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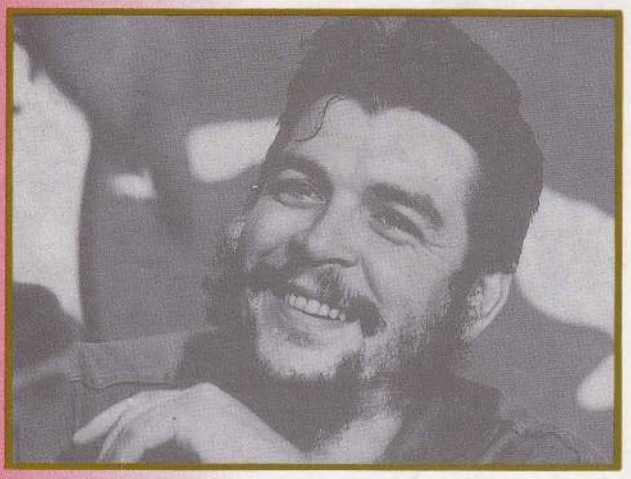

30th Death Anniversary

CHÉ TODAY

JAMES PETRAS
ALEJANDRO BENDANA
CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

97/10/03

SINHALA DISSENT : MERVYN DE SILVA
INDIA'S ENGLISH POETRY : GUY AMIRTHANAYAGAM
DEBATING SAMASAMAJISM : H.L.D. vs H.A.I.
IRISH PEACE MAKING : SEAN BYRNE

THE IDEAS MAGAZINE

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES
KANDY
PUBLICATIONS

Four books - essential reading for every Sri Lankan who wants to know why our national institutions from Parliament and Bureaucracy to Universities and the economy are in a state of dysfunction if not crisis.

- ***Sri Lanka: Problems of Governance*** **by K M de Silva (editor), G H Peiris and Radhika Coomaraswamy, 1993.** (Rs 850/=)

  The authors try to answer the question "Why has post-independence Sri Lanka not lived up to the promise of its early years of independence?" The political system and political economy of the country, civil liberties, language and religion, defence and external affairs are among the wide range of themes that are dealt with in this publication.

- ***The University System of Sri Lanka: Vision and Reality*** **edited by K M de Silva & G H Peiris, 1995.** (Rs 600/=)

  Written at the time when Peradeniya University celebrated its 50th anniversary, the monograph appraises the achievements and failures of the University System in general, and Peradeniya University in particular, and its contribution to Sri Lanka's development. Contributing authors: Professors Asoka Ekanayake, K N O Dharmadasa, S A Kulasooriya, S N Arseculeratne, B L Panditharatne, Drs. Wijaya Jayatilake, Neelan Tiruchelvam, Messrs. D L O Mendis and W M A Wijeratna Banda.

- ***Development and Change in Contemporary Sri Lanka: Geographical Perspectives*** **by G H Peiris, 1996.** (Rs 850/=)

  This is the most comprehensive analysis of post-independence socio-economic development available today. The author presents a rich variety of quantitative and qualitative data, much of it not readily accessible to the average reader, to support the discussions on a large number of major themes ranging from, Physical Resources Base, Environmental Hazards, Development of Peasant Settlements in the Dry Zone, Plantation Crop Production and Social Welfare Services to Macro-Economic Change: Problems and Prospects.

- ***Regional Powers and Small State Security: India and Sri Lanka 1977-90*** **by K M de Silva, 1996.** (Rs 850/=)

  This is a comprehensive and incisive case study of international relations in a cold-war/ post-cold war context. It provides an authoritative study of India's relations with Sri Lanka since the 1970s, and especially of the Indian intervention in Sri Lanka in the 1980s. This book is largely based on a study of unpublished documents relating to the Indian intervention. The author has also interviewed most of the principal figures involved in policy-making at the highest levels at that time in India and Sri Lanka, including Rajiv Gandhi, J R Jayewardene and J N Dixit.

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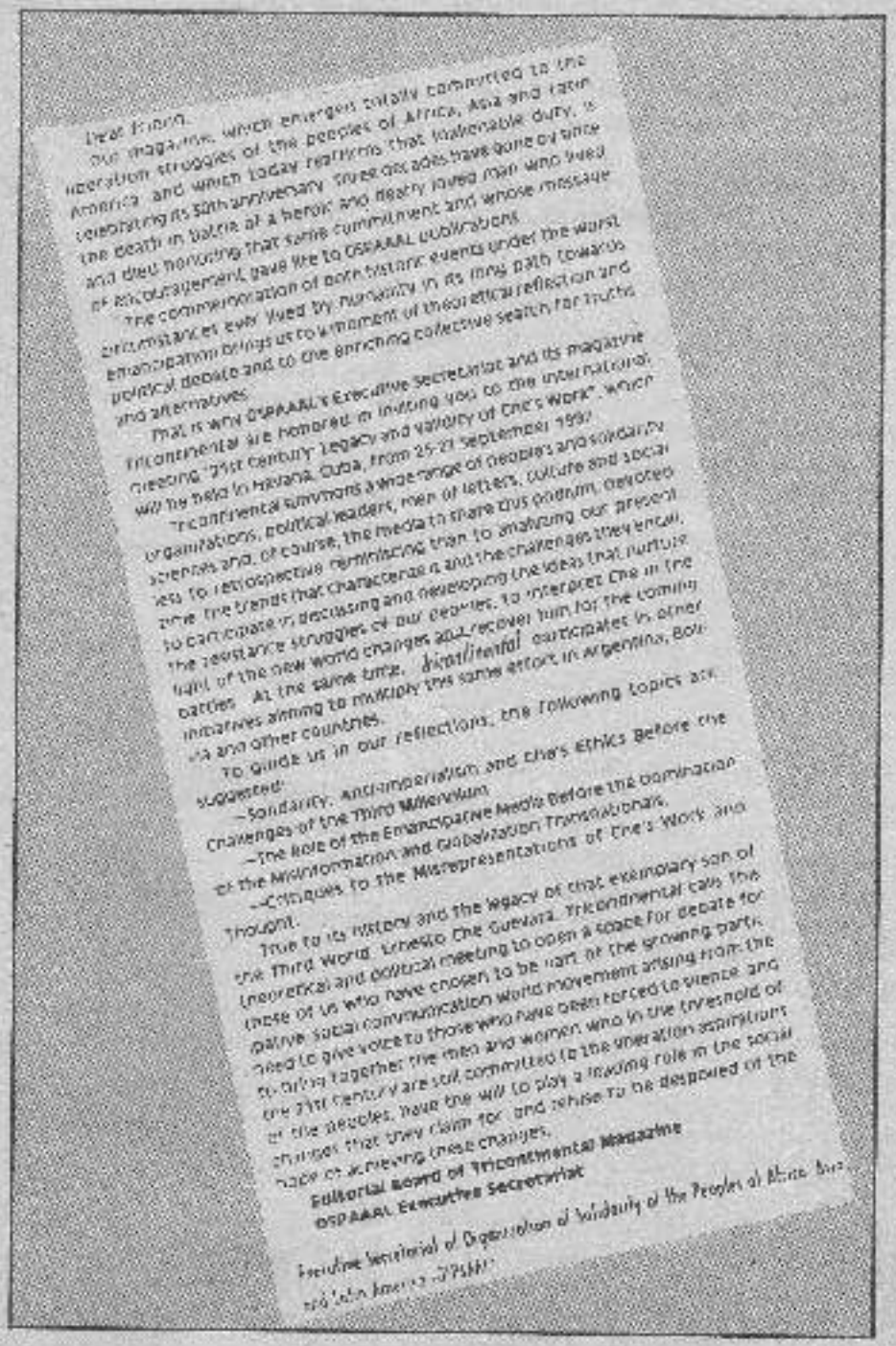
EDITOR'S NOTE

Unconditional, absolute and total solidarity with blockaded socialist Cuba, the Cuban Revolution and its leader Fidel Castro, has been a hallmark of this magazine since its inception. Long standing readers will remember not only the extensive reportage of the 1979 Havana Non-aligned Summit by our founder editor Mervyn de Silva, who received a personal invitation from the Cuban Government to attend the occasion, but also our support for Cuba's line - and critique of the anti Cuba efforts - within the Non-aligned Movement. Publication of Fidel's speeches on the significant anniversaries of the Cuban Revolution such as the 30th anniversary of the 'Granma' landing (Dec'86) has also been a characteristic feature of the Lanka Guardian.

Continuing this tradition, we dedicate this issue of our journal to the memory Ché Guevara, on the 30th anniversary of his martyrdom, which is commemorated on Oct 8th. The Lanka Guardian's extremely dire financial straits prevented us from accepting an invitation (reproduced below) to its present editor, to participate in the international theoretical seminar on Che, held in Havana in September this year. While we regard the invitation itself as a rare, precious and unforgettable honour, this issue of our journal is then our modest contribution to the memory of Ernesto Ché Guevara, one of the most attractive, exemplary and inspiring personalities of the 20th Century.



Dear friend,

Our magazine, which emerges totally committed to the liberation struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and which today reaffirms that inalienable duty, is celebrating its 30th anniversary. Three decades have gone by since the death in battle of a heroic and dearly loved man who lived and died honouring that same commitment and whose message of encouragement gave life to OSPAAAL publications.

The commemoration of both historic events under the worst circumstances ever lived by humanity in its long path towards emancipation brings us to a moment of theoretical reflection and political debate and to the enriching collective search for truths and alternatives.

That is why OSPAAAL's Executive Secretariat and its magazine Tricontinental are honored in inviting you to the international meeting "21st Century: Legacy and Validity of Che's Work", which will be held in Havana, Cuba, from 25-27 September 1997.

Tricontinental summons a wide range of people and solidarity organizations, political leaders, men of letters, culture and social sciences and, of course, the media to share this podium, devoted less to retrospective reminiscing than to analyzing our present time, the trends that characterize it and the challenges they entail, to participate in discussing and developing the ideas that nurture the resistance struggles of our peoples, to interpret the in the light of the new world changes and recover turn for the coming battles. At the same time, *Tricontinental* coordinates in other initiatives aiming to multiply the same efforts in Argentina, Bolivia and other countries.

To guide us in our reflections, the following topics are suggested:

—Solidarity, Anti-imperialism and Che's Ethics Before the Challenges of the Third Millennium.

—The Role of the Emancipative Media Before the Domination of the Misinformation and Globalization Transnationals.

—Critiques to the Misrepresentations of Che's Work and Thought.

True to its history and the legacy of that exemplary son of the Third World, Ernesto Che Guevara, Tricontinental calls the theoretical and political meeting to open a space for debate for those of us who have chosen to be part of the growing participative social communication world movement arising from the need to give voice to those who have been forced to silence and to unite together the men and women who in the threshold of the 21st century are still committed to the liberation aspirations of the peoples, have the will to play a leading role in the social changes that they claim for, and refuse to be deprived of the hope of achieving these changes.

Editorial Board of Tricontinental Magazine
OSPAAAL Executive Secretariat

Executive Secretariat of Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL)

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97/10/03

THE IDEAS MAGAZINE

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September 9th, 1997.

There are two isues arising from Mr. H. A. I. Gooentilleke's response to a series of my articles on "the debacle of the Trotskyite movement" : 1) his use of the word "contemptuous" to describe my critique of the Trotskyite movement and (2) whether Trotsky acknowledged the existence of the Lankan group.

I must admit, before I go any further, that Mr. Goonetilleke is absolutely right in pointing out that Trotsky in one letter — and in one letter only — has acknowledged the existence of the "T" (for Trotsky group) in Ceylon, as it was known then. I can only state that one of those infinitesimal chips in the cerebral motherboard must not have been active at the time of writing it for me to overlook this detail because Prof. Lerski in his book **The Origins of Trotksyism in Ceylon** (p.187) says : "It seems safe to assume that Trotsky directly adressed his Ceylonese followers only once, in answer to Mrs. (Selina) Perera's (wife of Dr. N. M. Perera) apprehensive query about the alleged possibililty of the Red Army's intervention in South Asia. The concluding sentence of the communication, which mainly added some new argument to those of his earlier "Open Letter to Indian Workers" proves that in December 1939 he at last became fully aware of the existence of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in Ceylon and that he regarded its leaders as his committed comrades. The letter was written soon after Mrs. Perera's attempt to discuss those matters in person with him, and it ends with his best wishes for her safe trip home."

The trip he refers to is the abortive one taken by Mrs. Selina Perera to meet Trotsky in Mexico. According to known sources she is the only one who came nearest to meeting Trotsky. Unfortunately, she was turned back at the Mexican border and no Sri Lankan has had the privilege of meeting Trotsky. I do not wish to quote the full letter but will focus only on a few line to reinforce Mr. Goonetillekee's point and also the main theme of my critique. The letter ends saying : "With warmest greetings to yourself and to the Ceylon comrades, and with best wishes for your trip. Yours sincerely, L. Trotsky."

However, Trotsky's main concern was not the "T" group in Ceylon but the Indian anti-British movement for independence. In his "Open letter to the Workers of India" signed on Coyacan, Mexico on July 25, 1939 which was only a few months away from the outbreak of World War II, he primarily addressed the Indian leftists. But, says, Prof. Lerski,. "it aspplied mutatis mutandis to Ceylonese Trotskyites as well, hence its significance for the better grasp of the late 1939 political orientation of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party." (P.177).

Since the letter to the Indian workers and the letter to Mrs. Selina Perera applies to the formative period of the LSSP, it is necessary to focus on the essential political message contained in Trotsky's writing directly to his committed Indian and Sri Lankan followers to test, the validity, if any, of Mr. Goonetilleke's verbal abuse. First, Trotsky states that Gandhi is the "leader and the prophet of this (Indian) bourgeoisie", followed by the sentence that Gandhi is "A false leader and a false prophet !" Then he warns the Trotskyites about coalitions with the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties. Arguing against colloboration with the bourgeois elements he says : "The German revolution, the Austrian revolution, the Chinese revolution and the Spanish revolution have all perished as a result of the politicy of coalition.(P.181)...The Fourth International offers this (Indian) party its program, its experiences, its collaboration. The basic conditions for this (Indian) party are : complete independence from the Second and Third Internationals (of Stalin) and complete independence from the national Indian bourgeoisie." (P.182) Referring to the task of the future Trotskyites in his letter to Mrs. Selina Perera he states categorically : "This support (of the Indian proletariat to overthrow the British domination) must be inspired by a firm distrust of the national bourgeoisie and their petty-bourgeoisie agencies. We must not confound our organisation, our prgoram, our banner, with theirs for a moment." (P.189).

We are all grateful to Mr. Goonetilleke's special talent of picking the minutiae of the big events and touching up one or two marginal details which, in itself, is quite a useful job. In keeping with his trait of being the monitor of minutiae gone astray Mr. Goooonetilleke has corrected a miniscule point in my critique which

does not alter, in any way, my critique, which, among other things, reiterated Trotsky's analysis that collaborating with the class enemy would only end in a debacle. Will Mr. Goonetilleke dare state that Trotsky's analysis too is "contemptuous" because he has predicted the miserable failure of the collaborationists in the very letter he quotes to correct my minute error. Mr. Goonetilleke, true to form, skips the major issue that must have got under his pro LSSP skin and resorted to name-calling.

I would have thought that, as one of the last remaining idolaters of the vanishing Trotskyite breed, his primary task was to challenge my central theme dealing with "the debacle of the Trotskyite movement." Presenting a reasonable argument to convince me and the readers of the opposite point of view would have been the appropriate response from a person like Mr. Goonetilleke. Instead of which he has resorted to throwing verbal invectives. I thought that was my speciality and not yours. Mr. Goonetilleke ! In any case, if I call Mr. Goonetilke "contemptuous" it does not make him contemptuous unless I substantiate my statement. Obviously, Mr. Goonetilke has fallen down on the job. He has not produced one scintilla of evidence to establish that my critique is "contemptuous". I can understand his frustration and anger which his heroic idols of the Left fall in; I fail to understand his use of invective in place of reasoned argument. It would have been very effective if he combined invective with reason.

Anyway, Mr. Goonetilleke must learn to take a broader look at the Trotskyite movement. In my critique, I emphasised that the Trotskyite movement ended in abject failure because, inter alia,

* it betrayed the working class and used it basically to advance their own political ends and if there were any benefits to the working class it was purely incidental. For instance, it launched waves of strikes in the post 1956 era with the political aim of gaining power by ousting S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike which led Mrs. Bandaranaike to campaign after his death accusing, somewhat justifiably, that the Left was responsible for her husband's death. *("Magey swamiya nomare meruwey Dr. N. M./Perera /vanarusikayo/.* Please note Mr. Goonetilleke I don't have the "Dinamina to quote the exact words).

* the much reviled Right wing, in particular the UNP, had introduced and implemented a welfare programme which even Lenin, Stalin, and their surrogates in Trotskyism, could not achieve with all the state power at their command. What is more, the Right-wing established this monumental social welfare programme within a democratic framework.

* the Left leaders, despite their early idealism, lacked the commitment to lead their followers — mostly urban workers neglecting the rural peasants — down a revolutionary path according to their sacred texts. On the contrary, they were prepared to compromise with the class enemy — not to advance socialism, as they professed — but to advance their personal careers. Take, for instance, the roles of Mr. Bernard Soysa, Mr. Batty Weerakoon, and Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara — all of whom are an integral of the PA government which is openly pursuing rampant capitalism in its most naked form. In supporting the PA government are these gentlemen supporting "socialism", or unmitigated and exploitative capitalism ? What would Trotsky have to say to this betrayal of his basic tenets ?

One last point. In my last article I quoted Comrade Kanalasingham, one of the most dedicated Trotskyites, whose venomous attacks on the LSSP leadership cannot be matched by anyone else. Is that "contemptuous" ? When the Trotskyites came to the parting of ways over doctrinal and personal differences those groups that did not capitulate to the capitalist line — e.g. Bala Tampoe, Edmund Samarakkody et al. — had equally damaging things to say about the failed Trotskyite leadership. Is that "contemptuous" ? As predicted by the Revolutionary groups of Bala and Edmund, those hanging on to the capitalist *sari pota* [e.g. N.M./ Colvin / Bernard / Vasudeva camp] dug their own graves and that of the Left movement with their self-serving compromises. So who is "contemptuous", Mr. Goonetilleke ? Those who betrayed the revolution and the poor workers ? Or me who merely pointed out the betrayal ?

Yours sincerely,

H.L.D. Mahindapala

LINES OF DESCENT...AND DISSENT

Mervyn de Silva

History repeats itself wrote Marx first as tragedy then as farce. Not in Sri Lanka, say the sceptics, who hold that History simply repeats itself .... FULL STOP. The attempts by successive regimes, all popularly elected, to resolve the so-called "ethnic conflict" have not saved the people of Sri Lanka from the ravages of racial strife and separatist revolt... this despite the "Sri" which implies of course that the island is specially blessed, a claim founded on the fact that Buddhism, the doctrine of the "Enlightened one" fled from Hindu India to find a home in Lanka.

REPORT CARRIED ON ELEPHANT was the headline. The MIDWEEK MIRROR informed its readers that the interim report of the SINHALA COMMISSION was taken to the headquarters of the ALL CEYLON BUDDHIST CONGRESS in a perahera of 5,000 monks and handed over to the three Mahanayakes by Mr. S.W.Walpita, the former Supreme Court judge, who chaired the Commission.

A flashback, if I may.

"If **the Executive Committee of the SLFP 'bowed to the language storm' its leader S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike must have felt that with his formula of Sinhalese as official language and the 'reasonable use of Tamil' he could ride the whirlwind and control the storm. He was not a racialist".**

The writer, E.F.C.Ludowyk, Professor Emeritus of the University of Ceylon, moved quite quickly to the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact and how a group of monks forced the Prime Minister to abrogate any arrangements he had made with the Federal Party. A state of emergency which the government was compelled to introduce after the B-C. Pact lasted ten months. "Sri" Lanka has now learnt to live under what soon became a state of Emergency. The communal disturbances were larger in scale and fiercer than any since the Kandyan rebellion. This writer cannot comment on that parallel but the 1958 "explosion" was one of the most frightening outbursts of violence he has ever seen as a journalist, and that means four decades!

A pure coincidence of course ... But the news that the report was carried by an elephant (the UNP symbol !) may lead to some speculation.

The Sinhala-Buddhist linkage cannot be ignored. **"The unofficial commission probed the injustices caused to the Sinhala people over the last few centuries and significantly the report is being handed over on the birth anniversary of Anagarika Dharmapala,** the fiery Sinhala-Buddhist crusader. A caparisoned elephant followed by 5,000 monks were part of an impressive procession which started at the Young Men's Buddhist Association office in Borella. Its destination was the A.C.B.C. headquarters where the three Mahanayakes accepted the document which focused attention on the injustices that the Buddhists had to bear in the past few centuries, particularly under three colonial (Christian) powers – Portuguese, Dutch and British". 'Sinhala-Buddhist" was the collective identity of the oppressed.

S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike, who raised the "Sinhala Only" cry was no communalist. As crucial as race and religion, were the family and the dynastic factor. When S.W.R.D., leader of the house and the prime minister's deputy - suspected that the "father of the nation" D.S. Senanayake was grooming his son Dudley, a politician much younger than S.R.W.D., the latter quit the party to launch his Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). And so the dynastic factor in South Asian politics, the great families that have dominated national politics, even the most democratic - Senanayakes, Bandaranaikes, joining the Nehru-Gandhis, the Bhuttos etc.

If S.W.R.D. had known that he would succeed D.S.Senanayake there would have been no need for a new party, and for S.W.R.D. to raise an explosive issue, language, which was so blatantly divisive. It was typically S.W.R.D, the westernised liberal, however, to try to redraw the balance and respond to Tamil protest, with slogans and comforting promises. But the Federal party had already announced after a meeting convened by F.P. leader, Mr. Chelvanayakam that the party's objective would be "an autonomous Tamil linguistic state within a Federal Union". A follow-up conference, much larger, insisted on a "new federal constitution for Ceylon" ..... "with the widest autonomous and residuary powers consistent with the unity and external security of Ceylon".

Mr. Prabhakaran has gone many (qualitative) steps further. But Prof. Pieris and the PA loyalists —— there are many dissidents at high level but they prefer to keep their jobs — believe that a "union of regions" and never federal "devolution" would meet the challenge. By winning over the Tamil moderates (i.e. anti-LTTE) the PA strategies believe that President Kumaratunga could (i) order the army to launch a fight-to-the-finish offensive (ii) satisfy the IMF-World Bank that the defence vote can be slashed once the LTTE is beaten or military contained and (iii) isolate the conventional enemy, the UNP.

Despite diplomatic pressure, Opposition Leader Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe has refused to play the role assigned by the PA producers, and the IMF-IBRD-Donor group promoters. Mr. Liam Fox was smart enough to realise that any serious offer to the Tamils must have bipartisan support, that is also one of the important lessons that history teaches the "mediator" or "facilitator" (the terminology of the conflict-resolution pundits) who have studied the history of this conflict. Any open-ended commitment by the Opposition Leader would have left him in the cold if the exercise failed. And "Batalanda" quite plainly did not impress or deter UNP leaders!

And so, what's the question?

How about this ...?

"How many divisions have the Mahanayakes got?"

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHÉ GUEVARA

Christopher Hitchens

CHRIS HITCHENS writes the "Fin de Siècle" column for *Vanity Fair* and "Minority Report" for *The Nation*. He is the author of *For the Sake of Argument*. An updated version of *Hostage to History*, his book on the partition of Cyprus, will be published later this year. This article is a slightly abridged version of a review essay on Ché that appeared in The New York Review of Books. We have departed from our standard practise of exclusivity in carrying it, owing to the importance of the subject and the relative inaccessibility of the source to the Lankan reader.

Ché Guevara: A Revolutionary Life
by Jon Lee Anderson.
Grove Press, 811 pp., $35.00

The Motorcycle Diaries:
A Journey Around South America
by Ernesto Ché Guevara.
translated by Ann Wright.
Verso. 156 pp., $11.00 (paper)

* * * * *

When, shortly after the triumph of the Cuban revolution, Ernesto Guevara took over the direction of the Cuban National Bank, it became his duty to sign the newly printed ten-and twenty-peso notes. This he did with a contemptuous flourish, scrawling the bold nom de guerre "Ché" on both denominations. By that gesture, which made those bills a collectors' item in some quarters of the left, he expressed an ambition to move beyond the money economy and what used to be termed "the cash nexus". It was a stroke, at once Utopian and Puritanical, that seemed to sum up his gift both for the improvised and the determined.

* * * * *

Leaving Cuba and landing in Cancún, Mexico, I carry *The Miami Herald* and *The New York Times*. On the front page of the *Herald* is the news that Hector Silva, candidate of the Farabundo Martí Liberation Front, has been elected mayor San Salvador. The paper mentions that many of Silva's enthusiasts "still sport" lapel buttons bearing the likeness of Guevara. When I interviewed him in 1987, the brave and eloquent Señor Silva was a much better candidate for assassination than election.

The front page of *The New York Times* reports from Zaire, and carries the claim of Laurent Désir Kabila that his rebel forces will be in the capital city by June. The paper's correspondent, citing the inevitable "Western diplomatic sources", quotes them as saying that they will be surprised if it takes as long as that. One of Guevara's first acts, after the overthrow of Batista, was to extend hospitality and training to the embryonic forces of the Sandinista and Farabundo Martí fronts. And one of his last acts, before embarking for Bolivia, was to spend some time on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, attempting to put a little fibre and fervour into the demoralised anti-Mobutu guerrillas. (At this time, he formed a rather low opinion of M.Kabila, whose base and whose tactics were too tribal, who demonstrated a tendency toward megalomania, and who maltreated deserters and prisoners). Still, Mobutu had been the jewel in the CIA's African crown. So perhaps not all the historical ironies turn out to be at Guevara's expense.

The superficial account of Ché's significance is narrated chiefly symbols and icons. Some of these constitute a bootique version: Antonio Banderas plays a sort of generic Ché in the movie rendition of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Evita*. As photographed by Alberto Korda with an expression of unbearable defiance, Ché became the poster boy of the vaguely "revolutionary" generation of the 1960s. (And of that generation's nemesis: the Orwell conglomerate once used a Ché poster in a recruiting advertisement with the caption "We would have hired him.") The Cuban government recently took legal steps to stop a popular European beer being named after its most popular martyr.

Much of the attraction of the cult has to do with the grace of an early and romantic death. George Orwell once observed that if Napoleon Bonaparte had been cut down by a musket ball as he entered Moscow, he would have been remembered as the greatest general since Alexander. And not only did Guevara die before his ideals did, he died in such a manner as to inspire something akin to superstition. He rode among the poor of the altiplano on a donkey. He repeatedly foresaw and predicted the circumstances of his own death. He was spurned and betrayed by those he did most to set free. He was by calling a healer of the sick. The photographs of his corpse, bearded and half naked and lacerated, make an irresistible comparison with paintings of the deposition from Calvary. There is a mystery about his last resting place. Alleged relics are in circulation. There have even been sightings.....

The CIA and its Bolivian military allies chopped off Guevara's hands in order to make a positive fingerprint comparison with records in Argentina: the preserved hands were later returned to Cuba by a defector from La Paz. We may be grateful that the Castro regime did not choose to set up an exhibit of mummification on the model of Lenin's tomb. Though I did discover, during my researches in Havana, that the pictures of Guevara's dead body have never been shown in Cuba. "The Cuban people", I was solemnly told at the national film archive, "are used to seeing Ché Guevara alive". And so they do, night after night on the screens - cutting cane as a "volunteer", greeting parties of schoolchildren, smiling at the United Nations or the Alliance for Progress, posing in a clearing in the Sierra Maestra or the Bolivian uplands.

One of the special dramas of the Latin American region is that of the *desaparecido*, or "disappeared person". From Buenos Aires

to Guatemala City, there are still committees of black draped *madres* who demand to know the whereabouts of their sons and daughters. And there are also "Truth Commissions: which have come up with the most harrowing evidence of what did happen. Ché Guevara is the most famous "disappeared person" in the hemisphere. When Jon Lee Anderson, the author of this intelligent and intriguing biography, published his findings last year on the probable burial site of Guevara's remains, he had the incidental effect of igniting a movement of relatives of the *desaparecidos* in Bolivia itself.

Another way of describing, and incidentally of de-trivialising, the legacy of Guevara is to place him as a founding figure of "magical realism". In his *Motorcycle Diaries*, an account of a continental road trip he took as a young medical student in the early 2950s, we read in Guevara's own youthful prose about his fact-finding tour of the leper colonies of Latin America. He celebrated his twenty-fourth birthday at one such colony in the Peruvian Amazon. The patients threw him a party at the conclusion of which, flown with locally distilled *pisco*, he made a speech and said:

> The division of America into unstable and illusory nations is a complete fiction. We are one single mestizo race with remarkable ethnographic similarities, from Mexico down to the Magellan Straits. And so, in an attempt to break free from all narrow-minded provincialism, I propose a toast to Peru and to a United America.

As he later described the same occasion in a letter home to his mother:

> Alberto, who sees himself as Peron's natural heir, delivered such an impressive demagogic speech that our well-wishers were consumed with laughter .... An accordion player with no fingers on his right hand used little sticks tied to his wrist, the singer was blind and almost all the others were hideously deformed, due to the nervous form of the disease which is very common in this area. With the light from lamp and lanterns reflected in the river, it was like a scene from a horror film. The place is very lovely....

The boy "Ché" drunkenly spouting pan-Americanism to an audience of isolated lepers in a remote jungle - here is a scene that Werner Herzog might hesitate to script, or Gabriel García Márquez to devise. (Márquez once said in the hearing of a friend of mine that in order to write about Guevara he would need a thousand years or a million pages. His non-fiction book *Operation Carlotta*, a straightforwardly not to say panegyrically Fidelist account of the Cuban expedition to Angola, does deal briefly with Guevara's earlier foray into the Congo). But writers as diverse as Julio Cortázar and Nicolás Guillén[1] have taken Guevara as an inspiration, and indeed one of his more lasting memorials may be in the regional literary imagination.

CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD

If we take this as Anderson does as a chronicle of a death foretold then it may be related as an intelligible series of chapters and parables. First we have the rebel: the James Dean and Jack Kerouac type. The young "Ché" - the nickname is distinctively Argentine and translates roughly as *copain*, or pal - came from an Irish-Spanish family of impoverished aristocrats with the patronymic of Lynch. He was always a charmer and a wit, and always a troublemaker and heartbreaker. His period of youthful sexual repression seems to have been short: an appealing candor about the physical and libidinous runs through all his writings as it does with very few professionals revolutionaries. His family was anti-Nazi and anti-Peronist during a time when this could be perilous in Argentina.

Ernesto took an active if rather theatrical part in local youth and student activism, helping out refugees from Republican Spain and cheeking pro-Nazi teachers and professors. The boy is not yet the father to the man except in two respects: he does not dislike Peron as much as his family does, because Peron is at least a nationalist and a foe of the *Yanqui*. And he is gravely debilitated by asthma, an affliction which he refuses to allow to incapacitate him. The story of his body-building, sporting enthusiasm, and outdoor effort, all aimed at putting strength into a feeble frame, reminds one of nothing so much as (of all people) Theodore Roosevelt. From this derives an emphasis on "the will" which is essential to the story.

Parable two concerns his resolve to become a physician. Not only did this expose him to encounters with veteran socialist doctors, but it also gave him a first-hand experience of the misery of the region. The *Motorcycle diaries* which reinforce the Dean-Kerouac scapegrace image at one level, also contain some very moving and detailed accounts of this part of his education. A monograph could easily be written on the "radicalising" effect of medical training on young idealists of the middle class. Guevara was much influenced, on his rattling around the southern cone, by an encounter with the Peruvian leprologist and Marxist Dr. Hugo Pesce. This man, the author of a book on Andean underdevelopment entitled *Latitides del Silencio*, was the recipient ten years later of an inscribed copy of Guevara's first book, *Guerrilla Warfare*. Clearly its author was interested in more than socialised medicine. (Another attentive reader of that first edition was President John F. Kennedy, who had it rapidly translated for him by the CIA and who then ordered the setting-up of the "Special forces" - materialising Regis Debray's thesis that "the Revolution revolutionises the counter-Revolution".)

Parable three brings us to the consummate internationalist. Of mixed nationality to begin with, Guevara married a Peruvian woman and took out Mexican citizenship for his children. He was awarded, and later renounced, Cuban nationality. He died in a country named for Simon Bolívar, and near a town named for one of Bolívar's lieutenants. His favourite self-image was that of Don Quixote, the rootless wandereR and freelance righter of wrongs. "Once again", as he wrote on quitting Cuba, "I feel Rosinante's ribs creaking between my heals". (It was Alisdair Macintyre who first compared this observation to one made by Karl Marx, who drily noted that "knight errantry is not compatible with all forms of society".) Indeed, Guevara came late to Marxism. For him, the great personal and political crux occurred as a result of his stay in Guatemala in 1954, where he was a direct witness to the ruthless and cynical destabilisation of the Arbenz government by the CIA.

STALIN

This story has been well told before, notably by Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer in their book *Bitter Fruit*. Our knowledge of the coup, of the complicity of the United States, and of the hellish consequences for all Guatemalans but especially for the descendants of the Mayan *indigenes*, has recently been sharply enhanced by disclosures from the archive of the Central Intelligence Agency, and by the excavation of an archipelago on unofficial mass graves across the Guatemalan countryside[2]. In the Kinzer-Schlesinger narrative, Guevara rated only a glancing mention. Jon Lee Anderson has reconstructed his part in the events

with punctilious detail.

Guevara arrived in Guatemala in December 1953, at the end of his long period of bumming around the continent. He decided to stay, and resolved to become more serious about himself, because he could scent both revolution and counterrevolution in the air. Nor were his instincts at fault. The election of the reformist Jacobo Arbenz had sent in motion the two things that the reformists most feared - namely the rising expectations of the revolutionaries and the poor, and the direct forebodings on the part of the United States. (The tense atmosphere of the place and the moment is well caught in Gore Vidal's novel *Dark Green, Bright Red*). Guevara decided to offer his credentials as a physician to the new regime, and hoped to be employed as a "barefoot doctor" among the peasants. Discouraged by the bureaucratic response to this proposal, he mingles at first rather ineffectually with the milieu of stateless rebels and revolutionaries who had converged on Guatemala City: the losers in the battles with Somoza and Trujillo and Batista. As he was arriving, Guevara had written home to say that:

> *Along the way I had the opportunity to pass through the dominions of the United Fruit, convincing me once again of just how terrible these capitalist octopuses are. I have sworn before a picture of the old and mourned comrade Stalin that I won't rest until I see these capitalist octopuses annihilated. In Guatemala I will perfect myself ...*

Fidel Castro's failed but already legendary attack on the Moncada barracks in Cuba had taken place the preceding July, and Guevara fell in (initially as a doctor for one of their number) with some of his exiled comrades. The talk was all of a coming confrontation with the colossus to the north, and its local octopus clientele. And indeed, the script for the events reads like a primer in elementary Leninism. The Dulles brothers and their corporate friends did embark on an armed destabilisation of the elected Arbenz government. They did engage the support of neighbouring oligarchs such as General Anastasio Somoza. They did find and pay a military puppet named Castillo Armas. And they did invade Guatemala with a mercenary force. Guevara and his "internationalist" friends watched all this with a mixture of shame and incredulity, convinced that their predictions about the uselessness of gradualism were being confirmed, so to speak, before their very eyes. But they were impotent.

Chased into the sanctuary of the Argentine embassy by the coup he had long foreseen and tried vainly to resist, Guevara spent some very concentrated time with desperate militants who would, in the succeeding decades, become guerrilla commanders in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala itself. Together, they reviewed the lessons of the defeat. Chief among these, they felt, was Arbenz's failure to distribute arms to the people. Next came his refusal to take action against the CIA's clever manipulation of the local press. It was a crucible moment: a young man receiving an indelible impression as a formative age. ***Up until then, Guevara had even by his own account been playing at revolution. Henceforth, he would not joke about Stalin. Rather, he would school himself in the intransigence of the "Socialist camp", and begin to study the canonical work of its lately deceased but not yet disowned General Secretary.***

In the succeeding parable, Guevara decides that he has found a mission in life. Guatemala must be avenged. Imperialism must pay for its arrogance and cruelty. To a friend he writes an agonised letter, saying that the Arbenz government was defeated and betrayed just like the Spanish Republic, but without the same courage and honour in its extremity. Indignantly, he repudiates the stories about atrocities committed by pro-Arbenz forces, adding ominously: "There *should* have been a few firing squads early on, which is different. If those shootings had taken place the government would have retained possibility of fighting back".

FIDEL

Chased from Guatemala to Mexico, when he encounters the young Fidel Castro he needs no persuading that this meeting was meant to happen. Before long, he is pursuing a more intensive study of Communist literature and a rigorous training as a guerrilla fighter[1]. (Iconographic note: When the rebel bearing vessel *Granma* reaches an Cuban shores and runs straight into an ambush, all later accounts stress that this left the nucleus of revolutionary disciples at the numinous number twelve).

Trotsky once remarked that what distinguished the revolutionary was not his willingness to kill but his readiness to die. The anti-Batista war conducted by Castro, Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos, and Frank Pais was, by most standards, a near-exemplar case of winning "hearts and minds" and recruiting popular enthusiasm. Some informers and deserters and backsliders were executed out of hand, but Guevara seems at first to have shown no relish for such work. Indeed, he sheltered one of his deputies in Camaguey province, a bizarre American freebooter named Herman Marks, because of his manic eagerness to take part in reprisal killings or on-the-spot battlefield punishments. Yet Anderson has unearthed a suggestive detail. Once in power in Havana, and immediately charged by Castro with purging and punishing Batista's police apparatus, Guevara set up an improvised drumhead tribunal at the harbour fortress of La Cabana, where he sent for Marks again and re-employed him as an executioner.

Some justified this kind of "people's court" as utilitarian. Herbert Matthews of *The New York Times* had a go at defending them "from the Cuban's perspective". (The paper wouldn't print his effort). But other foreign correspondents were appalled by the lynch trials, ordered by Fide Castro himself, that were held in the Havana sports stadium. Raul Castro went even further in the city of Santiago, machine-gunning seventy Batistanos into a ditch dug by a bulldozer. When challenged by friends and family, Guevara resorted to three defences. First, he claimed that everybody in La Cabana had had a hearing. The speed at which the firing squads operated made his argument seem exiguous. Second, as reported by Anderson, "he never tired of telling his Cuban comrades that in Guatemala, Arbenz had fallen because he had not purged his armed forces of disloyal elements, a mistake that permitted the CIA to penetrate and overthrow his regime". Third, and dropping all pretence, he told a protesting former medical colleague: "Look, in this thing either you kill first, or else you get killed".

LUXEMBURG

Methods and rationalisations of this kind have a way of establishing themselves, not as "emergency measures" but as administrative means of dealing with all opposition. That was the point made by Rosa Luxemburg in her original criticism of Leninism. The Luxemburg example was brought up in a fascinating interview given by Guevara to the American socialist academic Maurice Zeitlin on September 14, 1961. In this discussion, the new minister came out firmly for "democratic centralism", praised the Soviet example, and flatly opposed the right of factions or

dissidents to make their views knows even within the Communist Party itself. Asked by Zeitlin about Luxemburg's warning on this score, Guevara replied coolly that Luxemburg had died "as a consequence of her political mistakes" and that "democratic centralism is a method of government, not only a method of conquering power". It was clear, in other words, that his authoritarian stance was taken on principle and not in response to "tactical" considerations. Huber Matos and other allegedly "bourgeois" supporters of the original revolution who were imprisoned had already found this out, as had the Trotskyists who dared to criticise Fidelism from the "left"[1].

The final parable is the one in which Guevara recognises that, in a sense, his kingdom can never be of this world. Those who sympathised with the Cuban revolution at the time very often did so because they explicitly hoped for a non Soviet model. In the figure of "Ché", some of them, at least, thought they had found their exemplar. And they were, in one unintended sense, not mistaken. ***Guevara was privately critical of the Soviet bloc, already well into its post-Stalinist phase, on the grounds that it was too soft. It wanted "peaceful coexistence" with the American imperium abroad, and a system of capitalist emulation at home.*** There is a good deal of evidence that he privately sympathised with the emerging position of the Maoists - especially for the "countryside versus city" these of Lin Piao, where the immiserated peasants of the world were supposed to surround the debauched metropoles and overwhelm them by sheer force of numbers.

It is certain that he was enraged by Khrushchev's compromise with Kennedy over the missiles, and by the generally lukewarm attitude of the Warsaw Pact toward revolution in the Third World. In February 1965, while addressing an "Afro-Asian Solidarity" meeting in Algiers, he went so far as to describe the Kremlin as "an accomplice of imperialism" for its cold-cash dealings with impoverished and insurgent states. This, and the general chaos arising from his stewardship of the Ministry for Industry, made him an easy target for inner-party attacks by the unsmiling elements among the Cuban Communist Party: people for whom the very words "romanticism" and "adventurism" were symptoms of deviation. His dismissal from the ministry followed immediately on his return from Algiers, and he soon afterward set off for Africa with no very clear mandate or position.

CONVICTION AND PRACTICE

The word "romantic" does not make a very good fit with his actual policies as industry minister. The French economist René Dumont, one of the many well-being Marxists who advised Cuba during this period, recalls making along study of the "agricultural co-operatives". He told Guevara that the workers in these schemes did not feel themselves to be the proprietors of anything. He pressed him to consider a system of rewards for those who performed extra tasks in the off-season. As Dumont records, Guevara's reaction was tersely dismissive. He demanded instead:

> A sort of ideal vision of Socialist Man, who would become a stranger to the mercantile side of things, working for society and not for profit. He was very critical of the industrial success of the Soviet Union [1] where, he said, everybody works and strives and tries to go beyond his quota, but only to earn more money. He did not think the Soviet Man was really a new sort of man, for he did not find him any different, really, than a Yankee. He refused to consciously participate in the creation in Cuba "of a second American society".

It's worth noting at this point that Guevara made almost no study of American society, scarcely visited the country except as a speaker at the United Nations, and evinced little curiosity about it in general. ***When asked once, again by Maurice Zeitlin, what he would like the United States to do, he replied, "Disappear".***

In view of the resemblance of Guevara's Spartan program to other celebrated fiascos and tragedies like the Great Leap Forward, it deserves to be said that he was unsparing of himself. He worked unceasingly, was completely indifferent to possessions, and performed heavy lifting and manual labour even when the cameras were not turning. In the same way, he wanted to share in the suffering and struggle of those, in Africa and elsewhere, who were receiving the blunt end of the cold war. ***The murder of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, for example, seems to have affected him in very much the same personal way as did the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz. He was, perhaps, one of those rare people for whom there is no real gap between conviction and practice.***

And he did have a saving element of humour. I possess a tape of his appearance on an early episode of "Meet the Press" in December 1964, where he confronts a solemn panel of network pundits. ***When they address him about the "conditions" that Cuba must meet in order to be permitted the sunshine of American approval, he smiles as he propose that there need be no pre-conditions: "After all, we do not demand that you abolish racial discrimination..."*** A person as professionally skeptical as I.F. Stone so far forgot himself as to write: "He was the first man I ever met who I thought not just handsome but beautiful. With his curly reddish beard, he looks like a cross between a faun and a Sunday-school print of Jesus ... He spoke with that utter sobriety which sometimes masks immense apocalyptic visions".

Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they probably begin by calling "charismatic". The last few years of Guevara's life were a study in diminishing returns. He drove himself harder and harder, relying more and more on exhortation and example, in order to accomplish less and less.

On the front of the "world revolution", which is more fully treated by Anderson, Guevara's tricontinental activity (Asia, Africa, Latin America) was sometimes ahead of its time and sometimes behind, but never quite on target. For example, he lent his support to a catastrophic guerrilla operation in the wilds of his native Argentina - catastrophic in the sense that it was an abysmal failure and led to the deaths of most of its members as well as of a few civilians, but catastrophic, too, in that it began the quasi-bandit phase of radical politics in Argentina. Like Trotsky in exile, his guesswork sometimes allowed him to make important predictions, or even to compose moving post-mortems. But he could do no more than dream of a new "international".

He was among the first to appreciate the central importance of the war in Vietnam: a place where the hated American empire had made itself morally militarily vulnerable. But his most celebrated speech on the subject, which called for replicating the Vietnamese experience across the globe, sounded bombastic at the time and reads even more so today. His voyage to Africa, to combat Mobutu and his white mercenaries in the Congo and to open a second front against apartheid and colonialism, was conducted on a moral and material shoestring. He was humbled on

the battlefield as well as sabotaged by the anti-Ben Bella coup in Algeria and an outbreak of second thoughts by the Tanzanians. As Guevara scuttled his last positions on Lake Tanganyika in 1965, he did not try to delude himself:

> A desolate, sobering and inglorious spectacle took place. I had to reject men who pleaded to be taken along. There was not a trace of grandeur in this retreat, nor a gesture of rebellion... just some sobbing as if ill, the leader of the escapees, told the man with the mooring rope to let go.

Guevara's health - another subject on which he did not delude himself - had deteriorated further in Africa, and his fortieth birthday was looming up. It was evident to him that he had only one more chance to deal a decisive stroke at the detested imperial power. He had had Bolivia in mind for a long time, because its *shadow* abutted several other countries and a guerrilla *foco*, properly inserted there, might act as a lever on an entire region. The extreme altitude, desolation, and underdevelopment of the area do not seem to have struck him as a disadvantage until far too late, although it was at this time that he began to recur to the subject of his own death, which he always prefigured as a defiant one in the face of hopeless odds.

COMMUNIST PARTIES

Anderson's reconstruction of the Bolivian campaign is exhaustive and convincing. It is clear then the Bolivian Communists regarded Guevara's adventures as an unpardonable intrusion into their "internal affairs", and that they had the sympathy of Moscow in so doing. The persistent rumour that Castro, too, was glad to be rid of a turbulent comrade is rated by Anderson as less well founded. A successful revolution or even upheaval in Latin America would have strengthened his hand and perhaps helped end his isolation and dependence. Havana kept in touch with the doomed expedition for as long as it could.

But of course it also had, in the case of a defeat, the option of declaring an imperishable martyrdom. Since 1968, the "Year of the Heroic Guerrilla", Cuban children have been instructed in almost Baden-Powell tones that if they seek a "role model", they should comport themselves *como el Ché*. This strenuous injunction only emphasises the realisation that Guevara's Cromwellian, ascetic demands on people bordered on the impossible: even the churban. The grandson who is said most to resemble him - a young man named Canek - has quit the island in order to pursue the vocation of a heavy-metal guitarist in Mexico.

Having been captured in the first days of October 1967, Guevara was killed in cold blood. The self-serving account of his last hours given by Felix Rodriguez, the Cuban-American CIA agent on the scene, at least makes this clear[5]. Rodriguez wastes a lot of time explaining that he was full of doubt and remorse, and that he had no authority to overrule the Bolivian military, but succeeds only in drawing a distinction without a difference. The Bolivian Special Forces would have done what they were told and it seems that, Rodriguez notwithstanding, they knew what was wanted of them. As always in these cases, a "volunteer" executioner was eager and on hand. Ché's surviving disciples managed to escape in a wretched state across the Chilean border, where they were met by a then obscure physician named Salvador Allende and given by him a safe conduct to Easter Island and home.

Guevara's exemplary final days, which Rodriguez describes as suffused with "grace and courage", demonstrated yet again and conclusively that he was no hypocrite. The news of his murder somehow helped to inaugurate the "hot" period of the 1960's, in which, however much the image of "Ché" was to the fore, it was the hedonist Utopians rather than the rigorous revolutionary puritans who made the running. Thus, in a slightly bizarre manner, the same Ché was able to achieve the impossible, or at least the incompatible, by simultaneously summoning an age of chivalry and an age of revolution. That posthumous accomplishment was necessarily brief.

Our own age of sophists and calculators has thrown up some of the surviving actors in secondary roles. Felix Rodriguez, for example, having gone on to serve the CIA in Vietnam and El Salvador, surfaced again as George Bush's embarrassing underling in the Iran contra scandal. He was stunned, while being questioned on other matters by Senator John Kerry's committee of investigation into illegal drugs and guns, to be asked from the chair why he had not tried to save Ché Guevara's life.

As Jon Lee Anderson's work serves to remind us, when Ché Guevara first spurred Rosinante into the field the world was a radically different place. Most of South and Central America was in the safekeeping of military caudillos. The Portuguese empire was secure in Africa. Vietnam was still just a French colony. The Shah of Iran had been crammed back on his throne. Nelson Mandela was a secret clandestine human-rights lawyer. Algeria was French and the Congo was Belgian. The Suez Canal zone was British. In the processes that overturned this situation, Guevara was a nebulous and elusive but nonetheless real presence. The very element that gave him his certainty and courage - his revolutionary communism - was also the element that condemned him to historical eclipse. In setting down the whole story in such a respectful but objective manner, Jon Lee Anderson has succeeded in writing, for himself and I suspect for many others, a decorous goodbye to all that.

Footnotes

[1]. The imagery of these texts tends to be nationalist-heroic rather than socialist or revolutionary. Though a highly orthodox Communist himself, and a contemporary of Neruda, Nicolás Guillén composed an ode in 1959 comparing Guevara to Martí and San Martín. Julio Cortázar wrote a death-paean for Ché, offering his own hands and pen as a replacement for the hands chopped off by the killers.

[2]. See, especially, Peter Kornbluh, *The New York Times*, Op-Ed page, May 31, 1997, on the CIA's publishers plans to assassinate the Guatemalan then leadership, and Larry Rohter, "Guatemala Digs Up Army's Secret Cemeteries", *The New York Times*, June 7, 1997.

[3]. According to Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali in *"One Hell of a Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (Norton, 1997), which is based on recently released Soviet archives, Guevara went to the length of becoming a formal member of the Cuban Communist Party as early as 1957.

[4]. The entire interview, which is replete with the most lugubrious orthodoxy, can be found as an appendix to Robert Scheer and Maurice Zeitlin, *Cuba: An American Tragedy* (Penguin, 1964).

[5]. *Shadow Warrior: The CIA's Hero of a Hundred Unknown Battles*, by Felix Rodriguez with John Weisman (Simon and Schuster, 1989).

CHÉ GUEVARA AND CONTEMPORARY REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

James Petras

(Prof. Petras, the doyen of radical scholars on Latin America writing in English, is one of the world's best known political sociologists. While at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, he sent us this important essay exclusively, in response to our invitation. Prof. Petras is with the Dept of Sociology, State University of New York at Binghamton.)

To discus the relevance of Ché Guevara thought and practice today it is important to distinguish his revolutionary politics from its particular tactical application in the form of 'armed struggle' or even more specifically in rural guerrilla warfare.

This distinction is important because in the first instance Ché was a revolutionary actor and theorist even when he was not engaged in armed combat. Secondly, this distinction is useful in order to analyse the different levels of Ché's thought and practice. We can note several dimensions. First his general analysis of the class structure, role of imperialism, political alliances, historical experiences, correlation of forces on the international, regional and national level. Secondly, Ché's revolutionary thought and practice combined a critical analysis of imperialism and capitalism with active involvement and reflections on the construction of socialism. Thirdly, Ché's revolutionary thought and practice conceived of socialism as part of a new world order in which the imperialist countries mobilised on a world scale to destroy each revolution which, in turn, obligated revolutionaries to seek to support and extend the revolution internationally.

Between Che's general analysis of capitalism, imperialism and socialism and the specific tactical position on guerrilla warfare were Che's views of ethics and political practice, the relation of revolutionary organisations to oppressed people, the relation between political agency and objective conditions, the inter-relation between revolution and imperialism, and the relation between personal values and revolutionary action.

I would argue that Che's relevance to contemporary revolutionary politics is found in his general analysis of politics, and his middle range reflections on political action and economic structure rather than his tactical ideas applied to specific conjunctural circumstances. To conflate these three levels of Che's revolutionary practice or to reduce his thoughts to his tactical discussion of guerrilla or armed struggle is to totally misconstrue and demean his significance today.

From Che's general analysis and middle level reflections one can derive a variety of social and political strategies and tactics and a variety of organisational forms of action that may or may not include "armed struggle" and guerrilla warfare. Since the latter are tactical issues derived from specific contextual determinations and conjunctural circumstances, they are historically limited in their utility and relevance. Therefore, the most fruitful line of discussion is to focus on Che's revolutionary understanding of capitalism and particularly of imperialism and his middle range reflections on the relation of subjectivity and objective conditions.

THE DIALECTICS OF IMPERIALISM AND REVOLUTION: CHÉ AGAINST THE GLOBALIZERS

For Ché the expansion of capitalism on a world scale and its deepening penetration of markets, production, distribution, banking and services was essentially a political and social phenomena. The economic movements of capitalism were premised on political-military action that created the "appropriate" stable exploitative social relations between capital and labour. Within this imperial induced political and social framework, capital movements took place, multinationals expanded, foreign investors bought privatised public enterprises, IMF austerity programs were implemented. Che's description of the expansion of capitalism as essentially a political power relation is in sharp contrast with contemporary theorists who babble about "globalisation". They describe the expansion of capitalism as an impersonal, universal process that is irreversible because it is a product of economic structures.

Che's reading of capitalist expansion as a political and social relation is in contrast to contemporary globalist theorists who speak in terms of objective processes. These different conceptions have enormous political ramifications, Because Ché recognises that political power is the source of world capital

expansion, he utilises an incisive analytical concept - imperialism. The globalist theorists have no central axes to locate their amorphous, largely descriptive category "globalisation".

Secondly, Ché defines imperialism as a political and social relation between classes and state and therefore subject to transformation. The globalists describe globalisation as an objective structure that spreads through its internal logic and therefore eliminates any transformative social or political agency.

Thirdly, Ché conceptualises imperialism as a contradictory historic phenomenon whose expansion creates class/national conflicts which leads to its decline. In contrast, globalists have a linear conception of capitalist expansion, leading to its consolidation in a new world order. In its extreme (and reactionary) form, the globalists conceive of capitalism becoming a self perpetuating "world capitalist system" in which the only changes take place between different locations within the system.

Once the exploitative socio-economic relations are in place, for Ché subjectivity is determinant of the social order and economic system. In globalist thought, the economic structures continue to dominate subjectivity, leaving only small spaces for social action. While for Ché the big questions of state power, imperialist domination and class relations remain at the centre of political dispute, among contemporary globalists the big questions have been resolved. For the globalists the only politics possible is negotiating the terms of surrender to imperialism, cultural debates concerning formal identities and social space occupied by various identity groups functioning in the interstices of "the system", in a word, while Ché challenges world imperialism starting at the micro level of the villages of Africa and Bolivia, the globalist perspective is married to the micro world of post-modernists in the interstices of an over-determined world capitalist system.

Ché's political perspective evokes a Promethean image of humans struggling to change their world. Contemporary globalists evoke Schopenhauer pessimism regarding the prospects of transforming capitalism or a post-modern manic euphoria enumerating the proliferation of different identities, all firmly ensconced in the capitalist firmament. Today the fundamental theoretical and political conflict is precisely between Ché's Promethean perspective and the globalist Schopenhauerian pessimism and/or its euphoric Panglossian counterpart which thinks we are already living in the "best of all possible worlds".

To approach revolutionary political action today requires that one choose the Guevarian perspective. The point of departure for theoretical analysis and practical action resides in examining the political and class relations that underpin the expansion of capitalism. The process of transformation of the structures of capitalism or world imperialism begin with the social relations which sustain them at every level - from the most basic units (the workplace, local economy) through the productive sectors and national state to the international financial institutions and imperialist states.

CHÉ: SUBJECTIVITY, 'OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS' AND REVOLUTION

Following this line of inquiry and practice, we turn to Ché's second major contribution to contemporary revolutionary politics: the centrality of human action: consciousness, disciplined organisation and ideological clarity.

In his day, Ché's great enemies were the ideologues and epigones of the pro-Soviet Communist and Social democratic parties who counselled passivity before the "development of the productive forces". They argued that "revolutionary parties should promote the "maturing of capitalism", thus postponing revolutionary action to a later stage since the working class was still in the process of "being formed". In these reactionary or at best 'reformist' perspectives, Ché laid out several objections and an alternative perspective.

In the first place, he argued that while capitalism could 'advance', it would do so by exploiting more workers and undermining the very conditions of their existence. Ché argued that capitalism in the course of "developing the forces of production" was deepening the inequalities and undermining the capacity of classes and nations to act for themselves. Secondly, Ché saw no 'a priori' reason why the workers and peasants should wait or postpone their social revolutionary activities to a 'later stage' if there was already in place the very exploitative conditions and misery and collective experience that made possible a revolution. The question for Ché was not a quantitative issue of how many machines and workers were in place, but a qualitative issue. Did imperialism polarise classes within the basic units of production, did exploitative class relations characterise the social formation? If so, then revolution was not only possible but necessary.

Today the same duality of perspective is present as in Ché's time, only the names and language have changed.

The present day ideologues of the centre-left argue that in this stage of global capitalism the choice is between different varieties of capitalism: neo-liberalism (the retrograde variety) or welfare capitalism (the progressive variety). Together with their accommodation to capitalism, they argue that the current tasks of the Left revolve around "modernising" the economy, "reforming" the state and "decentralising" the government. Behind these general formulations is the notion that social revolution is impossible (because of globalisation, a mantra evoked in the absence of brain power) or that it remains for the distant future. In the meantime, the contemporary revisionists argue that the task is to collaborate ("concertacion") with the 'modern' bourgeoisie and imperialism to construct a competitive economy capable of participating in the global economy and providing for the welfare of 'the people'.

As in Ché's time, his contemporary revolutionary co-thinkers reject this thesis and propose another based on the contradictions emerging from real existing capitalism.

First, they point to the fact that the most

advanced and dynamic bourgeoisie (those who are most active in investing, exporting and producing) are precisely the most exploitative in terms of the capital/labour relation. Secondly, the "development of the forces of production" as it occurs today under conditions of total domination of the state is disintegrating and displacing masses of workers and peasants (through technology, through speculation, through buy-outs of local industries, through cheap imports, etc.) not expanding and creating a new cohesive working class.

Thirdly, the ***"reform of the state" that the revisionists favour, means in practice, the massive firing of public employees in social services and the increasing influence of a small nuclei of foreign trained technocrats (and NGOs) who are paid servants or associates of imperialism and collaborate with the local ruling class and its state.***

Fourthly, ***"decentralisation" shifts the responsibility for social services to local governments without the corresponding resources, while revenue becomes concentrated in a centralised executive which funds the economic elite.***

From their critique of the contemporary revisionists, ***the contemporary followers of Ché*** establish a different set of premises for political action.

To begin with, they argue that contemporary electoral politics is not the arena to bring about social change, only direct action involving mass mobilisation has been effective. To back up this proposition, they cite the last 15 years of political practice.

Secondly, they argue that deepening poverty and the increasing inequality between exploited and displaced workers and peasants necessitates class solidarity, not social pacts ('concertacion') with the exploiters. Again, this is based on recent historical experiences and empirical observations.

Thirdly, they point to class conflict within civil society (between landowners and rural workers, corporate executives and wage workers, etc.) as well as the state's centrality in promoting the neoliberal agenda. ***They reject the ideas of a homogeneous and virtuous "civil society" and an evil populist state.***

Fourthly, the contemporary revolutionaries argue that political action needs to be structured, organised, disciplined and oriented by political education. They are opposed to both spontaneity and elite electoral pacts.

The struggle between contemporary revisionists and revolutionaries mirrors the earlier debates and conflicts between Ché and his antagonists. Who are the "followers" of Che's revolutionary praxis today? As I mentioned earlier, the issue is decidedly not resolved by counting the number of guns (the military equation), but understanding the politics and practices that guide the new revolutionary social organisations.

We can start with the Landless Workers Movement (MST) in Brazil, the National Peasant Federation in Paraguay, the EZLN in Mexico, the FARC in Colombia, the Peasant Syndicate and sectors of the mining unions In Bolivia, the peasant and Indian federation in Ecuador, the CUC in Guatemala, ADC in El Salvador, the Revolutionary Force in the Dominican Republic.

What distinguishes these revolutionary groups form the revisionists is not the question of arms but the content and style of politics. What associates these groups with Guevara is the common political perspective, common political diagnosis and common point of departure for political action: the social relations of production, the assumption that subjectivity is the key mover of history, the idea that subjectivity needs to be expressed in organised and disciplined forms and that the centrepiece of politics is the liberation of the peasants and workers by their own direct action and not by electoral elites divorced form their everyday struggles. This does not mean that these revolutionary forces do not engage in electoral politics or look for support from electoral parties proximate to their political positions. It does mean that electoral politics and multi-class alliances are subordinated to direct action politics and to their programmatic agenda.

One might argue that this analysis "dilutes" the revolutionary "essence" of Che's thought by including diverse groups, with different strategies, engaged in non-military formations.

To that criticism it must be repeated that the fundamental premise of this paper is that Che's thought and practice is polyfaceted, complex and even in some cases contextually determined. Ché was acutely aware of historical variation and objective realities, even as in particular cases he made tactical errors. This line of argument, far from diluting Che's thought and practice, expands and incorporates his broader political thought; it rejects the militarist reductionist approach in favour of a broader theoretical understanding, one that explains the reasons why most of the social political movements enumerated above see themselves as the inheritors of Che's practice and theory.

INTERNATIONALISM: CHÉ AND CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENTS

While Ché started from the internationalist perspective of the Cuban revolution and moved toward a specific national and even local area of action, contemporary revolutionary movements start from a solid base at the local or regional level and move toward the national and international. While Che's international thought shaped his local practice, the social political movements today act locally and think internationally. The result is that while Ché had a brilliant understanding of the nature of imperialist politics, profound insight into the multiplier affects of revolution and the structural vulnerabilities of his adversaries, he was tactically weak and less than lucid in the specific locales where he originated action.

In contrast, the contemporary revolutionary movements have a fundamental grasp of local conditions including a deep understanding of regional and national power structures, the particular appeals and organisational capacities of exploited classes, but they are still in the initial stages of formulating an internationalist strategy.

A synthesis of the theoretical and

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THE STRUGGLE OF CHÉ GUEVARA : A SANDINISTA VIEW

Alenjandro Bendana

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Ernesto Ché Guevara was a person of his times, but his identification with the armed struggle is perhaps more the product of the circumstances—objective situations prevailing in Latin America and the world at the time. His conclusions were not much different from those deeply committed to democracy during this period.

Some, then and now, have taken his identification with revolutionary violence and the promotion of the subjective as pure voluntarism, termed adventurist then and anachronistic now. Ché however was very clear in his condemnation of terrorism and always emphasised that where social causes could be advanced by juridical-electoral means those spaces had to be utilised as much as possible; that armed struggle was the last not the first option and very much geared to the particular conditions in each nation.

There is no need to apologise them for Ché or simply turn him into an icon of a mistaken past. In Central America today, as in other countries, it is impossible to conceive of the minimal democratic liberties without the revolutionaries who gave their blood and fought against the dictatorships. Whether the ultimate achievemnt of twentieth century Marxists was the bringing of 19th century liberal political institutions about, History will judge. But in the context which prevailed in countries such as Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala or South Africa 25 years ago, such an accomplishment may well be judged revolutionary.

Guevara therefore is not a martyr or someone who had a death wish, as some biographers have proclaimed. He was a person that called in his work and example other human beings to sacrifice. It was Regis Debray rather in his unfortunate essay Revolution in the Revolution ? a book which he now disowns—that insisted upon polemizing with many established Communist Parties exaggerating the guerrilla component in revolutionary strategy and in Che's thinking, leaving both open to right wing distortions. What is clear is that Ché himself had no role in provoking such distortions and indeed if we look closely at his Diary in Bolivia, we notice a number of critical comments on Debray's book written along the margins, and his distrust of someone like Debray.

Unfortunately not only Debray but many well intentioned revolutionaries on the continent fell prey to the trap of simplifying and reproducing the Cuban "foco" experience, sometimes with disastrous and tragic results. Ché was not responsible for this and on more than one occasion alerted revolutionaries as to the danger of drawing the wrong lessons form the Cuban revolutionary armed struggle. "Foquismo" as it came to be known will confuse means (the armed struggle) with the ends (the political project) therefore leaving no other form of political practice open than violence.

Clearly this was not Guevara's vision, nor in fact the actual practice of the Cuban struggle. Indeed, as the Sandinista revolution was to prove, the political and military struggle could have other manifestations, and indeed would have to because revolution also revolutionised the counter-revolution and U.S. counter insurgency promotion. Ché did have a revolutionary vision for the continent, seeking the unity and levels of coincidental struggle necessary to fight imperialism. Early on he requested Fidel that in time he should be freed from his immediate obligations in order to support liberation struggles elsewhere. But what needs to be stressed is that Che's vision was essentially political, with mass armed participation where necessary and viable; it is not the reductionist foco strategy indirectly linked to the masses that sometimes has been adjudicated to Ché whereby a small group of persons are to act diverted from the people.

True, Ché takes issue with what had been the rather conformist strategies of the traditional left parties of the time. He brings forth the experience of Cuba, but is go to clear in his writings that sparking a guerrilla war is not a matter of pure will power but of concrete conditions. Nor does he look down on the struggles carried out by workers in the urban areas. Ché in fact clearly

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practical strengths of Ché Guevara's international analysis and the contemporary revolutionary movements local practice would provide maximum strategic, tactical and organisational capabilities in the task of creating the conditions for a socialist transformation of capitalism.

ETHICS AND POLITICS

Ethics and politics is another area in which Ché Guevara's analysis is relevant and influential for contemporary revolutionary politics. This takes several forms. In the first instance, the method of combating the distance (hierarchy) between leaders and followers. Secondly, the idea of combating bureaucratic structure and privileged distinctions between leaders and followers. Thirdly, the practice of engaging in the everyday work and life of the people while exercising authority in positions of leadership. Fourthly, of engaging in means that are compatible with the ends. Fifthly, of teaching by example, not by fiat or decree.

Ethical practices are not idealistic conceptions divorced from material existence. Historical materialism includes the norms of action, as well as the practice itself. An historical materialist approach to understanding the political relevance and continuities of Ché Guevara's influence on contemporary revolutionary politics requires that we examine his concept of 'the ethics' of politics.

Che's private life was austere: his political influence did not result in the accumulation of wealth and privilege. There was no Sandinista 'Piñata' in his post-revolutionary life. The revolution was about social advances by the class as a whole, not individual aggrandisement. The less the material distance between leaders and followers, the more likely they share the same problems, the more likely the leaders will respond to the same needs and problems of the rank and file. The less the material distance, the less obstacles to direct communication and access, the greater the possibility of shared perspectives, the less likely that the movement will attract opportunists interested in utilising politics as a trampoline for a lucrative career.

Today Che's practice of shared material conditions is practised by all of the major new revolutionary movements. The leaders of the MST in Brazil, the leaders of the Cocaleros in Bolivia, the peasant federation in Paraguay live in housing and eat food and dress at levels quite similar to their mass supporters. The gratifications of leadership are not found in material rewards or privileges but in creating and improving one's life chances in the same degree as the militants of the movement. Good leadership is rewarded by respect, recognition and authority among the rank and file.

Ché constantly fought "bureaucratic" structures and methods by fighting for effective and efficient organisation, bringing the cadres to work in the practical physical tasks and by creating and educating average people in the tasks to be solved. Anti-bureaucratic struggle was not spontaneous. It demanded discipline and structures that permitted extra effort and individual initiatives.

Today's successful revolutionary movements are highly organised and yet permit regional and local initiatives in the realisation of common goals and interests. The MST, for example, is a disciplined, organised movement with a national leadership whose purpose is to realise a profound agrarian reform. While the national leadership provides general direction, the regional organisations organise the land occupations, resistance and production. And the local co-ops decide their internal organisation and policies.

Ché was a firm believer in productive work; of combining physical and mental tasks as key elements in understanding the everyday concerns of the people. He saw volunteer labour as an important ingredient in breaking down caste outlooks among professionals and intellectuals - to teach them how the surplus was generated to provide for cultural activity. More basically, Ché saw this practice as key to creating bonds between manual and mental workers, to avoid the emergence of a New Class based on the superiority of the intellectuals.

Today the new revolutionary movements are engaged in a similar struggle: to recruit intellectuals to serve the movement and not to become its self-appointed vanguard. ***One of the areas of greatest conflict in this regard is the struggle between the professionals of the NGOs and the popular leaders of the revolutionary social movements. In many cases, the NGO professionals fragment the movements, subject them to tutelage or herd them into apolitical projects thus undermining their revolutionary political program.*** The revolutionary movements insist on setting the agenda, defining their needs and inviting the intellectuals to further the struggle on the terms set by the popular leaders. Some intellectuals accept, many withdraw.

Personal and political morality are entwined in Ché practice. ***In the Sierra Maestra Ché forbade his comrades from using torture to secure information from a spy working for the secret police. He argued that the use of torture would defeat the purpose of the revolution which was to abolish inhumane treatment. Moreover, Ché argued the practice of torture would corrupt the revolutionaries practising it. Likewise, Ché frequently liberated common soldiers during the revolutionary war, recognising that they too were victims of the system. Only torturers and those officials with blood crimes were summarily executed.***

Che's idea was that revolutionary organisations should engage in activity and create relations that pre-configured the new society. Hence, his belief in "The New Man" was based on the idea that what is done and how it is done today shapes what will emerge in the future. He didn't share the Soviet belief that by putting a commercial price or stimulus to motivate people would create a communist society. On the contrary, he correctly perceived that underneath the state property facade the Soviets were creating a capitalist mentality. Thus Ché anticipated with great foresight the collapse of Soviet Communism and the sudden emergence of capitalist ideology. As Ché and Castro argued, "You cannot build communism with dollar signs in people's eyes". This is not to say that material improvements were not essential to Che's vision. What he was

arguing is that the manner of achievement (collective struggle for collective improvement based on equal effort) was just as important as the result - material improvement.

The same ideas today inform many of the contemporary revolutionary movements in Latin America. The movements struggle to combine ethical means to achieve just ends. They do not coerce their members to pursue a single form of social organisation after land has been expropriated. They educate and then let families choose. They consult their members in organised assemblies; there is no enlightened caudillo who acts for the people. Of course, this is the norm that is not always practised. In many mass movements there are individuals who at times do engage in selfish activity and seek to gain small advantage at the expense of others. There are leaders who dislike criticism. The point, however, is that these are deviations from recognisable norms - not the rule that guides behaviour as in capitalist (or Stalinist) organisational codes.

Teaching by example was Che's guiding principle. In his active role in the guerrilla struggle, Ché suffered the same hardships, took the same risks and asked no special favours despite his serious physical handicap (asthma). In fact, he over committed himself, worked longer hours, slept less, was very critical of his errors and lapses. His pedagogical style was that learning was based on observing what one did, not only what one said. Too often the masses lost confidence and trust in ideas because of the double discourse - the divergences between what a leader promised or said and the way he/she lived or actually practised politics. Ché believed that confidence and trust was essential in building a popular movement and creating a principled organisation. To this end he believed leaders should teach by example.

Today's revolutionary leaders apply Ché teachings: at conferences they eat the same food and sleep on the same type of bunk or hammocks, travel in the same type of buses, engage in the same kind of practice and work. When they speak for land occupation, they are in the first line of action, not in the headquarters in the capital city issuing press releases and giving television interviews.

The success of the new revolutionary movements is in part a result of the practice of the ethics and politics articulated by Ché. Popular admiration and emulation is built on the shared belief that the material bases of the new society are built on the values of egalitarianism, personal responsibility and mutual respect.

CHÉ AND THE TACTICS OF ARMED STRUGGLE

Probably the area in which Che's contribution is least relevant today is in the area of military tactics. His guerrilla success in Cuba was based largely on the pre-existing mass organisation in the cities, the historic politicisation of the peasantry in certain regions and the strategic genius of Fidel Castro. His own experiences in the Congo and Bolivia were largely unsuccessful efforts to crystallise a struggle for power.

This is not to say that armed struggle has not been a successful strategy (Vietnam, Nicaragua, Cuba, China, Mozambique, etc.). Nor that important armed popular movements do not exist today (FARC in Colombia, Zapatista in Mexico, Kabyla in Zaire, etc.). Rather, in this area one must be careful to spell out what is relevant in Che's writing and practices and what remains an historically anecdotal.

First Ché spelled out the conditions under which armed struggle was necessary: dictatorship (Batista's Cuba, Barrientos Bolivia), imperialist invasion (Vietnam, Guatemala), colonial/neo-colonial dictatorship (Congo, Zaire). Some of these conditions are present in some countries of Latin America today (Peru, Colombia, Mexico). In Latin America, for example, Colombia, despite its electoral facade, is a terrorist state in which death squads and the military rule vast regions of the country. Mexico's PRI is a party-state dictatorship that assassinates rivals and steals elections. Peru is ruled by a civilian-military dictatorship. Secondly, Ché recognised the limits of capitalist democracy and questioned the willingness of the bourgeoisie to accept electoral outcomes that went against their fundamental property interests. Or in the case of imperialism, that it would acquiesce in democracies that went against their investments, debt collection and market opportunities. In those conditions, Che's position anticipated the U.S.-military overthrow of the democratically elected Allende regime.

These observations of Ché were the basis for his armed struggle perspective and they continue to be open to debate and discussion today.

What is less relevant is his conception of the relation of armed struggle to mass popular movements. Even in Cuba, Ché misunderstood and underestimated the crucial importance of the urban struggle and its networks of support - a point that he finally realised in his failed effort in Bolivia when they did not function.

Che's choices of areas of struggle and his analysis of the specific relations of forces in the sites of action, in the Congo, Bolivia, Argentina and Peru were quite off the mark. His dependence on second hand sources of information and general appraisals was an inadequate methodology. His sense of the subjectivity of the local population and the physical distribution of supporters was faulty. In a word, he attempted to formalise a model of guerrilla warfare (based on faulty assumptions in Cuba) and extrapolate it to another set of countries. The method was wrong and the consequences fatal.

In this sense, the contemporary revolutionary movements have a tremendous tactical advantage and great experience to supplement and surpass Che's revolutionary teaching. In other words, there can and should be a creative and critical dialogue between the living thought of Che Guevara, his brilliant general analysis, critical reflections on practice and theory and the insightful practices and creative strategic perspectives developed by the new revolutionary movements in Latin America today.

INDIAN POETRY IN ENGLISH : A SAMPLER

Guy Amirthanayagam

The main problem of writing about Indian poetry in English after Rabindranath Tagore is that there is a capacious nest of singing birds, the more interesting of them distinguished by about half-a-dozen poems each, and exhibiting no significant fruitful threads of development which can be traced by a critic in the way he can chart the variety, and plot the growth, of poets like Yeats, Eliot or Wallace Stevens.

Although the really great poems of any poet, with the exceptions of such as Shakespeare or Pushkin represent only a fraction of the total ouevre with the leading Indians, it is a matter of a fraction of a fraction. Thomas Hardy wrote many poems, a majority of which have only a paper modesty but wrote a fistful of outstanding poems, which alone make him qualify as one of the world's masters. Indian poets, on the other hand, do best in anthologies because only a few poems from an already slim output entitle them for recognition as worth discussing. Therefore it is not possible for me to write on Indian poetry in English the way I have written on the Indian novel.

Of course, from the more specific point of view of the cross-cultural encounter, the poetry represents a more inward and intimate level of interactions, where the nuances of human interchange are more sensitively recorded, and for this reason it is invaluable; the themes, too, abound: the physical Indian scene - the heat, dust and snowdrift, monsoon and drought, desert and tropical flamboyance - the different pace of life, the other worldly religions, minimising if not altogether negating, the riches of the lay world, the impact of Modernisation and Westernisation, the emancipation of women, gradual yet traumatic, the strong pull and presence of family, and of the extended family, the poverty straddling conspicuous wealth and ostentatious consumption, the racial arrogance and compensatory pride of country: these are but some, there is God's plenty.

Writing in a language, which though spoken by many, is still cut off from traditions, sometimes stagnant, sometimes evolving over centuries, presents its own problems. Even in the United States, where the language was used by native speakers of English, it took quite a while for the art of letters to acquire a self-sustaining national quality. In India, where the connotations of the English vocabulary are thin, they will become denser, but we have to wait. The language is used efficiently in many areas of communication and interchange where it enjoys pre-eminence, such as law, journalism, commerce and administration but the creative use has to compete with local languages enjoying historically continuous, established traditions and large audiences.

Besides, there is a preciosity associated with the language of a ruling elite, a self-consciousness about forging a language which is the most important gateway to the centres of power in one's own country as well as the outside world, while at the same time it does separate, even sunder, the writer from the teeming populace. This can have a devastating effect on the lyric poem, let alone making it unthinkable to imagine an Indian Chaucer or Shakespeare in the English tongue.

Of course, there are also the potent and ancillary problems of treating local events, situating and sensibility in a foreign or learned language. I say this despite the achievement in prose of R.K.Narayan, Nirad Chaudhri or Anita Desai. But India is populous, the use of English is growing (unlike, for example, in Sri Lanka or Burma, two countries which are more in need of international involvement), and we can look forward in the future to the distinct and compelling presence of Indian literature in English.

Of the poets I consider good I would name Nissim Ezekiel, Kamala Das, A.K.Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, Jayanta Mahapatra, Arvind Merhotra, Gieve Patel, Keki Daruwalla, and Arun Kolatkar. The best of their poems rank with the best that is being written in other English speaking countries, but considering the total body of their work, only Ezekiel, Ramanujan, Parthasarathy, perhaps Mahapatra and certainly Kolatkhar have written poetry with thematic sequences such as would lend them to some measure of extended treatment.

My modus operandi, then, would be to mention some of the poems I favour linking them with the most cursory comment on the poets interests and techniques, before I proceed to a more detailed consideration of Jejuri, a poetic sequence by Arun Kolatkhar.

The doyen - the dean of the poetic corps - of modern India poetry in English is Nissim Ezekiel. He is a Bene-Israel Jew, an almost

forgotten tribe with Indian residence over centuries. Ezekiel is a native user of English but this advantage is offset by his being an outsider in a double sense, first by being a member of an incompletely assimilated ethnic group with a religion, historically and obdurately resistant to conversion, and second, by electing to write in a minority language with impoverished resources both because of its distance from the mainstream of Indian life and letters and its isolation from the countries where English is the main language. Paradoxically, this isolation leads sometimes to an almost chauvinistic fervour which disfigures the otherwise brilliant, occasional reviews he has written of V.S.Naipaul, Ruth Prawer Jabhvala and Kamala Markandaya.

Ezekiel has a good command of rhythm, his words are slim in connotation, he does not strive for the exploratory, metaphorical density of the normally acclaimed English poets but his cold, analytical style can encompass unusually impressionac reverberations as in Night of the Scorpion. I can do no more than provide a sampler in his case as well as in that of the others: I would recommend Philosophy, Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher, The Visitor among others: a single quotation must do, though Ezekiel does often face "the final formula of light"

Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher

To force the pace and never to be still
Is not the way of those who study birds
Or women. The best poets wait for words.
The hunt is not an exercise of will
But patient love relaxing on a hill
To note the movement of a timid wing;
Until the one who knows that she is loved
No longer waits but risks surrendering-
In this the poet finds his moral proved,
Who never speaks before his spirit moved.

The slow movement seems, somehow, to say much
more.
To watch the inner birds, you have to go
Along deserted lanes and where the rivers flow
In silence near the source, or by a shore
Remote and thinly like the heart's dark floor.
And there the women slowly turn around,
Not only flesh and bone but myths of light
With darkness at the core, and reason is found
By poets lost in crooked, restless flight.
The deaf can hear, the blind recover sight.

Ramanujan, a master of poetic syntax, celebrates the Indian family and the extended family: essentially a poet of memory and recollection, though with a clinical, ironic detachment, he is the one poet who can rarely be faulted in his use of English words or prosody. A few lines from Love Poem for a Wife 1

Really what keeps us apart
at the end of years is unshared
childhood. You cannot, for instance,
meet my father. He is some years
dead. Neither can I meet yours:
he has lately lost his temper
and mellowed . . .

Probably only the Egyptians had it right:
their kings had sisters for queens
to reinforce the vessels
of childhood into marriage.
Or we should do as well-meaning
Hindus did.

Betroth us before birth,
foretelling separate horoscopes
and mothers' first periods,
and wed us in the oral cradle
and carry marriage back into
the namelessness of childhoods.

Can be complemented with this archetypalist's mood:

For me a perfectly ordinary
day at the office, only a red lorry
past the window at noon;
a sailor with a ghost tattoo.

I walk before dark
with my daughter to mark
another cross on the papaya tree;
dinner, coffee, bedtime story.

At dog, bone and shadow. A bullock cart
in an Eskimo dream. But I wake with a start
to hear my wife cry on her heart.

out as if from a crater
in hell: she hates me, I hate her.
I'm a flighty rat and a safer.

Kamala Das is a feminist, honest in convention-bound India about her sexual urges and her need for fulfilment: I represent her with a single poem:

The Looking Glass

Getting a man to love you is easy.
Only be honest about your wants as
Woman. Stand nude before the glass with him
So that he sees himself the stronger one
And believes it so, and you so much more
Softer, younger, lovelier ...Admire your
Admirer. Notice the perfection
Of his limbs, his eyes reddening under
The shower, the shy walk across the bathroom
floor,
Dropping towels, and the jerky way he
Urinates. All the fond details that make
Him male and your mate. Gift him all.
Gift him what makes you womanly, the scent of
Long hair, the musk of sex between the breasts,
The warm shock of menstrual blood, and all your
Endless female hungers. Oh yes, getting
A man to love is easy, but living
Without him afterwards may have to be
Faced. A living without life when you move
Around, meeting strangers, with your eyes that
Gave up their speech, with ears that hear only
His lost voice calling out your name and your
Body which once under his touch has gloomed
Like burnished brass,, now dies and oscillate.

Mehrhotra, original, a puzzler is well exemplified in The Sale, a poem which has to be savoured in its entirety because it has a truly meta physical unity and complexity.

Its yours for the price, and these
old bits have character too. Today
they may not be available.
Naturally I can't press you
to buy them, and were I not leaving -
you hear the sun choking with an eclipse-
I would take your time though, and
satisfy yourself. Yes, this is Europe,
that America. This scarecrow Asia,
that groin Africa and amputated
Australia. These five, I don't have more.
Maybe another egg-laying island remains
in the sea. You remember in my letter
I wrote of forests? They're wrapped
in leaves and there should be
no trouble in carrying them.
This skull contains the rivers.
Of that I'm sorry. Had you come
yesterday I might have given you two.
I shall take another look. Yes, I do
have a mummy somewhere; only last
night the pyramids came
and knocked at my gates for a long time.

2

Would you mind if I showed you
a few more things now your?
Be careful, one river is still wet
and slippery; its waters continue to
run like footprints. Well, this is a
brick and we call that string.
This microscope contains the margins
of a poem. I have a map left, drawn
by migrating birds.
Come into the attic.
That's not a doll - it's the
photograph of a brain walking
on sand and in the next one
it's wearing an oasis-like crown.
I must also show you a tiger's skin
which once hid a palace.
On one roof you'll see
the antelope's horns,
on another the falling wind. These round
things are bangles and that long one
a gun. This cave is the inside
of a boot. And here
carved wheels turn through stone.

3

I wish you had asked me earlier.
The paintings have been bought
by a broken mirror
but I think I can lead you
to a crack in the wall.
I've a skeleton too.
It's full of butterflies
who at dawn will carry away
the crown.
I've also a wheel-chair to show you;
it belonged to my uncle
and one day the hook
which hangs from the sky
touched him. If you open the
cupboard you'll see his memory
on the upper shelves and two books
now yours.

Ruskin's Lectures on Art and
A short History of English Literature by Legouis.
I'll take another minute.
Can you climb this ladder?
Well, that's the sun and moon
and with this candle you can
work the clouds. I'm sorry I was
short of space
and had to pack the Great Bear
in this clock. Oh them,
let them not worry you.
They're only fisherman and king
who will sail soon as one's bait
is ready and the other's dominion.

Mahapatra a good, consistent poet who rarely rises to intensity may be examined in the short A Missing Person

In the darkened room
a Woman
cannot find her reflection in the mirror
Waiting as usual
at the edge of sleep.

In her hands she holds
the oil lamp
whose drunken yellow flames
know where her lonely body hides.

Daruwalla, whom I do not quote, may be sampled in Death of a Bird, a moving, echoing poem. Gieve Patel, a humane, activist man of medicine may be seen in poems like On Killing a Tree or Servants. R. Parthasarathy's entire sequence Rough Passage is important, he has excellent imagistic skill, even if his images rise and evaporate within single lines. Though a fine poet, I find his moaning about his need to write in Tamil in order to define himself as a man somewhat artificial: I am a Tamil myself and an unpublished poet but except for occasional use of words like "aiyo" for alas, or "ouch", and of words like "Kadavul" for God, I have no disquietudes about using English: I dream in it. Human experience is surely, more important than fussing about linguistic media. Now, to Kolatkar.

ARUN KOLATKAR

Arun Kolatkar is an Indian poet whose mother tongue in Marathi, a language spoken in Western India, principally in the state of Maharashtra which includes the city of Bombay. Speakers of Marathi number about 45 million. Kolatkar writes poetry in Marathi as well as in English. As he did not learn English until he was fifteen years old, English for him is very much a second language. Nevertheless, his collection of poems entitled *Jejuri* won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize for 1977, a prize for which he had to compete with poets form all over the British Commonwealth for many for whom English is a native language. Despite this success, Kolatkar is still little known, even in the Commonwealth. It would not be an exaggeration to state that he is unknown in America. This is indeed regrettable in view of the fact that modern Indian poetry in English, including Kolatkar's *Jejuri*, often shows a highly individual absorption of American influences ranging From T. S. Eliot to e.e. Cummings.

The subject of Kolatkar's sequence of poems is religion, and in the matter of the relation between religion and culture, Kolatkar's attitude is very different from treatments of the same theme in modern Europe and America. The difference is not ideological: it arises out of an entirely distinct climate of sensibility. As we shall see, Kolatkar's poetic mind, subverted though it may be by irony, irreverence, even insouciance, remains paradoxically a combination of the sardonic, the negatively dark and even the joyous: it represents in the final analysis a modern adjustment to an accepted tradition. Unlike some Western work, it is not a floundering for, nor an attempt to construct something in a godless universe.

The poems describe a visit to a traditional place of pilgrimage. The poet joins the pilgrimage, but is different from the other pilgrims in the he does not share the same religious attitude. His approach may be better described as a search whereby he comes to terms with the place and with himself. He is ironic about the place of pilgrimage as well as the religious experience itself, but it would be a mistake to think that his attitude denigrates or is altogether dismissive of religious realities.

The first poem, "The Bus", sets the scene. The poet, along with the other pilgrims, boards the bus. So far, Jejuri is merely a destination. The imagery has a surreal quality. The reader is involved in the journey by use of the word "you"; the bus journey does not indicate the direction, as the bus is windowless and the only light comes through an eyelet in the tarpaulin, shooting only at the glasses of an old man sitting opposite who is also a passenger/pilgrim. When the reader-poet gets off the bus, he retains his individuality and has not been swallowed up within the world of the bus, symbolised by the old man's head:

Your own divided face in a pair of glasses
On an old man's nose
is all the countryside you get to see ...

At the end of the bumpy ride
with your own face on either side
when you get off the bus

You don't step inside the old man's head.!

In the next poem, "The Priest", the same surreal mode is used to communicate the poet's attitude towards the subject of the poem. Comparisons between the sun falling on the priest's crook and a pat from the village barber, or between the bus and a purring cat, while being unusual, stop short within that range of fantasy which does not dissolve the comic and satiric intention. The ironic mode helps to define the character of the priest, warts and all. His anticipation of good fortune with the arrival of the bus demonstrates that religion is the priest's livelihood:

The bus goes round in a circle
Stops inside the bus station and stands
purring softly in front of the priest.

A saffron on its face
and a line, ready to eat pilgrim
held between its teeth. (p. 11)

"Heart of Ruin" is about a ruined temple, now inhabited by the god Maruti, a bitch and her puppies, and a dung beetle. The refrain "May he or she likes a temple better this way", varying only in the use of the personal pronoun and applying as it does to the god himself and to the animals, expresses in its hesitation an ambivalent attitude: although the temple is no longer a place of worship, it has nevertheless become the house of god, a place that is equally well-served by his non-human creatures.

"Water Supply", where the movement of the lines recalls Eliot's well-known comparison of the fog to a cat in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", results in a totally original effect: a picture of dereliction in an Indian setting where the plumbing is weird and water taps are often dry. It will not be an exaggeration to relate the broken water tap to the drying up of traditional religion in the world of Jejuri. Though the language is conversational, the word order and syntax are idiosyncratic: words and images are chosen not for their communication but because they stand for a direct and bare concreteness.

This method of comparison is well demonstrated in the next poem, "The Door", where the fallen door is like a dangling martyr, "a frayed man of muscles who can not find his way back to an anatomy book", and a "local drunk" (p.15). In the conclusion the poet, in a mood of witty fancy, asserts that the door would have walked out long, long ago,

if it weren't for
that pair of shoots
left to dry upon its shoulders. (p.15)"

"A Low Temple" presents the kind of temple which keeps its gods in the dark. It is illuminated by getting a match, but what is actually seen is fleeting and deceptive - and whether a hidden goddess has eight arms or eighteen does not, anyway, seem important to the priest. The sceptical visitor responds by coming back out into the light of the sun, lighting up his cigarette as though the match serves him better this way. The indifference of the priest to the true nature of the goddess seems to be matched by that of the children who play on the back of the twenty-foot stone tortoise. In the following poem, "The Pattern", the tortoise-slab appears again, used by old men as a checkerboard, the lines of which are later smudged by the feet of children playing on it.

The character Manohar, in the poem of the same name, goes for a temple but finds a calf inside which makes him conclude that it is just a cowshed. Manohar would seem to be the poet himself trying to come to terms with the ruined enterprise that the religion of Jejuri represents. The beggarwoman in the following poem "The Old Woman" has the same sense of futility and justifies it by referring to the miserable and deadening environment: "What else can an old woman do/on hills as wretched as these?" (p.21). The cracks around her eyes match the cracked hills and the cracked temples. The poet humorously describes the old woman as reducing the visitor to near insignificance:

And as you look on,
the cracks then begin around her eyes
spread beyond her skin.

And the hills crack.
And the temples crack.
And the sky falls

with a plateglass clatter
around the shatter proof crone
who stands alone.

And you are reduced
to so much small change

in her hand. (p.22)

The short poem "Chaitanya", which follows, associate the creative energy of the god with a mute stones:

he hopped a stone
in his mouth
and spat out gods. (p.23)

In "Hills" the demons Khandoba killed were turned into hills where "cactus thrust/up through ribs of rock" (p.24). In the following :The Priest's Son", the poet asks a young boy whether he believes in the legend of Khandoba. The boy "looks uncomfortable" and is saved from his embarrassment (and from revealing his scepticism) by the quick appearance of a butterfly, a symbol of natural life among these infertile hills. The image is continued in "The Butterfly", with the apparition of the insect as transitory, disappearing as quickly as it appeared:

Just a pinch of yellow
it opens before it closes
and close before it o

where is it. (p.27)

Unlike Jejuri, and in contrast to the ancient but no longer enduring spiritual significance of the shrine, the butterfly exists only in the moment:

It has no future.
It is pinned down to no past.
It's a pun on the present. (p.27)

Blending the images of stones and gods, the poet is now able to hypothesise about the nature of the divine in Jejuri:

what is god
and what is stone
the dividing line
if it exists
is very thin
at jejuri
and every other stone
is god or his cousin. (p.28)

The next and longer poem, "Ajamil and the Tigers", is a mature and intelligent rationale for the need of sacrifice and compromise, with the poet writing a powerful and witty fable to illustrate the need for political manipulation in order to survive and be content. Ajamil, the shepherd, realises that he can have peace with the tigers only if he allows them to eat some of his sheep, that a full stomach is the best guarantee of an enduring treaty and a "common bond" (p.32). The succinct narration - almost staccato when necessary -with its effective dialogue and the conversational but ordered rhythms, contributes to the success of one of the best poems in this sequence:

Ajamil cut them loose
and asked them all to stay for dinner.
It was an offer the tigers couldn't refuse.
And after the lamb chops and the roast,
when Ajamil proposed
they sign a long term friendship treaty,
all the tigers roared,
"We couldn't agree with you more".
And swore they would be good friends all their lives
as they put down the forks and the knives.

Ajamil signed a pact
with the tiger people and sent them back,
Laden with gifts of sheep, leather jackets and balls of wool.
Ajamil wasn't a fool.
Like all good shepherds he knew
that even tigers have got to eat some time.
a good shepherd sees to it they do.
He is free to play a flute all day
as well fed tigers and fat sheep drink from the same pond
with a full stomach for a common bond. (p.32)

The two succeeding poems, "A Song for a Vaghya" and "A Song for a Murli", are spoken by a man and a woman respectively - Vaghya in the first poem is a first-born male child given away by the parents to serve god; and Murli is a first-born female who is dedicated to the temple and often becomes a prostitute. The poems are ironically poignant: Vaghya recognises that if he cannot beg he must steal and that if his instrument has only one string, it does not matter because he only knows a one-word song:

God is the word
and I know it backwards.
I know it as fangs
inside my flanks.
But I also know it
as a lamb
between my teeth,
as a taste of blood
upon my tongue.
And this is the only song
I've always sung. (p.34)

The sense of his role as a sacrificial victim and the cruelty of that sacrifice is strikingly conveyed. The irony of Murli in the second poem as performing both the role of protesters and prostitute is typical:

you dare not ride off with it
don't you see khandoba's brand on its flank
you horse thief

look
that's his name
tattooed just below the left collar bone
keep your hands off khandoba's woman
you old lecher
let's see the colour of your money first (p.35)

The imaginative problem in this poem is one of vision - you need the light of the moon in order to see the god's mark on the hill. Murli needs the moon's light so as to identify the thief, but as a prostitute, using him, she also needs it to see the colour of his money.

The small poem, "The Reservoir", uses the imagery of drought to indicate that the great architectural feats of the ancient rulers are now without any possibilities of life. The springs of the spiritual life have also run dry. In "A Little Pile of Stones" the poet is telling a young woman, a devotee, how to find the happiness. The devotee is instructed that she can learn from the stones a lesson which may lead her to happiness. "Makarand", the poem which follows, is a rejection by the poet of the temptation to pray: rather than take his shirt off he would smoke in the courtyard,

preferring its freedom in the same way as he preferred to be outside in the sun with a cigarette at the conclusion of "A Low Temple".

"The Temple Rat", in which a rat seems to be as much at home in the temple as the god himself, brilliantly describes the creature's journey from the "longer middle prong" to the sanctum behind the big temple drum. Kolatkar's characteristic use of images which are related to action, as well as his use of line divisions to indicate pace of movement, are very illustrated in this poem, and some of the imagery is startling - the rat is like a "thick gob of black blood" (p.40). The animal is indifferent to the wedding ceremony which is taking place and Kolatkar contrasts the lifeless gods with this living, however unpleasant, specimen from the animal world.

In "A Kind of Cross" and "The Cupboard", the sense of religion as disintegrating and obsolete is continued. In the first poem, the poet identifies religion with suffering, with the temple as a place of torture. The ironic parallel of a Christian cross reinforces the effect created by the "strange instrument of torture" (p.42), once an instrument for the slaughtering of the bull calf, but now a useless relic. In "The Cupboard" the dilapidated state of the shrine is further emphasised. The precariousness, insecurity, and the stubbly inorganic nature of the cupboard is suggested by the mention of linear or metallic objects - rectangles, setsquares, trapeziums, jagged slivers. The irony is directed not only against the "golden guns" (p.44), but against a dominant media which has buried them under vapid editorials, recipes for eternal youth, and the usual stock-in-trade of Indian newspapers - used here to plaster and hold together the cracked and broken glass of the cupboard itself.

"Yeshwant Rao" is one of the better poems in what is, in any case, a remarkably good collection or sequence. The poet prefers a "second class god" (p.45) to the more powerful and mainstream ones. The strong rhetorical tone of the "second class god" (p.45) to the more powerful and mainstream ones. The strong rhetorical tone of the following stanzas show the poet proceeding beyond irony to a more intense and bitter statement even though the concluding lines are playful in tone:

I've known gods
prettier toned
or straighter laced.
Gods who soak you for your gold.
Gods who soak you for your soul.
Gods who make you work
on a bed of burning coal.
Gods who put a child inside your wife
Or a knife inside your enemy.
Gods who tell you how to live your life.
Double your money
or triple your land holdings.
Gods who can barely suppress a smile
as you crawl a mile for them.
Gods who will see you drown
if you won't buy them a new crown.
And although I'm sure they're all to be pressed,
they're either too symmetrical
or too theatrical for my taste ....
Yeshwant Rao
does nothing spectacular.
He doesn't promise you the earth
or book your seat on the next rocket to heaven.
But if any bones are broken,
you know he'll mend them.
He'll make you wiggle in body
and hope your spirit will look after itself.
His is merely a kind of brave service.
The only thing is,
as he himself has no hands, hands and feet,
he happens to understand your griefs better. (pp.45-46)

The emphasis is on ordinary values, with Yeshwant Rao the "mass-sector" being more practical and more congenial to the worshipper's need for solutions to immediate problems.

Kolarkar writes savagely in "The Blue Horse", where a cabaret act arranged by a priest is presented as a picture of despair and futility. The performers, such as they are, are described as "God's own children/making music" (p.47); the temple is present again, just as the priest in "A Low Temple" had insisted on seeing an *eight* - rather than eighteen-! armed goddess, so, here, he remarks on a *white* horse painted on the wall, "Looks blue to me" (p.48).

"Between Jejuri and the Railway Station" is a highly innovative experiment. The poet is now ready to leave Jejuri ("this little temple town", p.50), and there is a monotonous listing of the town's sixty-three priests inside their sixty-three houses, the three hundred pillars and so on, which is interrupted by the sixty-fourth house which belongs to the temple dancer. The priest's son, perhaps of the earlier poem of the same name, "would rather not talk about" the dancer's skill - in the same way that he earlier evaded a question by the poet. The pilgrimage is thoroughly reduced in significance:

You've left the town behind
with a coconut in your hand,
a priest's visiting card in your pocket
and a few questions knocking about in your head. (p.50)

Into the empty mood breaks a vision - the only visionary experience in the sequence - of dozen cocks and hens in a harvest dance. Again, as in a number of earlier poems, it is the animals (here the fowl) which seem to have any vitality. The typographical arrangement of "up" and "down" conveys both the joyousness of the dance as well as its topsy-turvy nature.

The concluding poem, "The Railway Station", is divided into six short sections which are rendered in a wittily surreal mode. Both the temple and railway station seem to be ensconced in a state of unliving timelessness. The railway station, which should be a link with the world outside this nearly fossilised place of pilgrimage, does not offer any prospect of escape into a more meaningful human world. The station has acquired some of the temple's remoteness from the concerns of everyday. The indicator, which should point to something or reveal something, points to nothing: it is described in a mock-religious way as a wooden saint who gives no clue when the next train is due. A sense of meaninglessness is expressed:

the clockface adds its numerals
the dial is zero. (p.52)

The station dog is described as a "pilgrim" doing penance for the last three hundred years, the young waiter at the tea stall is described as a "holy cow" who has taken a vow of silence. The religious imagery is persistent: the waiter exposes you, sprinkles

dishwater in your face, performs ablutions and ceremonies; the booking clerk believes in the "doctrine" of the next train and the two-headed station master belongs to a "sect" that rejects every timetable. Words such as "apocryphal", "ritual", "sect", "doctrine" each emphasise the religious connotations. A typical humour predominates, however - through, for example, the way the station-master cannot be bothered with such pedestrian matters as timetables. The poet is also satiric about the religious exegesis which tries to make out that everything is implicit in the original text, all wisdom in the *Vedas*:

all timetables ever published
along with all timetables yet to be published
are simultaneously valid
at any given time and on any given track
insofar as all the timetables were inherent
in the one printed
when the track was laid. (p.56)

The fifth section, entitled "vows", portrays the poet-protagonist as a person willing to make any sacrifice in order to find out the time the train is due. The criticism of the traditional Indian bureaucracy wherein the station master is the most important civil servant in Jejuri, is based on the common experience of the rule and servant relationship, whereby the public official is not the public servant but someone who must be propitiated:

slaughter a goat before the clock
smash a coconut on the railway track
smear the indicator with the blood of a cock
bathe the station master in milk
and promise you will give
a solid toy train to the booking clerk
if only someone would tell you
when the next train is due. (p.57)

The sixth and concluding vignette, called "the setting sun", is not, however, altogether ironic. There seems to be a sense that the sun "touching upon the horizon/at a point where the rails" (p.58) appear to met is symbolic of a fulfilled or fulfillable prophecy; but it is not altogether a hopeful ending because the image of the wheel is also suggestive of the train, and therefore of the unrewarding railway station. The setting sun symbolises the end of a journey. What has been discovered in the search is not clear.

It is difficult to say at this stage whether Arun Kolarkar will develop into a great poet in the English language. One does not even know if he will write any more poems in English. But it is important to recognise both the achievement and potential manifested in *Jejuri*. Obviously, not all the poems in the sequence are of the same order of excellence, and I have preferred not to dwell on the inadequacies or the occasional failures of tone. But the exuberant fertility of this poet's inventiveness in a language, which while being at the same time Indianised and highly individual, is clearly the end product of a tongue which now seems to belong not only to the countries which produced Milton and Mark Twain but also to that latecomer on the stage of English literature, the vast and populous subcontinent of India.

Contd from page 13

stresses that a guerrilla struggle could not develop in countries where governments are the result of some form of popular consultation and where the possibilities of civic struggle have not been exhausted.

Ché would privilege the armed struggle given the specific conditions of most of Latin America in the specific decade of the sixties. It is not a once and forever recipe and Guevara does not rule out institutional non-military transitions where revolutionaries make full use of liberal frameworks up to the last moment. This is not contrary to the central strategic objectives which for Guevara are the destruction of imperialism and the construction of socialist power.

If we dwell on this polemic it is also because we must also take account more than ever the qualities of Ché not only as a guerrilla combatant, but also an organiser, a statesman, as an integral ethical human being. Guevara indeed was as much concerned with the armed seizure of power as with the political tasks involved in constructing organisational options.

In this sense Che's principal legacy stands as the readiness to employ critical capacity in the approach both to revolutionary theory and revolutionary action, contextualizing both the conditions and specificities requiring transformations. In many senses, the dissolution of the Soviet Union has also liberated Ché and allows a new appreciation for his anti-dogmatism, his ridicule of revisionism and anti-revisionism, and the insistence of developing the critical spirit in all directions and for all times.

In Ché we find this intimate and complex dialectic between the individual devoted to the revolutionary cause and the individual devoted to the collective. Self-formation gives way to collective formation, and vice versa. Ché is a revolutionary because he was first a humanist. He constructs his own person on a humane and ethical base to thereupon contribute testimony and action to the human formation of others, to their revolutionary formation.

Guevara indeed taught us lessons incredibly relevant for our neoliberal times. He insisted that could be no separation between the individual and the community, no divorce between personal ethics and politics. For Ché the age old conflict between individuality and community was the product of both the past and the present, of the deformation brought about in capitalist society, limiting or conditioning that "consciousness" which does not allow the human being to practice and fulfil his and her humanity, the person as an unfinished historical product which can only be advanced by individual and collective consciousness of history along with reflection on social context. In this way the new man - in Che's words - or person is born; he or she that struggles to leave 'the kingdom of necessity in order to enter that of liberty'.

THE EU AND PEACE EFFORTS IN IRELAND

Dr. Sean Byrne

11. STRATEGY

What are the goals and objectives to be accomplished? Borcovich (1984) contended that the objective of third party intervention is to "facilitate communication, exploration and problem-solving" (p.25) so that "the parties come to recognise their own needs, as well as those of the other party" (Burton, 1990, 17).

It is necessary, therefore, to get the disputing parties to use *interests-based negotiation* by putting the focus on interests instead of rights or power (Kriesberg, 1982). This will lead to a reduced level in communal violence, bigotry, and entrenched sectarianism. It will be necessary to build an incentive package for both sides into the framework, that is, the free-flow of monopoly capital investments and multi-national corporations into Northern Ireland, the suspension of the Hillsborough Accord and special security policies, and modification of Articles 2 and 3 of Bunreacht na hEireann (Irish Constitution), among others. The mediating team will also encourage and facilitate any form of cultural, sporting, and educational contact that will decrease segregation and increase opportunities for social interaction (Byrne, 1995).

It might also be plausible to propose some ideas to both parties (if required to do so) - such as the creativity and innovation of the referendum that permits crosscutting cleavages and shifting alliances on issues to contribute to peaceful change despite subcultural segmentation in the body politic. The third-party facilitator will also engage each community to analyse the conflict from its own perspective. This interplay between the conflict and the design will be value-laden and constructive, enabling the weakest party to empower itself (Bassett, 1989; Reed, 1989). Attention will also be spent in providing "rights and power, loop backs and backup procedures" (Reed, 1989, 12). Time will also be put aside to provide the motivation, skills, and resources necessary to make all the procedures work.

These objectives will provide the necessary communication link that allows the disputing parties to recognise the value of alternatives and assists them in building a relative power symmetry (Ury, Brett & Goldberg, 1988). Consequently, a dispute systems design is a logical course of action to pursue in the Northern Ireland case because it allows both parties to "resolve their disputes by trained third parties [to] jointly develop agreements which satisfy their basic needs and values and, therefore, are durable and require no external enforcement" (Bassett, 1989, 15).

12. GRASSROOTS PROBLEM-SOLVING AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Consequently, efforts must be made now to facilitate Protestants and Catholics working together at the local level and to learn to accept and to respect each others' cultural differences, thereby alleviating the potential for cultural misunderstanding (Byrne, 1995; Byrne & Carter, 1994). Interaction will promote a clear line of vision and a sense of direction that is sensitive to each others' cultural combinations. Efforts must be made to promote positive social attitudes ed structural changes between both communities in Northern Ireland if improvements in inter-community relations are to develop (Byrne & Carter, 1994). Protestants and Catholics must at least learn to interpret each others' divergent ways of communicating similar messages. "Intergroup contact under the right conditions may reduce prejudice because it changes the nature and structure of the intergroup relation" (McWhirter, 1983, 24).

To eradicate the underlying causes of entrenched bigotry and sectarianism that exist in Northern Ireland, a variety of various strata of contact and co-operation between people at the local and regional levels could counteract the reluctance of both sides to "chat over the wall" or recognise kinship ties across the sectarian divide (Harris, 1972; Nelson, 1984). For example, in Strasbourg, Nationalist and Unionist MEPs vote together on issues that affect the political and economic situation in Northern Ireland (Kearney 1988).

A European federation of decentralised and equal regions will erode the insular definition of cultural identity and place limits on absolute autonomy; the pooling of sovereignty ushers in an "erosion of frontiers' between member states and "has radical implications for future relations between the Republic, Northern Ireland and Great Britain", (Kearney, 1988, 8) "as a community of self-directing regions [relate] in a democratic and equal manner to the other regions of a "federal Europe" (p.10). In other words, Northern Ireland becomes a local region or canton under the political direction of Brussels, Not London or Dublin. In time, a Northern Ireland regional, allied to a European supranational identity will transcend the notion of an absolete national

identity as the concept of nation state peters out.

Local regional identity and culture are beginning to grow in importance as a European supranational identity is superseding and transcending national identity and as more political attention now focuses on Brussels and Strasbourg rather than on London or Dublin. Britain and the republic of Ireland are member states within the EU and signatories to the Maastricht treat, signifying the political union of member states, and are obliged to obey all directives from Strasbourg and Brussels. For example, in June 1991 Community Connections was organised to develop cross-border economic and community development between community groups in West Cavan and North Leitrim in the Irish Republic and West Fermanagh in Northern Ireland. Jenny Hopkins from the Regional policy Department of the European Commission stated that this was a part of an EU initiative "to break down the unnecessary border mentality that sometimes occurs and is entirely in the spirit that the Commission wanted to see coming forward, that of communities on borders working together for their region" (Trimble, 1991, 1).

Such a prospect of more regional autonomy will gradually erode the geopolitical and psychological border between Northern and Southern Ireland. Each region will be able to defend its sovereignty and independence against the entanglement and encroachment of central government. This process will remove "one of the major causes of human conflict - the non-recognition, undervaluing, neglect and even elimination of the identity of peoples (Hume, 1988, 48).

13. CONCLUSIONS

Some from of settlement can be arranged between all of the internal forces within Northern Ireland, as long as the external guarantors (the British and Irish governments) are not part of the mediating process. The conflict in Northern Ireland is deep-rooted; however, an impartial third-party facilitating team can support each community in solving its basic needs - economic and industrial development, security, employment, co-operation and frequent contact in the socio-cultural arena (Burton 1990; Azar & Burton 1986).

A positive peace is possible in Northern Ireland, and the current cessation of violence is just one more step on a long, arduous journey toward a lasting settlement. This proposal is not a panacea for an immediate resolution to the conflict, but it can help restore flexibility to diametrically opposed views by transforming the underlying nature of the conflict (Gottlieb, 1993).

These policy suggestions are not prescriptions for an immediate cessation to the inter-communal strife and are put forward most tentatively. As Akenson (1973) commented: "It is easy for an outsider to criticise the Ulster situation, but when he realises the complexity of the region's problems, he also recognises that to propound any simple solution would be arrogance" (1973, 193).

The third party must not place either community in a weak or zero-sum position vis-à-vis the other, because the active participation of all parties in analysing, designing, and implementing an effective design process will endow both communities to empower themselves (Kriesberg, 1982; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). A good outcome to this process is one in which all parties and forces co-operate with, and learn to trust and respect, one another.

CONCLUDED

Waiting 42

Mirror

The mirror that framed you in each masterpiece
Is placid now, like a quiet water
That held the flare and beauty of departed seasons

In that landscape, soft hued, with silks undraped
Your skin was the pastel sheen of earth,
Petal and dawn touched wing
On which gold and stones were the glitter
Of sunlight and he stars.

So this mirror is the machine of Light and Time
The boundary of a World which echoes still
The whisper of silks and sighs deep drawn
Certainly not of pain.

U. Karunatileke

Will privatization mean the end of the union I represent? How will the interests of my members be protected?

– Trade Unionist

Privatization will in no way dilute or reduce the powers and rights of your union. British Airways was privatized in 1987, and the unions remain to protect worker interests just as before. Some of the world's largest, most powerful and vocal unions exist in the private sector. For example, the United Auto Workers (UAW) represent over 100,000 workers at the three biggest American car companies, none of which are state owned. In fact, there is every likelihood that working conditions will actually improve in privatized companies, since there will be substantial investments made to upgrade facilities and training. You can look forward to representing a considerably more prosperous union.

It is important to realize privatization is a means to an end. It is a means to improve our living standards, foster technological progress, create employment and take our nation into a more prosperous tomorrow. In order to achieve these aims, privatization has to be executed in the appropriate manner.

That is the task of the Public Enterprise Reform Commission (PERC). Its mandate is to make privatization work for Sri Lankans today, and for generations to come.

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