

Cotopaxi: la Montaña de Luz / The Mountain of Light. Freddy Landázuri. Ediciones Campo Abierto, Quito, Ecuador, 1994. 192 pages, 70 black-and-white photographs, 7 line drawings and sketch maps.

Both books deal with Ecuadorian mountains and mountaineering, but they differ in scope. *Montañas del Sol* is a guidebook. Its three authors are the editors of the local mountain journal *Campo Abierto* (Outdoors) and easily rank among the most experienced climbers in their country. The work has a great quantity of information on history of local climbing, geography and mountain weather, and advice on medical matters as well as on equipment. The core of the book is a methodical description of the 40 main peaks of the country, ranging from Chimborazo to Reventador (3567 meters). For each mountain there appears location, climbing history, access and normal route, other routes (with length of time each one requires) and recommendations, particularly regarding quality of local rock and equipment to be taken. Style is laconic and direct. Illustrations are complemented by line drawings showing routes and location of huts, where available. All in all, a compact, efficient guidebook.

Cotopaxi has received the distinction of a monograph because it is this 5897-meters ice volcano, not 6267-meter Chimborazo, that is the favorite mountain of the Ecuadorians. Its ice cone can be seen from the streets of their capital city, only 2822 meters above sea level.

The monograph is a bilingual edition, Spanish and English. It has illustrations almost every other page. It describes everything that has been known about Cotopaxi. Particularly interesting is the history of its ascents. In pages 82-85 we learn that it was the German Theodor Wolf and the Ecuadorian Alejandro Sandoval who in 1877 made the first ascent of the very highest point of the mountain, even if previous parties had reached the crater edge in several occasions. The book covers all important ascents made so far and includes in detail the descent into the deepest pit of the active crater by two Ecuadorians and a Spaniard in 1979.

Both books are strongly recommended to everybody interested in the mountains of Ecuador, a country at present a favorite of trekkers and climbers. Both are light enough to be carried in one's backpack.

EVELIO ECHEVARRÍA

The High Mountains of the Alps. Helmut Dumler and Willi Paul Burkhardt. Translated by Tim Carruthers and adapted by Ken Wilson. The Mountaineers, Seattle, Washington, 1993. 224 pages, 275 color photos, sketches, maps. \$45.00.

In 1923, when modern mountaineering was unknown and mountaineers could still recall the names and accomplishments of their worthy predecessors, there appeared on bookshelves Austrian Karl Blodig's volume, *Die Viertausender des Alpen* (The 4000-meter Peaks of the Alps). Blodig claimed to be the first person