

The Book of Memories (Jewish Latin America Series)

Ana María Shua



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Born in Buenos Aires in 1951, Ana Maria Shua is one of the most exciting and prolific young Latin American Jewish writers. She published her first book at the age of sixteen; since then she has published thirteen books, including nonfiction, novels, short stories, and children's books.

The Book of Memories, originally published in Spanish in 1994, is a humorous yet moving exploration of a Jewish family's history, as seen through the eyes of three generations of women. The story begins with Grandfather Gedalia leaving Poland with forged papers to escape the army and sailing to Argentina, the "other America." Sometimes charming, sometimes stingy, this patriarchal figure, a peddler and sometime moneylender, heads a clan that includes, among others, the feisty and foul-mouthed Aunt Judith and Uncle Silvester, a seducer of young girls who has such high principles that he turns himself in after missing the Argentine police raid on his socialist printing press.

From the assorted perspectives of these and other characters, this tale of Jewish immigrants explores life in Argentina, the role of women, and the power and the limits of machismo and nationalism.

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