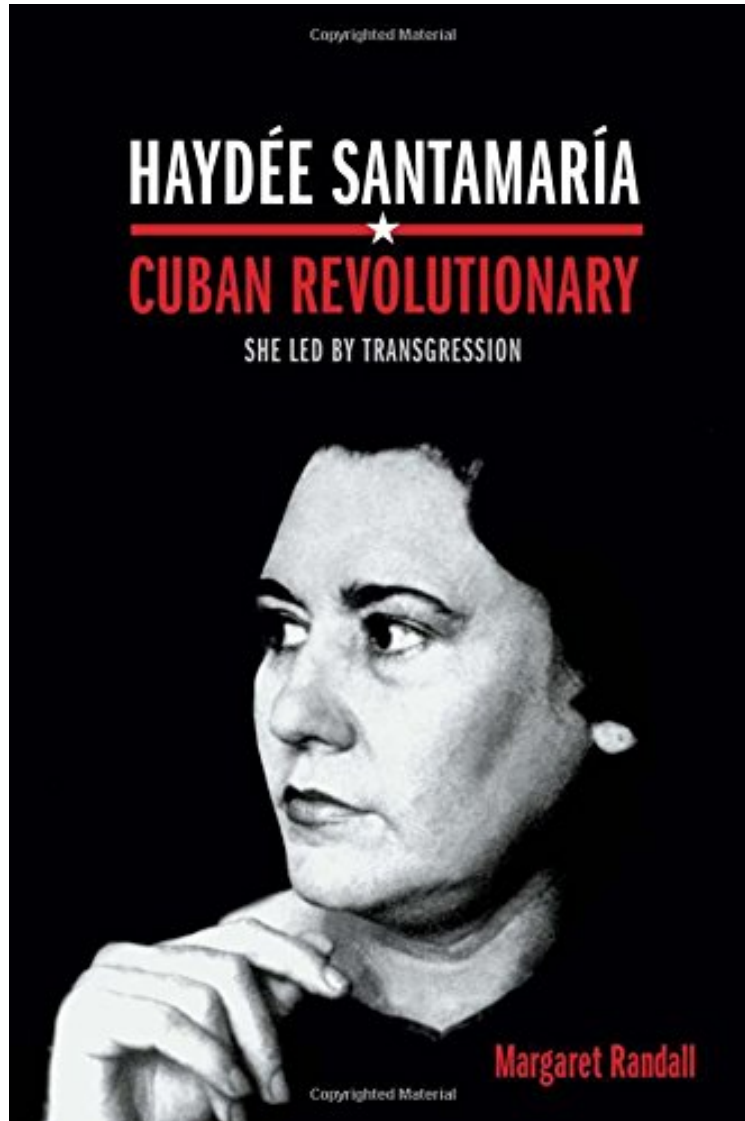


[E-BOOK] Hayde Santamara, Cuban Revolutionary: She Led by Transgression

Hayde Santamara, Cuban Revolutionary: She Led by Transgression

Margaret Randall

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Margaret Randall : Hayde Santamara, Cuban Revolutionary: She Led by Transgression before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hayde Santamara, Cuban Revolutionary: She Led by Transgression:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. this work of love...By Marc LichtmanI had read and enjoyed two of Margaret Randalls books on the Nicaraguan Revolution, as well as her translation of Tomas Borges 'Carlos the Dawn Is No Longer Beyond Our Reach.'That was a long time ago, and I hadnt read anything by her since, although I read a

lot of what is available on Cuba in English. I would have preferred a biography of Cuban leader Hayde Santamaria, but until there is one in English, this work of love, along with books by and about some of her closest collaborators will have to suffice. The strength of this book is reminiscences of her by Randall and by others who worked with her. The weakness is there's so much left out, and much repetition, sometimes of things of great importance, but sometimes of words she may have spoken at a given moment, which because of repetition may be given greater weight than they merit. Her work at Casa de las Américas, the internationalist center for the arts Santamaria headed is what I knew the least about, and therefore what I learned the most from. I don't know of any other sources to recommend on this, although Che Guevara's work *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, mentioned several times in the book is important for understanding the revolution's approach to art, unfortunately not always lived up to, although both Santamaria and her husband of twenty years, Armando Hart, played a big role in restoring it after the five gray years. In my opinion, the Cuban internationalist intervention in Angola, which Cuba launched without first informing the Soviet Union also created a new situation (see *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom*, as well as the works by Piero Gleijeses). Of course I agree with the author that Hayde Santamaria should have received a state funeral, but as someone who has struggled with lifelong depression, I know that few people who haven't had that experience can understand suicide. And of course I agree that it's never about one thing.... Still, all the central party leaders were present. Nancy Stouts biography of Celia Sánchez, *One Day in December: Celia Sánchez and the Cuban Revolution* fills in some of the gaps, as does *Aldabonazo: Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground, 1952-58: A Participant's Account*, by Hart. *Women in Cuba: The making of a revolution within the revolution. From Santiago de Cuba and the Rebel Army, to the birth of the Federation of Cuban Women* has accounts of her by Vilma Espín and Asela de los Santos. *Ches Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58* is also must reading. For the broader impact of the Cuban Revolution in the world, and especially in the US, I recommend, among many books, *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End*, *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, and *It's the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US Justice System: The Cuban Five Talk of Their Lives Within the US Working Class*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great impact as biography, history, political analysis, and poetry. By John Kotula. The other day I was telling my wife about this book, giving her a summary of what I'd learned about Hayde Santamaria. In the process of recounting her remarkable life, I got quite emotional and close to tears. This surprised me because while I was reading the book I was sometimes impatient with Margaret Randall's telling of the story. I wanted a more vivid, maybe cinematic, version of the events where I could see what was happening and not just hear about it. However, that is not what the author is up to and in the end her book has great impact as biography, history, political analysis, and poetry. One thing this book makes clear is that we in the US of A are deprived of the truth about the shining example of Cuba. Yes, the truth is available, but to access it, we have to circumvent sixty years of cold war lies, vilifications, and denigrations, all layered on because Cuba is proof that there is another way. Societies can organize themselves to take care of all their people and not just to funnel profit to the oligarchy. Randall presents the heroes and martyrs of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Celia Sánchez, Hayde herself, among many others, as driven, principled, self-sacrificing, and humane. They were not perfect, but they were deeply deserving of our admiration and study. There is every reason to believe she is correct in this assessment. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Unsung Hero of the Cuban Revolution* By Jack Colhoun. Margaret Randall introduces one of the most remarkable, but little known, heroes of the Cuban revolution to North American readers in her important new book *Haydee Santamaria: Cuban Revolutionary*. Santamaria was the only woman to take part on all aspects of the revolution in the 1950s. Haydee, as she was known in Cuba, participated in the Moncada Barracks attack in which her brother Abel and her lover Boris Luis Santo Caloma were captured, brutally tortured, and murdered by the Cuban army. She was captured, tortured, and imprisoned. As a leader of the urban resistance she smuggled arms and planned sabotage operations. She also fought alongside Fidel Castro and Che Guevara in the Sierra Maestra. After the triumph of the revolution, she founded Casa de las Américas, a path-breaking cultural institution that introduced the Cuban revolution to artists and intellectuals from around the world. This is not a biography, Randall writes. This is an impressionist portrait, written by a poet rather than a historian. Mine is a rebel and feminist lens. Randall first wrote about Santamaria in her Cuba memoir, *To Change the World: My Years in Cuba* (Rutgers University Press, 2009). The two women became friends as they collaborated on art projects when Randall lived in Cuba (1969-80). I was spellbound by Santamaria's description of her dealings with the Mafia to purchase weapons. The Mafia, which operated a colony of casinos, hotels, and nightclubs in prerevolutionary Cuba, sold arms to all sides in Cuba from Batista to Cuban rebel groups. I was forced to escape from one of those meetings with a pistol in my hand . . . , Haydee recalled years later. [W]hen I'd leave a meeting in the U.S., even if I took three or four showers I would feel dirty. I don't want to give the false impression that any of those gangsters took advantage of me; they weren't interested in a kid who barely weighed 90 pounds. But I was always afraid they might try to kidnap me in order to get money from Fidel. But she kept on transporting arms to the Sierra, and they [Cuban police] never caught me. Santamaria said the Mafia cheated the July 26th Movement, which did not get all the weapons it paid for. She asserted, The ammunition we . . . were able to smuggle out was due to the courage of Cuban women, who traveled with it sewn into their skirts. Haydee was wise beyond her years. I think it has to be difficult for people to be violent, to go to war if it's necessary, she told Randall.

What you cant lose . . . is your humanity . . . When someone had to place a bomb . . . I would always choose . . . the one who had the greatest consciousness, the greatest human qualities, so whoever it was wouldnt get used to placing bombs, wouldnt get pleasure out of placing bombs, so it would always hurt him to [have to do that.] Her humanity was underscored when she adopted children of fallen revolutionaries from Cuba and elsewhere in Latin America and raised them with her biological children. -- Jack Colhoun is author of "Gangsterismo: The United States, Cuba, and the Mafia, 1933-1966" (OR Books, 2013)

Taking part in the Cuban Revolution's first armed action in 1953, enduring the torture and killings of her brother and fianc, assuming a leadership role in the underground movement, and smuggling weapons into Cuba, Hayde Santamara was the only woman to participate in every phase of the Revolution. Virtually unknown outside of Cuba, Santamara was a trusted member of Fidel Castro's inner circle and friend of Che Guevara. Following the Revolution's victory Santamara founded and ran the cultural and arts institution Casa de las Americas, which attracted cutting-edge artists, exposed Cubans to some of the world's greatest creative minds, and protected queer, black, and feminist artists from state repression. Santamara's suicide in 1980 caused confusion and discomfort throughout Cuba; despite her commitment to the Revolution, communist orthodoxy's disapproval of suicide prevented the Cuban leadership from mourning and celebrating her in the Plaza of the Revolution. In this impressionistic portrait of her friend Hayde Santamara, Margaret Randall shows how one woman can help change the course of history.

"Hayde Santamara, Cuban Revolutionary is essential reading for all involved in the struggles for social justice, and for those devoted to literature, the arts, and imagination as a core ingredient in realizing another world. In Margaret Randall's literary hands, Hayde is a study of an ordinary, yet remarkable woman redefining herself through commitment to revolutionary change and to the people she loved. It is also a magnificent and sorrowful meditation on revolution, loss, gender, and art. A major and outstanding book."