Few political figures of the twentieth century have aroused as much passion, controversy, and curiosity as Leon Trotsky. Trotsky was that rare combination of the man of ideas and the man of action. His role in history—his epic rise and fall, his fiery persona, his violent end in Mexico in August 1940—holds a fascination that transcends the history of the Russian Revolution. Based on extensive firsthand research, this groundbreaking biography examines Trotsky's remarkable life from the perspective of his last exile in Mexico.

Bertrand M. Patenaude masterfully interweaves the story of Trotsky's final years in Mexico with flashbacks to pivotal episodes in his career as a young Marxist, revolutionary hero, Red Army chief, Bolshevik leader, outcast from Stalins USSR, and ultimately heretic of the Kremlin, targeted for assassination by its secret police. He vividly recounts the contentious Dewey Commission hearings and the passionate debates among liberals and Communists in the United States and Europe over the Moscow Trials and the charges made against Trotsky.

Drawing on Trotsky's private correspondence and diaries, as well as the testimonies of his American bodyguards and secretaries, Patenaude sheds new light on Trotsky's tumultuous friendship with painter Diego Rivera; his affair with Riveras wife, Frida Kahlo; and his torment as his family and comrades became victims of the Great Terror. Patenaude also turns to KGB files to document Stalins efforts to eliminate the man he considered his nemesis—including a failed commando raid on Trotsky's home three months before his death.

Gripping and tragic, Trotsky brilliantly illuminates the fateful and dramatic life of one of history's most captivating and important figures.
At the beginning of 1939, a man by the name of Pavel Sudoplatov was on his way to meet Stalin. The meeting between these two men sealed the fate of Trotsky, who was at that time living in Mexico. As Stalin put it then: "Trotsky should be eliminated within a year". And so, the process towards the assassination of Stalin's arch-enemy has begun.

Trotsky was among many Jews who thought that Communism would deliver them and the world of all the social evils in the world. His real name was Lev Davidovich Bronstein and was born in the Ukraine in 1879. After his rise and quarrels in the Bolshevik party, he was exiled by Koba (aka Stalin) and was dispatched to Turkey, where he was doing all he could in order to get a visa which would enable him to live in another country. From Turkey he and his wife moved to Norway, where the much-awaited visa for Mexico has finally arrived.

After some days, the couple has landed on the Mexican shores and it was there where they would spend the rest of their days, until the Spanish-born assassin Ramon Mercader had terminated the life of Trotsky.

In this biography, we get a panoramic description of Trotsky's final years in Mexico. Based on Trotsky's private correspondence and diaries as well as his archives and testimonies of his American bodyguards and many secretaries, Mt. Patenaude offers the reader a fascinating and thrilling story about Trotsky.

This is done in a series of flashbacks, in which Trotsky's various life episodes are brilliantly told and analyzed. The reader is informed about Trotsky the revolutionary, the lover, the husband and grandfather, the author and thinker, the paranoiac and the naive one. He had a brief affair with the painter Frida Kahlo, who was Diego Rivera's wife. Rivera, the mural painter, fell under the spell of Communism and both men had an admiration for each other until this came to an end for reasons the reader will find out when he/she finishes reading this book.

The author also discusses in detail the hearings of the Dewey Commission which set out to inquire the charges made against Leo Trotsky in the Moscow trials.

Another excellent aspect of this book is the way the thirties are described: the age of Stalinistic terror and the Spanish Civil War. There were many parts to Trotsky: the intellectual, the military commander, the jealous and erotic husband, the ideologue and revolutionary. Besides Trotsky, there are other minor characters accompanying the hero of this study, and they are mainly artists and left-wing intellectuals of the thirties. Many of them belonged the bohemian world of those years. Read this book and you will get a detective as well as a very serious historical tale and study of one of the most controversial and intriguing personalities that peopled this earth. All this in spite of the fact that the end of the story is well-known.
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