

Tony Cliff

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Tony Cliff (born **Yigael Gluckstein** (Hebrew: יגאל גלוקשטיין); May 20, 1917 – April 9, 2000) was a Trotskyist activist. Born to a Jewish family in Palestine, he moved to Britain in 1947 and by the end of the 1950s had assumed the pen name of Tony Cliff. A founding member of the Socialist Review Group, which eventually became the Socialist Workers Party, in 1977 Cliff became effectively the leader.

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Tony Cliff	
 <div>Tony Cliff in 1986</div>	
Born	<div>Yigael Gluckstein</div> 20 May 1917
Died	9 April 2000 (aged 82)

Biography

Tony Cliff was born Yigael Gluckstein in Zikhron Ya'akov in the Ottoman Empire's Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem, now part of Israel, during World War I, the son of Esther and Akiva Gluckstein, Jewish immigrants from Poland. His father was an engineer and contractor. He had two brothers and a sister. He grew up in British-ruled Mandatory Palestine. Notable Zionist activist and future Israeli Prime Minister Moshe Sharett was a family friend and frequent visitor to his family home, and he had two prominent uncles: the noted doctor Hillel Yaffe and agronomist and Zionist activist Chaim Margaliot Kalvarisky. In his youth, he came to identify with Communism, though he never joined the Communist Party of Palestine, as he had not met any of its members before becoming a socialist activist. However, he did join the socialist-Zionist youth movement Hashomer Hatzair, and soon became not only a Trotskyist in 1933, but also a confirmed opponent of Zionism. Along with other Hashomer Hatzair members, he joined the illegal Palestine Revolutionary Communist League, necessitating the use of several pseudonyms in three languages.

During World War II Gluckstein was imprisoned by the British authorities. After his release he moved to Britain in 1947, but was never able to become a citizen and remained a stateless person. To the end of his life he spoke English with a distinct Israeli accent. He was for a while deported to the Republic of Ireland and was only permitted to take up British residency due to the status of Chanie Rosenberg, his wife, as a British citizen. Living in London he again became active with the Revolutionary Communist Party, on to the leadership of which he had been co-opted. For most purposes Gluckstein was a supporter of the leadership of the RCP around Jock Haston,^[1] and as such he was involved with the discussions concerning the nature of those states dominated by Russia and the Communist parties initiated by a faction within the RCP. This debate was linked to other discussions on the nationalised industries in Britain and the increasingly critical stance of Haston and the RCP as to the leadership of the Fourth International with regard to Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia in particular.

On the break-up of the RCP his supporters joined Gerry Healy's group The Club although, having been deported to Ireland, Gluckstein himself did not. In 1950 he helped launch the *Socialist Review* Group which was based around a journal of the same name. This was to be the main publication for which Gluckstein wrote during the 1950s, until it was superseded by *International Socialism* in 1960, eventually ceasing publication altogether in 1962.

By the time he gained permanent residency in Britain his supporters in The Club had been expelled due to differences on Birmingham Trades Council regarding socialist policy concerning the war in Korea, where Gluckstein's co-factionalists refused to take a position of support for either side in the war.

Owing to his lack of established residency rights in Britain and during his earlier exile in Ireland the name Roger or Roger Tennant was used as a pseudonym. The first edition of his short book on Rosa Luxemburg in 1959 was possibly the first use of the pen name 'Tony Cliff'. In the 1960s Cliff would revive many of his earlier pseudonyms in the pages of *International Socialism* in which journal reviews are to be found by Roger, Roger Tennant, Sakhry, Lee Rock and Tony Cliff, but none by Yigael or Yg'al Gluckstein.

His group was renamed the International Socialists in 1962, and was to grow from fewer than 100 members in 1960 until it claimed in the region of 3,000 in 1977, at which point it was renamed the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Cliff remained a leading member until his death in 2000. He was central to the various reorientations carried out in the SWP from time to time to react to changes in the situation of the working class. In particular, after the high level of strike activity in the early seventies, he argued in the late seventies that the working class movement was entering a "downturn" and that the party's activity should be radically changed as a result. A fierce debate ensued, which Cliff's side eventually won. Trotskyist writer Samuel Farber, a long-time supporter of the International Socialist Organization in the US, has argued that the internal party regime established by Cliff during this period is "reminiscent of the one established by Zinoviev in the mid-twenties in the USSR" consequently leading to the various crises and splits in the group later on.^[2]

Cliff's biography is, as he himself remarked, inseparable from that of the groups of which he was a leading member.

Shortly before his death he underwent a major surgical operation on his heart.^[3]

Ideology

Cliff was a revolutionary socialist in the Trotskyist tradition attempting to make Lenin's theory of the party effective in the present day. Much of his theoretical writing was aimed at immediate tasks of the Party at the time.

Cliff was one of several leading Marxists of his era (including Raya Dunayevskaya and C.L.R. James) to develop a version of the theory that Russia and the 'glacis countries' (buffer states), as they were referred to in the Fourth International at the time, were "state capitalist". This theory was not at the time as iconoclastic as it came to appear later. The Fourth International held until 1951 that the 'glacis' states had remained capitalist even while the FI maintained the position that Russia was a degenerated workers' state. In fact one leader of the Fourth International (Ernest Mandel, writing under the name 'Germain') remarked that the ideas that both Russia and the glacis were capitalist, or that both Russia and the 'glacis' were workers' states, were both obviously incorrect and had no place in the Fourth International. However within months he would adopt the viewpoint that both Russia and the 'glacis' were workers' states.

Since then the consensus in most Trotskyist groups has been that all the states dominated by Stalinist parties and characterised by state planning and state ownership of property are to be seen as 'degenerated workers' states' (The Soviet Union) or 'deformed workers' states' (other Stalinist states, including much of Eastern Europe). In many ways Cliff was the main dissident from this idea although some of his opponents have sought to associate his state capitalist view with other ideas, for example the theory of 'bureaucratic collectivism' associated with Shachtmanite Workers Party in the United States. However Cliff himself was insistent that his ideas owed nothing to those of Max Shachtman, or earlier proponents of the theory such as Bruno Rizzi, and

made this clear in his *Bureaucratic Collectivism – A Critique*. Nevertheless, in the 1950s his group distributed literature published by Shachtman's group and the theory of the 'permanent arms economy' which was considered one of the pillars of what became the International Socialist Tendency originated with Shachtman's group though it is sometimes alleged that Cliff refused to acknowledge this publicly.^[4]

Besides Cliff's theory of state capitalism, and an adaptation of the idea of permanent arms economy, central to the ideology of the International Socialist tradition has been Cliff's theories on "Deflected Permanent Revolution," and the social roots of reformism.

Selected Works

- *The Problem of the Middle East* (1946)
- *The Nature of Stalinist Russia* (1948)
- *Stalin's Satallites in Europe* (1952)
- *Stalinist Russia: A Marxist Analysis* (1955)
- *Perspectives of the Permanent War Economy* (1957)
- *Economic Roots of Reformism* (1957)
- *Rosa Luxemburg: A Study*(1959)
- *Trotsky on Substitutionism* (1960)
- *Deflected Permanent Revolution* (1963)
- *Incomes Policy, Legislation and Shop Stewards* (with Colin Barker) (1966)
- *France: The Struggle Goes On* (with Ian Birchall) (1968)
- *The Employers' Offensive, Productivity Deals and how to fight them* (1970)
- *The Crisis: Social Contract or Socialism* (1975)
- *Lenin Vol. 1: Building the Party* (1975)
- *Portugal at the Crossroads* (1975)
- *Lenin Vol. 2: All Power to the Soviets* (1976)
- *Lenin Vol. 3: Revolution Besieged* (1978)
- *Lenin Vol. 4: The Bolsheviks and World Communism* (1979)
- *Class Struggle and Women's Liberation, 1640 to today* (1984)
- *Marxism and trade union struggle, the general strike of 1926* (with Donny Gluckstein) (1986)
- *The Labour Party, A Marxist History* (with Donny Gluckstein) (1986)
- *Trotsky Vol. 1: Towards October 1879-1917* (1989)
- *Trotsky Vol. 2: The Sword of the Revolution 1917-1923* (1990)
- *Trotsky Vol. 3: Fighting the Rising Stalinist Bureaucracy 1923-1927* (1991)
- *Trotsky Vol. 4: The darker the Night, the Brighter the Star 1927-1940* (1993)
- *Trotskyism after Trotsky, the origins of the International Socialists* (1999)
- *A World to Win: Life of a Revolutionary* (2000)
- *Marxism at the Millennium* (2000)

Personal life

Cliff had little or no time for any activities not directly linked to the needs of building his party (with the exception of caring for his family). He did not drink or smoke, or socialise very much. Cliff's wife, Chanie Rosenberg, was herself an active member successively of the SRG, IS and SWP, in which she remains active. As well as authoring many articles on social questions for the group's publications, she was an activist in the National Union of Teachers until her retirement. In addition, three of the couple's four children became members of the SWP, with one son, Donny Gluckstein, co-authoring two books with his father.

Cliff is depicted as Jimmy Rock of the Rockers in Tariq Ali's satire *Redemption*.

Archives

- **A Summary Description of the Tony Cliff papers** held at the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick Library. Online abstract available. Retrieved 16 June 2006.

See also

- bureaucratic collectivism
- deflected permanent revolution
- new class
- permanent revolution
- state capitalism

Notes

1. The War and the International: A History of the British Trotskyist Movement, 1937–1949 (with Al Richardson), Socialist Platform, London 1986.
2. Farber, Samuel (8 August 2013). "Tony Cliff as a Socialist Leader" (<http://www.solidarity-us.org/node/3989>). Solidarity. Retrieved 31 January 2014.
3. Birchall 2010.
4. This allegation seems to have originated from Jim Higgins in his booklet *More Years for the Locusts* (<http://www.marxists.org/archive/higgins/1997/locust/index.htm>), but it would seem to be contradicted by the fact that *International Socialism*, Nos. 47 and 49 carried prominent ads for the book **The Permanent War Economy** by T.N. Vance, who is now acknowledged to be the originator of the theory. Both Higgins and Cliff are listed in No. 49 (<http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/isj/index2.html#isj049>) as editors of that issue.

References

Articles

- Birchall, Ian (April 2010). "Tony Cliff remembered". *Socialist Review*. London.

Biographies

- Ian Birchall, *Tony Cliff: A Marxist for His Time* (London: Bookmarks, 2011)

External links

- Tony Cliff Internet Archive, biography and collection of his writings from 1938–2000 on Marxists.org.
- "50 Years of the International Socialist Tradition: Ahmed Shawki interviews Tony Cliff in 1997, 50 years after the publication of State Capitalism in Russia." *International Socialist Review*, No.1, Summer 1997, pp. 27–31.
- Obituary by Paul Foot, *The Guardian* (2000).
- Obituary by Duncan Hallas, *Socialist Review* (2000).
- Talkin' 'bout a revolutionary Interview with Ian Birchall about Cliff, *International Socialism* 131 (2011).
- Tony Cliff matters for socialists today by Alex Callinicos, *Socialist Worker* (2017)
- Tony Cliff by Ian Taylor, *Socialist Review*, 360 (2011)
- Tony Cliff rediscovered, *International Socialism*, 132 (2011).
- More Years for the Locust: The Origins of the SWP Criticism of Cliff and the SWP by Jim Higgins, a former colleague.
- Talks by Tony Cliff on Lenin and State Capitalism in MP3
- Tony Cliff (1917–2000) : Links to biographies, obituaries and websites, compiled by Modkraft Biblioteket - Progressive online library.
- Bibliography - the writings and works of Tony Cliff by Ian Birchall on Modkraft Biblioteket.

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Tony Cliff

Tony Cliff (* 20. Mai 1917 in Palästina; † 9. April 2000), eigentlich **Ygael Gluckstein**, war ein britischer Sozialist, Anti-Imperialist und Anti-Zionist jüdischer Herkunft.

Cliff wurde zu Beginn des Koreakriegs 1950 aus der trotzkistischen Vierten Internationale ausgeschlossen, als er sich weigerte, für China und Nordkorea und gegen die USA Stellung zu beziehen.

Er war Mitbegründer der trotzkistischen Socialist Workers Party in Großbritannien und des internationalen Netzwerks trotzkistischer Gruppen International Socialist Tendency sowie Autor zahlreicher Bücher, darunter eine Lenin- und eine Trotzki-Biographie, seine Autobiographie *A world to win* sowie sein Klassiker *Staatskapitalismus in Rußland*, in welchem er den Klassencharakter der Sowjetunion analysierte.

Siehe auch

- Sozialismuskritik

Weblinks

- Literatur von und über Tony Cliff im Katalog der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
- Tony Cliff Internet Archive (de) (engl.) im Marxists Internet Archive
- Vor allem war er ein Revolutionär zum Gedenken an den britischen Sozialisten Tony Cliff
- Artikel von Ygal Sarneh: A revolutionary life (1991) (engl.)
- Artikel von John Rees: Tony Cliff – theory and practice (2000) (engl.)
- Artikel von Paul Foot: Tony Cliff. Revolutionary political theorist and organiser who fired the Socialist Workers Party with his charisma, charm and vision (2000) (engl.)

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Tony Cliff

Ygael Gluckstein dit **Tony Cliff** (né le 20 mai 1917, mort le 9 avril 2000), est un théoricien marxiste et militant trotskyste, originaire de Palestine et fondateur au Royaume-Uni du Parti socialiste des travailleurs (SWP).

Biographie

Ygael Gluckstein naît en Palestine - alors territoire ottoman - au sein d'une famille d'immigrants sionistes de gauche. Bien que sympathisant communiste durant son adolescence, il n'adhère pas au Parti communiste palestinien, mais à Hachomer Hatzair, organisation sioniste de gauche. Il évolue cependant vers le trotskysme et se montre partisan de la construction d'un mouvement ouvrier unissant travailleurs arabes et juifs de la Palestine. Rompant avec le sionisme, il rejoint avec d'autres militants de Hachomer Hatzair, la Ligue communiste révolutionnaire palestinienne, une organisation trotskyste clandestine.

Durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, il est arrêté par les autorités britanniques qui administrent alors la Palestine mandataire. Après sa libération, et alors que la Palestine sombre en pleine guerre civile, il émigre au Royaume-Uni, où il s'installe définitivement après une période d'exil forcé en Irlande. Il milite alors au sein du *Revolutionary Communist Party*, la section britannique de la IV^e Internationale. Marié à une Britannique, Tony Cliff peut devenir résident permanent au Royaume-Uni. Il ne parvient cependant pas à en obtenir la citoyenneté, et demeure apatride jusqu'à la fin de ses jours¹.

Après la guerre, les trotskystes sont divisés. Comment analyser l'extension du système de l'URSS en Europe de l'Est, alors que Trotsky était certain que la bureaucratie stalinienne ne pouvait pas survivre à la guerre ? Cliff présente une réponse particulière à cette question. Il analyse l'expansionnisme soviétique comme un impérialisme nouveau. Il considère que – sous la couverture de formes juridiques nouvelles et d'un vocabulaire marxiste – la domination des travailleurs à l'Est est dans son essence la même que celle à l'Occident.

Vers la fin des années 1940 Cliff développe sa théorie caractérisant l'URSS comme un « capitalisme d'État », ce qui aboutit à son exclusion de la Quatrième Internationale.

Cliff et un petit groupe de sympathisants, le Socialist Review Group, fonde alors son propre courant, aujourd'hui représenté par le SWP britannique et la tendance internationale « Socialisme International » (International Socialist Tendency, en anglais).

Il écrit de nombreux livres, dont une histoire de la grève générale de 1926 en Grande-Bretagne, une histoire marxiste du Parti travailliste, une biographie de Rosa Luxemburg, une biographie en trois tomes de Lénine et une autre en quatre tomes de Trotsky. Ses ouvrages répondaient toujours à un problème de construction politique concret qui se posait, et malgré leur sérieux ils restent accessibles et évitent l'aspect académique.

Son autobiographie, *A World to Win*, a été publiée en 1999.

Liens externes

- <https://www.contretemps.eu/tony-cliff-un-trotskyste-juif-palestinien-au-royaume-de-sa-majeste/> Tony Cliff, un trotskyste juif palestinien au royaume de Sa Majesté par John Mullen dans la revue Contretemps

Tony Cliff

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Biographie

Naissance	20 mai 1917 Palestine
Décès	9 avril 2000 (à 82 ans) Grand Londres
Nationalités	Britannique, apatride
Activités	Écrivain, journaliste

Autres informations

Parti politique	Parti socialiste des travailleurs
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- *Le Trotskysme après Trotsky*, pour un résumé de ses principaux apports au trotskysme (qu'il a écrit en 1999 peu avant sa mort)
- Une partie de ses textes traduits en français (section francophone des archives marxistes sur Internet)
- Une partie (plus importante) de ses textes disponibles en anglais (section anglophone des archives marxistes sur Internet)
- Site du SWP

Notes et références

1. A revolutionary without a revolution (<http://www.redpepper.org.uk/a-revolutionary-without-a-revolution/>) , *Red Pepper* , octobre 2011

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Tony Cliff

Tony Cliff (oik. **Ygael Gluckstein**) (20. toukokuuta 1917 Palestiina – 9. toukokuuta 2000) oli trotskilainen poliitikko.

Tony Cliff syntyi Palestiinassa sionistiperheeseen. Hän radikalisoitui 1930-luvulla ja oli keskeisessä osassa rakentamassa sosialistista liikettä, joka yhdistäisi arabit ja juutalaiset. Toisen maailmansodan jälkeen, nähtyään, että sionistit tulevat voittamaan yhä varmemmin Palestiinassa, hän lähti maanpakoon Britanniaan ja vaihtoi nimekseen Tony Cliff.

1940-luvun lopulla hän kehitti teorian, jonka mukaan Neuvostoliitto ei ollut työväenvaltio vaan eräänlainen byrokraattinen valtiokapitalismi. Teoria on leimannut vahvasti suuntausta, johon hän kuului siitä lähtien seuraavat viisi vuosikymmentä. Vaikka Cliff erottuikin teoreettisesti "ortodoksisesta trotskilaisuudesta" sen jälkeen, kun hänet oli erotettu Neljännestä Internationaalista 1950-luvulla, hän piti itseään aina trotskilaisena.

Hänen poliittista perintöään jatkaa hänen perustamansa brittiläinen *Socialist Workers Party* sekä International Socialist -suuntaus, joita on kutsuttu "cliffiläisiksi".

Kirjoja

Tony Cliffin kirjoituksia on käännetty lukuisille eri kielille. Tähän on koottu joitain hänen merkittävimpiä teoksiaan.

- *All That Glitters Is Not Gold* (1945)
- *State Capitalism in Russia* (1955)
- *The Class Nature of the Peoples Democracies* (1948)
- *Bureaucratic Collectivism - A Critique* (1948)
- *Stalin's Satellites in Europe* (1952)
- *Economic Roots of Reformism* (1957)
- *Perspectives For The Permanent War Economy*
- *Mao's China* (1957)
- *Rosa Luxemburg: A study* (1959)
- *Trotsky On Substitutionism* (1960)
- *Incomes Policy, Legislation and Shop Stewards* (1966) with Colin Barker
- *The Employers Offensive; Productivity Deals And How To Fight Them* (1967)
- *France, The Struggle Goes On* (1968) with Ian Birchall
- *Party and Class* (1971)
- *Lenin (Vol.1): Building the party* (1975)
- *Portugal At the Crossroads* (1975)
- *The Labour Party: A Marxist History* with Donny Gluckstein (1988)
- *World to win - life of a revolutionary* (2000)
- Maailma voitettavana (engl. *Marxism at the millennium*) (2000)

Kirjallisuutta

- Birchall, Ian: *Tony Cliff. A Marxist for His Time*. Bookmarks, 2011. ISBN 9781905192793.

Aiheesta muualla

- Tony Cliff 1917-2000 (Marxists' Internet Archive)
- Maailma voitettavana (Sosialistiliiton julkaisema Cliff-suomennos)

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