

After the Event: Prospects and Retrospects of Revolution



*An international conference hosted
by UCL Anthropology 15 – 17 May 2018*

**15- 16 May 9:00 – 5:00 BST UCL,
Department of Anthropology
Daryll Forde Seminar Room, 2nd
Floor, 14 Taviton Street, London
WC1H 0BW**

**17 May 10:00 – 2:30 BST SPACE,
129-131 Mare Street, London E8 3RH**

In what ways do revolutions continue to shape people's lives in their wake, and in what manners are revolutionary events in turn shaped by subsequent political practice and discourse? How can we engage conceptually and ethnographically with the complex permutations that radical political projects undergo over time, their unexpected and perplexing consequences? How does the passage of time inflect the revolutionary experience and what does this entail for attempts to capture ethnographically the 'spirit' of past revolutions?

These are some of the questions that this conference aims to address by treating revolution as an ethnographic object of enquiry. More specifically, we aim to explore the impact of revolutionary politics across different spatio-temporal horizons and within various scales and spheres of our interlocutors' lifeworlds. In placing its focus squarely on revolutionary posteriorities - on the afterlife, the aftermath, the aftershock and the afterthoughts - this conference seeks to complement the Pauline emphasis on the ruptural event in the study of revolution. Our temporal focus aims to thematize the novel, often unintended socio-political forms that emerge from and after the event, proposing a

non-teleological understanding of revolution as productive of insurgent and resurgent subjectivities, accidental and incidental realities, and idiosyncratic, unruly forms of imagination and desire. Eschewing the success/failure binary and its normative inferences, we invite therefore discussions of the full spectrum of political contestation, from insurrection and occupation to disobedience, mass protest and resistance.

This three-day conference dedicated to exploring new departures in the anthropology of revolution will bring together a wide range of scholars who will examine the dynamics through which revolutions are continuously made and unmade long after they have first taken place. More than a mere exercise in stocktaking or hindsight, we want to take this opportunity to reflect on the implications the study of revolution has for anthropology itself. Just as revolutionary language is in a state of constant flux, so are our own terms of analysis, shaped by the ethnographic object of revolution as it emerges in the field. Predicated on this potential to allow for its own transformation, we seek to explore anthropology's contribution to wider debates about political temporality, probing the very possibility of revolutionary futurity in our purportedly post-revolutionary age.



After the Event is sponsored and hosted by the European Research Council research project ***Comparative Anthropologies of Revolutionary Politics (CARP)***, led by Martin Holbraad and based at UCL. It is organised by Narges Ansari, Myriam Lamrani, Charlotte Loris-Rodionoff, and Kaya Uzel, who are members of the project's research team.

Programme 15 May 9:00 – 17:00

Department of Anthropology, Daryll Forde Seminar Room, 2nd Floor, 14 Taviton Street, London WC1H 0BW

09:10 – 09:30 Welcome and Introductory Remarks

09:30 – 10:45 Keynote by Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi (Princeton University)

Revolution, Historical Possibilities, and the Perils of “Progressive” Politics

10:45 – 10:55 Coffee Break

11:00 – 13:30 Panel 1: The Tragic Turns of Revolution: Defeat, Failure, Dissipation

11:00 – 11:20 Brian Meeks (Brown University): *The Caribbean in the Aftermath of the Grenadian Revolution: Defeat, Tragedy and the Search for Optimism in the Dark Tunnel of Hegemonic Dissolution*

11:20 - 11:40 Alice Wilson (University of Sussex): *Defeated Revolutionaries, Lasting Legacies: the Afterlife of Revolution in Dhufar, Oman*

11:40 - 11:50 Coffee Break

11:50 - 12:10 David Cooper (UCL): *The Remains of Revolution: Disagreements about Revolutionary Failure in Nicaragua*

12:10 - 12:30 David Nugent (Emory University): *The ‘Revolution Before the Revolution’: Radical Organizing Across the Longue Durée in Twentieth-Century Peru*

12:30 - 13:30 Discussion

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break

14:30 – 17:00 Panel 2: When Utopia is Banal: Immanence and Transcendence in the Revolutionary Imagination

14:30 – 14:50 Samuli Schielke (ZMO Berlin): *The Search for a Normal Life in Egypt After 2013*

14:50 – 15:10 Martin Holbraad (UCL): *The House of Spirits: an Afterlife of Revolutionary Care in Cuba*

15:10 – 15:20 Coffee Break

15:20 – 15:40 Igor Cherstich (UCL): *Killing Time: Cigarettes, Tea and Post-revolutionary Laziness in Libya*

15:40 – 16:00 Piers Vitebsky (Cambridge University): *How can we Recognise when a Revolution has Taken Place?*

16:00 – 17:00 Discussion

Programme 16 May 9:30 – 17:00

Department of Anthropology, Daryll Forde Seminar Room, 2nd Floor, 14 Taviton Street, London WC1H 0BW

09:30 – 10:45 Keynote by Alpa Shah (LSE): *Why I Write: In a Climate Against Intellectual Dissidence*

10:45 – 10:55 Coffee Break

11:00 – 13:30 Panel 3: Revolution Through the Looking-Glass: Imaginary Horizons and Temporal Visions

11:00 – 11:20 Orin Starn (Duke University US): *After the Revolution: Rethinking Peru's Shining Path*

11:20 – 11:40 Francesco Vacchiano (ICS-U Lisboa): *'The Spirit of the Revolution': Unfinished Consequences of the Revolt Among Activists of the 20 February Movement in Morocco*

11:40 – 11:50 Coffee Break

11:50 – 12:10 Gabriele vom Bruck: *'Transfer of Presence': Photographic Articulations of Lived Experiences and Unfinished Pasts in the Context of the Yemeni Revolution of 1962*

12:10 – 12:30 Mary Elaine Hegland (Santa Clara University): *Revolution in the Field: After the Event in Aliabad, Iran*

12:30 – 13:30 Discussion

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break

14:30 – 17:00 Panel 4: Enduring Aesthetics. Memory and Sensual Perceptions of Past Revolutions

14:30 – 14:50 Ileana Selejan (UCL): *¡Patria libre y vivir! Photography and Protest in Nicaragua*

14:50 – 15:10 Jessica Winegar (Northwestern University): *The Aesthetic as Revolution's Ambiguous Battleground: Notes from Egypt*

15:10 – 15:20 Coffee Break

15:20 – 15:40 Yolanda Covington-Ward (University of Pittsburgh): *Embodied Revolutions: Body Politics, Religion, and Subject-Making in Postcolonial Congo*

15:40 – 16:00 Rafael Sánchez (Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva): *Humpty Dumpty Politics. Post-Truth Revolutionary Populism in Venezuela (and Elsewhere)*

16:00 – 17:00 Discussion

**Programme 17 May 10:00 – 14:30
SPACE, 129-131 Mare Street, London E8 3RH**

The last day of the conference will be held at SPACE in East London, the venue of the exhibition *Morphologies of Invisible Agents*, which is the outcome of the Social Morphologies Research Unit's (SMRU) long-term dialogue between artists and anthropologists, mediated by their shared use of diagrams as catalysts for thinking and doing social change. Collaborating pairs of artists and anthropologists use as their point of departure the shifting social tensions they detect in an array of settings: Shi'a rituals in Iran, revolutionary change in Libya and Cuba, the slashing of welfare in the UK, and more. Delving into the hidden dynamics of these social morphologies, the collaborating pairs present a series of speculative works that deploy diagrams and diagrammatics as not merely explanatory machines but as exploratory investigations to allow invisible agents to be sensed. The Social Morphologies Research Unit is based in the Anthropology Department and the Slade School of Fine Art at University

College London and is an offshoot of Comparative Anthropologies of Revolutionary Politics (CARP).

10:00 – 10:45 Private View

10:45 – 12:00 Keynote speech by David Lan (LSE/The Young Vic): *What Goes Around, Comes Around – Late Reflections on the Chimurenga*

12:00 – 12:30 Refreshments/sandwich lunch

12:30 – 14:30 *'Talkin' About Revolution': A roundtable discussion with anthropologists, historians and sociologists, including Martin Holbraad (UCL), Caroline Humphrey (Cambridge), Bruce Kapferer (Bergen), Nicola Miller (UCL), and Bjørn Thomassen (Roskilde)*

Abstracts:

YOLANDA COVINGTON-WARD - Embodied Revolutions: Body Politics, Religion, and Subject-Making in Postcolonial Congo

This paper uses two case studies to discuss the interrelationship of embodiment, religion, and revolutionary politics in post-colonial Democratic Republic of Congo; political animation during the presidency of Mobutu Sese Seko (especially in the 1970's and 1980's), and embodiment in the movement of Bundu dia Kongo in the early 2000's. In both cases, I explore how revolution becomes mundane and banal, rather than exceptional and extraordinary, and the significant role that the physical body plays in crafting revolutionary subjects, even if it is against their will.

The first case study examines post-colonial Congo under Mobutu Sese Seko. In 1965 Mobutu took power in a coup d'état that he called revolutionary; in fact, Mobutu established a one-party state (Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution, or the People's Revolutionary Movement) of which all citizens had to be members. During his dictatorial rule, Mobutu advocated an ideology of "authenticité," based on revaluing and celebrating the country's diverse cultural heritage. One aspect of this policy was political animation: organized dancing, singing, and other forms of artistic expression performed not only at political events but also in everyday settings such as businesses and schools, all with the purpose of spreading governmental propaganda and exalting Mobutu. For many, their participation in the "civil religion" of Mobutu worship and political animation was coerced; yet through the forced dancing their bodies were shaped and transformed by the revolution in everyday life.

The second case study is an examination of embodied politics in the politico-religious-nationalist movement of Bundu dia Kongo, a group with the ultimate goal of re-forming the pre-colonial Kongo Kingdom. This movement, led by Ne Muanda Nsemi, seeks to revalorize Kongo culture and language, while advocating for greater political power for people of the Kongo ethnic group in a much larger country in which they are often marginalized politically. The paper examines their redefinition and refashioning of greetings and forms of prayer to shape politically conscious Kongo subjects who can be mobilized for political action. While in this case, the revolution is still ongoing, it offers some instructive lessons for understanding the role of the body in making and remaking revolution in everyday life.

IGOR CHERSTICH - Killing Time: Cigarettes, Tea and Post-revolutionary Laziness in Libya

Two events marked the recent history of Libya. In 1969 Colonel Qaddafi conducted a revolutionary coup that led to the creation of the Jamahiriya, a political system supposedly based on direct democracy. In 2011 another revolution broke out, Qaddafi was killed, and the Jamahiriya collapsed. The paper compares the aftermath of these two revolutions. In particular, the focus will be on the experiences of young Libyans in the city of Tripoli in two distinct moments: during the last years of the Qaddafi regime - forty years after the Colonel had come to power - and in the time that followed the end of Qaddafi's rule. We will explore these two post-revolutionary scenarios by looking at notions of lethargy and dynamicity. As we will see, Qaddafi envisioned his revolution as the creation of a society infused with vitality and vibrancy. In contrast to this vision, however, young Libyans experienced on an everyday basis stuckness, immobility and laziness, spending large portions of their time in an attempt to kill time. In exploring this sense of lethargy we will illuminate the failures of Qaddafi's project, showing how the end of such project was perceived by Libyan youth as a long awaited explosion of dynamicity. Such analysis will bring us to think more broadly about the politics of laziness, but we will also have a chance to investigate Libya's current vicissitudes where, eight years after the revolution of 2011, young Libyans feel, once again, stuck, but have found very different ways of killing time.

DAVID COOPER - The Remains of Revolution: Disagreements About Revolutionary Failure in Nicaragua

Appraisals of the current state of health of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua are highly polarised. For many the revolution is, well and truly, dead. On this view, what remained of the revolution's progressive gains were systematically undone by 'neoliberal' governments that ran the country between 1990 and 2006. The return to power of the Sandinistas in 2007 changed little. The FSLN had shifted from being a party of genuine revolutionaries to being a machine for the personal enrichment of a new elite. For ongoing supporters of the FSLN, meanwhile, the revolution is alive and well. It entered a '2nd stage' in 2007, continuing to

represent popular interests in an enduring struggle between 'socialism' and 'capitalism', between the 'Left' and the 'Right'. This presentation sets these opposed views of revolutionary vitality against the way the revolution was understood by residents of a strongly Sandinista community in Nicaragua's Segovian mountains. For them, the revolution was many things. It was something which 'arrived', suddenly, and in doing so connected rural areas to a new national society. It was a total transition from oppression and poverty to freedom and plenty. It was the promise that land would be given to those who work it. It was the promise that the President would personally see to it that the poor were looked after. It was the victory of one of two violent factions struggling for control of a remote 'government'. It was a grand educational process which turned 'Indians' into 'Nicaraguans'. Only some of these views of the revolution overlap with the polarised perspectives just described—and only some allow for an analysis of revolutionary continuity structured by metaphors of life and death. The examples provoke an exploration of how understandings of revolutionary durability depend on the conception of revolution itself.

BEHROOZ GHAMARI-TABRIZI - Revolution, Historical Possibilities, and the Perils of "Progressive" Politics

Do revolutions lead societies from one stage of history to another? Do they realize an already mapped historical telos or do they open possibilities in the manifestation of a contingent history? Through a conceptual analysis of the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the Arab uprisings of 2010-11, in this presentation I problematize the notion of revolution as a temporal abbreviation and a violent realization of a predetermined future. I argue that revolution ought to be understood as a moment of creative pause and a transformative politics the outcome of which needs to be negotiated in practice. The Iranian revolution as well as the Arab uprisings of 2010-11 generated in fleeting moments the possibility of a different kind of revolutionary politics that did not simply reflect the unfolding of a universal temporality.

MARY ELAINE HEGLAND - Revolution in the Field: After the Event in Aliabad, Iran

Based on anthropological fieldwork in Iran for 18 months between June 1978 and December 1979, as well as seven subsequent research trips to Aliabad and nearby Shiraz between 2003 and 2018, this paper focuses on (a) pre-Revolution reasons for dissatisfaction among Aliabad and some Shiraz people and hopes and expectations from the revolutionary movement and the post-Revolution society; (b) post-Revolution continuities with pre-Revolution trends ascertainable in Aliabad and Shiraz between 2003 and 2018; (c) post-Revolution developments apparently in Aliabad, some of them unintended consequences; (d) evaluations of the Revolution and post-Revolution conditions—satisfactions and dissatisfactions among Aliabad people. The (d) section also looks at post-Revolution conditions in the light of pre-Revolution expectations and hopes for results of the resistance

movement. Attention will be given to the variety of attitudes among Aliabad people during the revolutionary movement and the various motivations behind these stances, including political events, developments, and alignments in Aliabad history. Case studies and quotations will forefront people's voices. People seem to use personal and social agency to make their own decisions about their relationship with revolutionary forces; although they may feel forced to portray their relationships in certain ways, they seem to hold on to their own attitudes in private. In general, field research demonstrates that for most people of Aliabad, expectations from the Revolution for societal and personal changes have not come to fruition and in some ways conditions have worsened, according to research partners. Further, although people have many complaints about post-Revolution developments, conditions, and policies, Aliabad people are less likely to comment on positive changes. Expectations have been raised dramatically, and when not fulfilled, people are quick to criticize and grumble, at least among intimates.

MARTIN HOLBRAAD - The House of Spirits: an Afterlife of Revolutionary Care in Cuba

In a situation like Cuba's, in which the optimistic effervescence of revolution has long since dissipated into the institutionalized apparatus of a 'revolutionary state', people's lives are shaped by continual comparisons between the revolutionary ideals the state is meant to embody and promote (the 'ought') and the lived realities citizens experience as normal (the 'is'). The revolution (*la revolución*), understood in Cuba as a still ongoing project of socio-political transformation, thus unfolds as the 'afterlife' of an ordinary revolutionary event – an afterlife that people tend to cast in the language of cynicism, disappointment and dejection. What happens, however, when these dismal comparisons of revolutionary ideals and realities are upended? This paper presents the remarkable story of a man's ongoing struggle to rebuild his home following its partial collapse (an all-too-common occurrence for the ageing housing stock of Havana), and how this has propelled him into a daily encounter with the state's housing structures and regulations. Refusing to temper expectations of how things ought to be with an acceptance of how they actually are, the man is steadfast in his conviction that state structures can yield to his own designs. This conviction, it turns out, stems from the man's idiosyncratic practice of Cuban Spiritism, which involves intimate relationships with spirits who inhabit his derelict home and guide his daily bureaucratic manoeuvrings. The upshot is a cosmology of power and care that is quite different from the one the state promulgates, recasting the man's relationship to the state-revolutionary project.

DAVID LAN - What Goes Around, Comes Around - Late Reflections on the Chimurenga

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BRIAN MEEKS - The Caribbean in the Aftermath of the Grenadian Revolution: Defeat, Tragedy and the Search for Optimism in the Dark Tunnel of Hegemonic Dissolution

The 1983 collapse of the Grenada Revolution, with the killing of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and his associates by his own People's Revolutionary Army, was swiftly followed by the US-led October 25 invasion. It marked the end of an era of popular post-colonial upsurge across the Anglophone Caribbean and the beginning of an extended period of neo-liberal resurgence. This was accompanied by a parlous social and political moment that I have referred to in the Jamaican case, as "hegemonic dissolution". While some scholars have questioned the finitude of 1983, suggesting that significant contingents of the popular movement continued to advance, the consensus weighs in favor of the notion that this was a decisive blow to the momentum for radical change that had grown in the region over the previous decade. Indeed, after more than thirty years of quietude, in which the call for radical, transformative change has all but disappeared, the question can reasonably be posed as to whether the decade of the Seventies was anomalous and the call for revolutionary transformation nothing more than an aberrant pipe dream. In this paper, I grapple with David Scott's proposal that "tragedy" needs to be incorporated into the conversation on Caribbean revolutions, which he poses as a counter to Marxian (and Jamesian) notions of revolutionary optimism. While I heed Scott's warning that a certain hubristic certainty needs to be exorcised from radical Caribbean thought, I fear that his approach may exceed this mandate and contribute to the contemporary trend of withdrawal from the political. As a partial counter then, I want to return to Gramsci's aphorism, also deployed by Stuart Hall - "pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will" - as a starting point to think about two failed insurrections that occurred post 1983, recent seismic changes in popular Caribbean culture and whether revolution is a chimeric notion, or may still have purchase as inspiration for the long-postponed transformational change that the insurgents of the Seventies stood for.

DAVID NUGENT - The 'Revolution Before The Revolution': Radical Organizing Across the Longue *Durée* in Twentieth-Century Peru

In the closing decades of the twentieth century the Communist Party of Peru-Shining Path (PCP-SL) attempted to seize control of the Peruvian government through armed struggle. The ensuing Civil War, which lasted well over a decade, claimed perhaps 70,000 lives. While much has been written about the Shining Path, the armed struggle that it launched is rarely connected in any systematic way to prior forms of revolutionary activity. Instead, the tendency has been to Orientalize this radical Maoist-inspired movement—to treat it as an extraordinary episode, an aberration from what had come before. In this paper I argue that the revolution precipitated by the Shining Path is best seen not as an event but rather as part of the 'aftermath' of previous revolutionary initiatives.

That is, PCP-SL is usefully understood as having emerged out of an extended period of widespread radical endeavor that stretched across much of the twentieth century. I illustrate this argument by exploring the ‘revolution before the revolution’—by analyzing radical initiatives earlier in the twentieth century and showing their connections to PCP-SL. I focus on the forms of subjectivity, organization and discipline that emerged across the *longue durée* of revolutionary activity in twentieth-century Peru. In so doing, I seek to raise new questions about the temporality of revolutionary politics, the ambiguity of revolutionary legacies and the scale of the everyday in revolutionary transformation.

RAFAEL SÁNCHEZ - Humpty Dumpty Politics. Post-Truth Revolutionary populism in Venezuela (and Elsewhere)

Focused on Venezuela but with references to the current situation in the US, this presentation explores the afterlife of revolutionary populism in the age of the ‘retreat of the theologico-political’. If, as the “royal road” to the political, according to Laclau classical (revolutionary) populism enables through appeals to the people the hegemonic reconstitution of a political order rent by intractable antagonisms, making it whole again, then it is my argument that nowadays, in the midst of the mentioned “retreat,” these people-appeals obey a non-hegemonic political logic where what is at stake is not the reconstitution of any totalizing order but the establishment of a war machine. Bent on “dominance without hegemony” (Guha) and centered on affect and the body, such machine operates vis-à-vis an ever more fragmented social terrain which it does not seek to totalize but, rather, assumes as the endemic predicament that is its enabling precondition. In what, in our current “post-truth” predicament amounts to a Humpty Dumpty logic (“a word means what I say it means” says Humpty Dumpty to Alice in *Alice through the looking glass*), at this point the ‘people’s referent is not, as in classical populism, any numerical majority but, more tribally, “my people,” those who, whether or not they are the majority, are whenever summoned to do so from the state ready to go and bodily crush the enemy. This ever more tribalizing logic is, I argue, one of the afterlives of revolution today.

SAMULI SCHIELKE - The Search for a Normal Life in Egypt After 2013

At the height of the Arab uprisings in 2011, change was the word of the day in Egypt. And yet even during the most intense moments of the revolutionary period, many people were mostly busy with trying to maintain ordinary life and a degree of normality. Some others were emboldened to claim that only after change is accomplished, they may finally be able to live a proper, normal life as decent people. At the same time, a powerful counter-revolutionary discourse called for a quick return to normality. As the fantastic moment of possible change passed, stability became the new political keyword, and people who might have been temporarily mobilised during the uprising mostly turned their focus on working careers, marriage, education and migration for the sake of social

becoming in a largely conventional and conservative framework of a good, ordinary life. At the same time the political situation in Egypt remains volatile, contrary expectations are invested into the idea of a normal life, unsustainable ecological and demographic processes are underway, and a lot of things actually have changed, for better or worse.

In my presentation, which draws on long-term fieldwork in Egypt and collaborative conceptual work with Aymon Kreil and Paola Abenante, I focus on a paradoxical dimension of normality: the idea that a normal life is something else than the ordinary life in the here and now. Sketching the contours of the search for such a normal life in the ruins of a defeated revolution, I highlight three key complications. First: to build a good life at home, one must look elsewhere. Second: stability is based on growth, which is an unstable state. Third, attempts to live an unremarkable, unproblematic life may be successful but in an open-ended way, realising something else than originally envisioned

ILEANA SELEJAN - ¡Patria libre y vivir! Photography and Protest in Nicaragua

This talk seeks to provide an analysis of key images and imagery that accompanied the rise of the April 2018 protests in Managua, Nicaragua. The discussion will revolve around the use of the phone camera and social media as tools for demanding justice as well as for witnessing and documenting “live” history. The *Movimiento Estudiantil 19 de abril* was the largest social movement to develop in the country since the Sandinista revolution, which toppled the Somoza dictatorship in July of 1979. The sudden appearance of new images in the public sphere manifested itself as an overflow of content against a backdrop of prolonged silence due to censorship. Correspondences with well-known photographs from the 1978-79 insurrection were tested, as the memory of the historic revolution was actively engaged with in the streets. This effervescence nonetheless spurred iconoclastic acts on a par, and Latour’s thesis (2002) becomes immediately relevant here. In this talk, I will revisit theoretical notions concerning the proliferation of images via photographic technologies in a revolutionary context, reflecting on what makes images particularly powerful and effective in an activist sense, spurring audiences into action.

ALPA SHAH - Why I Write: In a Climate Against Intellectual Dissidence

Why do I write? If there was ever a time when we could ignore this question, we certainly cannot anymore. The domination of knowledge production that creates hegemonic ideology is crucial to the marriage of state-craft and corporation-craft that is deepening socio-economic inequalities. In keeping the spirit of disinterested enquiry, promoting critical analysis, challenging conventional wisdoms, the spaces of intellectual dissidence once provided by universities are being ever more controlled, if not squeezed out or shut down entirely in many parts of the world. In this overall climate of attack on the dissidence of our intellect, this Keynote Lecture will draw on the writing of *Nightmarch: Among India’s Revolutionary Guerrillas* to raise the following

questions: Why do we write? What is at stake? Who is our audience? What is our intent? What makes us tear up our pages and rebuild? What is our political purpose? Our historical impulse? Are we aware of it? How do we navigate the tension between our activist commitments and the analytical demands of scholarly fidelity, write accessibly without jettisoning nuance and complexity? To what extent is the writing an aesthetic experience? Would we be better served if we were simply journalists or even writers of fiction? Why, if at all, does it matter that we are writing as anthropologists? What are the consequences?

ORIN STARN - After the Revolution: Rethinking Peru's Shining Path

I'll discuss the life and afterlife of Peru's Shining Path Maoist insurgency. When I was a young anthropologist during the 1980s, the rebels seemed a scary, mysterious force, and I had several dangerous run-ins with them. Now, after getting to know top jailed leaders and other research for a new book about Shining Path, I have come to a quite different understanding. It seems much clearer to me that the guerrillas were hardly some cruel millenarian exception so much as a group very much within mainstream 20th century Communist traditions. What are the difficulties of deciphering the "revolutionary event" through the smoke, fear, and uncertainty of wartime? What were (and are) the blind spots of leftist academics like me in making sense of social movements past and present? How might Shining Path's story lead us to think differently about the Cold War and the beauty and horror of utopian imagination? I will take up these questions to reflect on revolutionary aftermaths and time's unexpected work in the context of a war whose ghosts wander the cloud villages and Lima shantytowns even today.

FRANCESCO VACCHIANO - 'The Spirit of the Revolution': Unfinished Consequences of the Revolt Among Activists of the 20 February Movement in Morocco

Despite the overall dissatisfaction for the results of the so-called 'Arab Spring' in Morocco, many of the activists who participated in the 20 February Movement (the self-organised, committee-based and leaderless group that spurred on the protest during the 'long 2011') admit that, after the events, "nothing will ever be the same again". My research takes this statement seriously and tries to grasp the dimensions of this change by exploring the biographies of militants who took part in the protest. My hypothesis is that, beyond the objective political results, what has changed on a long-lasting basis is their worldview, their ethical orientation and their relationships. I argue that 'political subjectivation' entails a complete transformation of personal schemes and feelings and that, before the inevitable frustration that any revolutionary hope generates, commitment is often internalised and privatised. This personal move reformulates the ethical and subjective transformation occurred during the 'hot time' through forms of self-cultivation that are intended both to instil and give a new life to "the spirit of the revolution", constituting, as such, the basis for new forms of mobilization. This presentation is set to present some of the outcomes of the research project:

“Globally Sensitive: Revolt, Citizenship, and Expectations for the Future in North Africa” (<https://globallysens.hypotheses.org/>).

ALICE WILSON - Defeated Revolutionaries, Lasting Legacies: the Afterlife of Revolution in Dhufar, Oman

When a revolution is defeated, what may endure over time of militants' values and aspirations for social change, and how may these legacies manifest themselves? In Oman, the Sultanate defeated the former Marxist liberation movement in the southern Dhufar region in 1975; since then authoritarian rule has marginalised public discussion of the war and its legacies. Nevertheless, forty years on some former militants reproduce revolutionary values of social egalitarianism in their everyday lives, whilst Dhufaris led Oman's longest Arab Spring demonstrations in 2011. Through both ordinary and extraordinary actions Dhufaris have created an “afterlife” of ongoing legacies of defeated revolution. Where prevailing narratives of post-war Dhufar have emphasised the Sultan's military and political victory, this afterlife of revolution foregrounds a counter-history of defeated revolution and its legacies.

JESSICA WINEGAR - The Aesthetic as Revolution's Ambiguous Battleground: Notes from Egypt

This paper aims to bring an anthropologically informed consideration of aesthetics to our understanding of the ongoing afterlives of revolutions. Drawing on material from Egypt, it explores how the aesthetic—conceived of as an embodied, affective experience, an expressive style, and a realm of judgment—is a key battleground on which political imaginaries are opened or obscured, but not erased. The ethnographic focus is on the huge proliferation of different groups of Egyptians' judgments of and affective reactions to styles of protest and protestors from 2011-2014, such as their hair, clothing, speech, behavior, and their material protest culture. These judgments and affective reactions were articulated in personal conversation, cultural production such as memes and political cartoons, and in media discourses. The paper shows how actors on opposite sides of the political spectrum (for example, Islamists and secular-oriented people) often rendered the same negative judgments and had similar affective reactions to each other's protests. This phenomenon reveals a normative impulse at the heart of the aesthetic common to urban, middle and upper middle-class Egypt—one that also aligns with new forms of aesthetic governmentality. At the same time, the contradiction in these processes of judgment across political lines, and the protests styles they target, also reveal the subversive nature of the aesthetic because they, at both embodied and discursive levels, realign sense and style in a way that is politically significant. The paper suggests that because the uprising precipitated shifts in affect, style, and judgment, its political outcome cannot be so easily determined or foreclosed. The paper closes with a rumination on the concept of “faltering” as a more productive, aesthetically attuned way to capture the afterlives of revolutions than the binary of success and failure.

PIERS VITEBSKY - How can we Recognise when a Revolution has Taken Place?

Communist takeover and Christian conversion both show a similar rhetoric of rupture, contempt for ancestral knowledge, internalisation of alien ideology, and policing of deviance. Nomadic Eveny reindeer herders in Arctic Siberia were converted to Soviet socialism in the 1920s, Sora of Tribal India to Baptism or neo-Hinduism in the late 20th century. Reflecting on the lives of my friends in both places, I shall trace patterns of coercion and collusion, opportunism, cruelty, and regret, amidst different styles and stages of historical consciousness. Along a spectrum from rejection to reform, it is not always easy to pinpoint the tipping point at which change can be called revolutionary.

GABRIELE VOM BRUCK - 'Transfer of Presence': Photographic Articulations of Lived Experiences and Unfinished Pasts in the Context of the Yemeni Revolution of 1962

This paper deals with domestic photography and the memory of loss in northern Yemen. Photographs in the domestic realm are potent symbols of the present absence of those who were killed during the revolution or the ensuing civil war. For the victims of the revolution, photographs of disappeared family members constitute memorial sites that are managed within kinship relations. As affective spaces, they are locations of generational memories and scarred pasts. The paper intends to engage with Elisabeth Edwards' claim that photographs focus and extend the verbal articulation of histories, and become interlocutors that unlock memories. I shall argue that the relationship between memory and the materiality of the image cannot be determined in an *a priori* fashion and requires contextual analysis.