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My Life With Che: The Making Of A Revolutionary



Synopsis

Che Guevara's first wife, Hilda Gadea, paints a personal portrait of the legendary figure, revealing his lesser known side as a romantic wanderer, a philosopher and doting suitor and father. Ernesto Guevara and Hilda Gadea met in Guatemala as members of the political-exile community. Later they were forced to flee to Mexico, where their relationship grew stronger and where, stimulated by Hilda, Che's convictions were shaped. In Hilda's account, their life together is filled with joy, and the excitement of involvement with the Castros and other Cuban refugees. Gadea was with Guevara during a tumultuous period in his life, which turned him from an intellectual theorist to a dedicated revolutionary. Against this backdrop, she offers insight into their long courtship, five years of marriage, and the birth of their daughter, Hildita. Gradually the character of this influential leader is revealed by the woman who knew him best, providing a vital key to the comprehension of Che's legendary qualities.

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Customer Reviews

“A candid, serious memoir by the iconic revolutionary's first wife. . . . An intelligent, tender look at Guevara's human side.”
— Kirkus reviews
“This is a vital book for anyone wishing to understand more about the late Argentine revolutionary. Vivid, intimate and uncensored, *My Life with Che* picks up Guevara's story where *The Motorcycle Diaries* left off, taking us, via his first marriage to Hilda Gadea, through his extraordinary transformation from bohemian adventurer to Marxist Revolutionary. A refreshing and engrossing read.”
— Jon Lee Anderson, bestselling author of *NYT Notable Book, Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* “Che

Guevara is our Jesus Christ: an idealist, a martyr, a redeemer around whom a religion has sprung, first spontaneously, then officially. Hilda Gadea's memoir is the gospel according to Mary Magdalene--an impassionate, first-hand account of the emblematic leader. We come across a Che that is, at once, small and larger-than-life. So we bow in reverence!

—Alan Stavans, best-selling author of *The Hispanic Condition* and *Spanglish*

“Gadea's life story is not as well known as her husband's, but in many ways it was even more extraordinary than that of the famous revolutionary. A political refugee from Peru, she was exiled not once but twice -- first to Guatemala and later to Mexico. Frequently harassed and jailed by the police for her political beliefs, Gadea's stoic resolve in the face of great odds was remarkable. *My Life With Che* is a revealing, compelling insider look at the life of Che Guevara, at the corrupt and compliant right wing authorities who did Washington's bidding in South America, and at a daring group of Latin American revolutionaries who dedicated their lives to the furtherance of a higher cause.

—Nikolas Kozloff, author of *Revolution!: South America and the Rise of the New Left* and *Hugo Chavez: Oil, Politics, and the Challenge to the U.S.*

“*My Life with Che* offers an intimate look at one of the most influential figures of the Cuban Revolution. The story of Che's life has become inseparable from the myth, and this book sheds new light on the man from the unique perspective of his first wife Hilda Gadea.

—Alfredo JosĂf Estrada, author of *Havana: Autobiography of a City*

“Gadea's insights into the thinking and behavior of the young Che, and the Castro brothers during their exile in Mexico in the mid-1950s, are of great historical value. Che was then perfecting his Marxist beliefs but Raul Castro was already a great admirer of the Soviet Union. Gadea reveals too that Fidel espoused a radical internationalist agenda that he concealed from the Cuban people until after his victory. Essential reading for anyone interested in the Cuban revolution.

—Brian Latell, author of *After Fidel: Raul Castro and the Future of Cuba's Revolution* and Senior Research Associate in Cuban Studies at the University of Miami

“Always be capable of feeling most deeply any injustice committed against anyone, anywhere in the world. This is the most beautiful quality in a revolutionary.

—Che Guevara, in his last letter to his children

Hilda Gaeda was the first female Secretary of the Economy for the Executive National Committee for the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance in Peru but was exiled in 1948. She worked for the Guatemalan government as an economist and lived in Mexico and Cuba advancing the same revolutionary politics as Che. She passed away in Havana in 1974

much useful information from ms. gadea's point of view which is left out of biographies of che. they learned a lot from each other. she was a very courageous and intelligent lady who was jailed for a time with their infant daughter. in spite of many hardships she continued on. sometimes she differs from what other authors say and from che's diaries which make this a worthwhile read. i feel i'd be giving too much away by citing examples in this review and the differences reflect personal situations more than history.

Very nice book, shame they couldn't stay together. It's nice to see how they remained friendly & he never forgot about his daughter. She was very classy & never once badmouthed the home wrecker he left her for. I read his second wife's book too & lost all respect for her when she talked about his first wife.

Loved this book, a great read written by a great woman about an incredible man. I think this woman was very remarkable woman in her own right who was highly intelligent and was a real revolutionary herself. She had a strong influence on che and though their marriage didn't last. It really was a meeting of two great intellects.

I have read every thing on Che I can get my hands on. Yes I enjoyed this book. It is a different perspective on Che.

As a Afro Cuban born raised and nurtured Lets be honest..You review is only about you and your feelings NOT! the Cuban who remained fought back and comitted. All men who struggle, lie, manipulates become whore mongers etc IE Kenneey, Lansky Siegel and the other MAFIO who LOST! and even Castro are simply just than MEN.. However freedom to run our country as we please without outside the EMPIRES interference can only be respected. Now if by chance u are Cuban, or from another Pais which had to whoop the empire off its back tell me this. Why did Kennedy lay on Cubas beaches, screw Cuban women, eat our food take in our hospitality and then backstab our people our leaders and disrespect a free nation with an Embargo?

This book is an awkward translation of an old story told by Che Guevara's ex-wife being revived in English for anyone still interested in anything related to this myth. Other than to read the same old idealistic half truths, this book should be a guide as to what patterns of behavior in men lead to disaster if not death and suffering to others around them. This woman was at least more cultured

and well read about politics and history than Che was. Misguided in her ideals about how Latin America should overcome poverty and corruption, she catapulted him to having intelligent opinions about the subject for the first time, and she introduced him to other people who influenced his direction. Before that, he had no direction and he had no real understanding of Latin American politics or anything else. He was an irresponsible adventure-seeking youth with no money. She simply helped him find himself and financed his adventures. She justifies his behavior throughout the book, even when he was selfish and inconsiderate with her and eventually their child. Since the book is translated to English so badly, it allows the reader to look past the flowery letters and it leaves you wondering why this woman allowed herself to be emotionally derailed by an unemployed, arrogant doctor. She gets pregnant and it's assumed that she has to take care of a child associated to all the risks his political activities brought them. If the future of that child had not been so grim, it is almost funny how these so-called heroes of the revolution always find time to get involved with women, have a bunch of children, and then abandon them in the name of whatever revolution they happen to be fighting. Well let's be clear that Che Guevara was no exception, and let's read other biographies to find out how his daughter ended up. I highly recommend Alina Fernandez's biography (Fidel Castro's daughter) and what it says about Hildita Guevara's life as she grew up.

Now that a movie glorifying Guevara is about to make its debut out of Tinseltown, everyone with an ounce of greed in their innards is publishing a book about Che--a most lucrative way for opportunistic ghost writers to make lots of money without a drop of sweat. Years after Che's well deserved execution by the Bolivian military, greedy writers who want to make a buck at the expense of the ignorant reading masses are exalting the mass murderer's life with memoirs, novels, biographies, and so on. "The sanctification of Che" is coming out of the woodwork. For those Guevara boot-lickers who weren't "fortunate enough" to live in Cuba during the early days of the so-called revolution, Che became such a thorn on Fidel's side that the maximum liar presented the sinister doctor with the notorious ultimatum: Bolivia, or else. Thus the main reason the Argentinian "benefactor" leaped south in a "quest to liberate" the Bolivian masses from oppression. Guevara was cast off to South America, Camilo Cienfuegos (one of Castro's lieutenants) was killed in a mysterious airplane accident and anti-communist revolutionary Huber Matos, was condemned by a puppet court to life imprisonment. The runway clear, Fidel and Raul became the island's indisputable proprietors. According to Forbes Magazine, Fidel, with a billion dollars worth of foreign investments has become one of the world's wealthiest heads of state second to Queen Elizabeth II--all of it

extracted from the sweat and blood of the long-suffering Cuban people. Socialism at its best. But why wasn't Che allowed to share Castro's diabolical agenda? The answer; too much competition for the Cuban dictator and his little brother. Fidel wanted he and Raul to be the sole heirs to the Cuban farm and he succeeded! A ruthless human being by conviction, and a bloodthirsty doctor by trade, Guevara, like Fidel, executed in cold blood those who opposed their communist ideas. Regardless of how ghost writers exalt Guevara, he will go into history as an intelligent ruthless flake who happened to be in the right place at the wrong time. The man deserves to be remembered like he was; a criminal, a loser and a mass murderer. Signed: Andrew J. Rodriguez Award-winning author: "Adios, Havana," a Memoir

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