

For Chairman Gonzalo Pt. 3: Poetry and Literature Collection

DECEMBER 3, 2021

STRUGGLESSESSIONS



Editor's note: To celebrate Chairman Gonzalo on his birthday, we present a small collection of poetry and literature dedicated to him. Many of these are written by new writers who have not been featured on Struggle Sessions before as a showcase of the new voices of those in the US who are producing art in the heart of class struggle, inspired by Chairman Gonzalo's defeat of reaction's plans. This includes our first piece of creative non-fiction as we expand beyond theory and poetry to other spheres of cultural and ideological production. If you have a contribution of poetry, an essay or creative non-fiction that honors Chairman Gonzalo, please consider sending it to us for inclusion in this collection.

Untitled Poem

Gonzalo spoke the truth
Promising imperialism's apocalypse and the
Glorious birth of our luminous socialist future

Gonzalo gave us the blueprints for a better world
Entrusting us with the task of sweeping away
The rot and decay and building a new world

The capitalists, the opportunists and the revisionists
Slander him and deny his immortal contributions
They call him a terrorist, a cultish dogmatist

Gonzalo lives on in the peasants, who shed their blood in the struggle for land
Gonzalo lives on in the hearts of the workers, who have nothing and demand
everything

A Poem For Chairman Gonzalo

by Shay

It is easy to say that you'd change the world
It is harder to walk that road
And harder still, and so great the man
Who made that change his code

It is easy to see that the world is wrong
And so to despair and mope
It is harder to be he who saw the wrong
And raised up a red flag of hope

His body may not rest in the clay of Peru
The land he fought so hard to free
But his words, just like Lenin's, will walk round the world
Inspiring all to agree

You parasites, landlords and bosses and pigs
Know that still you must fear the red dawn

For our leader is Chairman Gonzalo
And still we march fearlessly on

My new roommate

We sit on the edge of my bed
and talk about tear gas
and deadbeat dads,
where our ideas come from,

turning over the losses
in our lives. He says, "It's
terrible what they did to your
Chairman Gonzalo" and I

learn his hurts, and what
he thinks it means to be a man.
One time he was cooking alfredo,
I heard him on the phone with

his mom. He was telling her,
"Now don't you worry,
the communists are fighters
for the people."

He's been teaching me
basketball, and every time it
bounces off the rim he says
"It's cause it's a double rim!"

We try to make life better
for each other. He calls me brother

and sometimes, “comrade”
(in a Russian accent) and

we have no intention of settling
for a broken world.

A communist has his life dedicated to communism, although he will not see it, because really we aren't going to see it, at least, I am not going to see it. But that is not the problem. Not seeing the goal for which we struggle only leads us to reflect, to take a hold of the great examples that Marxism has given us.

– Interview with Chairman Gonzalo

For Chairman Gonzalo

By Mari Roja

on september 11, 2021, the reactionaries of peru
finished an assassination nearly three decades in the making,
martyring the greatest communist of our time
chairman gonzalo.

encircled by reaction for 29 years
deprived of sunlight,
deemed too dangerous for human contact,
but this dangerous revolutionary kept maoism
and the revolutionary masses alight in his heart
and never, not once, surrendered the peruvian revolution.

the peruvian fascists, fed by the CIA, both sicker than rats,
tried to parade our chairman in a cage, like an animal.
But 29 years ago, defiantly, he proclaimed;
nothing and nobody could stop the people's war!

he was tortured, starved, faced with death –
and with his life in his fingertips, he raised his fist
and saluted the international proletariat and oppressed nations of the world.
resolutely, he shouted

LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF PERU
THE PEOPLE'S WAR WILL INEVITABLY PREVAIL
GLORY TO MARXISM–LENINISM–MAOISM, PRINCIPALLY MAOISM
HONOR AND GLORY TO THE PERUVIAN PEOPLE

the capitalists have their own heroes and villains;
they turn the world upside down,
making heroes of bloodthirsty imperialist leeches and their mercenaries
and vilifying revolutionaries like our chairman,

the bourgeoisie screech that our chairman was a terrorist –
but it's the old, dying peruvian state which has the blood of the masses
on their hands. they are too ashamed to look at their own history,
but they will be punished for their shortsightedness,

for their ruthless massacres of the people.
for their assassination of chairman gonzalo.

the andes are shaking with the fury of the masses.
they will collect their debt in blood,
led by their party,
guided by his thought.

the imperialists can say what they want.
the oppressed and exploited people of the world know who the real terrorists
are.

everywhere, they are burning US flags –
they know it is imperialism killing them and oppressing their countries.
and the imperialists, dealing with one military defeat after another,

cover, their crumpled hands shaking with fear.
they are giants with feet of clay.
and what they don't know and can't see is that we,
we the workers, the poor and oppressed
we have numbers, history, and truth on our side.
and our heroes are immortal,
their ideas and actions live on in our every struggle.
their blood merges with ours.
and our villains – the reactionaries, the fascists,
the exploiters and oppressors of the people –
will be converted to dust.

comrades! history is calling us;
chairman gonzalo is commanding us!
and our path is clear,
the time to make revolution is here!

nothing and nobody can stop the forward march of history
towards a future free of exploitation and oppression,
luminous communism.

ETERNAL HONOR AND GLORY TO CHAIRMAN GONZALO!
LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF PERU!
THE PEOPLE'S WAR WILL INEVITABLY PREVAIL!
LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!

An Activist's Reflection on Recovery and Chairman Gonzalo

by Facundo

In recovery, we are taught to give ourselves over to a higher power. For many atheists in the program, this has been the bane of their existence, but not me.

Because Maoists believe in a higher power, only one.

Chairman Mao and his greatest pupil Chairman Gonzalo taught us that the masses are our one and only divinity, and to quote him, "... we invoke those Gods in order for them to hear us so when that happens exploitation will be eliminated."

I came to this understanding out of the muck and mire of revisionism and the pure insanity of alcoholism. Most of my adolescent and adult life has been a series of black outs, mistakes and violence. Alcoholism and drug addiction kept me in deep and dark subjectivism; it kept me arrogant with self-deprecation and kept my mind dull with depression, it kept me from seeing myself objectively and the world for what it really was: a good place, filled with good struggling people, including me, but ruled by a relatively small group of imperialists.

But before all of that, I was lost. I grew up in a poor proletarian Chicano neighborhood, seeing blood and death and hearing the screams of people suffering and surviving (not all) somehow. The famous American writer Hubert Selby, Jr., who was also in recovery, once said he was a "scream looking for a mouth": that was me. My anger was all-consuming and misdirected, mostly at myself, but I wanted that anger to go somewhere.

In my 20s my alcoholism had become more acute. I was the one who would do any drug, drink any drink. Because life was bad. My home was bad. The neighborhood was bad. Work was bad. School was bad. Yet, that anger never subsided and little by little I was able to give it some direction and slowly started pointing it at society, at the economic laws of my oppression and our class' exploitation, at the concrete conditions that our suffering sprung from.

And so it was my 20s that I also came to activism. This was during the time of a huge surge nationwide for immigration reform with the "mega marches" initiated by the Sensenbrenner Bill (H.R. 4437, officially known as the "Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005") under

President Bush, which called for more Mexico-US border construction, more collaboration between federal and local authorities to deport immigrants without legal status, making it a felony to give shelter to a deported immigrant coming back into the US, and in general creating more repression against immigrants. Around the country millions of people took the streets to protest against the bill and the emboldened anti-immigrant racism, especially against Mexicans and Central Americans. It was enraging to continue to see the state go after some of the poorest, most oppressed workers in the country. Still fresh in the memory of many people in California was Proposition 187 from the 90s, an earlier statewide version of the bill known as the "Save Our State" initiative which came soon after US imperialism, supported by the smaller Canadian imperialism, unleashed their joint attack against Mexico through the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement. This gave further impetus for the reactionaries and racists to target Mexicans in the US (and anyone else unfortunate enough to be confused as Mexican) who were seen as stealing work from native-born workers.

I would go to the marches with my dad and we would look at the banners with progressive and radical slogans. For me, I was searching, scanning them all looking for something that made sense and would give me the solution to solve the suffering of millions, including my own. I was drowning my pain in alcohol and drugs and I wanted out. As an atheist, I knew religion wouldn't bring me solutions. As an activist I knew liberals and the Democrats were just as bad as the Republicans but more opportunistic. I wanted a drastic change in politics, I was looking for a qualitative leap from reformism to revolution.

So I joined organizations, some even called themselves "parties," but all were revisionist. They all peddled reforms as solutions; they were hopeless and infected others with their hopelessness. I kept drinking. But a spark was lit nonetheless. I still believed in revolution, just not what the revisionists were preaching.

One day walking around my neighborhood I found a used bookstore. As I was going through the politics section I came across a thin little book with a red

vinyl cover by Chairman Mao. Unlike the revisionists, it didn't side-step revolution and war. It did the opposite: it said that revolution is a universal law, that it happens and will and must. This was one more in a long series of sparks that opened my eyes to the world, to see the struggle between those who oppress the people and the people who resist their oppression. It was a violent thing, not something that passing one reform or stopping one bill would stop. Revolution was drastic. It wasn't a thing to be thrown around recklessly by poets and political charlatans. It meant so much to me. It made the blood pass through my veins, into my heart and to all my extremities, and it filled me with light. It was a very modest beginning to what I would later understand as Maoism.

But after snapping out of it and back into the mundane swamp of hopelessness, these eye-opening moments would be subdued by dark thoughts. What difference do I make? We're all doomed. The world is doomed. Our enemies are too powerful. We're too weak. And the liquor stores and the street corner spots were never too far away. Even being poor, getting drunk or high was never a problem we couldn't afford. A curse in the disguise of a blessing.

So what does one do? You have to do something, that's what. And so I did. I put Mao on the shelf. I made several attempts at taking my own life. The closest I got was when I tried killing myself with carbon monoxide poisoning while sitting in my idling car, windows up, one end of the hose hooked up to the exhaust and the other end inside the car.

After a mandatory 72-hour observational hold, and a couple of DUIs, I managed to begrudgingly finish college and went on with my life. I went to some AA meetings but it never stuck. I wasn't ready. But when I came back to activism I found like-minded people in the same revisionist organizations, also angry at the current state of things and especially at the revisionists who were preying on people like us. These friends would eventually become my comrades.

These comrades took great patience in bringing me up politically. Together we studied, and they offered a brighter perspective of the world. They knew about Chairman Mao, they talked about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and they taught me about the Communist Party of Peru, the People's War and its Guiding Thought and Great Leadership Chairman Gonzalo. Another spark. I was given vision: things didn't seem so dark anymore—there was purpose. So I slowly started thinking about my health—my mental health and my alcoholism. I started with therapy, got on medication which helped me stop drinking. I eventually started going to AA and NA meetings. I got a sponsor, started the 12 steps, and above all else I gave myself to my higher power; I pledged my life to the people and the revolutionary movement guided by Maoism. I subjected myself to it, embracing the subordination of my life to the authority of a power greater than myself. In doing so, the weight of fear and purposelessness was lifted from my shoulders.

That is what Chairman Gonzalo has given me, and by extension what he has given my family, my partner, my friends, my comrades and above all else the people who I try hard and humbly to serve every day. A sober man on the road to becoming a revolutionary.

The people are my Gods and they have my undying faith. They are the makers of revolution and history. Nothing in the universe can change this. It isn't something that requires faith—that is just a nice bonus, because I see proof everyday when workers organize for their demands, when tenants push a landlord to the point of great fear and he stops the eviction. I saw it when the people took the streets last year during the rebellions in defense of black lives, how Garrett Foster gave his life defending protesters in Austin, how the people heroically went after the police, how the people broke their noses and set fire to their cars and precincts, how they encircled the police like a nascent network of people's militias. I will never forget the summer of 2020.

I will never forget Chairman Gonzalo who gave the world Maoism as the third and highest stage of Marxism—that says, it is right to rebel. I will never forget Chairman Gonzalo who said from behind the bars of a cage made to humiliate

him—turning it into its opposite as a podium to deliver his message to the world—that now is the time we organize to constitute or reconstitute our Communist Parties; now is the time we make preparations to initiate people’s wars where there aren’t any or develop them where they have already been initiated. There is nothing more inspiring, hopeful and radiating with blinding-like brightness of a future where exploitation and oppression no longer exist. There is nothing greater than the masses who will take us there in the next 50 to 100 years, to a time when this rotten imperialism that holds humanity back is swept from the face of the earth and only remembered as a temporary moment of darkness in the history of humanity.

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