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The Road Less Traveled: Forms of Mobility in

The Motorcycle Diaries

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The Road Less Traveled: Forms of Mobility in

The Motorcycle Diaries

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The Road Less Traveled: Forms of Mobility in

The Motorcycle Diaries

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The Road Less Traveled is about engaging film from a geographic perspective, specifically analyzing the underlying structures, cultural contexts and forces affecting the movements of the two main protagonists of the film *The Motorcycle Diaries*. The focus at the individual scale aims to reveal not just how and where, but why people chose to move where they do. The paper is divided into five main chapters: mobility as resistance, mobility as structured process in the form of motility and moorings, forced mobility as distinctive from chosen mobility, mobility as discovery and a final body chapter that demonstrates examples of all these types of mobility. These sections will mainly flow as neoformal, mostly chronologic descriptions of the film text, but will also occasionally reference the written text of the two diaries on which the movie is based. While the main character of the film is Che Guevara, no attention will be dedicated to his revolutionary life outside of the time frame encompassed by the film.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Two men stand in an airplane hangar next to a runway in northern Venezuela. Their exchange is brief but meaningful. This goodbye is not an easy one. The pair has spent the last seven months traveling side by side the length and breadth of the Spanish-speaking countries of South America. After 12,425 kilometers via motorcycle, hitched rides, footpath, and boats large and small, their reluctance to part is understandable. Their adventure has not known a day of separation. The noisy cargo plane that waits nearby signals its end.

The scene described above is the bittersweet conclusion of the film *The Motorcycle Diaries*, the 2004 Focus Features release that received much critical praise and enjoyed commercial success. The film is based on travel diaries kept by two Argentinians. One, Alberto Granado, was a 29-year-old biochemist and doctor specializing in leprosy treatments. His traveling companion was a 23-year-old, asthmatic medical student named Ernesto Guevara de la Serna. This is the man whose face would launch a thousand t-shirts and be forever inscribed in political conversation and popular culture simply as Che.

The goal of this paper is to add to the growing bodies of literature within the geography subfields of film geography and mobilities research. In recent years scholars have called for a study of mobilities that is not exclusive to any one academic

discipline (see Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007; Cresswell 2006).

The basis of this lobby for a new focus on mobility study comes from the fact that these scholars do not believe that current models within sociology, geography and

other social sciences adequately deal with the topic. We urgently need more systematic comparative studies of how cultural mobilities are generated in everyday life and facilitated as well as constrained by specific circuits and institutions (Salazar 2010).

Slide 1: Map of route taken from Che Guevara's diary

map of
the motorcycle diaries



This paper is concerned with the ways in which mobility research, or research on human movement at various scales and in various contexts, intersects with the growing subfield of film geography. This is to fill a current gap in research within the discipline. It is surprising that so few scholars have considered something so inherently mobile, the motion picture, worthy of analysis under the mobilities rubric. Researchers who study mobility can and should take film texts as valid sites of inquiry.

Media is omnipresent. One could surmise that considering the breadth and speed of contemporary technological advances in communication that overall knowledge would likewise grow in conjunction. Lukinbeal and Craine (2009) argue, however, that the need for media literacy in a world saturated by it has never been higher. While geographic information and access are on the rise, geographic literacy seems to be on the decline. If McLuhan (1964) is right that “the medium is the message,” it is imperative to understand the medium to get to the message.

With their imagery of changing landscapes, crossings of different cultures and constant movement between places, road movies are a natural marriage of geographical inquiry and mobility. With all this in mind, *The Motorcycle Diaries* is the ideal film for such academic focus.

In this film, the protagonists decided to embark on a journey across their native land. South America was “Our America with a capital A” as Guevara (Guevara 2004, p. 32) penned it or “my own long-suffering continent” to borrow the words of Granado (Granado 2004, p. xvii). They rode a Norton 500 cc motorcycle they called

“La Poderosa,” *The Mighty One*. Leaving Buenos Aires on January 4th, 1952, they traveled for seven months. They maintained diaries along the entire trip and these notes, reflected upon and later modified into narrative, were published many years after Che’s death. The two diaries together form the source material for the film script.

The trip was quite extensive. It included everything from the pampas of Argentina to the many ridges of the Andes. They swam in the Pacific Ocean and walked through parts of the Atacama Desert. They took a raft down the Amazon and a plane over the Caribbean. Many analysts have said (Granado and Guevara inclusive) that this was the formative trip of Che “the revolutionary’s” life. In a way, the film itself was made to demonstrate this idea. However, it is at this juncture that I must be clear about my stated research goals. I do not intend to discuss Che Guevara’s life outside of the context of this particular film. The geographic lens I wish to place on this study is neither political nor historical, but rather, cinematic.

My aim is at a deeper level. My focus is on the movement involved in his journey. The trip changed his life, but what made the trip possible? There are underlying structures that both enable and prevent mobility. I seek to demonstrate how various types of mobility are represented in this one particular film text.

The paper is divided into four major sections, each of which will provide a neoformal analysis of the film text, occasionally referencing the written diaries as corroboration. Each section will introduce a topic related to mobility. In order of

presentation they are: mobility as resistance; motility (potential movement) and moorings (enablers of movement); forced mobility; and lastly, mobility as discovery.

Mobility as resistance is an obvious choice of focus considering the study subject. Among the pantheon of famous and infamous resistance leaders in Latin America, Che Guevara stands out. Why is this so? Perhaps it is because so many of the names associated with revolutions – Sandino, Castro, Zapata – are tied intimately with their birth nation while Che, ever the traveler, is paired with multiple revolts spanning three continents. How many Che t-shirt wearers could place the icon on a map if asked where he was born? The combination of his prolific mobility and resistance to accepted norms, even before his revolutionary years, makes Che an indelible subject for the exploration of the idea of mobility as resistance. That being said, I will curtail my focus to this film and the diaries off which it is based and not discuss Guevara's political actions outside of these strictures. I feel that his actions on screen in and of themselves are sufficient support of my arguments therein.

The term motility is used in biology to refer to the capacity of an animal to move or of a cell or an organ (such as they eye). In sociology, for example, it is found in sociological analyses of the body to describe the body in motion (Kaufmann et. al. 2004). I consider the ways in which Granado and Guevara use their motility as a type of mobile capital. The various things that allow them to move – financial means, ownership of a motorcycle, knowledge of basic mechanics to fix the bike among others – all add into their success on the road.

Additionally, moorings, or places of fixity that enable movement, are the yin to the motility yang. Mooring is a broad term that can include any enabler of movement. For instance, a fleet of airplanes is not useful unless a fixed airport communicating which plane is flying where is established. A river that is too deep to ford necessitates a ferry to reach the other side. Many times in the film *Granado and Guevara* face situations where established moorings enable their trip to continue. Without them, their motility capital would often be for naught.

Third, forced mobility is discussed as distinct from mobility that is chosen over the same path. In contemporary society such a dichotomy is easy to see. Consider the Mexico-United States border. Across this imaginary line passes, each and every day, people going to work, on vacation, visiting family or conducting state business to name but a few. Crossing this same extended line are people fleeing the violence of drug-related warfare, clandestinely moving into America to find better opportunities, or smuggling illegal substances to be distributed on black markets because they cannot make a living in a legitimate manner. The point is, the simple fact of movement across space is not a deep enough analysis. Underlying causes as to *why* people move must be investigated in order to understand their various mobilities. Chapter four will focus on such distinctions.

The next chapter will approach the subject of mobility as discovery. Road films and travel literature are the perfect media from which to glean this idea of mobility as discovery. This is because both show the complete story arc in a compact space. To argue that discovery has happened, one must show both the

starting point *and* the resultant change. Film and literal narratives allow for such an analysis. This film (and its diaries) in particular reveal myriad scenes in which discovery – of places, of ideals, of truth – take the forefront of the action. In this chapter I point out several of these scenes and describe them and their importance in detail.

Lastly, the film culminates at the site of a leper colony deep in the Peruvian Amazon. It is the San Pablo Leper Colony, whose patients are the most severe cases in the entire continent. From the planning stages of the trip, the destination was a major goal for both Guevara and Granado. Each man was hoping to further his career prospects in the field of leprology, and time and experience in this place was one of the most serious steps they could possibly take to that end.

It is the culmination of not just the film, but also of the subject of this study. Within their time at the colony, the viewer sees bits of every type of mobility discussed thus far. The travelers are resistant to the rules of the Mother Superior that segregate the healthy from the sick. They have used their extensive motility capital and established moorings just to make it to this remote place. They encounter an entire community of ill souls that were forced from their former lives to be in this place due to their malady. Both men discover many things about themselves, about the treatment of people and about life in the far reaches of their birth continent.

When selecting a valid site of inquiry for the study of how film, geography and mobility can intersect, I believe *The Motorcycle Diaries* is among the best-suited

places to start. Its nomadic protagonists, narrative structure and place specific cultural revelations all make this film an accessible area of study that will hopefully grow the current scholarship on these topics in positive and lasting ways.

Chapter 2

Mobility as Resistance

Understanding the various and sundry reasons individuals choose to be mobile requires detailed examination. The analysis from this chapter will center around an idea put forth by Cresswell (2010) when reflecting on the classic migration theory of getting from point A to point B. In this, a given individual moves from point A to point B based on the aggregation of all considered push and pull factors, such as job opportunity, cost of living, or political asylum among many others. What remains completely unexplored, argues Cresswell, is the line between the points. What of the line itself? What if neither point is compelling enough to draw the individual? What if that which is desired is the in-between, nomadic existence? Such questions form the essence of this chapter.

In previous work, Cresswell (1993) conducted a geographical reading of “On The Road” by Jack Kerouac to highlight the idea that mobility can be a form of active resistance. Other published essays have discussed the idea that mobility as a life choice concomitantly demands that the former lifestyle be relinquished (see Leong et. al. 1997; Creekmur 1997; Klinger 1997). To read film in this way tasks the observer to find three things: an acknowledged form of domesticity or stasis; comparison with a mobile lifestyle; and personal agency in choosing the mobile over the fixed. This chapter will seek to show the ways in which *The Motorcycle Diaries* is accessible to these terms by providing a chronological description of the film’s

events and the following with several examples of mobility as resistance from both the film and Guevara's diary.

The opening titles of the film reveal a scene familiar to the start of most long journeys: the packing of bags in preparation. The scene cuts between the two main protagonists, the 29-year-old biochemist and the motorcycle's owner Alberto "Mial"

Slide 2: Leaving Buenos Aires for the open road



Granado and his co-pilot, 23-year-old asthmatic medical student, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, loading their essential gear into the few bags they will carry. Guevara explains their intentions in voiceover:

The plan: 8000 kilometers in four months. The method: improvisation. The goal: to explore a continent we had only known in books. The equipment: "The Mighty One," an aged, leaky 1939 Norton 500.¹

As Ernesto describes the plan to the viewer, the shots of preparation cut to the tail end of a family meal in the Guevara home. Che is arguing with his father

¹ When the dialogue is italicized and referring to Che it is lines from the film spoken in voiceover.

about the necessity of the trip. His father's resistance to it is spurred by the fact that Che is only one semester away from becoming a doctor. Che insists this can wait. The journey ahead is more important.

Guevara continues to introduce the travelers and their reasons for leaving, including narration of two shots showing Che's interests: on a subway with a skull to aid his anatomical studies; and on the rugby field displaying both his athletic prowess and his occasional asthma.

Next Guevara and Granado meet in a local café and spread a map of South America over the table. Granado draws a winding line in pen over the continent to show their proposed route of adventure. He mentions that he is willing to make a slight detour to the Argentine coast to Miramar, the home of Che's girlfriend. As he finishes the continuous line at the top of the map, Granado's joy at the prospect of the trip is palpable.

Mial: We land on the Guajira Peninsula. The tip of this grand continent. Bellies full of wine and two tropical beauties, hopefully sisters...

After a bit of banter and confirming the date after which Che will have finished his exams, Mial makes his main point of taking the trip:

Mial: Check out that guy over there. Do you want to end up like that?

The camera cuts to a middle-aged, chubby man hunched on his café table over a newspaper. There are two dirty coffee cups next to him. He is asleep, upright in his chair.

Mial: You don't want to end up like that, Fuser.

The shot cuts to the scene of farewell from the Guevara home, as all of Guevara's immediate family is present in front of their stoop. The excitement for what lay ahead masks the difficulty in bidding farewell to his family. Many hugs are given and after seemingly interminable well wishing, the pair ride off. Luckily, they make it more than a block, barely missing an on-coming bus immediately upon departure.

The camera cuts to an open road, straight and narrow into the vanishing point on the horizon. A shaky camera holds this view as part of a letter Guevara wrote to his mother is read in voiceover by the author:

Dear Mom,

Buenos Aires is behind us. Gone is "this wretched life", the uninspiring lectures, the papers and medical exams. All of Latin America is ahead of us. From now on we only trust in "The Mighty One." ... I am glad we've left "civilization" behind and are now a bit closer to the land.

A break from the film text is needed here to discuss the language Guevara and Granado use in the film as well as the phrases in Guevara's diary.

The plan of the trip is beautiful in its simplicity. Guevara merely states an amount of time, a distance in kilometers and an improvised route along and through an entire continent. There are no points A and B in this arrangement. Indeed, their journey will be the aforementioned, and as yet unanalyzed, line between the two points.

Conversations about Guevara's status in medical school alerts the viewer that Che is very close to finishing his studies. However, he makes it clear that "the uninspiring lectures, the papers and medical exams" are considered a "wretched

life” in comparison to the thought of exploring Latin America. Thus, the three aforementioned objectives are achieved: 1) a form of domesticity or stasis has been acknowledged (a promising medical career in Buenos Aires); 2) a value judgment has been made (between staying and going); and 3) the mobile lifestyle has been actively chosen over continued sedentariness.

Further proof of Che’s preference for the road over medical school is seen in both the film and his diary. Guevara’s father chides Che in the opening scene of the film for leaving on a trip with only one semester of medical school remaining. Che assures his father that it can wait and not be affected, which gains a sly smile from his mother. Che’s father still argues the pragmatism of the point, but as the two men prepare to say farewell to each other the father’s displeasure at Che’s leaving dissipates and his true feelings about the trip emerge.

Father: Tough times are ahead. But to tell the truth, I’ve always dreamt of doing something like this. I confess that if I were a few years younger I’d climb on that motorcycle with you.

Che: Imagine I’m doing it for both of us.

While he assuages his father, Che notes in his diary a separate encounter along the road where his decision is adamantly derided by a friend of Alberto’s.

...stopping next in Necochea...receiving a genial welcome from the friend [of Alberto] and a not so genial welcome from his wife who had spotted the danger in our resolutely bohemian ways. ‘You have only one year left before you qualify as a doctor and yet you’re going away? You have no idea when you’ll be back? But why?’

We couldn’t give precise answers to her desperate questions and this horrified her. (Guevara 2004, p. 38).

Granado's desire to resist domestic norms is also seen in these first few minutes of film action. He speaks of parties, exotic women and refusal to end up a fat man sitting alone in a quiet café whose greatest challenge seems to be staying awake. Guevara confirms the parallel mindset of the two travelers as he speaks in voiceover just after Granado makes an example of the portly café patron: *What we had in common: our restlessness, our impassioned spirits, and a love for the open road.* Che reaffirms this mindset later in the trip in his diary.

I now know, by an almost fatalistic conformity with the facts that my destiny is to travel, or perhaps it's better to say that traveling is *our* destiny, because Alberto feels the same. (ibid, p. 45, emphasis added).

Returning to the film, the two friends camp along the road for the first few days as they motor towards their first stop on the adventure, Miramar. This stopover introduces us to a new character. Chichina, Guevara's girlfriend at the time, lived in this port town, six hundred kilometers south by southwest from their point of departure in Buenos Aires. She comes from a much richer family than either of the travelers. This is evidenced as the scene opens on a perfectly manicured estate lawn that displays what would be more aptly called a two-story castle than a house. The gaudy architecture of the manor and the landscaping even prompt Granado to say on screen, "Where the fuck are we, Switzerland?"

The juxtaposition of the smoking, foul smelling bike carrying dust caked riders is made even more stark by the cut to a lavish dinner party. The ambiance is fit with candelabras, a grand piano, maids and servants, and what appears to be a

rival suitor telling Chichina's father about a recent trip to Cambridge and London where he attended various seminars. When Che and Mial ascertain that his doctorate is in law, not medicine, they chide him subtly yet sarcastically.

The sound of a piano being played moves the action into the large living room for dancing. Granado, suave on the dance floor, whirls Chichina around for a few songs. Guevara, shy in this social setting, is eventually dragged into a tango with his significant other. As she guides him through some steps their passion for one another is revealed.

Che: Tonight?

Chichina: Dad asked Aunt Rosana not to let me out of her sight. And Mom promised the Virgin that she'd walk to her sanctuary if we break up.

Che: Don't your parents realize that the deeper you bury the diamonds, the more determined the pirate is to take them?

Chichina: Believe me, this diamond wouldn't mind being taken.

Granado has literally tangoed out of the room and out of sight with one of the attractive maids. Not so lucky is Guevara, who shortly learns that his sleeping quarters will not be near Chichina, but rather out on that nice lawn in his tent.

In the next scene, Che and Chichina are seen walking together around the estate while Mial laments on a rock wall. The two men speak as they later do some maintenance on the motorcycle. Granado is frustrated that their two-day layover has turned into a six-day pleasure stay. He urges his younger companion to say his farewells to Chichina and continue the trip. The next day Che and Chichina drive one of the family's cars into the woods to be intimate.

Chichina: (as she pushes him away) If you stayed we could do many things, Ernesto, but only if you stayed.

Che: That didn't sound so good.

Chichina: What do you want to hear? That I'll wait for you?

Che: I told you I'm coming back.

Chichina: (sarcastically) I have the dog to prove it.

Che: You don't like him?

Chichina: What do you want, Ernesto? What do you want to hear?

That I'll wait forever, that I'll wait months on end for you to return?

A goodbye follows in the next scene as Mial jumps on the motorcycle behind Che, who is locked in a kiss with a tearful Chichina. They give thanks for the hospitality and both men, one excited and the other torn, rumble off the impeccable lawn and into the remote hills and valleys of Patagonia.

The landscape is bleak, rugged, vast. The frigid tops of the Andes call from afar. The winding dirt roads beneath the bike bounce the travelers along, two bits of tumbleweed blowing across primitive surroundings. Che's voice: *Each moment seems split in two: melancholy for what is left behind, and the excitement of entering a new land.*

Guevara's resistance from the staid life of a medical student is understandable. After years of repetition, he was tired of it. It is the farewell from his beloved Chichina that speaks volumes about his commitment to resist domestic life and travel the endless pathways across the continent. It was not an easy task. Lines of a poem are read in voiceover, but the poem is put into better context in his diary:

Our journey was suspended in that haven of indecision, subordinate to the words that give consent and create bonds. Alberto saw the danger and was already imagining himself alone on the roads of America, though he

never raised his voice. The struggle was between she and I. For a moment as I left, victorious, or so I thought, Otero Silva's lines rang in my ears...*My heart swaying between her and the street, the road. I don't know where I found the strength to free myself from her eyes, to slip from her arms...She remained clouded by tears, her anguish hidden by the rain.* (Guevara 2004, p. 36).

Chichina seems tempted by the idea of flight when she says, "This diamond wouldn't mind being taken," but ultimately she stays, as the social constraints on her are too great. A strict family, a lavish homestead and a desire to settle down far outweigh any brief desires of resistance. She merely sends Guevara away with a kiss, tears, and fifteen American dollars in the hopes that Che will buy her a bathing suit, should the pair make it to Miami. These funds will become a point of contention for Guevara and Granada, which will be discussed in due course.

Both men have chosen to travel knowing that the result would be absence from their beloved families, denial of assured careers and tough goodbyes mixed with the on-coming unknown. Despite all this, Guevara would pen the following:

On camp beds, the only beds we'd know from now on...we still looked into the future with impatient joy. We seemed to breathe more freely, a lighter air, an air of adventure. Distant countries, heroic deeds and beautiful women spun around and around in our turbulent imaginations.

My tired eyes refused to sleep and in them a pair of green spots swirled, representing the world I had left for dead behind me and mocking the so-called liberation I sought. They harnessed their image to my extraordinary flight across the lands and seas of the world. (ibid, p. 40).

The men chose this path and chose it gladly. They were not fleeing any type of persecution. Instead, they fled the very creature comforts to which so many of us cling for dear life. While this line of action may seem counter intuitive, the

protagonists saw it as the only possible course to invigorate their lives as well as shed their ignorance about the continent on which they lived.

Resistance is a relative term. What were they resisting? More importantly, *how* were they resisting? If their choice of resistance was to be mobile, then their rejection was of being sedentary. I have shown clearly in the chapter that multiple practices and routines were the cause for their flight. Che was bored of class lectures and textbooks. He was not comfortable immersed in the glamorous wealth of Chichina's family or the upper middle class status of his own. To Che, the comfort and status he knew were "this wretched life" and the road was the cure for this malady.

Che chose flight over many things: a promising medical career; time with his family; a relationship with his girlfriend. As is revealed by his dialogue later in the film, none of these were easy to leave behind. However, the difficulty he had in leaving them is proof positive that the road he chose instead, the mobility for which he opted, was many times stronger than any force pulling him the opposite direction, trying to anchor him in place.

Like Kerouac's *On The Road* or the innumerable travelogues penned by nomadic souls the world over, the explanation of flight over stasis is at once elusive and concrete. None of the actors in these settings can say precisely what they want to achieve, but can usually describe the drab routines they wish to avoid. Mobility as a form of resistance is something almost ethereal. To be in motion is to be alive.

Chapter 3

Motility and Moorings

Before further textual explanation is provided, the first of the two key terms explored in this chapter, motility, must be approached. No matter how strong the desire to do so might be, there is a large gulf between the potential to travel and the actuality of movement. This chapter, in part, will attempt to operationalize the term motility, which is defined by Kaufman (2002) as “*the way in which an individual appropriates what is possible in the domain of mobility and puts this potential to use for his or her actions*” (p. 37, emphasis in the original). Underneath our motivations to move lie pragmatic infrastructures that enable or impede our ability to do so.

The purpose of this section is to show that mobility must be contextualized and examined on an individual scale. The factors that enable any given person’s mobility differ greatly depending on a wide array of variables and circumstances. This section will explicate some of the factors that enabled this particular journey.

To set the proper context to begin understanding motility, we must revisit the first six and a half minutes of screen time. In *The Motorcycle Diaries* the *mise-en-scene* used by the filmmakers exhibits no less than six elements that make up Guevara’s motility capital.

The first is seen immediately. As both men pack, the viewer sees bureaus full of clothes, boxes of medical supplies and stacks of books. Before even being properly introduced, the viewer can infer by their surroundings that these men are of at least middle if not upper middle class status. Shortly after this scene is one in

which Guevara argues with his parents about taking the trip. He, his parents and his four siblings are present, all clean cut, well dressed and sitting around a dining table littered with abundant food and drink, a further clue to Guevara's elevated socio-economic situation.

Second, the next scene cuts to Che playing rugby. This shows that despite being "occasionally asthmatic" he is in good physical condition to undertake a long journey that may require a good deal of physicality. In addition, Guevara and Granado's physical prowess paid them direct returns. In one entry from Che's diary, he describes a scene in which he and Mial hitched a ride to train station out of money and very hungry.

There we encountered a group of laborers practicing for a football match with a rival team. Alberto took a pair of running shoes out of his backpack and started to sound off. The result was spectacular. We were signed up for the match on the following Sunday; in return: food, board and transport to Iquique (Guevara 2004, p. 83).

Their skills on the playing field resulted in accumulation of much needed goods.

Third, Che introduces both men in voiceover by name, age, nickname and area of specialty. We find out that Granado is a biochemist and Guevara is a medical student specializing in leprosy. When this fact is put forth, Che is seen rather anecdotally pulling a skull out of his backpack on the subway, much to the confusion of his fellow passengers. This informs viewers that not only are these men educated, but that they have specialized knowledge in fields of medicine. As will be seen later, this education was used as a bartering tool many times to gain lodging, food and other helpful items that kept their trip in motion.

Fourth, there are only a few lines of exchange about it, but Guevara has the ability to take time off from his studies without sacrificing his future career. His father declares, "You're only one semester away from becoming a doctor." To which Che responds, "That can wait." This comment is received by a sly smile on the part of his mother. The trip's departure date is planned for January 4th because, as Granado confirms with his traveling companion, this is when Guevara will be done with the exams for his current semester of study. Lastly, as the pair mounts the motorcycle to depart Granado notes to Che's mother, "Don't worry ma'am. He'll come back and be the doctor we all want him to be." This is a huge part of Guevara's motility capital. Many people feel they cannot be mobile because the social constraints on them are too great. Guevara has found the time to go without putting his career in jeopardy.

Fifth, the ownership of the motorcycle itself lends a great deal of capital to the travelers. Without consistent means of transit, they would not be able to dictate their schedule nor plan their own route. They would have to rely on public transit or hitch rides when and where available, as we will see later in the film. To be able to store all of their rations and gear in one mobile space and have the only constraint on them be the availability of a road the motorcycle can handle, their motility capital increases dramatically.

Last, and most understated, is their knowledge of the Spanish language. This is perhaps one of the most taken for granted aspects of travel in the modern world. While English may be the lingua franca of today's cruise ships and tour buses, Guevara and Granado are planning on traveling the length and breadth of a vast

continent, often sleeping in, eating at and driving through cities and towns where no one speaks anything but the local language. Again, the *mise-en-scene* utilized subtly displays their knowledge of and planning for this dilemma. When Granado draws the route on the map of South America while the two sit in a café in the first few minutes of the film, the line never crosses into Brazil. Their goal was to get to know the land and meet as many people along the way as possible. This would be inconceivable if a common language were not spoken. On a trip like this, their native tongue adds greatly to their motility capital cache.

Now that some elements of the protagonist's motility are understood, the description of the film itself resumes as the men cross their first international border into Chile. The film transitions from wide, imposing landscape shots to Guevara and Granado entering a city and arguing. Their trip has now met some travail, and their need for creative solutions is at an all-time high. Upon rounding a curve Granado exclaims, "You can fix anything with wire!" referring to a recent patch job he had done on the motorcycle. The brutal reality, revealed seconds later, is that when it comes to motorcycle repair, wire does not in fact fix everything. The pair crashes and incurs some minor injuries.

Reduced to walking the bike until they can find a proper mechanic, the men set out to find some lodging out of the cold wind that has accompanied them in their traverse of the Andes. In a letter to his mother, read again in voiceover, Guevara informs her that "*money and food are scarce but we've managed to bum some free food, thanks to our secret weapon. Alberto's impeccable bullshitting.*" Over the course

of the next fifteen minutes of film is a trio of rehearsed play actions between Guevara and Granado. All three scenes highlight an invaluable element of their collective motility: their specialized knowledge of medicine paired with an audacious and indomitable capacity to “bullshit” people to get what they need. As these scenes are very telling of how persuasive and effective the two trekkers can be, each will be delineated in turn.

“Red October” is the code name Guevara and Granado give to one of their play actions. This dialogue is used to gain lodging for an

Slide 3: Convincing a rancher of their medical expertise



evening when their tent blew away in a storm. Two times the pitch is made in the film and both times they are only meagerly rewarded, but rewarded nonetheless.

The aim is to convince the target (a ranch owner in these cases) that the two men are world renowned doctors traveling the length and breadth of the land in search of cures for the worst diseases affecting Latinos and giving treatments along the way. The only recompense they desire is a warm bed in which to sleep and a

decent meal on which to dine so that they might continue their unbelievably important research. While the diaries mention that this method had a measure of success, the film finds them resorting to blatant honesty; their tent has flown off, it is cold outside and they have not had much to eat. Anything that could be spared is appreciated. The result: nights in barns out of the wind and some small meals free of charge.

The next scenario sees Guevara and Granado step up their audacity several fold. In response to criticism about his bold honesty, Che stops walking the motorcycle and parks it in front of the local newspaper of Temuco, Chile, the town the men have just entered. Not sure what he is up to, Granado follows his friend into the newspaper building. The next scene cuts to the two men again, now lying down and being woken up in the morning by a boy selling the day's local newspapers in the street. Their ploy is revealed moments later as Granado walks the bike astride Che reading the following story:

Yesterday afternoon, Temuco was honored by the arrival of two of the most prestigious leprosy experts in South America. Dr. Alberto Granados [a misspelling that annoys Mial] from Cordoba and Dr. Ernesto Guevara de la Serna from Buenos Aires, have embarked on an epic journey from their native soil to the northern tip of Venezuela. The charismatic scientists – adventurers, experts in their field, have treated over 3000 patients across the continent. They expect to complete their marathon-trek in a record-setting five months, just in time to celebrate the youthful Dr. Granados' thirtieth birthday.

With the motorcycle reaching its limit of functionality this drastic action was warranted. The fact that they could wax philosophic on many medical topics, including extensive knowledge on leprosy made the gambit extremely plausible.

Because of this news article, they were able to convince a local mechanic to repair their motorcycle free of charge. They convinced him he was doing it for the benefit of mankind. Perhaps he was in a way, but truly it was their motility capital that provided a boon when it was needed most to keep the trip moving forward. As Guevara notes in his diary, “no longer a pair of more or less likable vagrants with a bike in tow; no, we were now ‘The Experts,’ and we were treated accordingly” (Guevara 2004, p. 59).

Lastly, Guevara and Granado use their suave ways of persuasion to satisfy their baser instincts while procuring the usual duo of food and lodging. Even with the repairs made by the previously duped mechanic, the motorcycle fails them again. The next scene has the men pushing rather than riding the bike into another Chilean town where they encounter two young women at a restaurant. After some playful introductions, they begin another prearranged dialogue:

Mial: Do you know what day it is?

Jazmín: February 26.

Mial: February 26. Sounds unbelievable, but it’s been a year.

Jazmín: A year since what?

Che: One year since we started this trip.

Mial: One year and we’re flat broke, we can’t even celebrate. What a shame.

Daniela: Why don’t you let us treat you to a bottle of wine?

As the young woman calls for the wine, Che implants part two of the riff to produce a meal as well...

Che: Girls, don’t be offended, but I can’t drink wine.

Daniela: Why couldn’t you drink just a bit?

Mial: There’s an old custom in Argentina...

Che: No, Mial, please don’t...

Mial: What is it? I think they deserve an explanation.
Che: They do.
Mial: An old custom in Argentina doesn't allow us to drink on an empty stomach. Since we're flat broke, we can't buy food and must reject your generous offer. That's all.
Jazmín (laughing): Come on, lighten up. (To the waiter) Could you bring us some empanadas?
...
(a bit later...)
Che: Wish we could stay!
Mial: Too bad we have nowhere to crash. We'll sleep out in the park.
Jazmín: Listen... my Dad's fond of Argentinians.
Che: No joke!
Jazmín: Honest. He might be able to help you.
Daniela: Since Dad's Chief of the fire brigade, he knows lots of people.

In one conversation Guevara and Granado, without a cent to their names, without a functioning motorcycle and with no other resources but their wits have procured female companionship, a bottle of wine and lunch, as well as an offer to lodge at the house of the two women, who turn out to be sisters. Also, to their delight, they are able to leave the motorcycle to be examined by a friend of the girls' family who is a mechanic.

The extensive use of their motility toolkit exemplifies how determined Guevara and Granado were to keep the trip going, to stay mobile. But it is here I must reiterate the yin to the motility yang: moorings. While motility signifies the capacity of an individual to be mobile, moorings are *enablers* of mobility. They are quite literally the infrastructure of a mobile way of life.

Scholars have recently called attention to the inherent importance of moorings as they relate to mobility (see Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006; Adey 2006). Consider the mechanics that are shown in the film. The first was mentioned

in the scene in which Guevara and Granado convince him to fix their bike for free because of the orchestrated newspaper play. Surely it was their motility that got the bike fixed, but it was the mooring – in this instance the mechanic’s shop and the mechanic himself – that did the fixing. Motility put them in position to forge ahead. A mooring made forging ahead a feasible expectation.

The other mechanic shown in the film comes in the next scene, a sad one for the protagonists. After all the patchwork and thousands of kilometers, “The Mighty One” is dead. The mechanic relays this news unceremoniously and seems surprised they even made it as far as they did on such a clunker. However, the trip does not stop here with the end of the motorcycle’s run. It has been clearly established by now that these men will not let anything – lovers, hunger, weather, sickness, injuries – come between them and their goal of crossing the continent. Mial, in tears, asks, “What will we do now? Go on?” Che replies, without hesitation, “Of course. We carry on. A man only turns thirty once, right?” While a strong face is shown to Granado because he has taken the loss of the motorcycle so personally, Guevara understands how seriously the loss of a huge factor in their motility capital will affect them. He pens in his diary, “To a certain extent we had been knights of the road; we belonged to that long-standing “wandering aristocracy” and had calling cards with our impeccable and impressive titles. No longer. Now we were just two hitchhikers with backpacks, and with all the grime of the road stuck to our overalls, shadows of our former aristocratic selves.” (Guevara 2004, p. 68) The rest of the trip will require the pair to be ever more resourceful to continue achieving their goals of travel.

Just as importantly, the two travelers will have to continue to rely on moorings. Moorings of all kinds can be seen along the way in the film. The train stations, farmhouses and barns in which they have slept constitute these fixed elements of mobility. Without a tent, the pair has relied on such things for lodging. Now, without a mechanized form of personal transportation, other infrastructural moorings must be utilized to move forward. To leave town after saying farewell to “La Poderosa” Guevara and Granado head down a dirt road. A little ways down they are able to hitch a ride in the back of a truck. The shot cuts to the pair in the cab of a different truck, suggesting they were able to procure several rides along the way to Valparaiso.

Valparaiso was a destination for Guevara and Granado because they were expecting some funds to come via the mail. An element of their motility, as discussed earlier, was their relative wealth and the wealth of their families. Mial is seen opening an envelope from Che’s mother. While the amount is not announced, the visual suggests it is substantial to replenish their empty wallets for a while. Without it, the trip could be in jeopardy. Thus, once again an element of their collective motility, the wealth of their families, keeps their dream trip alive.

To end the chapter it must be pointed out that motility and moorings are inextricably intertwined. There are at least four ways in which the two terms have complimented each other in this chapter alone. All four demonstrate that without motility capital, the mooring is rendered useless. Likewise, without the mooring in place, no amount of motility would suffice to extend the life of the journey.

First, when pushing the bike into Temuco, Che is struck by the idea to publicize their “medical mission” in the local newspaper with hopes of convincing the locals of an elevated importance. Both motility and moorings are crucial here. Without the extensive medical knowledge to back the claim (not to mention the audacity to attempt such a scheme) the plan would not have worked. Likewise, without an established, trusted source such as the local daily newspaper the plan would have not come to fruition.

A second time when moorings and motility worked in conjunction to benefit the protagonists was with the Temuco mechanic. Using the recently acquired newspaper – which, effectively is now also a piece of their motility capital – Guevara and Granado convince a local mechanic to fix their bike free of charge. Having no money, it was the newspaper article, and that alone, that convinced the mechanic to work *pro bono*. However, it was the mechanic himself, a mooring, which enabled the trip to continue. The newspaper article alone could not fix the motorcycle. It needed to be paired with a mooring.

Third, the various other schemes the duo used to procure food and lodging give credence to the motility/mooring conjunction. It was demonstrated in this paper that the men, especially Granado, would employ elaborate schemes to convince people along the way to help them when they were low on rations and money. Akin to the newspaper needing a mechanic, each of these rehearsed scenarios needed a willing actor with goods to provide for their motility to be

relevant. Moorings such as barns to sleep in and a meal with attractive sisters were only acquired after employment of their sometimes devilish scheming.

Lastly, the hitched ride that brings them to the port city of Valparaiso, Chile is evidence of this connectivity. The city's post office works as a mooring. Without a postal service and a central postal office in place, Guevara and Granado, not to mention everyone else, would have no way of pre-arranging a drop of money from their families. The motility of their financial means to take the trip paired with the mooring of a way to deliver it to them in a specified location of the post office has once again extended the life of the journey indefinitely.

It is clear that both motility and moorings played hugely important and connected roles in making the trip a viable success.

Chapter 4

Forced Mobility

A rickety trolley car cranks and lowers down a steep track between a mosaic of rusted tin rooftops. Two friends sit in silence. The trolley descends into darkness and the scene emerges framing Guevara contemplating a letter he has just received at the post office. Money has come from his mother, but also a letter from Chichina has arrived. The somber mood, zero dialogue and the shot surrounding Che with a vast oceanscape all clue the viewer in that this is a letter of farewell. A terse exchange passes between the friends asking if the other is ready to go and quickly Valparaiso is behind them.

Granado has lost his beloved motorcycle, Guevara his lover. The film shifts to a starker mood. Reflected in this heavy tone is the subject matter of this chapter, forced mobility. As I will consequently demonstrate as the description of the film text resumes, mobility that is forced is distinct from mobility that is chosen. Or, as stated by Cresswell (2010), if one chooses to be mobile one's experience is vastly different from another who is forced into movement over the same path. Guevara and Granado share the same path as actors that are forced to do so multiple times in the forthcoming section. As the section ends I will deconstruct those scenes to highlight the many ways in which their experiences differ from those they encounter along the way.

With the motorcycle this may have been a bumpy but bearable trek. On foot, this terrain is a severe physical test. Granado, whose weight is a running joke in the

film, is insulted by the idea that he cannot make the crossing. The two travelers have a mocking exchange, followed by a renewed sense of vigor, or perhaps vain pride, as they pick up the pace to prove to each other whom is the tougher man.

Dusk settles in, and the two men are but miniature silhouettes surrounded by an empty landscape. A truck saunters past, raising their hopes of respite from walking. However, it does not stop. They curse it as it rumbles past. In the dust of the passing truck, Guevara and Granado encounter another pair of travelers on the road. They introduce themselves.

The scene cuts to a modest fire of sticks. This place provides precious little in the way of fuel. It is enough to make some *mate*, a traditional Argentinian drink that Guevara and Granado have consumed throughout the trip.

Granado hands over a map to the newly encountered couple. The man points out from where he and his wife have come and where they are going. They tell their story to our protagonists.

Man: We didn't have much, just some tough, dry land.

Wife: It belonged to his grandpa.

Man: It was ours. Until a land speculator forced us off.

Wife: That's what they call progress.

Man: So we had to leave our son with family and hit the road, looking for work, trying to escape from the police who wanted to toss us in jail.

Mial: Why?

Wife: Because we are communists.

Man: Now we're going to a mine. If we're lucky, I'll find some work. It's so dangerous, they don't care what party you belong to.

Wife: Are you two looking for work?

Che: No, we're not looking for work.

Wife: No? Then why are you traveling?

Che: We travel just to travel.

Wife: (pause) Bless you... Blessed be your travels.

Guevara and Granado are hit by their words like shockwaves. They are stunned, speechless. Guevara hands over his only blanket to the woman. The meager fire cannot heat the four souls that surround it. The woman accepts the gift eagerly.

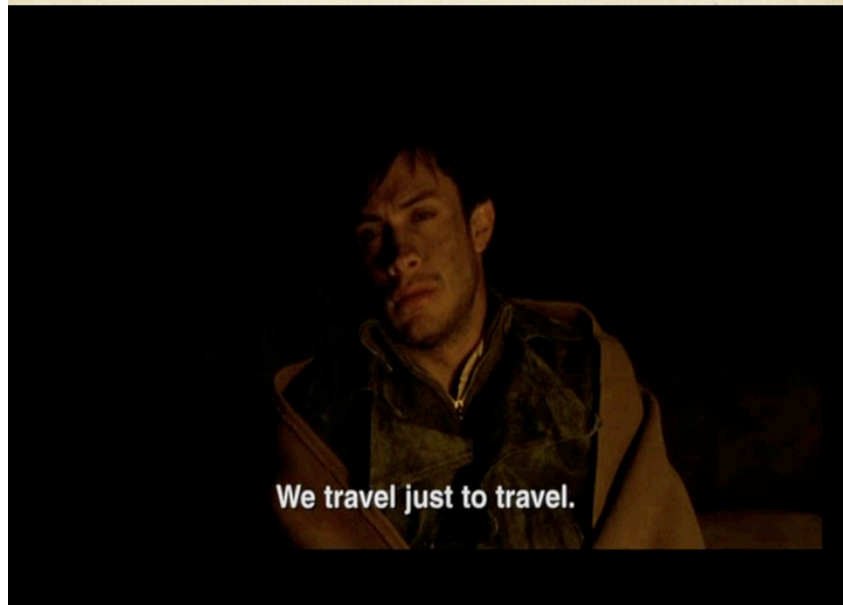
Guevara speaks in voiceover:

Their faces were tragic and haunting. They told us of comrades who had mysteriously disappeared, and were said to be somewhere at the bottom of the sea. It was one of the coldest nights of my life, but also one which made me feel closer to this strange, for me anyway, human race.

A scene

shrouded in
darkness cuts
suddenly to a palate
of gray. The couple
that shared the fire
sits among a
smattering of dusty,
downtrodden men.
Their clothes are
caked with soot

Slide 4: A cold night in the desert



from the monochrome rocks on which they sit, waiting to see if they gain a day's employment in the mine. As a foreman begins picking his workforce, the shot cuts to Guevara and Granado perch on a ridge overlooking a massive industrial complex.

This is Chuquicamata, one of the largest mines in Chile. It is March 15, 1952. Che and Mial have traveled over five thousand kilometers.

As the foreman finishes his selections, he tells the rest of the men to go home. More than twice as many men are left without work than are on the truck going down to the mine. The man with whom Guevara and Granado shared the campfire the night before is chosen. His wife, pleased he will work but terrified for his safety, meanders off with the other workers that were not. Disgusted by the surroundings and the impersonal manner of the foreman, Guevara cannot resist verbal confrontation. The exchange becomes heated and ultimately results in Che screaming into deaf ears and the foreman threatening arrest for trespassing on private property.

The foreman, satisfied he has made his point and in a hurry to get to the mine, walks off and jumps into the passenger side of the truck. Cursing him, Guevara launches a rock at the foreman's door to vent his frustration at what he has just witnessed.

The scene cuts to yet another rugged landscape. The travelers are winding through the precarious roads of the Andes. In the center of the frame of this shot is a small funeral procession. A bumpy handheld camera captures the scene from Guevara's point of view. Again, Che speaks in voiceover to communicate how the progression of the trip is affecting he and Granado.

*As we left Chuquicamata we could feel the world changing, or was it us?
The deeper we go into the Andes the more indigenous people we encounter,
who are homeless in their own land.*

The scene moves to Che and Mial now walking those same roads up a steep grade. Granado, again the butt of jokes about being out of shape, flops onto the side of the road.

Mial: (To Che, out of breath) Fuser... This is not humanly possible.

The camera, in one continuous take, pans left and down the hill to a man approaching at a steady clip. He is an indigenous man, native to these mountains. He carries three full satchels and is wearing sandals. He strides past the exhausted protagonists without breaking his gait, much to the viewer's amusement and Granado's chagrin.

After many scenes of natural landscapes, Guevara and Granado enter Cuzco, "the heart of America", and encounter many local inhabitants who share bits of their culture and history with the travelers.

After this cultural exchange, the background changes drastically yet again. The imposing stone walls and ornate church facades of Cuzco are traded for the lush, verdant hills above the city. Guevara and Granado are on the move, again on foot, and greeting the passing farmers as they go. One farmer they meet tells a story of hardship similar to that of the couple with whom they shared a fire in the desert.

Farmer: I was working for a time on some land. And the landlord kicked me off the land. I was doing my work and he threw me out.

Che: How'd he throw you out? Did he bring police?

Farmer: Yes, he brought the police. Because he's rich, he's got lots of money. He wants me to vacate his land, to get out.

Mial: Once it was already productive.

Farmer: Yes, it was producing wheat, corn, potato, all that. And he kept most of it. So I can't live in the past. I have to move on... work, find the money to educate my kids—
Che: How many kids do you have?
Farmer: I have five kids.

Albertsen and Diken (2001) note that whereas mobility is a matter of choice for some, for others it is a fate. Some people are constantly forced to move on and are denied the right to settle down in a suitable place. (quoted in Sager 2006, pg. 472). This verity is present in a trio of experiences described in this chapter. All three take place on a different personal scale, from detached to confronted to shared experience. I will describe each of the three in turn.

To begin, I will forsake chronology and opt for a starting point that places Guevara and Granado at the greatest distance from the subjects they are observing. As the pair bounces along in the cab of a truck in which they are hitching a ride they pass a funeral procession walking along the winding Andean road. Che reflects, "*The deeper we go into the Andes the more indigenous people we encounter, who are homeless in their own land.*" This is a reference to the fact that since the coming of the conquistadores the fate of indigenous South Americans has been to bend to the whim of whoever is in power. Guevara's sentiment is generalized, not placing the onus of culpability on any specific actor. He is simply observing that many of the people he has encountered in the journey thus far do not move like he and Granado do. The mobility of the natives is not seen as a choice, but rather a consequence. Guevara and Granado may travel the same roads, but they do not share the same plight.

Second, to bring the action a step more personal, the film text described in this section ends with a conversation between Guevara, Granado and a short Andean farmer. The leather-skinned native explains how land that became productive because of his own hand was taken from him by force when his landlord demanded it. The landlord even called in police to remove the man, who by all appearances seems meek, calm and genteel. This suggests two things. One, that the man loved his bit of land dearly and did not consent to leave willingly; and two, that the landlord used his considerable wealth and influence to be able to remove a man who produced goods yet it was the landlord who retained the majority of the harvest. Now the farmer is forced to be mobile and search for means of income both to survive and to feed and educate his five children. Again, the viewer sees the dichotomy of mobile freedom and mobile necessity clash on the same pathway.

Finally, the most poignant scene comes at the closest range. Unable to hitch a ride in the formidable Atacama Desert, Che and Mial encounter a couple walking towards their shared destination, the Chuquicamata Mine. This scene reveals the starkest dichotomy in the entire film. After being forced off their land by a land speculator, the couple left their child with family and took to the road to find work simply to feed themselves and survive. On this same walked path, they encounter our protagonists who willingly chose the road for the sake of travel itself. While the couple seems to demur and not understand why anyone would willfully choose such a life, they are ultimately polite and well wishing to Che and Mial.

In conclusion, mobility over a given path cannot be viewed with a one-dimensional lens. Multiple actors moving over the same space can provide polar opposite examples of the type of mobility being experienced. In the case of our nomadic protagonists, mobility is freedom; a source of capital they have decided to utilize in exchange for release from the responsibilities of domestic life. Opposing this are the indigenous people they encounter who have no such capital and must travel by necessity. Mobility is not freedom; it is separation from the domestic life they desired. Their social capital has been taken away and been replaced with uncertainty on the road. Different people, same road, opposite plights. This is the essence of forced mobility.

This chapter provides multiple sights of this dichotomy of forced versus chosen mobility. In many ways it is the climax of the classic five-act structure of a play. The film, the diaries and this paper all reflect this rise and fall of action. At first, mobility is seen as the excitement for the open road. The scenes are playful and the difficulties encountered along the way are dealt with as though troublesome but never life-threatening. As the action rises, Guevara and Granado encounter more and more people, learning of the plights of their fellow South Americans. Here, in the center of the film, the quintessential scene is revealed when Che and Mial share a cold night with the communists looking for work in a mine that the protagonists had planned to visit merely as a tourist site. It is in this scene that the stark difference in the mobile worldview of those that are free to choose it is directly compared to those that are forced to do so.

The rest of the film, and the rest of this paper, detail the falling action of both men, but especially Guevara, beginning to understand the immense nature of the problems plaguing the Latin American people. Mobility is no longer a self-interested rejection of routines. It has now taken on an air of critical observation and discovery.

Chapter 5

Mobility as Discovery

Travelogues are captivating for two main reasons. The first is that the author describes in detail a place or string of places that the reader has not encountered and thus makes this place of interest instantly accessible. The second is that in almost all travelogues there is a sense of discovery of new places, new characters and, depending on the author's depth of enrichment, new life. In fact, Guevara's diary ends its first passage with these words:

The person who wrote these notes passed away the moment his feet touched Argentina soil again. The person who reorganizes and polishes them, me, is no longer, at least I am not the person I once was. All this wandering around "Our America with a capital A" has changed me more than I thought (Guevara 2004, pg. 32).

This chapter will indicate various times and places in which Che Guevara 'discovered' his home continent in ways he had not even anticipated. To begin, the chronological path through the film is resumed as Che and Mial 'discover' one of the world's greatest man-made wonders: Machu Picchu.

After their conversation the ascent resumes into the misty mountain peaks. The landscape looks almost prehistoric; unspoiled by mankind in anyway. As the shot cuts to their descent on the other side, exasperation washes over them. The target of their hiking quest is then revealed in full. It is Machu Picchu, the city of the mighty Inca before the Spaniards came to the New World. It is the fifth day of April 1952. The journey has traversed more than seven thousand kilometers.

It is hard to understate the impact the Incan ruins had on the pair of travelers. Guevara dedicates fourteen pages of his diary to the ancient city and its surroundings (Guevara 2004, p. 103-117). Likewise Granado pens seven pages (Granado 2004, p. 89-96) discussing the commonalities between what the Inca faced in times past and what indigenous people deal with in present day. He laments that despite the rich history, not much has improved since the arrival of the first foreign invaders.

After wandering about the ruins for a while, Guevara and Granado sit down to write in their respective journals. Che speaks in voiceover:

The Incas knew astronomy, brain surgery, mathematics among other things, but the Spanish invaders had gunpowder. What would America look like today if things had been different?

Then Alberto engages Che in a revolutionary idea.

Mial: Fuser, here's my idea; I'll marry an Inca descendant. We'll start an indigenous party...encourage the people to vote, reactivate Tupac Amaru's revolution, the Indo-American revolution, Fuser. How's that sound?

Che: A revolution without guns? It would never work, Mial.

Again, to Che's thoughts: *How is it possible to feel nostalgia for a world I never knew?*

Guevara is reflective as he sits among the remnants of an empire now void of human life. Had he not journeyed to this place, he could not have understood the grandeur, the isolation or the tragedy of this once powerful society. It is fitting, then, that this is one of several scenes in which Guevara is seen with his diary open, pen in

hand. Each time he is shown contemplating his writing, it is during a scene of discovery.

The first time Che pens his thoughts on screen is while he is camped out on the lawn of Miramar. Cast aside from being with his lover, Che writes about the experience at Miramar and the definite class distinctions he sees and why he thinks them unjust.

Another instance comes at the end of the action being described in this chapter while our journeymen ride a ferry into the Amazon jungle towards a leper colony at which they will work. Being tugged behind the ferry is a miniscule boat crammed with humanity; “second-class” citizens that cannot afford the luxury of the larger vessel. Che again writes in his diary on screen while contemplating the forced separations of rich and poor that society has constructed.

Additionally, when Guevara aids the old dying woman in Chile (after meetings the friendly sisters that provided him wine and food) he scribbles his thoughts about the encounter and how helpless he felt to discover that as a doctor he could only treat the symptoms of poverty. He could not get at its core. This stream of thinking becomes constant in his continued pursuit of truth and justice in the world.

Lastly, and to bring the flow of this chapter back to the chronology of the film, Guevara and Granado sit among the tattered bricks and let their minds wander. It is a rare instance in the film where both men are seen constructing their diaries at the

same time. They contemplate revolution, poverty, the ebb and flow of history.

Ultimately, Che provides the viewer a last thought in voiceover:

How can a civilization that built this...(a shot of the Incan ruins) be destroyed to build... this?

The shot cuts to a smog-laden cityscape in a valley. The only greenery is a handful of trees that dot the dense neighborhoods and paved streets. Houses and buildings fill every corner of the frame like so many jigsaw puzzle pieces. The city in view is Lima, Peru; the capital the Spanish conquistadores constructed after destroying the Incan Empire and leaving its capital, the awe-inspiring Machu Picchu, to crumble away into history.

The din of traffic, shop owners, hustling pedestrians and more, replaces the serenity of the mountaintops. The expansive long shots that displayed the beauty of Machu Picchu give way to handheld close-ups of Guevara and Granado as they confusedly wander the streets of Lima in search of a doctor that Granado had contacted before they left Buenos Aires. The labyrinthine quality of the city fully exposes itself when they think they have found their destination, only to realize there are multiple streets with the same name.

Mial: This has got to be Mercaderes [Street].

Che: That one is too.

Mial: (to a passerby) Is this Mercaderes Street?

Passerby: Yes.

Che: And that one?

Passerby: Yes.

Confused, tired and hungry, Granado notices a few bottles of milk on the other side of a gate at which they have stopped. The travelers decide to take

advantage of the milk's owner not having retrieved them yet. Coincidentally, at this same moment, a bespectacled man in a bowtie and three-piece gray suit emerges from the house that the gate protects. Luckily for the protagonists, the man is the host for whom they have been looking.

Che introduces this new character: *The best thing about Lima was Dr. Hugo Pesce. Director of Peru's leper treatment program. He gave us clothes, food, money and ideas.*

As the viewer hears Guevara's voice, Che and Mial are given books to read by Dr. Pesce. Some are about the need for and ways to administer a revolution. As Dr. Pesce describes the books, the film cuts to Che and Mial lying on hospital cots and reading their new literature. Che reads *7 Ensayos de Interpretación de la Realidad Peruana* (7 Interpretive Essays of the Peruvian Reality) by José Carlos Mariátegui as Dr. Pesce's voice talks of an original, indigenous revolution. As the camera pushes in to Che, the shot sharply cuts to a black and white film stock.

This method of sharply contrasting screen action to the thoughts in a character's mind is used as a motif in the latter half of the film. This is the first of such juxtapositions. Here, two Andean farmers, an older man and a younger one, presumably his son, stand on a gently sloping road in the countryside. The shot plays like a living photograph. The film cuts briefly back to Che and pushes in closer still as another 'living photograph' takes his place. This one is of a large group of men all standing on the gray rocks of the Chuquicamata mine. They are all dressed

alike, plainly and sedately, and look directly into the lens of the camera. It is as though Che's memory is addressing him directly, yet silently.

More photographs: An elderly woman wrapped in a blanket sitting on a stone step between a large wooden door and a cobblestone street. A group of Quechua women of three generations standing together in wool ponchos between two stone walls. All of these bleak human faces are shown to a score of slowly strumming Spanish guitar and, as bookends of the sequence, the words of Dr. Pesce:

Mariátegui speaks of the revolutionary potential of the natives and farm workers of Latin America. He says the problem of the Indian is the problem of the land, and that the revolution should not be an imitation. It should be original and indigenous.

'We are too few to be divided', he said. Everything unites us, nothing separates us.

In a sense, these 'living photographs' provide the viewer with Guevara's idea of what it means to be void of mobility capital. Each shot renders the subject or subjects deathly still, fixed in his memory just as they are fixed in their station in life. Ironically, it is Guevara's ability to move across the landscape that allows him to instill so many indelible images of fixity in his mind and, concomitantly, on our screen.

The poignant scene cuts to Che and Mial making rounds at the hospital where Dr. Pesce works. Since both men are interested in the treatment of leprosy, Dr. Pesce and his working environs were sought.

Not much screen time is spent in the hospital, as the scene cuts to Pesce's home and a large dinner with Che, Mial and his wife and children. The house is clean

and ornate. Many books spill over the shelves in the background. Dr. Pesce is a simple, but wealthy and educated man. He retrieves one book in particular for Che and Mial to read. It is a novel he has written; the great love of his life, after his wife, he assures them. They agree to read the tome and give their feedback upon their departure.

The film wastes no time getting to this next transition point, as the next scene cuts to a crude dockyard. Local merchants carry their produce towards a boat at the end of a rusted, elevated pier. Small one-story, piecemeal shacks crowd into every space available along the waterline save the tiny dock. The town is Pucallpa, Peru. The body of water on which the boat rests is the Ucayali River, a large tributary of the Amazon. Thanks to a pair of tickets provided by Dr. Pesce, this boat will transport Guevara and Granado to the San Pablo Leper Colony where the hospital staff send the most serious cases of leprosy in the region to be treated. The trek to the colony will take five days. It is the 25th day of May 1952. The journey has almost eclipsed nine thousand kilometers. The boat departs for the heart of the Amazon.

This is not the first watercraft that Guevara and Granado have utilized on their trip. Earlier on, in an attempt to save money and gain miles, the pair stowed away on a commercial vessel transporting fruit and other goods along the Chile-Peru coast. It is here that a discovery of their life's purpose is shared:

At night...we would look out over the immense sea, full of white-flecked and green reflections, the two of us leaning side by side on the railing, each of us far away, flying in his own aircraft to the stratospheric regions of his own dreams. There we understood that our vocation, our true vocation,

was to move for eternity along the roads and seas of the world (Guevara 2004, pg. 75).

In conclusion, the diaries used to make the film's script take on a tangible presence during the moments of discovery described in this chapter. While the scenes mentioned above are not the first in which Guevara and Granado are seen jotting down their thoughts, the journal entries are beginning to take on a heavier weight and tone. The nostalgic and contemplative voiceover dialogue used by Guevara as he sits among the ruins of the fallen Incan Empire reveal that this journey is not merely one of observation but a set of sojourns that continue to affect him more deeply than he had anticipated.

This is reinforced by the "living photographs" that are shown at moments of reflection by Guevara. He no longer sees just the people he passes by; he frames it in the larger context of their plight. The absence of color and motion in these shots suggest the bleak outlook he has for these people. Guevara has begun to discover what life on his continent means for so many. His mobility granted Guevara access to these places. His observation of these places has led to discovery: of places, of plights and of his own passion to make a difference.

Chapter 6

Mixed Mobilities: The San Pablo Leper Colony

The final chapter of this paper revisits each type of mobility the protagonists have encountered along their journey. In many ways the final destination portrayed in the film, the San Pablo Leper Colony deep in the Peruvian Amazon, is a microcosm of all types of mobilities discussed so far. As the various scenes encompassing their time at the colony are described, I will interject at the appropriate times where an aforementioned type of mobility arises. To begin, I resume the action as they start their journey down river towards the colony and into the remote jungle.

A three-tiered cruiser leaves the dock of Pucallpa with a small, wooden boat in tow. The smaller vessel, which sports a thatched roof of palm fronds and crude wooden sidings, is filled to the brim with laborers too poor to afford the passage on the boat that tows them. Che walks astern of the yacht to peer down at the cramped conditions endured by those trailing behind him. A short montage of hammocks strung up inside with only centimeters between sleeping, sweating faces tanned and wrinkled by years of work in the sun. Baskets of chickens and bananas and children looking for a place to stand are accompanied by a score of electric guitars playing notes in dissonance. The montage comes to an abrupt end as once again the shot turns to black and white film stock: another living photograph burned into Che's consciousness. That night he is seen writing in his journal. This is akin to the earlier scenes in which Che becomes acutely aware of the difference in his mobility with that of the people he has met along the way. Here again the viewer sees Guevara in

relative luxury, newly clothed, comfortable and on a high perch looking down towards a mishmash of humanity and commercial goods, spackled together on a small boat as if they are all the same thing. Che can walk away, while they have no space to move amongst themselves. Here the viewer encounters both Che's mobility leading to discovery of yet more unjust conditions and also of forced mobility, as the riders of the smaller boat must move down river to find work and sell their goods and make a living.

The next day as Che continues to scribble in his journal, his breathing becomes labored. He is having an asthma attack. His anxiety over the attack worsens, as he cannot find his small medical bag. He collapses on the floor of the ship, unable to breath. Luckily, his dear friend Mial comes to his rescue with a shot of adrenaline. Granado stays by his side until he is sure his friend will be all right.

As night falls again, with his friend safe in bed, Mial returns to his carnal desires. When Che fell ill, the first person to help him up was an attractive young woman. Mial extends his thanks to her and inquires what her role on the boat is. After some playful banter about the uncannily similar sex organs of river dolphins to that of a woman, he surmises that she is a prostitute, and appeals to Che for the fifteen dollars Chichina gave him in Miramar.

Mial: I need the fifteen dollars, Fuser.

Che: What?

Mial: Her name is Luz. She told me a story of a fish the Indians fuck and kissed me, I'm so horny I could explode.

Che: I spent them.

Mial: No, Fuser. Don't bust my balls. We crossed a desert together, we starved, froze, had accidents... My needs come before Chichina's bathing suit.

Che: I don't have them. I gave them to the mining couple.

Not to be left unfulfilled, Granado enters into a game of blackjack with a single sol, the Peruvian currency unit. Luz, the reason for his gambling, stands behind another man at the table, but stays attentive to Granado's playing. As the night wears on, he continues to win and draws a small crowd. By the time Che is well enough to see what the fuss is about, Mial has won sixty soles and the right to spend an evening with the object of his affection.

The river continues to wind along the verdant shores through rain and heat,

day and night. Finally, modest sets

of buildings appear on the

riverbank. This is their

destination: the San Pablo Leper

Colony. It is the eighth day of June

1952. They have traveled 10,223

kilometers since leaving Buenos

Aires.



Guevara and Granado's host upon arrival is Dr. Bresciani. He is the head of the colony and a close friend of Dr. Pesce. He explains that the Amazon River cuts the colony into two halves. The patients live on the South bank. The men stand on the North bank, where they will lodge with the staff, doctors, nurses and a group of

nuns among the various treatment buildings. While the buildings are basic, they are sturdily built and kept tidy. Those nearest the river stand on stilts and are connected by elevated wood plank pathways. Soon, the travelers are settled in and meeting the various characters that populate the colony's treatment area. Mial is taken to the laboratory to help with some samples. He is escorted to a room containing the patients with the worst cases of leprosy. They have been brought over from the South side for vigilant observation.

Later in the day Guevara and Granado are taken for a similar tour of the South bank. Dr. Bresciani informs them of the basic statistics of their destination.

Mial: Doctor, how many patients live on the South side?

Bresciani: Almost six hundred.

Mial: All Peruvian?

Bresciani: No, most are, but we have some from Colombia, Venezuela, and other South American countries.

While staying with Dr. Pesce in Lima, Guevara and Granado had been told that the most serious cases of leprosy seen in the hospital in the Peruvian capital are sent to this colony. Dr. Pesce also mentions that families and employers, fearful of contracting the disease themselves, are mainly the agents that mandate such movement. In other words, the leper colony is home to an entire population of forced mobilities. These sick individuals cannot maintain their place in 'civilization' and are forced as outcasts into the depths of the jungle to live among others of their kind. This separation from 'society' lives on even here, as Dr. Bresciani explains some of the rules of visiting the leper's side of the river.

Bresciani: I suggest you wear these gloves. Although leprosy is not contagious under treatment, the nuns are quite insistent on this point.

Che: If it's not contagious, then it's just symbolic, right?

Bresciani: Yes, I'm just telling you so you don't make any mortal enemies.

Che: You know what, Doctor, you'll excuse us, but we're not going to wear them.

Bresciani: Don't say I didn't warn you.

As expected, this point does not go over well with the Mother Superior. She chides the men for breaking procedure, which they brush off with a joke. They continue their tour with the doctor. The lepers continue their daily routines. They have adapted to their new lives, by building their own houses, farming and raising animals.

The walking tour proceeds to the hut of a rebellious patient named Silvia. She refuses a surgery that is the last hope in saving her infected arm. Che asks if he can enter and speak with her. As he begins, his breathing is heavy. His asthma is flaring again. Silvia does not have much to offer for pity; her painful, infected arm lies between them. Guevara insists it is not so bad to have bad lungs. It got him out of military service. He will not have to clean anyone's boots.

Silvia inquires, "Is that why you became a doctor? Because you're sick?"

"Maybe," Che replies. "The first word I learned was injection. I want to be useful somehow."

Silvia assures Che he is wasting his time. She thinks life is pain from which there is no escape. While he agrees in part, Che advises, "You gotta fight for every

breath, and tell death to go to hell.” The two share a silence, and then Che departs, not knowing if she will accept the badly needed surgery.

Back across the river, after dinner in a large mess hall with the whole staff, all white clad and chattering, Guevara and Granado sit in their quarters reading and writing in journals. Che’s stare is fixed on the far bank of the river, the South bank. Granado shares the good news that Dr. Bresciani is going to write him a letter of recommendation to work as a resident in the Cabo Blanco Hospital in Caracas, Venezuela. Che is too preoccupied to rejoice for his friend. His mind is elsewhere.

Mial: What’s wrong, Fuser?

Che: Have you seen the river?

Mial: Of course.

Che: It segregates the ill from the healthy.

His gaze stays fixed across the flowing divider. This expanse of water prevents the patients’ access to those without their malady. Their motility capital is all but nil. But for the mooring of a dock and regular visits by the doctors, the residents of the South bank of the river would be completely isolated. Guevara and Granado, on the other hand, have utilized their motility to its fullest capacity to be here. Years of study in the area of leprosy have both earned them the right to visit as well as the respect of the patients who are being cared for. What’s more, their relationship with Dr. Pesce enabled them to pay the fare necessary to travel to this remote spot and gained them a trusted letter of recommendation to Dr. Bresciani. The lepers were sent here with no choice in the matter. Che and Mial fought to get

here by using all their abilities. It is striking to see yet again that the same place can be arrived at by diametrically opposite paths.

The next day a thunderstorm washes over the colony. In the operating room we find Dr. Bresciani, assisted by Guevara and another nurse. The patient on the table is Silvia. She has decided to have the surgery. She winces through painful injections that anesthize her arm as Guevara talks her through the procedure. The scene cuts to her recovering in a mosquito net covered bed. Guevara is next to her talking of the things he misses from home, namely his mother and four siblings. He falls asleep at her bedside.

This scene gives way to Che caring for a different patient. The young Argentine is now swabbing the ankle of Papa Carlito, the South bank's community leader. He advises the leper to wear shoes next time he plays soccer and also to extend an invitation to his caretaker.

After this, we see Che on the roof of one of the new houses being constructed by the patients. He is helping nail the palm thatching in place. Granado is helping tie the fronds together and handing them up to the roofers. Later, the entire staff engages in an impromptu drumming jam session and a spirited game of soccer. The longer the travelers stay in this place, the more involved they are getting in all aspects of the patients' lives.

The following scene exemplifies just how much the two young Argentinians mean to the patients of the colony. From the day they set foot onto the Amazonian shores of San Pablo, neither Guevara nor Granado had paid heed to the arbitrary

rules set out by the Mother Superior, Sor Alberto. One rule included attending Sunday Mass in order to receive the evening meal. Since neither man went to Mass, the nuns dishing out the food abstain from feeding Che and Mial. The two brash travelers confront the Mother Superior.

Che: We'd like to eat, if possible.

Mial: We deserve to eat like everybody else.

Sor Alberto: But you didn't go to mass.

Che: No.

Sor Alberto: So, how do you expect to feed the body if you haven't first fed the soul?

Mial: Ma'am, it's unchristian to deny us food!

Sor Alberto: We have rules in this house, and they have to be followed.

Che: I didn't see any rulebook.

Mial: Neither did I. I think if I find it, I'll eat it.

The shot cuts to Che, hungry and defeated, sitting on a stump and reading over his journal. An arm drops into the scene with a bowl of food. It is Silvia, the cantankerous patient whom Che convinced to allow surgery to save her arm. Within a few seconds, several other patients are approaching Guevara with similar bowls. They have all stolen an extra ration to give to their foreign doctor comrade.

After this, Che and Mial return to their side of the river and their bunks. Their time in San Pablo winding down, Mial has news to share. He has been offered a job at the hospital in Caracas. As he mulls over the decision, he asks what his friend's plans are. Will he return to Buenos Aires? Will he finish medical school? Che states that he isn't sure and that if he can find a way back he plans on it, probably anyway. Granado, in light of this job news, offers Guevara the opportunity to join him in the Venezuelan capital. Guevara, expectedly by this point, is resistant to the idea of a life

of stasis. While Mial waxes romantic about settling down, finding a nice girl and setting up a medical practice, Che seems uncomfortable even discussing the future. He has seen too much to sit still. He must stay mobile. He is not sure for what or to where exactly yet, but he knows he must resist once again the tenets of domesticity.

The culmination of Guevara and Granado's time at the colony is a going away party thrown by the staff on the North side of the river. Everyone is having a good time, drinking, dancing to the music. Full of energy, and probably also full of alcohol, Mial decides to play a prank on his traveling companion.

Mial: (To Che, as the music changes) Hey! This is the tango you danced in Miramar.

Che: (a bit drunk) I like it.

Mial: Did you notice? You know how to dance to this one.

Che: This one's a bit fast, isn't it?

Mial: You dance it perfectly, and I think there's a young lady interested in dancing with you.

Che: (as the camera pans right to a pretty girl and then back) I should ask her, right?

Mial: The bird of youth flies away and doesn't come back. Fly, man, fly!

With bravado, and thinking he knows the steps, Che asks the young girl to dance what he thinks is a tango. He confirms she knows how to dance and then begins an awkward set of steps, noting that the version he knows is played to slower music. Soon Che realizes, with the whole room laughing including the seated nuns, that the appropriate dance is actually the Mambo and that he has been had.

The embarrassment does not linger long luckily, per screen time anyway, as the shot quickly cuts to everyone at the party encircling Guevara and singing happy

birthday to him. He is twenty-four years old. Dr. Bresciani sums up the feelings of the entire staff in a thank you statement to both men:

I think it's the perfect time to let Ernesto and Alberto know how grateful we are to them. Not only for having come here, but also for the enthusiasm and dedication they have shown towards San Pablo's patients during their three weeks with us. To show our appreciation, we have a little surprise for you. Tomorrow we're going to give you a raft so that you can continue your trip. This raft will be named after tonight's newly invented dance: The Mambo-Tango.

Up to this point, the two travelers did not have a clear idea of how they would leave the colony. As appreciation for their service, the staff of the colony built a raft and stocked it with fruits, chickens, mosquito netting and trinkets. Right when they need to be mobile again, this mooring appears due to the use of their knowledge and skills.

A rousing round of applause is followed by a call for a toast. The waiting crowd goes silent. Once Che begins to talk to the only sound between his pauses is the steady hum and heave of insects in the thick night air.

Che: Well...it's my duty to thank you for this toast with something more than usual conventions. But, in view of the shabby condition in which we travel, all we have to offer you are words. Employing them, I'd like to express my sincere thanks, to the entire staff of the colony, who, although they barely know us, have shown their affection by celebrating my birthday as if it were an intimate celebration of one of their own. Tomorrow we leave Peru, so these words are also our farewell in which I'd like to remark how grateful I am to the people of this country who have generously looked after us again and again. I'd like to add something else, completely unrelated to this toast. Don't worry, I won't dance. Even though we are too insignificant to be spokesmen for such a noble cause, we believe, and this journey has only confirmed this belief, that the division of America into unstable and illusory nations is a complete fiction. We are one single mestizo race from Mexico to the Strait of Magellan. And so, in an attempt to free ourselves from narrow-minded provincialism, I propose a toast to Peru and to a United America.

At this, even the curmudgeonly Sor Alberto applauds. In fact, she is the first to do so. Mial has to work to hold back tears. Upon many cheers, Che exits and the music starts again. He walks to the dock and eyes the lights on the far shore. He wants to spend his birthday with everyone from the colony, especially the patients. The boat is nowhere in sight. Against Granado's adamant insistence, Guevara begins to strip to prepare for a lengthy swim to the southern shore.

Mial: Are you nuts? At night? The animals in there will eat you alive!

Che: How many times did we think we wouldn't make it? And look, here we are.

Mial: But this is different, Fuser.

Che: Why?

Mial: Because I won't be there to help you! I'm not going in there.

Che: You're always going to be with me, Mial.

Mial: Come here you little shit, you're mother's going to kill me!

With the same dogged determination he had demonstrated throughout the trip, Guevara enters the river and begins to swim. As Mial, whom Dr. Bresciani soon joins, shouts that Che return, many of the patients begin to congregate on the South shore to find out what the fuss is about. The crowds on both shores steadily grows, as does the anxiety over whether or not the asthmatic Guevara even has the physical ability to cross the imposing, expansive river channel. Demands of his return from the north side fade are soon overpowered by enthusiastic cheering for his arrival on the south. Much to the unabashed joy of both sides, Ernesto arrives safely and spends the remainder of the night with the colony patients. Early in the film I noted that physical conditioning was a major piece of Guevara's motility. Here, he desires to move across a difficult space with no moorings to help him achieve it. He has to

rely solely on his own physical attributes. Had he not had the stamina, it is clear to see that the results easily could have been tragic.

The next morning, the day of their departure from San Pablo, Che can barely make it out to the boat as every single patient wishes to hug, shake hands and otherwise impart some tactile blessing on him. The goodbye is painful. These weary travelers have not treated the lepers like second tier humans. They have shown respect, empathy and genuine friendship. The sky is a steely blue. No more words are spoken. A single arm is raised and waved. Guevara and Granado know they must move on, but like they have felt many times on the journey, the battle between excitement for *terra incognita* and longing for that left behind rages in their hearts and minds. The boat drifts to the middle of the river. San Pablo is now behind them.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

The main goal of this paper is to explore not just where or how people move, but why they do so. The structure of the paper was designed to compliment both the narrative flow of the film as well as a systematic construction of my argument as to why Che Guevara and Alberto Granado chose to be mobile. A single road film was chosen as the site of inquiry so that the proper attention into specific details could be paid.

Mobility as resistance was chosen to lead the argument. Even though I opted to omit any discussion of Che Guevara's political life before or after the trip, his actions during the film as the main protagonist provide more than sufficient data to be examined. Indeed, many instances of resistance were identified during the course of this paper.

First, Guevara and Granado had steady careers in front of them if they had opted to stay where they were. They both had supportive families of relative wealth. They faced no religious or political persecution in their daily lives. Yet, they chose to flee. Logically, this is counter-intuitive. This is why mobility as resistance is such a fascinating point of study. In the case presented here, it proves that a desire for *terra incognita* can and often times does outweigh a static life of comfort. This should come as no surprise. Explorers for centuries have set off into uncharted waters and unmapped lands on little more than rumors, legends and promises of wealth. The difference is that the wealth sought by Guevara and Granado was knowledge of their

native land. When two learned men have a passionate desire to understand something, they will resist creature comforts of home and any pleas from loved ones to continue edifying their understanding of places yet unseen.

Next, the paper discussed the elements that enable a long journey to be executed properly: motility and moorings. As was argued in the chapter containing these terms, motility and moorings are undeniably intertwined and must be considered as a pair. This is why each was not given its own chapter.

Guevara and Granado had multiple facets to their motility, or their potential for movement. Each of these disparate elements, from physical prowess to ownership of the motorcycle to the more creative side such as “Alberto’s impeccable bullshitting” factored into an aggregated cache of motility between them. In other words, their motility became a form of capital. And just as economic capital is useless without goods and services to purchase, motility capital is rendered moot when void of complimentary services.

The services needed here are moorings, or sites of fixity that enable mobility. At various junctures along the way, Guevara and Granado used their wits, their letters of introduction, their skills on the soccer pitch and more to acquire lodging, food, the help of mechanics and hitched rides to keep themselves in perpetual motion onward.

Showing up at the mechanic’s shop without the embellished newspaper article in hand would have left them with a broken bike. Having multiple play-acts rehearsed to convince people they were world-renowned doctors would not have

mattered if the targeted person spoke a foreign language. While perhaps much of the good fortune experienced by the protagonists could be considered luck, the viewer cannot discredit the impressive and opportunistic employment of motility paired with the moorings encountered along the journey. Their desire to learn and explore caused them to resist stasis. Motility and moorings enabled them to make the trip possible.

Third, an important distinction was made between mobility that is chosen and mobility that is forced. Different actors using the same means of transit over the same path for the same amount of time are not necessarily traveling for the same reasons. At its core, this paper is in search of such distinctions. While transport geographers may compute statistical data of how many people move how often over a given set of spaces, my aim is much deeper. I seek to understand *why* people move as much as how and where. A goal for such depth requires analysis at the individual scale.

The most pertinent scene in this analysis comes in the humblest of meeting places. In the barren Atacama Desert Che and Mial share a miniscule fire with a communist peasant couple. Both pairs are on foot in the desert. All four are headed to the Chuquicamata Mine. The similarities end there. While the film's main protagonists are ambling towards the mine as interested tourists, the Andean man and his shivering wife are in search of a new livelihood. Forced off their land for their political beliefs and their lack of power to stop it, the couple must stay mobile until they find suitable work, albeit dangerous and for little pay. The goal of the

chapter was to illuminate the differences in what might otherwise appear to be similar paths of flight. I believe that describing scenes like the night Guevara and Granado shared with this couple fully achieve that aim.

Additionally, mobility as discovery is an idea that is paramount to this paper. Along their journey, Che Guevara and Alberto Granado discovered more than they had even anticipated. They discovered places formerly unknown to them. They discovered ideas brought to their attention by individuals for whom they had a great deal of respect. Most importantly, they discovered the reality of what daily life means to a plethora of souls with whom they share the grand continent of South America.

The diaries kept by the two men are the capsules of these grand discoveries. This is translated in the film by showing each man scribbling in his own journal at times when it is clear that new ideas are being worked over thoughtfully. Also, small glimpses into the diaries are given when Che speaks in voiceover, projecting his thoughts over the landscapes that he is contemplating. Most poignantly, drab flashes of black and white “living photographs” remind the viewer of Che’s perception of many of the disenfranchised people he has encountered along the way. Their colorless, static presence on the screen indicates his understanding that his freedom to move is not available to all. This is perhaps his greatest discovery of the trip.

Finally, the paper ends with a catch-all chapter wherein all the types of mobility previously discussed are encountered. This is a fitting conclusion for both the film and this paper. Guevara is resistant to the separation, both physical and

metaphorical, of the patients and the medical staff. He chooses to be mobile, this time swimming across the Amazon River, to make the point that he does not accept the status quo. Also, he resists an offer from Granado to join Mial in Venezuela for a secure job. Che instead opts to keep moving.

The leper colony acted as a mooring because it was a destination point to be reached. It took all the motility capital Guevara and Granado could muster to reach this destination. They worked with Dr. Pesce to gain boat fare and letters of introduction. Granado applied his medical knowledge to save Guevara as Che fell ill on the boat to the colony. This is not to mention the various and sundry times the men employed their wits, skills and abilities much earlier in the trip just to put themselves in a position where traveling to the leper colony was a feasible option.

Forced mobility is on display very clearly at the leper colony. Every patient that resides there was sent there either because their case was too severe to treat in their homes or because a family member or employer mandated they be quarantined to the jungle. None of these patients chose to become ill, but as a consequence each was forced to move to this place.

Lastly, Guevara continues down a path of discovery. He is seen multiple times while at the colony writing in his journal and he has multiple flashes in his mind of the black and white "living photographs." As Che contemplates the things he has seen, both in the leper colony and over the entire seven months of travel, the last scene in the film plays out.

Two men stand in an airplane hangar next to a runway in northern Venezuela. Their exchange is brief but meaningful. This goodbye is not an easy one. After 12,425 kilometers via motorcycle, hitched rides, footpath, and boats large and small, their reluctance to part is understandable. Their adventure has not known a day of separation. The noisy cargo plane that waits nearby signals its end.

Mial: I'd prepared a speech full of anecdotes and grandiose phrases, I can't remember shit now.

Che: That's how it goes.

Mial: Che...It's not too late to come work with me in Cabo Blanco. You could come back after you graduate. I'll wait for you.

Che: I just don't know. You know, Mial, all this time we spent on the road, something happened. Something I'll have to think about for a long time. So much injustice...

The plane makes its last call. Mial hands Che a map. It is the same one on which Granado had drawn their original route in the café many months prior. The two men embrace, neither wanting the moment to end. They part, the cargo plane door closes and Granado stares into the distant horizon. The words of Che's diary are heard one last time:

This is not a tale of heroic feats. It's about two lives running parallel for a while, with common aspirations and similar dreams. Was our view too narrow, too biased, too hasty? Were our conclusions too rigid? Perhaps. But wandering around our America with a capital "A" has changed me more than I thought. I am not me anymore, at least I'm not the same me I was.

Mobility, on any scale, implies constant dynamic movement, which in turn suggests constant change. The goal of this paper was to operationalize several concurrent notions in the mobilities paradigm using a road film as case study. While this study has only scratched the surface of the potential scholarship film

geographers can contribute to the study of mobilities, I believe it has added a piece to the framework that can be built upon by scholars in the future. Film is a dynamic and evolving medium that hopefully will be dissected and explored for generations.

Slide 6: Ferrying into Chile



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