

1: Che Guevara Quotes by Jon Lee Anderson

Medical school and Motorcycle Diaries: early life. Guevara was the eldest of five children in a middle-class family of Spanish-Irish descent and leftist leanings. Although suffering from asthma, he excelled as an athlete and a scholar, completing his medical studies in

The deception was made to avoid the scandal of being already three months pregnant, before getting marriage, would create. Wells and Robert Frost. These included composing analytical sketches of Buddha and Aristotle , along with examining Bertrand Russell on love and patriotism, Jack London on society and Nietzsche on the idea of death. His "hunger to explore the world" [40] led him to intersperse his collegiate pursuits with two long introspective journeys that fundamentally changed the way he viewed himself and the contemporary economic conditions in Latin America. For the latter, he took a year off from his studies to embark with his friend Alberto Granado , with the final goal of spending a few weeks volunteering at the San Pablo leper colony in Peru , on the banks of the Amazon River. A motorcycle journey the length of South America awakened him to the injustice of US domination in the hemisphere, and to the suffering colonialism brought to its original inhabitants. By the end of the trip, he came to view Latin America not as collection of separate nations, but as a single entity requiring a continent-wide liberation strategy. His conception of a borderless, united Hispanic America sharing a common Latino heritage was a theme that recurred prominently during his later revolutionary activities. Upon returning to Argentina, he completed his studies and received his medical degree in June , making him officially "Dr. Guevara cited these experiences as convincing him that in order to "help these people", he needed to leave the realm of medicine and consider the political arena of armed struggle. She introduced Guevara to a number of high-level officials in the Arbenz government. Guevara then established contact with a group of Cuban exiles linked to Fidel Castro through the July 26, attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba. During this period, he acquired his famous nickname, due to his frequent use of the Argentine filler syllable che a multi-purpose discourse marker , like the syllable " eh " in Canadian English. On June 27, Arbenz decided to resign. Following the coup, he again volunteered to fight, but soon after, Arbenz took refuge in the Mexican Embassy and told his foreign supporters to leave the country. The last Latin American revolutionary democracy " that of Jacobo Arbenz " failed as a result of the cold premeditated aggression carried out by the United States. Its visible head was the Secretary of State John Foster Dulles , a man who, through a rare coincidence, was also a stockholder and attorney for the United Fruit Company. By the time he left, he was sure of this. Hilda later found a poem that Che had dedicated to the old woman, containing "a promise to fight for a better world, for a better life for all the poor and exploited". In this vein, he considered Batista a " U. The key portion of training involved learning hit and run tactics of guerrilla warfare. Guevara and the others underwent arduous hour marches over mountains, across rivers, and through the dense undergrowth, learning and perfecting the procedures of ambush and quick retreat. They set out for Cuba on November 25, With the group withdrawn to the Sierra, the world wondered whether Castro was alive or dead until early when the interview by Herbert Matthews appeared in The New York Times. The article presented a lasting, almost mythical image for Castro and the guerrillas. Guevara was not present for the interview, but in the coming months he began to realize the importance of the media in their struggle. Meanwhile, as supplies and morale diminished, and with an allergy to mosquito bites which resulted in agonizing walnut-sized cysts on his body, [82] Guevara considered these "the most painful days of the war". Deserters were punished as traitors, and Guevara was known to send squads to track those seeking to go AWOL. We would have given our life for him. On one occasion Iglesias recounts the time he had been wounded in battle, stating "Che ran out to me, defying the bullets, threw me over his shoulder, and got me out of there. Travelling by foot, Guevara embarked on a difficult 7-week march, only travelling at night to avoid ambush and often not eating for several days. The final death toll from the two years of revolutionary fighting was 2, people. Guevara returned to the seaside village of Tarara in June for his honeymoon with Aleida. In , the revolutionary government extended its application to the whole of the republic and to those it considered war criminals, captured and tried after the revolution. According to the Cuban Ministry of Justice, this latter

extension was supported by the majority of the population, and followed the same procedure as those in the Nuremberg trials held by the Allies after World War II. Those persons executed by Guevara or on his orders were condemned for the usual crimes punishable by death at times of war or in its aftermath: I should add that my research spanned five years, and included anti-Castro Cubans among the Cuban-American exile community in Miami and elsewhere. Some exiled opposition biographers report that he relished the rituals of the firing squad, and organized them with gusto, while others relate that Guevara pardoned as many prisoners as he could. If the only way to "defend the revolution was to execute its enemies, he would not be swayed by humanitarian or political arguments". Almost immediately after the success of the revolution on January 27, , Guevara made one of his most significant speeches where he talked about "the social ideas of the rebel army". During this speech, he declared that the main concern of the new Cuban government was "the social justice that land redistribution brings about". The government had begun land seizures included in the agrarian reform law, but was hedging on compensation offers to landowners, instead offering low interest "bonds", a step which put the United States on alert. The blasts killed at least 76 people and injured several hundred, with Guevara personally providing first aid to some of the victims. Cuban leader Fidel Castro immediately accused the CIA of "an act of terrorism" and held a state funeral the following day for the victims of the blast. INRA quickly became the most important governing body in the nation, with Guevara serving as its head in his capacity as minister of industries.

2: The Story Behind Che's Iconic Photo | Travel | Smithsonian

Che Guevara: Cuban revolutionary, doctor, communist, author, rebel, hero, villain - and according to Jean Paul Satre "the most complete human being" of his age.

Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, enchanted with a tropical utopia that might lend color to the gray Stalinism of Soviet-style communism, were among the honored guests. He went on to accuse the U. Before the revolution, which began in , he and his friend Luis Antonio Pierce had named their studio Korda after two Hungarian film directors. Korda would later recall his magic Che shutter click: I was focusing on Fidel and the people around him. Suddenly, through the 90mm lens, Che emerged above me. I was surprised by his gaze. By sheer reflex I shot twice, horizontal and vertical. It all happened in half a minute. Korda hung the Che image in his apartment. For Che was obsessed with neither governance nor diplomacy but with exporting the revolution by any means—a mission too sacred for him to play a character who emerges for half a minute and then steps back discreetly behind the verbosity of Fidel Castro. He was a man of action and needed to get back to it. In the Cuban people heard nothing of their supposed hero for six months, until Castro unexpectedly made public a farewell message from his old comrade. Ernesto Guevara de la Serna was executed by U. Feltrinelli asked for two copies, and the next day Korda made two eight-by-ten prints. When asked about the price, Korda said the photos were a gift because Feltrinelli had been sent by someone he regarded highly. That may well be true, but accepting money in payment could also have been risky. The government was on its way to extinguishing all private business, and possession of foreign currency was a crime that carried a prison sentence. Suspicions of suicide and assassination still surround his death. The Soviets never forgave him for helping Pasternak, just as they never forgave Che for being an admirer of Mao, whose global aspirations conflicted with their own. Such profiting would have been unrevolutionary. Just before his death, Korda did file and prevail in some legal claims and finally had his copyright confirmed by the London High Court. Korda insisted to the press that neither he nor his hero ever drank alcohol. And his image continues to be framed into the last selfies of socialism by tourists passing through what was once called Civic Square and is now the Plaza of the Revolution. Maybe he saw the irony or some political utility in the shot. Still, it was more evidence—as if any were needed—that the magic somehow persists. Meanwhile, the mortal remains of Ernesto Guevara de la Serna, their authenticity subject to ongoing debate, are kept as a communist totem in Santa Clara, in the geographical center of Cuba—a withering testament to one of the last attempts to create a utopia on Earth. His book *Abandoned Havana* is a photo diary of his home city.

3: Che Guevara - Wikipedia

A detailed timeline of the life of Che Guevara. Batista sent forces into the Cuban hills to wipe out the rebels. However, the Cuban army were no match for the rebels who knew the hills and used guerilla tactics against the Cubans.

Al Jazeera examines Ernesto "Che" Guevara: The man Ernesto Guevara de la Serna, known worldwide as Che, was born on June 14, 1928, into a middle-class family in Rosario, northeast Argentina. He had a left-leaning, and literary, family life before beginning his studies in medicine at Buenos Aires University in 1946. Two years later, Guevara started the first of two motorcycle journeys through Latin America which in successive years would help shape his political views and sense of purpose. Guevara became convinced during his journeys - 4,000km and 8,000km respectively - that the solutions to the widespread poverty and oppression he had witnessed were armed revolution and communism. The two first met in Mexico City almost five years earlier, where Guevara had moved in 1953. Che Guevara and Fidel Castro - Revolutionary Friends From this position, he was able to roll out domestic plans for land redistribution and the nationalisation of Cuban industry. He travelled around the world as an ambassador for the country. Guevara guided the Castro government towards closer alignment with the Soviet Union through his diplomacy, which would prove a crucial relationship for Cuba throughout the Cold War as Castro sought to prevent the United States from interfering in the country. Six years after the revolution, Guevara left Cuba in order to spread Marxist revolt elsewhere. He arrived in Congo in 1965 and attempted to mobilise armed rebels forces there against the Congolese central government. His efforts failed within seven months. By the end of 1965, after a brief return to Cuba, Guevara had switched his attention to Bolivia and a revolutionary movement against the government there. He was executed the next day, aged 36. Critics point to his role in a Cuban government which oversaw extrajudicial killings and political repression as evidence of the damage caused by his dogmatic faith in communism. Supporters say he was a hero who fought and died for his beliefs, and see him as a romantic figure associated with the universal fight for freedom. But his legacy in Latin America continues to be felt in a more literal way. In countries including Bolivia, Cuba and Venezuela, governments continue to draw inspiration from Guevara, shaping the lives of Latin American people. In his words Here is a selection of words that belong to Che. You have to make it fall. Liberators do not exist. It exists when people liberate themselves. I am Che Guevara and worth more to you alive than dead.

4: Che Guevara: a Revolutionary Life

Che Guevara was a legendary political activist, who gave his life for the downfall of imperialism and the establishment of socialism. It is through his relentless work that he became the countercultural symbol of rebellion and revolution.

Elegantly written and psychologically perceptive, it would reward anybody with even a superficial interest in Guevara. Unfortunately what it lacks is an informed Marxist point of view that in the final analysis leaves the subject something of a mystery, especially the circumstances of his tragic death. This review will cover both the assets and the weaknesses of the book as well as point in the direction of much-needed Marxist research into the career of Che Guevara. Of Irish lineage, Ernesto Guevara Lynch tried one business venture or another before settling into construction. Yerba mate is a plant whose stimulating properties yield a beverage that is as much of a staple in Argentine society as tea is in England. Che favored this drink throughout his life, even after he had taken up residence in revolutionary Cuba. This plantation was no paradise either for the workers or the Guevara family. Yerba plantations and logging camps often depended on debt peonage. While agrarian capitalism in Great Britain might have been characterized by wage labor, in Latin America unfree labor was the norm. If one finally did, the local cops would return them to captivity. Anderson notes that Guevara Lynch was not the typical plantation boss: It helps us not only understand the harsh realities of Latin American society, but the way in which they impinged on a family that was both typical and atypical. The dinner table was her throne. Here she sat for endless hours playing solitaire, which-like the cigarettes she habitually smoked-she had become addicted to, but she was always ready to receive some young person for conversation or to dispense advice. With true aplomb, she was unperturbed when she found nothing there. There were other peculiarities: On one level this expressed itself as a disdain for personal hygiene or fashionable clothing. He was proud of the nickname "El Chanco" he had acquired as a youth, which means "the pig. Yet, he never wanted to force his own personal values on others. In his capacity as economic planner in Cuba, he was dismayed at the inability of the Russians to supply personal hygiene goods in ample number. For the fastidious Cubans, deodorant, shampoo and soap were nearly as important as food, just as is the case today. Reaching maturity during the presidency of Juan Peron, Che began to explore Marxist and socialist literature ranging from Joseph Stalin to Alfredo Palacios, the founder of the Argentine Socialist Party. When Che ran into a CP youth leader at the University of Buenos Aires, where he was studying medicine, he came across as "brusque and difficult. Despite his wide reading in leftwing literature, it would probably be more accurate to describe the young Che Guevara as a cultural rebel more than anything else. Although deeply opposed to class injustice, he had not really developed a systematic understanding of the capitalist system, nor how to overthrow it. It was around this time that he began to travel extensively on the continent. His "Motorcycle Diaries," which record only part of these peregrinations, come across as a mixture of Jack Kerouac and John Reed. The couple, frozen stiff in the desert night, hugging one another, were a live representation of the proletariat of any part of the world. It was one of the times when I felt the most cold, but it was also the time when I felt a little more in fraternity with this, for me, strange human species. He arrived during the presidency of Jacobo Arbenz, a reformer who had earned the enmity of the CIA, the United Fruit Company, and the local comprador bourgeoisie. Although he did not write up an extensive balance sheet of the abortive Guatemalan social democratic experiment, he did take note of one failing in a letter to his friend Tita Infante. Falsehoods were being circulated all over Latin America about the bloodthirsty character of the Arbenz government, from whose grips the CIA and the army purportedly had delivered the Guatemalan people. To the contrary, for Che "there were no murders or anything like it. In Guatemala City Che became acquainted with Hilda Gadea, a heavy-set Peruvian woman with plain features whom he would eventually wed. Although Che was blessed with an Adonis-like beauty, he did not necessarily seek physical attractiveness in the opposite sex. His only disagreement with her revolved around the character of the APRA party which he regarded as middle-class and reformist. Castro had arrived in Mexico City after being pardoned by Batista for his armed assault on the Moncada barracks in Upon being freed, he immediately began plans to launch another armed assault on the degenerate dictator and American puppet. The two hit it off instantly. When asked by Hilda why

he was in Mexico if his struggle was in Cuba, Fidel replied: Elaborate preparations were now underway to organize an armed invasion force to join the July 26th movement in Cuba that was already conducting sabotage and propaganda interventions through its largely urban student and middle-class base. In some of the future guerrillas, including Che, were arrested in Mexico City after word of their preparations had leaked out. Following a week or so of interrogations, Che told the cops that he "openly admitted his Communism and declared his belief in the need for armed revolutionary struggle, not only in Cuba but throughout Latin America. Always the master of thrust-and-parry, Castro ridiculed the idea of being smeared as an agent of communism. Eventually Che was freed from the Mexican jail and the guerrillas sailed to Cuba on a rickety yacht called "Granma" at the end of Three days after landing, they found themselves in the middle of a sugar field en route to the Sierra Maestra mountains in Oriente province. There they ran into a Cuban army detachment at 4: Shot in the neck, Che was lucky to escape with his life. Of the 82 men who arrived on the Granma, only 22 would ultimately regroup in the sierra, including Fidel and Che. At their newly established camp, Fidel lashed out at Che for losing his rifle in the heat of battle and stripped him of his pistol. Che bore no resentment at being dressed down and worked all the more assiduously in the future to show his battle-worthiness. When he became a commander of his own guerrilla column, he imposed the same kind of iron discipline as Fidel--making sure that he would set a personal example himself. In an encounter in the Mar Verde valley, we see Che as battle-hardened veteran. He looked around suspiciously and advanced slowly. I hid my head, waiting for the battle to begin. There was the crack of gunfire and then shooting became generalized. The army hastily fired mortars, but they landed well beyond the rebels, and then Che was hit. I had been shot in the left foot, which had not been protected by the tree trunk. Desperately he rolled over and managed to grab the pistol just as he saw one of his own men, Cantinflas, coming toward him. Cantinflas had come to tell him his own gun was jammed and that he was retreating. Che snatched the gun, adjusted the clip, and sent the youth off with an insult. In a display of courage, Cantinflas left the tree cover to fire upon the enemy only to be hit himself by a bullet that entered his left arm and exited through his shoulder blade. To escape the line of fire, they began crawling until they found help. Cantinflas was in a hammock-stretcher, but Che, his adrenaline still pumping, did the first part of the trip on his own two feet before the pain from his wound overcame him and he had to be lifted onto a horse. On January 1, , the guerrilla armies made their triumphal entry into Havana. Since the Guevara who interests and inspires him most is the Guevara of motorcycle journeys or courageous combat, his stint as economic planner and his failed missions in the Congo and Bolivia are treated anti-climactically. However, these are the exact issues that challenge us as Marxists. How can socialism be built in an underdeveloped island that depends on export agriculture? How can the revolution be extended beyond the shores of the island to relieve pressure, as well as defeating injustice in other countries? These are obviously the questions that the Marxist movement has been grappling with since and before, and which Anderson lacks the motivation and expertise to address. Before Che made the decision to leave Cuba and launch guerrilla warfare to relieve pressure both on Cuba and Vietnam, he was working two jobs. INRA was also where Fidel was working. From this agency, the assault on Cuban agrarian capitalism was mounted. Foreign dignitaries would be told of being granted an interview with Che at 3: The Cuban decision to advance toward socialism is treated, as one might suspect, by Anderson in standard jaded journalist mode. Moreover, this turn is treated as if the issue was style rather than the ability of a nation to go its own way without interference from a hostile imperialist power that had sucked its wealth for most of the century. Along with most other American influences--such as Santa Claus, who had been banned--the learning of English was now discouraged; Russian was now the second language to learn in the "new" Cuba. Che began taking twice-weekly Russian-language classes from Yuri Pevtsov, a philologist sent from Lomonosov University to be his interpreter and personal tutor. They had no Russian-Spanish manual to work from, so the two made do with a Russian-French primer. The government spearheaded the emblematic transformation. Streets, theaters, and factories were rebaptized with the names of homegrown and foreign revolutionary heroes and martyrs such as Camilo Cienfuegos and Patrice Lumumba. Time and time again, the reader is not sure whether Anderson is resorting to "scare quotes" to score political points or rather referring to the actual words of Cuban officials. For example, on page Anderson is setting up the first meeting of Tomas Borge with Che,

who is described needlessly as "squat and full-lipped. No need for scare quotes when you are dealing with really scary dictators. It would appear that resolute struggle against capitalism and colonialism is the best prescription for relief from superstition of any sort. To put it as succinctly as possible, the defeat in Bolivia is not the result of poor tactics by the guerrillas, or a more sophisticated counter-insurgency policy. Namely, the guerrilla movement in Cuba was an outgrowth of civic movements that combined legal, electoral and extra-legal assaults on the dictatorship. By the time Fidel Castro had arrived on the beach of Oriente province in , he was already well known as the student leader and the candidate of the Orthodoxo party who had challenged Batista. The revolutionary movement he founded existed all over Cuba whether or not members were engaged in combat or not. As a rule of thumb, guerrilla movements cannot succeed unless this kind of mass movement has had a prior existence. Unfortunately, Che and his fighters were extremely isolated from any ongoing national struggle in Bolivia itself and were forced to rely on a CP who preferred conventional trade union and parliamentary work to armed struggle, no matter the lip service they gave to this project. In light of recent anti-globalization protests, with their trans-national ruling class target, it is useful to remind ourselves of the need for a political program based on the living class struggle of a given nation-state. After all, when all is said and done, revolutions grow out of the most deeply felt grievances of oppressed peoples whose consciousness is formed by experiences at the plant gate or the plantation.

5: The Political Theory of Che Guevara | Rowman & Littlefield International

Born in Rosario, Argentina, in 1928, Ernesto "Che" Guevara de la Serna studied medicine before traveling around South America, observing conditions that spurred his Marxist beliefs.

See Article History Alternative Title: After his execution by the Bolivian army, he was regarded as a martyred hero by generations of leftists worldwide, and his image became an icon of leftist radicalism and anti-imperialism. Medical school and Motorcycle Diaries: Although suffering from asthma, he excelled as an athlete and a scholar, completing his medical studies in Buenos Aires. He spent many of his holidays traveling in Latin America, and his observations of the great poverty of the masses contributed to his eventual conclusion that the only solution lay in violent revolution. He came to look upon Latin America not as a collection of separate nations but as a cultural and economic entity, the liberation of which would require an intercontinental strategy. In particular, his worldview was changed by a nine-month journey he began in December 1952, while on hiatus from medical school, with his friend Alberto Granado. In January 1953, Guevara went to Guatemala, where Jacobo Arbenz headed a progressive regime that was attempting to bring about a social revolution. About that time Guevara acquired his nickname, from a verbal mannerism of Argentines who punctuate their speech with the interjection *che*. The overthrow of the Arbenz regime in June 1954 in a coup supported by the U.S. This became the cornerstone of his plans to bring about socialism by means of a worldwide revolution. It was in Guatemala that Guevara became a dedicated Marxist. The few survivors, including the wounded Guevara, reached the Sierra Maestra, where they became the nucleus of a guerrilla army. Indeed, the complex Guevara, though trained as a healer, also, on occasion, acted as the executioner or ordered the execution of suspected traitors and deserters. Guevara became a Cuban citizen, as prominent in the newly established Marxist government as he had been in the revolutionary army, representing Cuba on many commercial missions. He also became well known in the West for his opposition to all forms of imperialism and neocolonialism and for his attacks on the U.S. Guevara expounded a vision of a new socialist citizen who would work for the good of society rather than for personal profit, a notion he embodied through his own hard work. Often he slept in his office, and, in support of the volunteer labour program he had organized, he spent his day off working in a sugarcane field. He grew increasingly disheartened, however, as Cuba became a client state of the Soviet Union, and he felt betrayed by the Soviets when they removed their missiles from the island without consulting the Cuban leadership during the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. Back in Cuba, increasingly disillusioned with the direction of the Cuban social experiment and its reliance on the Soviets, Guevara began focusing his attention on fostering revolution elsewhere. After April 1961 he dropped out of public life. His movements and whereabouts for the next two years remained secret. It was later learned that he had traveled to what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo with other Cuban guerrilla fighters in what proved to be a futile attempt to help the Patrice Lumumba Battalion, which was fighting a civil war there. During that period Guevara resigned his ministerial position in the Cuban government and renounced his Cuban citizenship. After the failure of his efforts in the Congo, he fled first to Tanzania and then to a safe house in a village near Prague. In the autumn of 1967, Guevara went to Bolivia, incognito, beardless and bald, to create and lead a guerrilla group in the region of Santa Cruz. After some initial combat successes, Guevara and his guerrilla band found themselves constantly on the run from the Bolivian army. On October 8, 1967, the group was almost annihilated by a special detachment of the Bolivian army aided by CIA advisers. Guevara, who was wounded in the attack, was captured and shot. Before his body disappeared to be secretly buried, his hands were cut off; they were preserved in formaldehyde so that his fingerprints could be used to confirm his identity. On the 80th anniversary of his birth, another memorial to Guevara, a statue, was dedicated in his hometown, Rosario, Argentina, in 2008, after decades of acrimonious debate among its citizens over his legacy. The Cuban government refuted the claim, citing scientific evidence from including dental structure that, it said, proved that the remains were those of Guevara. He was almost always referenced simply as *Che*—like Elvis Presley, so popular an icon that his first name alone was identifier enough. Many on the political right condemned him as brutal, cruel, murderous, and all too willing to employ violence to reach revolutionary ends. Framed by a red-star-studded beret and long hair, his face

frozen in a resolute expression, the iconic image was derived from a photo taken by Cuban photographer Alberto Korda on March 5, 1960, at a ceremony for those killed when a ship that had brought arms to Havana exploded. At first the image of Che was worn as a statement of rebellion, then as the epitome of radical chic, and, with the passage of time, as a kind of abstract logo whose original significance may even have been lost on its wearer, though for some he remains an enduring inspiration for revolutionary action. Guevara, CheDemonstrator carrying a flag bearing an image of Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara at an antigovernment rally in Bangkok,

6: Bibliography of works on Che Guevara - Wikipedia

Ernesto "Che" Guevara (/ tÊf eÉª Éj Ê™ Ê v É• r Ê™ /; Spanish: [ÊtÊfe ÊÊeÊ²aÊ¼a] June 14, - October 9,) was an Argentine Marxist revolutionary, physician, author, guerrilla leader, diplomat and military theorist.

Share via Email On the outskirts of Vallegrande, a mountain village in Bolivia, there is a single airstrip, little more than a long ribbon of rubble and dirt. It was there, seven years ago, that a team of forensic scientists from Argentina and Cuba began digging in search of the skeleton of a man with no hands. They found it after a few days, buried alongside the bones of six others. His final resting place is a mausoleum in the suburbs of the city of Santa Clara, a site of almost religious significance to Cubans who lived through the revolution of Vallegrande, where his corpse was put on public display following his execution, remains much as it was, a forlorn place with little trace of his presence save for the hawkers of cheap Che memorabilia who wait for the tourist buses. During the political unrest of , it became a clarion call for what seemed like a spontaneous global insurrection and, for a brief moment, it seemed like the old order - capitalism, the Cold War, conservatism, militarism - might actually be replaced by something though what exactly was never defined younger and freer. That something was symbolised by the doomed romantic figure of Che Guevara , whose short life ended in a kind of martyrdom in the mountains of Bolivia, where the CIA openly admitted their role in his capture. Like many who came of age politically in the late Sixties, Hitchens was in thrall to the personality cult that attended Che. He was a role model, albeit an impossible one for us bourgeois romantics insofar as he went and did what revolutionaries were meant to do - fought and died for his beliefs. Though it has survived decades of sanctions and attempts to assassinate its leader, the socialist republic of Cuba is now under threat from within: And yet, the myth of Che endures. In , the same year that Che died, the radical French activist Guy Debord wrote *The Society of the Spectacle* which, among other things, predicted our current obsession with celebrity and event. He has become a global brand. The late Alberto Korda - whose iconic photograph of the bearded and long-haired Che wearing a beret with a red star may be the most appropriated image ever - won a moral victory of sorts when he successfully sued a British advertising agency for using it in an ad for Smirnoff vodka. *The Life and Death of Che Guevara*. To endure as a romantic icon, one must not just die young, but die hopelessly. Che fulfils both criteria. When one thinks of Che as a hero, it is more in terms of Byron than Marx. There is no myth around Castro. Che was young and beautiful, and that, as much as all that happened later, is what underpins the myth. More recently, Oliver Stone made a controversial hagiographic documentary about Fidel Castro. Its release was put on hold when, in April, Castro executed three Cubans who had hijacked the ferry, and sentenced 78 dissident writers to 28 years in prison. It was one of absolute implacability. He snapped and the photo soon went around the world, eventually becoming the famous poster that would adorn so many college bedrooms. In it, Che appears as the ultimate revolutionary icon, his eyes staring boldly into the future, his expression a virile embodiment of outrage at social injustice. The transformation from symbol of violent revolution to emblem of Sixties cool was complete, and Che has remained more Lennon than Lenin ever since. Korda, as a fashion photographer, sensed that instinctively, and caught it. Before then, the Nazis were the only political movement to understand the power of glamour and sexual charisma, and exploit it. The Communists never got it. Then you have the Cuban revolution, and into this void come these macho guys with their straggly hair and beards and big-dick glamour, and suddenly Norman Mailer and all the radical chic crowd are creaming their jeans. Che had them in the palm of his hand, and he knew it. Che was much more than that - he was a steely, driven, ruthless leader. He may have been an idealist, but he was also someone unafraid to get his hands dirty in pursuit of an ideal. Born in , to aristocratic but radical parents in Rosario, Argentina, he was the first of five children. His character was forged in part by the chronic asthma that would dog him until his death. That, in a way, was his strength and his downfall. With her encouragement, he studied medicine in Buenos Aires, interrupting his education to undertake the motorcycle trip that politicised him. In , having seen the CIA-backed coup overthrow the socialist government in Guatemala, Che fled to Mexico, where he met the exiled Fidel Castro, who was plotting revolution against the Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista. Their daughter, Hildita, was just

one year old when Che set sail for Cuba with Castro and 80 other exiles, and began the guerrilla campaign against Batista. Initially, the campaign was a catalogue of disasters but slowly the rebels gained local support, often from peasants who realised it was more dangerous to support Batista than Che. By the time they took Havana in , Che had taken up with the woman who would become his second wife, year-old Aleida March de la Torre. Politically, Aleida and Che were incompatible as she belonged to an anti-Communist revolutionary faction that he hated. Che was an inspiring leader but also a harsh and unbending taskmaster, who meted out stern punishment. On his orders, several peasants were executed for disloyalty, as were local bandits who preyed on the poor. Others, often no more than boys, underwent mock executions. Spilling blood was necessary for the cause. Within two years, he would order the death of several hundred Batista partisans at La Cabana, one of the mass killings of the Cuban Revolution. In the halcyon post-revolution days, Che was made Governor of the National Bank, his face appearing on the two peso note. Because they were all in awe of him, they voted him governor of the bank. It turns out Che had misheard the question. He thought the guy had asked, "Is there a Communist in the room? During the Cuban Missile Crisis in Che was more bullish even than Castro or Khrushchev, seemingly unconcerned that the whole world was holding its breath over the outcome. That, for me, is a contradiction too far. You can only be one or the other. Che was being interviewed by an American woman from Look magazine. The interview was like a cockfight between Communism and capitalism, and he was strutting and angry, hectoring this woman, and chomping on his cigar. Suddenly, he looked straight at me and said, "So, you are with Magnum. I knew then, this was a man who was not cut out to be a politician, he was a soldier and a killer. He had this Castilian Spanish upper-class guilt about the working class and peasants that he never quite overcame. From there, he returned briefly to Cuba, whence, increasingly estranged from Castro, he set off for Bolivia to begin his last and final guerrilla war. Of all the books written by Guevara, The Bolivian Diaries are the most powerful and affecting, not least because the ideological demagoguery of old has disappeared, replaced by a more stoical voice. It is a diary of struggle and hardship, of dismay and defeat, the antithesis of The Motorcycle Diaries, and, of course, not a story that Hollywood will ever tell. He was captured at the Yuro Ravine in by troops loyal to military President Barrientos. Real politics had intervened. But Castro always had the option to mount a rescue mission even if it was by no way assured. Put it this way: Shoot, coward, you are only going to kill a man. To leave the world in no doubt of his identity, his captors instructed some local nuns to wash his face, tidy his bedraggled hair and beard, then photographed his corpse. To their dismay, the image that was circulated throughout the world recalled countless Renaissance paintings of the dead Christ taken down from the cross - and so Che attained iconic status for the second time. In death, he was frozen forever, and spared the ignominy of a long decline. Had he lived, the myth of Che would have long since died. For him, one suspects, that would have been the cruellest fate imaginable.

Che Guevara had a huge impact on his world, not only as a major player in the Cuban Revolution, but also afterwards, when he tried to export the revolution to other nations. He achieved the martyrdom that he so desired, and in doing so became a larger-than-life figure.

He helped free Cubans from the repressive Batista regime, only to enslave them in a totalitarian police state worse than the last. The cult of personality revolves entirely around the dead guy. You know what happens to Cubans who display open hatred of Che? When he was still alive, they were executed or herded into slave-labor camps. Woe to those who disobey State Security. Others resisted at home, especially during the s, the decade of global rebellion. What do they think? That this is a bourgeois liberal regime? There is nothing liberal in us! There will be no Prague Spring here! Would Americans love a foreign implant who murdered thousands, forced thousands more into slavery, and drove more than a million to exile? The memorial is in a square the size of a shopping mall. There are no trees or shade. An imposing statue of Cheâ€™ complete with a cast on his broken left armâ€™ is placed atop a gigantic pedestal. The steps leading up to it are huge. I felt tiny and low by comparison. The whole scene intimidates by design. Does Fidel want Cubans to be like the real Che or the fake Che? We must never give him a minute of peace or tranquility. This is a total war to the death. He emerged from his studies a monster and became the most wanted terrorist on earth. They admire the image, which is and always has been a fraud. He relied primarily on enemies and victims of the Nazis for his information. He relied on Russian and Ukrainian exiles. Here is a quote from Fidel Castro in when he was in prison in Cuba. We can never abandon propagandaâ€¦ Use a lot of sleight of hand and smiles with everybody. We must follow the same tactic we employed in our trial; defend our points of view without raising hackles. There will be plenty of time later to crush all the cockroaches. They made it a goal from day one. They needed to export their propaganda and make it not seem like propaganda. Maybe because Cuban communism was seen, rightly or wrongly, as less severe than the Soviet version. Had he lived longer and committed yet more atrocities, perhaps the truth about him would be more obvious and well-known. Whatever the reason for the success of their ludicrous narrative, it drives Cuban exiles in the West over the edge when they see their tormentor lionized by naifs. This man committed many of these murders with his own hands. And yet we see him celebrated everywhere as the quintessence of humanity, progress, and compassion. Those who adore him are adoring a lie just like Westerners who emblazon his face on their t-shirts. The Cuban regime knows that the real Che was a despicable human being and knows that civilized people find villains like him appalling. The truth is a dirty secret that the regime wants to keep buried. Older Cubansâ€™ especially those who fled to the United Statesâ€™ know the real story, of course, but younger Cubans might not. I have no idea, really, what they think or know about him. I asked a handful and they were cagey about it. Almost everyone I met complained about the government, but not about Fidel personally, and especially not about Che. One of the guides at the museum said something strange. Cubans are hardly paid anyway. Most of them work for the state and earn a maximum wage of twenty dollars a month. What difference does a couple more hours make? He is entombed in a mausoleum behind the memorial. There are microphones inside and they are listening. Inside is peaceful and candlelit. It looks and feels like a shrine. Photography is strictly forbidden. The walls are made of stone. I heard no noise whatsoever from outside. The air is cool and dry. The ambience itself inspires silence. A policewoman sat on a chair in the back. She stood up and marched toward me and belted out a shattering sound. Why is she talking in here? She pointed at the wall in the center of the room where Che is entombed. The policewoman made me uncomfortable, especially for yelling at me after I was told to shut up. So I left and returned to the hot and humid world outside that almost never cools off during the day. Down the road a ways from the memorial is a little park built around a derailed train. During the revolution, Che and his men supposedly forced it off the tracks by placing a bulldozer in its path. Capitalist running dogs like myself? All of the above, more likely than not. Fontova calls it the Caribbean Lubyanka. Thousands of men and boys were executed against its walls with firing squads. The totalitarian nature of the regime was inscribed there from the very beginning. Prisons are unpleasant places everywhere in the world. Artists tend to be anti-authoritarian,

and naturally police states fear and loathe them, so Arenas was hauled off to prison. A memorable bit of dialogue from the film sums up Cuban due process for him in eight words. Gays were not treated like human beings, they were treated like beasts. They were the last ones to come out for meals, so we saw them walk by, and the most insignificant incident was an excuse to beat them mercilessly. Thirty days later he emerged from that cell a human wreck. The night [he] made his confession was unforgettable. That vital man, who had written beautiful poetry, apologized for everything he had done, his entire previous work, throwing the blame upon himself, branding himself a despicable coward and traitor. He said that during his detention at State Security he had come to understand the beauty of the Revolution! Padilla not only retracted all he had said in his previous work but publicly denounced his friends and even his wife. You can see the skyline of restored Old Havana across the harbor. The fort itself is well-preserved and aesthetically pleasing. I saw and heard no mention there about the thousands of people the regime killed even though so many were killed on one of its walls. The blood and gore are long gone. One dayâ€”perhaps not soon, but somedayâ€”that is going to change. When that day arrives, tourists who visit will finally learn something real. You can make a one-time donation through Pay Pal: Alternatively, you can make recurring monthly donations. Please consider choosing this option and help me stabilize my expense account.

8: Just a pretty face? | Film | The Guardian

Che Guevara has the most effective public relations department on earth. The Argentine guerrilla and modern Cuba's co-founding father has been fashioned into a hipster icon, a counter-cultural hero, an anti-establishment rebel, and a champion of the poor.

Che is not at all influential among the various wings of the Cuban opposition. In a broader sense, for many rebellious young people throughout the world, Che Guevara is seen as a key leader of the Cuban Revolution—“one of the most important revolutions of the twentieth century”—and the only one who coherently practiced what he preached. To many of the contemporary rebels active in anticapitalist movements, Che is not only a radical, uncompromising opponent of capitalism, but—“given his opposition to the traditional pro-Moscow Communist parties”—also a revolutionary who shares their own ideals in pursuit of revolutionary and antibureaucratic politics. This book analyzes the substantive political ideas and practices of Che Guevara from a standpoint that shares this anticapitalist, antibureaucratic sentiment. It does so, however, based on the belief that socialism and democracy are indispensable requisites to realize those aspirations. I was born and raised in Cuba and participated in the anti-Batista high school student movement of the s, and have been involved in socialist politics for well over fifty years. My political roots are in the classical Marxist tradition that preceded Stalinism in the Soviet Union. Soviet Stalinism established the structural paradigm of a one-party state ruling over the whole economy, polity, and society—a paradigm that was later implemented in its multiple national variations by countries such as China, Vietnam, and Cuba. Central to my perspective is a view of socialist democracy in which institutions based on majority rule control the principal sources of economic, social, and political power at the local and national levels. To be a fully participatory democracy, socialism must be based on the self-mobilization and organization of the people, and the rule of the majority has to be complemented by minority rights and civil liberties. I have written three books and numerous articles on Cuba based on this perspective. Che Guevara is a central part of the story of the Cuban Revolution, but his life and politics have international and theoretical repercussions that go beyond the Cuban story itself. In that sense, this study is closely related to another of my books, *Before Stalinism: The Rise and Fall of Soviet Democracy*, published in . While clearly distinguishing Leninism in power from Stalinism, I nevertheless argued that, under the great pressures of the civil war and severe economic crisis, mainstream Bolshevism changed its political character, converting the necessity of repression under civil war conditions into a virtue, thus weakening the resistance to the subsequent emergence of Stalinism. Although of course the political background and historical conditions under which Guevara fought for his ideas were very different from those of the Russian Revolution, they also require us to consider the relationship between revolution and democracy. Thus, his revolutionary perspectives were irremediably undemocratic, based on a conception of socialism from above rather than below, which raises serious questions about the social and political order he would have brought about had he been successful in his efforts to spark victorious revolutions in the Congo and Bolivia. To Che, the state was the fulcrum of change and its takeover was the goal of the socialist revolution. But he was an idiosyncratic Communist: But even when he became more critical of the Soviet system after leaving the Cuban government, he upheld until the end of his life the monolithic Soviet view of socialism as a one-party state. Che was neither a libertarian nor a democrat in his theory or practice. For Che, the essence of socialism consisted in the absolute elimination of competition and capitalist profit, and in having the state, led by the vanguard Communist Party, control the economic life of the country in its totality. In his conception of economic equality and his insistence on an exclusive dedication to the goals of society, he implicitly accepted the old Tocquevillian dichotomy of equality versus individuality. Che Guevara considered himself a Marxist and seriously studied the Marxist classics but was very selective of the aspects of Marxism he adopted as his own. But, as we shall see, as early as when he was in the Sierra Maestra in , Guevara in contrast became the principal proponent of the view that the guerrilla rebel army itself—and not the working class or, for that matter, the peasantry, except as supporting actors—would overthrow the Batista dictatorship and carry out the social revolution in Cuba. But it was entirely consistent

with the establishment of a socialism from above, which initially enjoyed overwhelming support; it emphasized popular participation while excluding popular democratic control. Thus, the system established by Guevara and the other Cuban leaders on principle did not allow for the establishment of socialist democratic institutions and the political liberties and rights necessary for their fulfillment. Che used the same fundamental approach in his guerrilla incursions in the Congo and especially in Bolivia without ever reassessing his assumptions regarding the socioeconomic and political conditions necessary for the success of guerrilla warfare. In the case of the Congo while he later acknowledged the absence of conditions for a social or even an anti-imperialist revolution in the eastern part of that country, where he had led Cuban and Congolese soldiers, he nevertheless insisted, with extreme voluntarism, that the solution to those very real objective obstacles was the creation of a vanguard party. And in the case of Bolivia, he advised militant miners to abandon the mass struggle in the places where they lived and struggled and instead to join his faraway guerrilla army, which, in contrast with the democratic revolutionary traditions of the miners, was organized on a strictly military hierarchical basis and led mostly by people foreign to their class and country. In this context, revolutionary violence is unfortunate, but necessary and inevitable in light of what oppressive ruling groups will do in order to preserve their power. His clear implication is that reform, not revolution, is the only viable, sensible alternative in fighting for liberty and democracy. At least since the Russian Revolution, it has become accepted almost as political common sense that revolution and its violence are incompatible with democracy and liberty and that only parliamentary social reform can coexist with a democratic political order. In the mid-twentieth century, this perspective was not only maintained by prominent critics of Marxism such as the philosopher Karl Popper but at least implicitly by authentic socialist leaders such as Salvador Allende. As the democratically elected president of Chile, overthrown and killed in a military coup supported by the CIA, Allende sacrificed his life to remain faithful to that notion. The relationship between revolution and democracy is a very important issue and a difficult one to disentangle. Nevertheless, I would assert that the following two points are vital: First, revolution does not automatically lead to dictatorship, totalitarianism, or democracy. It is true that any situation of active armed conflict—revolutionary or otherwise—inevitably involves the curtailment of the democratic process and of civil liberties. But what happens after the armed conflict has ceased and the revolutionary power is stabilized, although economic crisis may act as a restraining and limiting force, depends to an important extent on the politics of the revolutionary leaders in determining whether the encroachment on democracy and liberties during the armed conflict are to be made permanent, thus converting what originally might have been a necessity into a virtue. Second, a social revolution does not necessarily lead to the collective punishment of social groups or categories of people—whether based on race, class, religion, or ethnicity—in contrast with the necessary punishment of individuals or specific groups who engage in armed actions against the revolutionary government. For example, in the aftermath of the Bolshevik revolution, universal suffrage—an enormous achievement of the democratic struggles that arose in the wake of epoch-making movements such as the French Revolution and the Chartist movement in Britain—was curtailed by the provisions contained in chapters 5 and 13 of the Soviet Constitution promulgated in July. These chapters established, respectively, the obligation of all citizens to work and confined the franchise to those who earned their living by production or socially useful labor, soldiers, and disabled persons, and specifically excluded persons who employed hired labor, rentiers, private traders, monks and priests, and officials and agents of the former police. In her famous pamphlet on the Russian Revolution, Rosa Luxemburg criticized these exclusions, arguing that the Russian economy was in no condition to offer gainful employment to all who requested it, thereby disenfranchising those who might have been involuntarily unemployed. The aim of the Bolshevik government was not the disenfranchisement of the idle or the unemployed in general, but to punish every member of the bourgeoisie and allied strata, such as the church, even if they requested state employment after having lost their business, factories, and churches. This notion of collective punishment gained traction at the same time that Lenin explicitly indicated that he regarded these exclusions not as matters of general principle regarding the general nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat but as the result of specific Russian conditions, that is, the extreme resistance offered by bourgeois and petty bourgeois circles to the October Revolution and to the radical and initially democratic changes introduced by

it. Thus, it was that same notion of collective punishment that was used to repress and kill peasants in the Tambov region whether or not they had personally aided or participated in the so-called green peasant rebellions in 1921. This is a matter in which the classical Marxist tradition has been less than fully clear, since its indispensable critique of the vices of liberal capitalist parliamentary democracy does not settle the question of whether workplace representation would be sufficient by itself to represent all sectors of the population. The working-class nature of the new socialist system is most of all established by the actual political leadership of the working class and its allies and by a political system structured in such a way as to favor the collective workplace instead of the isolated individual citizen. It should not mean a repudiation of the principles of universal suffrage and legal rights on behalf of which so much of the blood of the oppressed has been shed. His exclusive focus on making the revolution and on the tactics of the armed struggle led him, by the mids, to the conclusion that practically all the countries in Latin America were ready to take up arms in their rural hinterlands, ignoring the widely differing political and socioeconomic conditions prevailing throughout the continent. This strategic and tactical blindness came in part from his reaction to the electoralist tendencies and politicking prevalent among the old pro-Moscow Communist parties of his time. But their opportunistic practice of making pacts with corrupt parties and leaders was an entirely different matter, as was the case with the old pro-Moscow Cuban Communists in the struggle against the Batista dictatorship. It is a perspective that posits revolutionary politics as requiring strategic and tactical thinking and action in order to advance the revolutionary process. In that sense, politics is an imperative forced on the revolutionaries by stark political reality, which includes what the ruling class and its allies will do to prevent any changes that harm their interests. Political reality presents a great number of difficulties and options that continually pose anew the perennial question of what is to be done—as well as the political goals and the strategy and tactics best suited to attain them. As movements develop, in addition to government surveillance, provocations, and repression, they inevitably face the lies and propaganda of the rulers to weaken, divide, and confuse them. The best responses to these challenges are often far from obvious and require strategic and tactical tasks that help mobilize and make people conscious of the nature of the enemy and its tactics. Lenin, the Bolshevik leader, famously put it: To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: Otherwise, Lenin noted, things would not change and reaction would very likely set in. The utter failure of his guerrilla venture was hardly surprising given the absence of a revolutionary situation and a mistaken strategic orientation to the peasantry in an isolated and thinly populated part of the country, which failed to obtain any support from either the Bolivian peasantry or its working class. My aim is to understand his politics and the varying situations in which he acted, and in the process help to dispel many of the common myths about Che. I have drawn on a variety of sources, especially on my previous work on Cuba and the Cuban Revolution. However, two of my most fruitful sources are works by Guevara that were not intended for publication but emerged between thirty and forty years later, when changing political conditions, including the demise of the Soviet Union, convinced the Cuban government that it was no longer necessary to keep them under lock and key. These are *The African Dream: The Diaries of the Revolutionary War in the Congo*, published by Grove Press in 1968, which originally appeared in Spanish in 1938 under the title *Pasajes de la guerra revolucionaria*: As in the case of the *Apuntes*, all translations from Spanish are my own, unless stated otherwise. In June 1968, the Catholic hierarchy appointed new editors who have since substantially reduced the frequency of the journal and its political interventions. Samuel Farber, *Before Stalinism*: Polity Press and Verso Books, I use the terms Communism and Communist for the sake of clarity, simplicity, and convenience. Furthermore, I also use Communism in a generic sense to describe a socioeconomic system, even though, of course, each Communist state has its own peculiarities and individual history. Marxists use the term capitalism similarly, despite the fact that capitalist states like the United States, Japan, and Sweden have significant differences. For a thorough account and analysis of the role of the urban revolutionaries in the struggle against the Batista dictatorship, see Julia E. Harvard University Press, Knopf, 1968, xv—xvi. University of Michigan Press, 1968, 64—65. Progress Publishers, 1968, Farber, *Before Stalinism*, 1968, El Che

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9: A Timeline of the Life of Che Ernesto Guevara -

The body of Che Guevara, the hero of Latin American revolutionaries, on display in Bolivia in Guevara was buried secretly and found 30 years later, when his remains were brought to Cuba.

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