

The Internal Guerrilla

Roberto Matta

Congreso Cultural. Havana, Cuba. 1968.

In my opinion, one of the most important topics proposed by this Congress is the one referring to the Integral Development of Humankind. Allow me to expose my views regarding this point, especially in relation to one of its essential aspects: the development of the creative imagination, of an intelligence that builds from poetic imagination, of a subversive imagination, of an erotic imagination also.

I understand that just as Revolution is a collective endeavor on the social plane, it is also a process which must be verified in each individual. For intellectuals and artists, for all people, I consider this personal revolution wholly necessary. Especially so if the intellectual, if the artist, if that person is conscious of belonging to a world which finds itself in the complex stage of building a new social organization, in which the Integral Development has an importance of the first order.

It is not about only *being* with the revolution, but about *being* revolutionary. And being revolutionary implies, of course, being free, or consequently fighting for liberty. Just like people free themselves through the fight against political and economic oppression, individuals can only free themselves through the fight against internal tyrannies: hypocrisy and fear. Prejudices, false pretenses, self-criticism, conventional and schematic ideals constitute the invisible (often mercenary) army against which the internal guerillas set out to defend creative liberty. As with more consciousness there is more light, so too there is more light with more consciousness.

To achieve a cultural revolution there must be a cultural *revelation*, humankind's possibilities must be seen. A high sense of responsibility does not mean practicing self-censorship systematically. In the field of imagination, one must be brave as in the field of battle. The builders of a new world, in

the social sphere as in the cultural, intellectual, and artistic spheres are characterized by generosity, for commitment to their work, but also by defiance, by the capacity to assume, with necessary courage, the risks undertaken by all creators and innovators, by all true revolution.

This problem does not concern the poet exclusively. I think a true person is a poet, an integral person ought to be a poet, because poetry means clinging to more reality, all reality. In the end, an intellectual, an artist, only differentiates themselves from others by their capacity to experience the world more intensely, dealing not only in facts but with imagination also. Stimulating the creative imagination of people, creating conditions for which all have access to true culture (that is, more than accumulating knowledge, but the profound interpretation and appreciation of that knowledge) is the goal of a revolutionary process prolific in its cultural field. A person forged this way will be an integral person, that is to say, a poet, even if their job is not explicitly to write poems.

Art is not a luxury but a necessity, and just like in the social landscape, Revolution confronts new problems and finds new ways to solve them, in the landscape of artistic creation and intellectual labor a truly creative imagination will propose solution to a renewed set of problems, and will find the means of investigation and expression to resolve them.

Art is the desire for what does not exist, and it is also the tool for achieving that desire.

I hope this Congress will not only meet the undebiable need to harbor information and exchange of ideas dear for artists and intellectuals. I hope for more: a discussion on how far we will let our victory over internal guerrillas depend on fruitful development and that an integral person, a poet, a new person, can become reality.