

The Ghosts of the Past: Repented Leftists Revisited

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Act 1 scene 1 Cemeteries of the world are filled with ghosts meeting and discussing; ghosts in sheets of red, ghosts in black and red; some with gaping wounds, others without limbs, some beheaded and blinded. Some came from forgotten weed patches, others from under monumental tombstones. Some speak loud and clear, other curse under their breath – but all are filled with angry indignation.

From near and far they all declare:

All: Revenge!

To those who betrayed our trust, our fight, our sacrifice,
even as they dare to praise or speak
in our name and of our death.

We say a curse on all your kind,
we shall visit

and you shall hear our voices
amplified by the millions
and through the many languages
will be conveyed

our message:

Traitors do not tread upon our graves
Lest you lose your treasures
And more yet

your unholy alliance with all those
whose power tyrannize

our people

And makes a mockery of our sacrifice.

*And so speak the assembly of the ghosts of the past
addressing the rulers of the present,
former comrades
who have taken up the cudgels
of their former enemies.*

*They travel far and wide
to Central and South America ,*

*to the Middle East ,
Asia, Europe and
North America .
Neither color or gender
are forgotten,
or forgiven.
All those who forsake
their class are to be visited...*

Act 1 scene 2

(Midday in Managua in the Presidential Palace, the ghosts of the past stare on the ex-guerrilla President.)

Ghost : Do you know what it cost for you to become President?

President : What's it to you,
who are dead,
the past,
forgotten?

Times have changed.

Time to move on...

Ghost : Drop the clichés -
the election campaign is over.

I want an accounting.

I will remind you everyday
in everyway.

President: I don't keep books
...Maybe millions
from bankers, entrepreneurs
everyone regressive
has to be 'progressive'
for funding me.

Ghost: *(loud prolonged laughter, followed by a cold stern straight ahead look)* That's all known,
your new allies:

the Archbishop, who blessed the mercenaries,
the bankers, who bought the guns,
who murdered our schoolteachers,

the entrepreneurs, who closed the factories
and took their money to Florida .
I'm talking about your former comrades ,
who fought and died,
whose blood and courage
freed the country of the tyranny:
fifty-thousand of the best and most beautiful,
under the earth,
feeding the worms...

President: We tried the revolutionary way.
It didn't work.

Times have changed,
we had to try
a new way.

We were successful,
the proof is that I am President today!

Ghost: You in the tyrant's palace
with your millionaire commanders and partners in crime
incestuous lovers,
criminals and swindlers all!

Who cringe and crawl

Before the emperor
we dared defy.

President: (*screams*) You dare repeat
the outrageous lies, those obscene stories of forbidden love
to me-the-President-elect ?

You miserable ghost! (*He pulls a revolver out of his desk drawer and waves it around in the empty air*)

Ghost: We'll have no more of your empty gestures,
your feigned indignation.

Face reality:

You cannot kill the past,
it lives in the streets and hovels,
the heroes who hop on stumps,
the fighters who sell trinkets in the street,
the boldest taking flight to other lands,

and others still
taking up arms to traffic in drugs and contraband,
to guard the mansions of their former foes –
landowners, bankers, the crap of old.
President: Ghost, guerrilla, comrade or foe.
You must know
that this catastrophe was not of my choice.
It was the Empire
which left us so.
Ghost: No double discourse, Sr. Presidente.
For while you speak in here of the criminal emperor,
out there you are with bended knee:
Austerity for the poor and incentives for the rich.
You open the door and with a deep bow, your forehead touching the floor,
you say ‘Welcome plunderers, pillage to your hearts’ content...
and leave it to me to corrupt the willing
and repress the poor.’
President: (*rises and strides toward the door*) I have no bad conscience.
I never regret of fighting and forgetting:
I have made new friends and abandoned the old.
For that I am now el Presidente!
Ghost: I take leave today.
But I will be back everyday. When you speak,
I will tie your tongue.
When you walk,
I will crowd your way.
When you embrace the Archbishop,
I will raise a bloody fetus to your sight,
product of your heinous legislation.
You will rule from the palace,
but the streets will remain our domain.

Act 1 scene 3

(Senate chambers of a South American State)

Ghost hovers over a Senator in conversation with a General

Senator: The best is to forget the past,
we both believed sincerely

In our cause,
we guerrillas fought and lost,
but now we are allies in democracy.

General: I look forward to your collaboration
in the name of God, Family and Nation.
You can start by striking down our common enemy –
those who would incite the rancor of the past,
rake up tales of death of torture
long past...

and best forgotten.

Senator: I have spoken once and will speak again.
to forget the past,
revenge speaks not to justice
but to chaos,
vindictive families fail to realize
we cannot raise the dead.

Ghost: We have risen,
you Senator of Perversion.
My former Commander who sent me into combat
on a hopeless mission,
captured,
I spent days and nights on the rack,
to save your skin...

Senator: *(aggressively self-righteous)* It was right to send you into combat then
and it is right today for me to be with your former torturer –
a General essential to our defense.

General: *(perplexed by seeming monologue of the Senator)*

Senator, its time for me to go.
We shall continue some
other time.

(*Musing to himself, “Must be a habit from his long stay in solitary”*

He laughs as he walks away.)

Ghost: You’re sitting pretty now, Senator.

It was a long and arduous climb.

Over the corpses of so many comrades,

so many of our suicides, exiles, mentally disturbed.

The tragedy are those militants who build the movements,

some of whom receive the crumbs

of your largesse as Senator.

Most, however, worry about tomorrow’s meal,

struggle with a subsistence pension,

while your new affluent colleagues drink champagne

instead of maté,

celebrating power over solidarity.

Senator: I don’t need your lectures.

I did my time.

(*He begins to pace back and forth, six steps in each direction, the size of his former prison cell*)

Ten years in prison,

nine years in solitary,

six years underground,

without light.

I never talked.

Ghost: True. But now you are making up for lost time.

Your frequent press conferences

in favor of imperial bases,

investments and contamination

makes a mockery of your party’s name – National Liberation.

Better call it ‘National Defamation’.

You live off our past.

You piss on our graves and call it ‘holy water’.

Holy hypocrite.

Senator: We honor your memory each year.

We celebrate our roots,

commemorate our movement,

our fallen militants.

Ghost: Yes, I recall the day and time:
between bending over to be buggered
by the imperial military consul,
and debauching with the bankers.
Shame!
Look at yourself
Self-important
In the Senate.
On your knees before the powerful
At the throats of the poor.
Look in the mirror!
A traitor
Is a traitor
With and without a shave.

Act 1 scene 4

Ghost: Where did you get the design for this Wall?
From Warsaw ?
Your memory of the ghetto
Allows you to recreate another...
As curator,
promoter
of the Holocaust Memory Industry.
Your testimonials
Serve as the foundation
For a living ghetto.
Traps a million Palestinians.
Extract a billion from the brethren
far and near.
Joshua: *(looks up)* I am a survivor...
Ghost: Of sorts...your Aunt Lina died in a camp,
while you, a baby born in
Istanbul ,
claimed her memory

and are generously compensated.

Joshua : ...who educates the world
on the greatest crime in history,
against a uniquely suffering people...

Ghost: Yes they are all
all suffering people.

The Russian Oligarchs, the Israeli death squads,
And the squalid lawyer exploiters
of our people's past misfortunes...

Joshua: We share a common past.
Two thousand years of anti-Semitism
by the Gentile assassins
who laid waste our dreams
and still would,
if they had half a chance.

Ghost: The millions flow to your pots of gold
from the wealthy brethren,

Who are the richest among the rich,
a power among the powerful

In the land of the Gentiles.

You speak to no fool

We knew you kind and kin:

Swindlers and frauds, we called you 'kapos'

In the Warsaw ghetto.

Joshua: You smell of the anti-Semite,
speaking not in Hebrew
but in a foreign language...

Ghost: Yiddish.

Bundist Socialist
and fighter –
That's me.

We beat in our tombs,
Knowing of your crimes:
Everything we suffered from our enemies
You practice in this stolen land.

After Deir Yassin,
came Sabra and Shatila and Jenin
we became a ghost brigade

After the Wall, Lebanon and that roofless prison,
Gaza ,

We met in a grand assembly
And voted to disown you,
our descendents –
We despise your beliefs,

Charlatans' claims
to be a Superior Race

Begotten by the Aryan disgrace.
Joshua: Self-hating Jew!!
Who respects nothing we hold sacred
Our Memory, our Treasury
Our holocaust!
Your claims of battles past
Were lost!
So dare you not deface
Our military State
Which has never
Lost battles

with our inferior foes.

Ghost: Hearts we share
With the resistance
To your oppression
To your wall.
Poorly armed resistance
To your military juggernaut,
Evokes painful memories

of our Warsaw street-fighting days.

Courage we share
With the Intifada
(so like our own uprising)
that denies your

ethnocide,
homicide
and affirms
their humanity.

Joshua: You are not a real Jew
And anti-Semitism is your sport.

Ghost: Rabble and swine,
do not speak our name in vain.

Time will come
when in greed you'll fail.

Returnees will claim their homes, their land, their olive trees.
Will you be ready to share and
Till the land?

Earn your keep with the sweat of your brow?
Or will you traipse on back to Gentile land
And plead as a 'refugee'
from the Promised Land?

Act 1 scene 5

(A feast of billionaires, CEOs, top Party officials at a 30-course Mandarin dinner)

Ghost: Quite a banquet of the rich and powerful.
Very different from the old days

in the cafeterias of the communes and factories
with soup and rice and a chicken bone.

Hu Dung Chi, *(President and Secretary General of the Party, Commander in Chief of the Army and Pater familia of several tycoons)*

Quite in line with the Marxist-Leninist-Dungist Philosophy:
'What's good for the wealthy is good for China '!

Ghost: Let me remind you
the rich went not on the Long March to Yenan
in the Thirties – they collaborated
with the Japanese and Kuo Ming Tang.
In the Fifties they did not fight or die
on the frozen fields of North Korea .

They did not build dams, roads, industries, hospitals and schools
Which your greedy colleagues (do you still call each other 'comrade'?) have
Seized –
excuse me – privatized –
and exploited with imperial partners.

Hu Dung: *(Very cool and nonchalant)*

If you were truly a MARXIST-LENINIST you would know
that equality and social justice was an early stage of building socialism,
what MARX called 'primitive accumulation'.

Today we are in the advanced period
of the six 'C' principles:

Concentration, Centralization, Conspicuous consumption
Corruption and Concupiscence.

The mature state will lead to Equality, Fraternity and Liberty .

Ghost: There are 700 million peasants who liberated and defended the nation
Who now live without pensions, public clinics and schools.

The elders are paupers.

The parents cannot pay school fees for their children.

Millions die at the doors of private clinics or sell

their last pig to see a doctor

or their last chicken to see a nurse.

Your state mature

Is worse than manure

It smells the same

But provides no future

For the millions of poor.

The wealthy prosper

The peasants

Are paupers.

The Party celebrates

The economy grows

Only the people suffer.

Hu Dung: You are spreading anti-state lies –

If you were not spiritual

You would spend time in prison

And I would not have to listen
To your ghostly fabrications.
Ghost: In our assembly of one billion ghosts
Who in time past fought and lost limbs and eyes –
Even our babies ended their lives
At the ends of Japanese knives
Find your wealth – obscene.
Your pillage
Of our wealth is treason.
Your justifications without reason.
For now we ghosts stand as your opposition
Because today's fighters are in prison.
Hu Dung: I have no time to discuss with invisible foes.
Forsooth seek out Mao,
Ho or some other ghost
Who shares your outmoded ideals and dreams.
For me there are reams of contracts to be signed,
Several agitators to consign
To prison. For me
Material reality is the only 'truth'.
Ghost: So easy do you forget the hundred million
Workers and peasants dispossessed
To ape the new billionaires

Of East and West:
Your son included
with his chauffeured limousine,
his empire of office towers,
factories and banks,
to keep his concubines
in palatial mansions
and pay his progeny's foreign education.
There is no better proof than your family,
millionaires form a new class
of exploiters
of exporters

and rentiers.

Put a mirror to your clan,
your family
and all those who lead
and follow your command.

Traitors all!

The poor whisper as they recall
the loss of dignity and land
so too will come your judgment day.

Hu Dung : The aromas of the thirty fine dishes
beckon me on.

The shine of the billionaire's fortune,
the pot of gold
is the light to follow.

I dare look back
only to bellow to the Army
to cover my ass
and slaughter the mass
that dares disturb
the banquet of the billionaires.

Ghost: I will follow you to the table
to remind you of who
is not there
and to cause you indigestion.

Hu Dung: Remember I was called a 'capitalist roader'
in the days of Mao's infamy!

I am protected in History
by a mountain of tales
about the horrors of the past.

I read them not
but I urge on the scribes.
They protect me from indigestion
and dysfunctional erection.

Ghost: Your army of scribblers,
who write your speeches

in Chinese character
and flatter your reforms
in English letters,
cannot abolish
the memory of
the hundreds of millions of
workers and peasants
whose factories and lands were sold for a pittance
to speculators and investors
who paid your cadres
to beat the militants,
frighten their sympathizers
and isolate the rest.

Hu Dung: *(presiding at the banquet)*

A toast to the best and brightest:

Long live Socialism!

Long live Capitalism!

Long live Peace and Friendship between
the Ruling Classes of the World!

Ghost: So many sacrifices produce such gaseous expressions.

Tis the hot sauce and dollar signs that inspire your speeches.

Tis your ass which speaks as your mouth knows better.

Hu Dung: *(Annoyed by the Ghost's intervention)*

Get thee to a factory!

This is no place for old militants.

Militants out! *(He shouts)*

(The billionaires raise their heads in shock:

"Too much to drink",

"Has he lost his mind?",

"Is it a joke to titillate the CEO's"?)

Oligarch : *(Raising his glass to toast the party)*

To the militants:

Tycoons and billionaires!

The vanguard of the New China!

The Leaders of our Superpower!

Act Two, Scene 1 Denial

(A meeting of all former revolutionaries who occupy positions of power in the New World Order.)

Hu Dung We gather because
we have all suffered
visits from the ghosts of the past
who complain and whine
‘that we have forgotten the masses
and created new classes of predators and exploiters.’
Though their threats are immaterial
yet they have spoken
and we should seek
a collective – no, no –
a forthright repudiation
of their blood libel fabrications.

Senator: Let us first admit that we made mistakes
in the past.

We failed to understand
the magic of the marketplace.

So we led some astray
and now they come back
to haunt us.

Let us say
that we admit the errors of our past,
and affirm that now
we have found
our way to prosperity.

Joshua: The Chosen Way

Hu Dung : Not for me.

We were right in the past
and we are right today.

The reason is found
in the changing times
in the different stages
in the dialectical logic.

We are always on top

and the bottom is on the bottom
as it always will be.
President: If the dialectics is not
your kettle of fish,
there is still cocaine
and an orgy
each day
to keep the ghosts away.

Act Two, Scene 2

Hu Dung: We must not distain
the old leaders
and militants
who in their day
were stepping stones
to our glorious future.

President: Yes, let's construct monuments
and mausoleums.
Honor their past
in order to transcend
them today.

Joshua: Let's honor our martyrs
and charge admission
for a visit
to our Remembrance Museums.

Senators: Let's even sing the International
while we reap the profits
of global integration.

(Together they sing a single verse of the International – and stop for loss of memory, some, while continuing, sing 'arise ye stock markets of the world' in place of 'arise ye wretched of the earth'.)

Act Two, Scene 3

Senator Methinks we fear too much the ghosts of the past,
the voices of the dead.

After all we are all honorable men
and our works will live
long after the ghosts have been forgotten.

We should celebrate the free market
and free elections.

Break out the champagne!

Bring on the caviar!

The lambs on the spit...

let the good times flow!

Hu Dung: Democracy and Prosperity with Chinese Characters!

Don't cower,

Asia is the Emerging Superpower.

Joshua: Lets celebrate and cheer,

but keep me clear

of pork and shrimp

to keep my body clean

and my conscience free.

President: Lets play some music

and invite our muses.

Tickets only for millionaires and bankers.

Hu Dung: Only Billionaires for us,

we are now a World Power,

extracting wealth

and killing miners.

But who cares?

Its all part of History

And our growing maturity.

(Hu Dung starts to dance with the First Lady Billionaire)

(The President escorts an ex-Dictator's mistress).

(The Senator paces the floor looking for the General's daughter)

(Joshua beckons a 'billion-dollar babe' from the Diaspora).

Joshua: We have to tell our story.

Our History will refute
the ghastly lies
that cover us with blood
\and gore.
We are founders of a State
of refugees, settlers, squatters
and mega-crooks
who have great fortunes founded.
We sheltered them all,
even our brethren,
the Russian oligarchs –
we sheltered their treasures too!
Hu Dung: We started poor
and fought and struggled
for what we got.
So why shouldn't we enjoy
our fortune and...pleasure too?
Senator: The ghosts are jealous because we survived
while in ill fortune they perished.
We dodged the bullets
and shells
while they lay dead and heard not the calls
of collaboration and reconciliation.
Now they speak
of those who want
what we got
without our struggle
and sacrifice.
Let the text books show
that we,
the survivors and victors,
are generous
to our former adversaries,
even the billionaires,
while we scorn those

who prattle on
of a class struggle of the past
long gone.

Act Three Scene 1 (*A Grand Council of Ghosts from the marked and unmarked graves of revolutionary fighters.*)

Ghosts from Central America : (*With great indignation*)

There is nothing
we share in common
with our former comrades.
Neither memory nor suffering moves them.
They are lost to appeals
to conscience.
Only action
by a new generation
will move
and unseat them.

Ghosts from China : They sing and whore
over our graves.

Even when we berate
their lies,
their degenerate souls,
we see no remorse.
We warn – lest they forget
that one Cultural Revolution
does not preclude another.

So we look and hope
for the dispossessed
to repossess their land
from the predators.
We look to the workers,
who shoulder the architecture
of this emerging world,
to stretch their arms
and bring it down.

March the billionaires
in their dunce caps
through the streets
of the common whores,
down the alleys
of the drug fixes.

We will reach the tallest towers
where the worshipers of the Golden Calf
design the Sweatshops of the World.

And send them flying
down the stairs or out the window –
it's quicker that way.

Ghost >From the Warsaw Ghetto: I fear that little is left
of rebels from the Ghetto
except the commercial enterprise.

So we look to our Semitic brothers
enclosed in walls
and like us suffering
collective punishment and dispossession
who share our fighting spirit.

I found a future
reincarnated
as a Palestinian.

South African Ghost: The most we can do
to be true to our memory:

Clear the debris
of history,
dissociate the dead
from the degenerate living.

Bring together
the remaining few,
true to the cause of Liberation
with the new generation.

Free the past of the hucksters,
Presidents, Senators and

the black bourgeoisie
who falsely claim to be the righteous
heirs of our struggles.
All Ghosts: What is to be done?
We ask the New Generation on the barricades
in struggle: They tell us
the answers are coming,
the voices are rising
from the jungles of Colombia
and the slums of Caracas ,
the millions in the factories and villages of China ,
the mines and the shanties of South Africa .
We can hear the crackle of its guns
in the hands
of the streets fighters of Iraq , Lebanon and Palestine .
Putting fire to the ample haunches
of the billionaires,
owners of the Empire!