

Most complete book on a true Mexican leader. Those who worked the land deserved their right to own their share. Mexico would be a leader in the world today if all the other men in leadership roles had lived by Zapata's principles.

A little out of date but a good overview of Mexican history.

Really enjoyed this book! Just what i was wanting.

I've always enjoyed reading about Mexico and it's turbulent history. This is a book I would recommend to people that are like minded.

I liked Steinbeck's notes for action and actors. Zapata became a real person in his film version. I suggest his movie should be made.

I really appreciated that Steinbeck went to Mexico to interview those still alive from the revolution and got real stories from real people. It was great to read about the people, how they lived, loved, took care of their land until it was taken from them and how they were so oppressed. Zapata is a part of our family heritage and I enjoy anything i can learn about him. The movie pretty closely followed the book and i also appreciated that.

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