

Movie book review



Movie/Book Review

The Motorcycle Diaries (Review) The film “ The Motorcycle Diaries” is based on the life of the Cuban revolutionary Dr Ernesto Che Guevara. Directed by Walter Salles, the film won 1 Oscar award and 25 other awards (IMDB). The film has a total running time of 126 minutes. It was mutually produced by Michael Nozik, Edgard Tenenbaum, and Karen Tenkhoff and earned revenue of \$16, 680, 023 in box office. The role of Dr Ernesto is played by a Mexican actor Gael Garc’a Bernal and Alberto Granado’s role by Argentine actor Rodrigo de la Serna. It is an adventure and a drama film and can also be called a biography.

This movie is an excellent amalgamation of superb cinematography, great acting, and excellent chemistry between the two main actors. The Director took five years to complete this film on which three years were only taken by the research work. (IFP. org). Jose Rivera based the script on the diaries which Ernesto and Alberto kept with them during their eight month trip through South America. Guevara narrates adventures which he and Alberto had while they were passing South America by motorcycle during 1950s. As mentioned in the starting of the movie, “ It is about two lives running parallel for a while, with common aspirations and similar dreams”. Alberto Granado is second cousin to Ernesto on his maternal (DURBIN, 2004). They both are student in the same medical college. It is the time when Ernesto and Granado are about 23 and 29 years old respectively. They want to seek entertainment and adventure and meet some girls along the way. A semester before their graduation, they plan to travel across Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Chile and Venezuela for fulfilling their objectives. Besides

searching fun and adventures, one of their main aims is to work in a leper colony in Peru.

They are crazy about seeing the Latin America and want to explore it more than 8, 000 miles in just four months. They start their journey with Alberto's ancient Norton 500 motorcycle named La Poderosa " The Mighty One". After reaching Venezuela, their spluttering bike (The Mighty One) stop working, forcing them to continue their travel by foot or hitchhike. Due to this slower pace, they reach Caracas in July.

Both the two friends find poverty of the indigenous peasants while travelling. The movie starts to assume seriousness as they gain a sense of the disparity for the people of Latin America. In Chile, some local resident accompany Ernesto and Alberto to the Chuquicamata copper mine. Seeing the condition of the workers there, Guevara becomes very upset. Guevara finds the society totally unbalanced when on a river ship, he looks down at the poor people on the smaller boat hitched behind.

Ernesto is a very sensitive person who feels the pain of the people in his heart. During there journey, he helps the poor people by providing them treatment who cannot afford a proper doctor and that is truly depicted in this movie. Once Ernesto said in his real life, " At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that a true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love.

(DURBIN, 2004)

They gradually feel the inequality faced by the poor people of South America. Their minds changes as they explore and realize the injustice with the people. In a scene where Granado dreams to peacefully revolutionize modern South America, Ernesto adds, " A revolution without guns? It will never work."

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Finally they reach to Peru for meeting their last important goal. During their stay in the Leper colony at Peru, Ernesto refuses to wear rubber gloves and prefer bare shake hands with the locals. On the north side of the river, there are the houses of staff whereas the lepers are separated which are on the South of the river. On the night of his birthday, Guevara swims across the river that separates the two societies of the leper colony, to spend the night in a leper shack, instead of in the cabins of the doctors. At this moment of the film, Guevera is transformed to totally a new person with anti-authority impulses. The following lines are said by Ernesto at the end of the film, "Wandering around our America has changed me more than I thought. I am not me any more. At least Im not the same me I was." The film ends after an appearance of the real life Alberto Granado, who is still alive and founded a medical school in Cuba.

In short, this movie shows how these two young hedonists, who were seeking fun and girls were totally revolutionized by realizing the disparity of poor and rich and were traumatized by various injustices which they observed during their 8 month trip.

During an interview, Gael Garc'a Bernal, who played the role of Che Guevara in the film said, " It took six months of intense preparation, study and reading. I read just about every biography ever wrote about Che. Apart from that, I spoke with the people who knew him like Alberto Granada, we traveled to Cuba and spoke with his family, took cultural seminars, studied the Incas." (Bernal)

The movie is a must watch for the lovers of Che Guevara. Based on a historical document, it depicts a somewhat true picture of Che's early revolutionary life.

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