

Book Review

The Motorcycle Diaries: A Journey
Around South America

By Ernesto Che Guevara

(Translated by Ann Wright)

(New York: Verso, 1995)

Review by Jennifer Gann

Comrade Che and his close friend left their home in Argentina on a motorcycle for an adventurous trip across South America. The Motorcycle Diaries is the detailed account of this pre-revolutionary experience of Che.

Traveling through Chile and Peru, we meet Mama Occlo and the Inca Creator-God Viracocha at Cuzco.¹ Inti, the Sun God, is remembered at the Temple of the Sun in Machu Picchu.^{2,3} And the landscape reveals the contrasting Huayna Picchu.⁴

Overall, The Motorcycle Diaries is a fun and insightful read, and a nostalgic look back at developing revolutionary times. Though even Che was a sexist and chauvinist at this point, nobody's perfect.

Reference Notes

1. Mama Occllo was the sister/wife of Manco Capac, the first Inca Emperor. According to the legend, the two were born simultaneously, arising from Lake Titicaca, thus symbolizing the unity and equality of the masculine and the feminine. Viracocha was the Inca Creator-God. Tawantinsuyu (meaning 'four quarters') was the Inca world of which Cuzco was the centre. (Ernesto Che Guevara, *The Motorcycle Diaries: A Journey Around South America*, (Verso, 1995). p. 87, fn. 24.
2. Inti - the Sun God. Ibid - p 90.
3. Machu Picchu - lit. "Old Mountain" site of the Temple of the Sun.
4. Huayna Picchu - lit. "Young Mountain"

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