

# *Reminiscences*



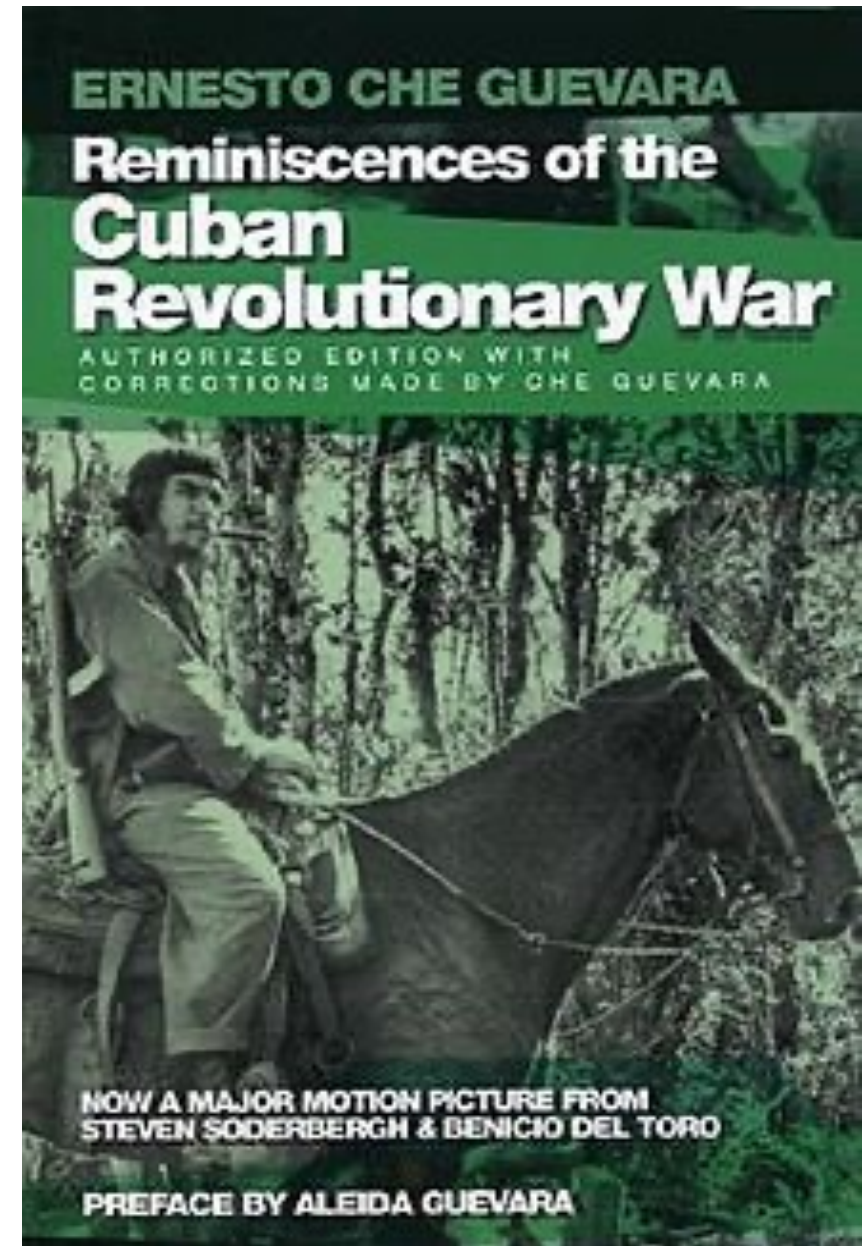
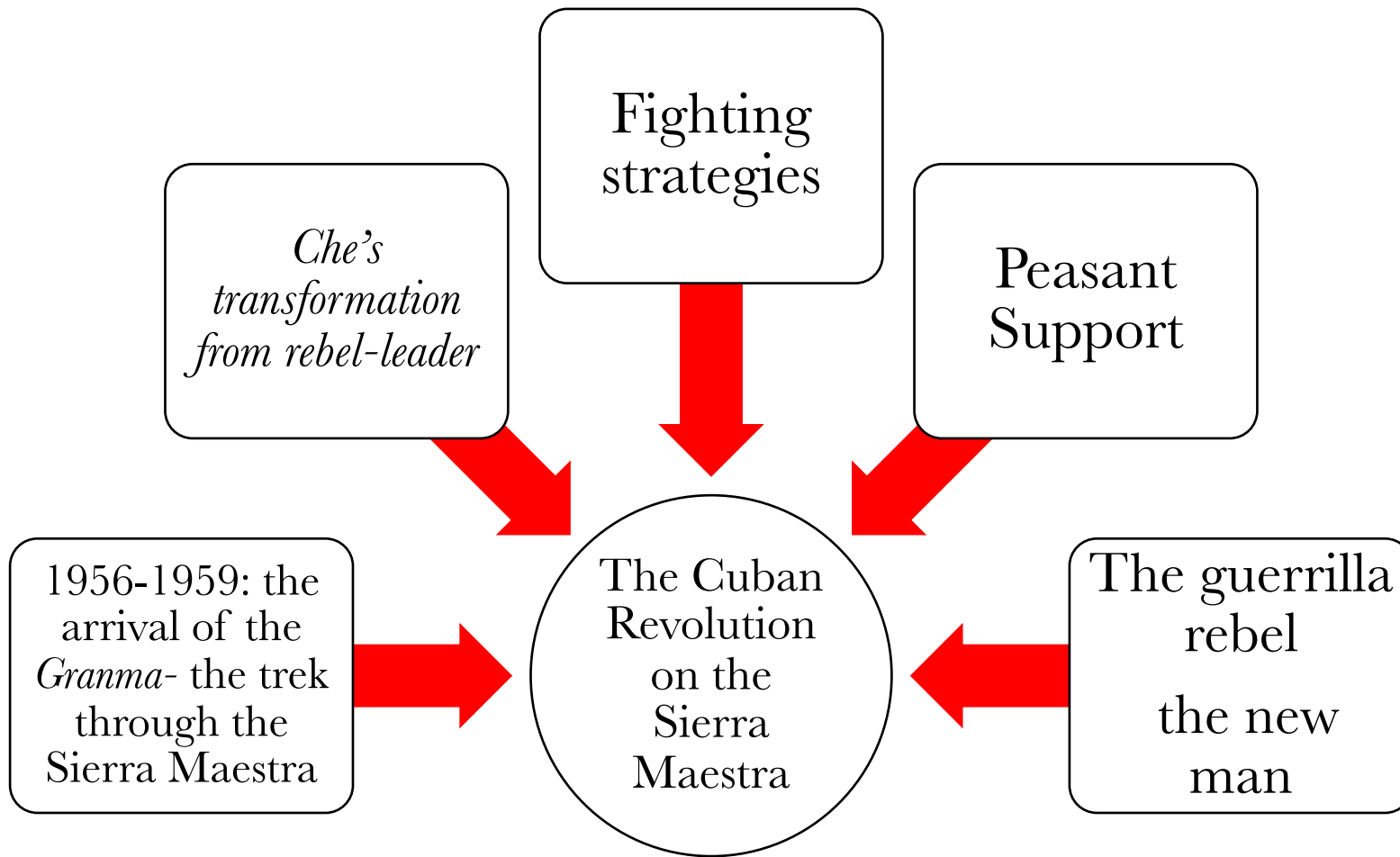
“Prologue,” “Alegría de Pío,” “Air Attack”, “The Morale and Discipline of the Troops,” “Death of a Traitor”

Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>

# Today's objectives

- **Review** Che's goals, writing style, and initial thoughts on what type of text *Reminiscences* is;
- **Discuss** the literary classification of *Reminiscences* and rhetorical strategies Che employs (sometimes without our realizing it!)
- **Ask/answer** questions related to today's readings and prepare for what's to come on Friday.

# Reminiscences (1961)



# Warm-up: A word from our author



Why does Che write  
*Reminiscences*, according to his  
“Prologue”?



# What should we look out for in Che's *Reminiscences*?

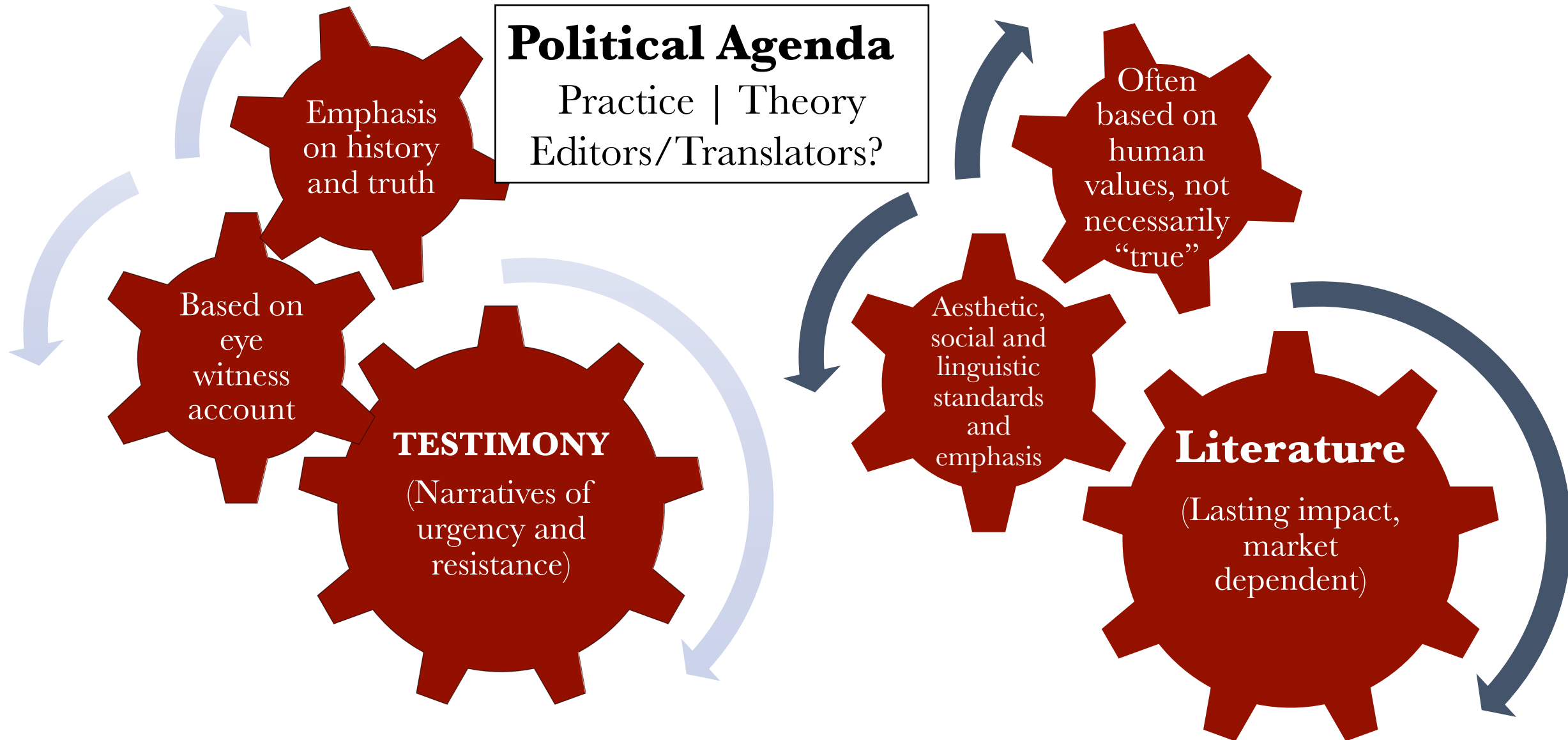
- First person account – fragmented
- Published *after* the triumph of the Cuban Revolution (1959) and in the context of Castro's speech *Words to the Intellectuals* (1961)
- Che, in this moment, *is*, the face of transcontinental revolution...
- And he is extremely well-read ... and artfully rhetorical...



# Guiding Questions

1. What is the condition of the rebel troops upon arriving to the *Sierra Maestra*?
2. What details does Che include/exclude from his narrative? Why do you think he does this?
3. What details of his specific (personal) experience does he include? Does his experience differ from that of the other rebels?
4. What are some of the issues that Che and the other rebels face early on in the fight? Is there a remedy for them?
5. Can you see some of the concepts/thematic lines that Che brings out in “A Child of My Environment” in *Reminiscences*? What other topics/concepts/themes begin to arise?
6. How do you find Che’s writing style? Is this a different Che from the one we read in *The Motorcycle Diaries*?

# The literary classification of Che's *Reminiscences*



John Beverley. *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth* (2004)

Terry Eagleton, *The Event of Literature* (2012)

# *Che's Literary and Rhetorical Strategies*

## **False Modesty**

- Give the appearance of modesty (but really believe the contrary)

Ellipsis...

Hyperbole



## **Teaching by Contraries**

- Use opposite ideals to promote the “right” path (similar to a fable)



## **Hindsight | Moral**

- We must learn something from this (*and we already did... look at us!*)



How do you observe these literary classifications and rhetorical strategies in the content of today's chapters??

**7-10 minutes!**

### **The Morale and Discipline of the Troops**

- 1. Does the chapter, “The Morale and Discipline of the Revolutionary Fighters” represent a narrative shift in *Reminiscences*? Why or why not?
- 2. What broader lesson(s) do you think Che hopes we will take away from this chapter?

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### **Death of a Traitor**

- 1. Does the content of “Death of a Traitor” bring together some of the testimonial and literary characteristics and/or rhetorical strategies we discussed earlier in class today? Which ones and why?
- 2 Why do you think Che dedicates so much textual space to Eutimio Guerra, a traitor of the Revolution?

# Wrapping up and looking forward to Friday

## **Noteworthy Examples (Morale and Discipline)**

The Rebel Army | Vanguard  
(The Mountain | trajectory)

Frank País (the City)

Fidel Castro?

**El Patojo**

## **Poor Examples (and punishments)**

### **The Reinforcements**

Batista's Troops

Traitors  
(Eutimio Guerra)

Weak individuals  
(Morán, the deserter)

# For Friday

- *Reminiscences*: “Bitter Days,” “Reinforcements,” “El Patojo”
  - 1. How does Che open the “Bitter Days” chapter, and why? Why are they, in fact, “bitter days”?
  - 2. Who are the reinforcements, and how does Che describe them, and who does he compare them to?
  - 3. Who is “El Patojo,” and does Che dedicate an entire chapter of his book on the Cuban Revolution to a man who didn’t even fight in the movement?

# Bibliography

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- Gugelberger, Georg. 1996. *The Real Thing: Testimonial Discourse and Latin America*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.