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Riot, Revolt, Revolution

Paper abstracts

Priscilla Alamos, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium

What is happening on the ground and why? A causal-explanatory mapping of the onset of the bottom-up struggle in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries

Recent and popular developments of the so-called "Arab Spring" experienced in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria in 2010, offer a unique opportunity to research the causes of the onset of contentious collective action and their different forms (protest, riots, revolts, revolutionary movements and so on) and dynamics. The empirical evidence leads us to a two-part puzzle: Why do *wages* of contentious collective action occur in MENA? And under which conditions does contentious collective action happen in MENA countries? Thus, this paper focuses on the period prior to the onset of wages of contentious collective action in order to explore its nature in the light of both empirical evidence and different theories such as social movement, revolutions, civil society, contentious politics and unruly politics. Because the study is causal-explanatory, its aim is twofold: on one hand, to explain the occurrence of contentious collective action as well as the different forms that it takes since its emergence, and on the other, to clarify what is happening on the ground in MENA as a whole, in the light of the theories mentioned above. The concept of "contentious collective action" is built using necessary and sufficient conditions and family resemblance approach (Goertz, 2005). Collecting data methods include "expert interviews" and systematic reviews of secondary sources such as reports of research centers in order to generate qualitative data. Data analysis methods include a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis in order to investigate the determinants of the onset of "contentious collective action". Finally, the paper concludes with a reflection about the main combinations of conditions which can explain the causes of the bottom-up struggle in MENA, as a contribution to future research of the phenomenon.

Alexandria Antoniadou, University of Edinburgh, UK
Censorship and the critical responses of Greek performance art

In the 1960s and 1970s, in the western world, and specifically in the U.K and the U.S.A, the feminist movement and the theory of post modernism along with the exploration of new forms and means in art production led to the flourishing of Performance Art. The use of the real body in visual art initiated the redefinition not only of the artwork but also of the relationship between the artwork, the artist and the viewer. This effort to break certain conventions led on the one hand to the predominance of the spectacle, and on the other hand to the new 'role' of the spectator, whose involvement in the production of the artwork became increasingly active. What happened though during the 1970s in Greece, when the military regime abolished any notion and action of freedom and expression? The particular sociopolitical conditions of the country imposed a new response to life and consequently to art as well. The body, often functioning through an allegorical dimension, became a place of resistance.

Taking into consideration the origins of Performance Art and the circumstances under which it appeared in Europe and the USA, my presentation will focus on the different cultural and sociopolitical framework in which the first performances took place in Greece. In what way did the -imposed by Greek junta (1967-1974) - censorship and restriction of personal freedom influence cultural production and specifically the evolution of Performance Art? Artists I will be looking at include Maria Karavela, Theodoros Papadimitriou and Dimitris Alitheinos.

Hannah Awcock, University of London, UK
'Whose streets/our streets!': Space and contentious politics in the November 2010 student protest

This paper explores the relationship between space and politics in the November 2010 student protest in London against tuition fees. Using semi-structured interviews with people who attended the protest, it looks at the complex relationship between space and politics, a research area that scholars have been developing for about the last two decades. The paper focuses on three questions: why the biggest march took place in London, what is the nature of the relationship between the space the march took place in and political power, and how protestors used physical and virtual space to organise. My research suggests that London is an important site for protest due to its symbolic identity as the heart of British politics. The protest led to a feeling of empowerment for many, partially because they felt they were taking control of the space, although in the case of this protest this political power seemed fleeting and superficial. The incidents at Millbank Tower acted as a useful focus of the various intersections of space, power and contentious politics at the protest. The physical organisation of the march was mainly a fairly traditional A to B march, although there were some breakaway groups. Virtual space was not used as much for communication as it was in subsequent protests, although it did play an important role in terms of organisation and publicity in the build up to the march.

Kevin Barker, University Campus Suffolk, UK
Post-colonial violence, resistance and law's origin

The discipline of history has assumed a monopoly in the narration of violent events against the state and as such shapes the typical conceptual classificatory designations 'riot', 'rebellion' and 'revolution'. The mechanics and politics of historical narration and representation inform appreciations of violent events that inaugurate law and those that do not. This goes beyond the qualities of particular violent events, in the sense that it does not merely depend on what counts as a revolution and what does not, but is influenced by the implications for particular dominant discourses. The French Revolution and the American Revolution are usually advanced as examples of the kind of violence that usher in new legal orders, but not events such as the Haitian Revolution or the Morant Bay rebellion or the 'Mau Mau' rebellion. In other words, the French and American revolutions would, to use Walter Benjamin's philosophical approach on the question of law and violence, be deemed legitimate violence, since such violence achieves the first function – the creation of law. In much of legal, theoretical and historical scholarship, other revolutions are denied this legitimating force as exemplifying the capacity of those subordinated under colonial rule to create law. How then is such a legacy of appreciating past violent events to be re-orientated to inform contemporary theoretical engagements with the inextricable connection between law and violence? This paper explores how revisionist postcolonial readings seek to confer law –making and law - preserving functions on particular historic violent events. It is argued that such readings defy not only official, disciplinary historical narration, but also instantiate 'the popular' as central to theorising law's origin.

Maria Belen Garrido Cornejo, Independent Scholar, Ecuador
Cécile Mouly, FLACSO, Ecuador
Achievements and challenges of the non-violent movement in Syria

This paper analyses achievements and challenges of the non-violent movement in Syria since the beginning of mass protests against the regime in March 2011. It begins with reviewing the non-violent strategies used by the Syrian opposition to protest against the government and evaluating the impact of such strategies. Using insights from the literature on non-violent movements against dictatorships, it then assesses the main challenges encountered by the non-violent movement in Syria before concluding with a reflection on future perspectives for democratic transition in relation to the strategies chosen by the opposition movement and the international community.

Rodion Belkovich, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia
Struggle for Siberian autonomy: Oblastnichestvo movement

In the second half of the XIXth century a number of intellectuals of Siberian origin (Grigorii Potanin and Nikolai Iadrintsev being the most well-known of them) launched a so-called "*Oblastnichestvo*" movement which proclaimed Siberia to be something more than just another region of the Russian Empire. Their discontent with the manner in which the Russian authorities dealt with the Siberian territories, transforming them into a giant penal colony, found its expression in a theory of decentralisation within the Empire. *Oblastniki* refused to accept the view of Siberia as a Russian periphery, which contrasted with the important role it played in the Russia's economic growth. They believed that for the centuries of co-existence of local peoples and migrants from the European parts of Russia a new nation had been born and it must be treated as such. *Oblastniki* had a strong interest in the American revolutionary experience and discussed the need for federalisation of Russia in the same vein.

The *Oblastnichestvo* was regarded dangerous by the Tsarist regime. The proponents of the movement were penalised by the Russian state for their activity despite the fact that they actually did not put forward an idea of secession and only sought the greater autonomy for Siberia within Russian borders.

Why this federalisation idea was that unbearable for the Russian establishment? Should we, following the logic of imperial authorities, regard an "*oblastnichestvo* project" as a revolutionary one? Was it a theory capable of becoming a rationale for the anti-colonial struggle in Siberia or was it just a petty bourgeois harmless rhetoric?

Nowadays we encounter a revival of Siberian regionalism in a much more radical, secessionist form. Is that a result of the rediscovery of the old ideas or an essentially different approach to the question of Siberian autonomy?

Monir Birouk, Ibnu Zohr University, Morocco
Re-mapping the Orient in the Western discourse after the Arab Spring: from neo-Orientalism to comparativism

Today that the winds of the Arab Spring have already started to re-shape power relations and discursive practices in the Arab world, Edward Said is still regarded as the "absent present" figure in this spate of revolutions which pervaded the Arab World. It is perhaps too early to venture a well-founded interpretation of the causes and implications of these Arab uprisings, as we have still to wait for forthcoming sociological studies as well as imaginative, artistic and cultural productions for a more probing comprehension of what happened. Until scholars have discursive material at hand to examine, scrutinize and interpret, we shall content ourselves perhaps with a tentative exploration of how the Arab revolutions have come to bear on the relationship between the West and the Arab World, a relationship

which has since the 17th century been tainted by the former's will to knowledge and power over the latter. With particular focus on the Arab Spring, this paper aims at tracing the continuities and discontinuities in the West's paradigmatic representation of the Arab World, raising in the course the question about the extent to which Said's thesis in *Orientalism* can still serve in dissecting the realities of the post-Arab Spring. The paper raises two main questions: to what extent has the Arab Spring disrupted the long-standing image of the Orient as a male-centered, dormant, chaotic and violent entity"? And would the Arab World be able to mark the time for what Spivak calls "a comparativism of equivalence"?

María Blanco Palencia, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain
Social movements of protests in Jordan: Towards change or continuity?

Although Jordan has remained relatively stable during the Arab spring, there have been examples of social movements of protest which should be analysed as they have reflected the existence of new social dynamics and will probably acquire an important role in the future political development of the country. The development of these protest movements will be evaluated through the causal factors at three different levels: firstly, at a regional level, the impact of regional instability with the Arab spring in their appearance and development; in second place, at a national political level, the internal governmental management of the protests; finally, at a social level, factors of Jordanian society, namely Jordan's social fragmentation. These factors will help us draw a series of possible future scenarios for Jordan which are especially relevant for the Jordanian upcoming general elections, which are scheduled for before the end of 2012, and which are supposed to constitute the beginning of a new era in the Jordanian political life. We will see to what extent these factors work towards the stability of the country, arguing that if reforms do not succeed in meeting social demands, they could eventually lead to a context of contentious politics in the country.

Jane Brake, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
John van Aitken, UCLan, UK
The Salford riots and the crisis of voice

On 10th August 2011, the day after the Salford riots, Lisa Moore was interviewed for BBC news in the entrance to Salford Shopping City. On the same day Lisa Moore's interview was re-encoded, re-titled with the words 'Chav Mother' and uploaded to YouTube. We will take this interview and its subsequent proliferation, as a point of departure, engaging participants in a mixed media presentation (audio, stills, video), which articulates a series of questions around what Nick Couldry has described as "the crisis of voice" after neoliberalism. For example we are interested in the way particular forms of mediatization can be seen to amplify or distort meanings of the Salford riots; how opportunities to listen in the post riot context are orchestrated to exclude certain voices; and how the process of gentrification designs out

spaces where questions may be asked, where people confront each other on a daily basis, in favour of spaces regulated by consumption.

John van Aitken is Course Leader for Photography at UCLan. Jane Brake is Senior Lecturer, Interactive Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University. Aitken and Brake work together as the Institute of Urban Dreaming. They are involved in a long term research project in Salford, which includes the production of a visual archive about the process of gentrification.

Gabriella Calchi-Novati, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
What happens the day-after? From 'Occupy Wall Street' to 'Melancholia'- and back

> Yes, the protests did create a vacuum – a vacuum in the field of hegemonic ideology, and time is needed to fill this vacuum in a proper way, as it is a pregnant vacuum, an opening for the truly new.
> - *Slavoj Žižek1*

When the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek spoke at Zuccotti Park, in October 2011, he wisely advised the crowd of protesters not to fall in love with themselves, warning them that 'carnivals come cheap' and that 'what matters is the day after when we will have to return to normal lives.'2 The actual question, therefore, is: what happens the day-after? I would like to attempt to answer this question by employing the recently released Lars Von Trier's movie *Melancholia* (2011) as, on the one hand, a visual paradigm of what contemporary hegemonic ideology seems to have become – a vacuum, and on the other, as a critical lens to interrogate the performative means employed by *Occupy Wall Street* (OWS), such as zombie make- up and *V-for Vendetta* masks. What is remarkable in *Melancholia* is that within the first ten minutes or so we see the end of the movie: planet earth is going to implode and disappear inside a much bigger and much greener planet, *Melancholia*, which will basically destroy life as we know it. Regardless of us being well aware that there will be no "day-after" there, we still enjoy watching the movie, for we silently hope, against the odds, that life will, somehow, make it. That, in other words, there will be a "day-after". In both zombies and V (the main character of *V-for Vendetta*) what is at stake is a quite ambiguous temporal tense, which is not present, nor past, but not future either. Zombies, as we know, dwell in an indistinct temporal zone, which is the same one inhabited by V. And if we might argue that the absence of a clear-cut "day- after" leaves some sort of open-ended possibility to the events, it is also true that, as argued by Kant 'singularity borders all possibility and thus receives its *omnimoda determinatio* [...] only by means of this *bordering'.* 'What is in question in this *bordering*', Giorgio Agamben explains, is the concept of the *'threshold'*, which is a 'point of contact with an external space that must remain empty'.3 I will conclude by advancing that this external space that *must remain empty* is what we see literalised in the negation of a "day-after" in *Melancholia*; which is the very same space that 'the excess of revolutionary enthusiasm'4 of contemporary revolts, such as OWS, hope to occupy, but in fact can never access.

Paul Carnegie, American University of Sharjah, UAE
Trouble ahead, trouble behind: Challenges of transition for the 'Arab Spring'

It is no exaggeration to say that the events that have swept the Arab World in the past year have gripped us all and I guess many (myself included) are still trying to grapple with their implications. Yet, at this stage I think it is better to exercise caution before coming to any definitive conclusions about post-uprising politics. We all too easily assume that when a country enters a transition from authoritarian rule it is inextricably moving towards democracy. This is a false assumption. There are simply no guarantees during a transitional phase. Translating the popular social momentum for change into effective representational capacity with the ability to yield substantive reform is no easy task. If experience tells us anything, it is that countries do not emerge from this process overnight. It may be one thing to establish formal democratic institutions, but quite another to sustain them over time without stagnation or reversal. Let us not fool ourselves the challenges of democratization confronting the Arab Spring are multiple. Drawing on personal experience and lessons from the comparative study of democratization, this paper outlines the difficult times ahead and some of the major obstacles facing the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Dora Carpenter-Latiri, University of Brighton, UK
Tunisia, the revolution and women

A year and 9 months after the flight of the dictator Ben Ali, Tunisia is under a temporary government with the responsibility for writing a new Constitution. The demand for a new Constitution was ailed at preventing the concentration of powers that led to the brutality, nepotism and corruption that characterised the Ben Ali era.

In this paper I would like to assess the outcomes of the temporary government, focussing on the tensions between modernists (wanting a semi-secular State with an Islamic identity but a Tunisian semi-secularist Constitution) and Islamists (asserting their belonging to the broader Arabo-Islamic Umma and strongly advocating the Sharia). Taking my cue from Fanon's 'Black skins, white masks' I will look closely at women's issues, analysing the support of some women for Islamist demands such as the veil, polygamy, and religious marriage, when many of these features of Islamic traditions were never widespread in the Tunisian way of life and were forbidden by law under the Code of Personal Status introduced by Bourguiba after Independence, making Tunisia an exceptional case in Islamic societies in matters of women's rights. I will also examine women's rights discourse in Tunisia and negotiation with Islamic representations of the role of women in society and will explore some iconic gestures made by post-revolution women.

Chris Cocking, University of Brighton, UK
The psychology of crowd behaviour and the myth of the 'mob mentality'

The riots seen in English cities in August 2011 highlighted not only the need to understand how such disorder begins and develops, but also how outdated and flawed concepts of the crowd are still pervasive in social and political discourse. This was reflected in coverage of the riots by politicians and the media that rarely went beyond simplistic descriptions of events, and largely avoided any attempts to explain why the disorder began, and the social and political contexts in which it occurred. I will argue that populist explanations of crowd behaviour rely too much on irrationalist accounts, which are not supported by empirical evidence, and also based on ideological perspectives that reflect a deep distrust of the crowd, emphasizing its vulnerable nature, and propensity for violence or mass panic. More recent crowd models by social psychologists argue that crowds are not only much more resilient than they are often given credit for, but that they can also be a force for positive social change, as well as a potential resource for collective instrumental and psycho-social support during and after mass emergencies. However, the general distrust and fear of the crowd by those in authority, means that the positive aspects of mass collective behaviour are rarely recognized and/or utilized to promote possible social benefits. Furthermore, this distrust of the crowd is often reflected in crowd management strategies that risk becoming a self-fulfilling prophesy, in that the ways crowds are treated often creates the very public order problems that those in authority fear.

Nerma Cridge, University of Brighton, UK
On the Impossibility of revolution

This paper will start by exploring a series of case studies from the Soviet post-Revolutionary art and architecture, including some of the most famous examples ever imagined: Tatlin's Tower and the Palace of the Soviets. Thus the initial part of the paper will focus on this singular moment in history when radical change and the new socio-political system not only seemed possible, but imminently about to happen. As we now know, this revolutionary radical 'new' never fully materialised. After looking carefully at the past, the paper will speculate on the scale of the anticipated change and what we came to refer to as nostalgia for the future.

The second part of the paper will relate these iconic moments of art and architecture to the current notions of revolution in our social-media driven digital age. The concluding remarks in the paper will question whether the revolution of a vast scale and the presumed sweeping change really ever came very close to be realized. The final argument will come to propose that the notion of 'true revolution', in the generally accepted sense of this word, was not only unrealised, but, much further than that, it could in fact be unrealisable and may even be impossible. Instead, it could be plausible to suggest that the current social media post-digital age, where something may seem revolutionary for a fleeting moment and forgotten the next, demands radical new terms.

Morten Dahlback, NTNU, Norway
Substance, subject, revolution: Hegel's theory of the French Revolution

What is the place of the subject in revolutionary political change? How does the subject inscribe itself in a political event? This paper adresses these questions through a reading of Hegel's interpretation of the French Revolution and Badious theory of the subject.

I argue that the common interpretation of Hegel's account of the French Revolution as a criticism of the excessive violence of the Terror is misleading. As a closer reading of Hegel's writings (especially the *Phenomenology of Spirit*) reveals, the Revolution holds a special significance in Hegel's political thought. It 1) marks the historical moment when the State is desubstansialized, and 2) sets the stage for a theory of the political inextricably linked to the concept of the subject. Only with the Revolution does "Substance become Subject". The State is divested of its apparent solidity and dissolved by the subject's "absolute power of freedom", which takes on a key theoretical role in Hegel's thought.

I then argue for a correspondence between Hegel's idea (elaborated in the Introduction to the *The Lectures on the Philosophy of History*) that the New always appears as a rupture in the social order and Badiou's account of the effects of the event. To clarify the role of the subject in Hegel's political thought, I link his account with Alain Badiou's theory of the evental subject. Hegel's liberal- conservative leanings notwithstanding, his political theory may be read as an attempt to work out the consequences of the emergence of the subject in politics, and thus the consequences of a political event: the Revolution. I conclude by claiming that the stance of philosophy towards political events should be the one defended by Hegel and Badiou – conceptualizing the political in light of present political events.

Jacqueline Davis, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada
Occupied discourses: Rhetoric and the changing face of revolution

What is revolution? What *was* revolution, and how has it changed over the course of the 20th century? Is the Occupy movement a revolution in itself and does it initiate societal transformation? Does it mark the end of a transformation, or a failed attempt? Our ideas of revolution are formed by historical examples and the archetype they create within our collective memory. Specifically, I would like to compare *Occupy* with the civil rights and environmental movements as well as the May 68 protests in Paris. It is my opinion that Occupy is at once working with the archetypical ideas of revolution and protest, as well as changing the processes of revolution. The idea of revolution may not have changed, yet I would like to assert that the social and physical realities of orchestrating one have.

Occupiers use both body and voice to affect their ideas. In physical performances as spectacle and in performative speech acts, Occupiers solidify their movement and reference a 'culture of revolution'. The variety of language used creates a larger voice; one that speaks throughout discourses of resistance. However, is the voice of Occupy to remain within the discourses of resistance? Do the Occupiers' vocal

and bodily tactics present a viable challenge to capitalism? Does the Occupy movement present enough ideas, do they sway populations to the extent that resistance to change may be breached and overcome?

I believe the diffuse and subtle functioning of the Occupy movement is demonstrative of its ability to disprove the stereotype of an immediate and definable revolution and riot. It is my opinion that Occupy is exemplary of today's social justice methods and sentiments, and I would like to track the movement's progress in a critical and comparative voice.

Brahim El Kadiri Boutchich, Moulay Ismail University, Morocco
Peaceful change in Morocco: Is it an exception in revolutions of the Arab Spring?

The aim of this paper is to raise an issue which is still subject to investigation and debate and concerns the way of explaining the changes that Morocco has witnessed during Arab Spring in a peaceful fashion, far from the use of weapons as was the case in Libya or aspects of violence that characterized some Arab countries like Syria. Morocco has adopted a shortcut strategy in the embodied in the new constitution that has been subject to a compulsory political agreement between diverse political powers represented in the government, political parties, organizations and civil and legal associations, though the movement of the 20th February which is essentially behind the quest for change, refused the modified version of the constitution.

Many contacts has taken place between different political powers before announcing the new constitution, after which it was approved with the majority of votes as a result of a political agreement among various parties in spite of their contradictions. This has made change in Morocco a model exception.

However, the central question that arises at this point is: Isn t this agreement or «compulsory» consent which is the outcome of fear to be involved in violence, is but a patchy attempt adopted by different powers to please one another without being a means to a real change? To answer this pertinent question, we will deal with it in the light of three axes:

The first axis: The political powers which are striving for change and the contradiction of their objectives.

The second axis: Reading in the changes which have been brought about by the new constitution.

The third axis: Reading in the features of the Moroccan exception and unexpected happenings in the future.

Samy Gerges, Kennesaw University, US

Islamic political parties and institutional reform in the Arab Revolution: A case study of sectarian violence in Egypt

One of the results of the Arab spring is that Islamic movements and parties have appeared as powerful actors within Arab politics. In Tunisia and Egypt, Islamic political parties managed to win the majority of seats in the parliamentary elections held in 2011. These new parliaments will be given the duty for reforming and reviewing the constitution, and revising the laws that are related to human rights. The Islamic political parties are expected, by the citizens of countries that witnessed the Arab Spring, to deal successfully with atrocities of the past and to achieve reconciliation and healing for victims of the systematic human rights abuses by the previous regime. The success of Islamic political parties, within the coming period in these countries that witnessed the Arab Spring, is related their ability to respond to people's feelings and demands. the Arab Spring sought to end an era of absolutism and dictatorship and move toward democratic political systems, Islamic political parties, to be successful, should deal with issues related to political transitions, including institutional reform. Conceptually, this study will highlight the institutional reform needed to deal with issues of transitional justice related to sectarian violence against minority. This study will focus on minorities groups because they represent the weakest part of the society. Therefore, minorities groups are always targets for systematic and massive human rights abuses by the regime. In transitional society, inability of any political regime to achieve institutional reform has been found to be the major caused of domestic instability. This study could bring Islamic political parties to develop and implement the appropriate model of institutional reform which consists with the realities of modern life and victims' demands and could move the society towards stability, democratic culture, and reconciliation with the past.

Alicja Gescinska

Revolt and resentment

At the beginning of the 20th century, the German philosopher Max Scheler offered a philosophical analysis of the origins and consequences of resentment. He argued that resentment lies at the basis of destabilizing forces and groups in society, and in particular he linked resentment to the rise of anti-democratic, totalitarian discourses. Scheler did not live to see how the rise of the Nazi-party and the Second World War were so tragically to confirm his theory.

In this paper I will analyse the concept of resentment and link it to present day evolutions. First, I will discuss the way in which Nietzsche, Scheler and the Polish philosopher Barbara Skarka identified a feeling of powerlessness as the core of resentment. It is this feeling that generates resentment. Sometimes it can be transformed into a positive striving and revolt, as we are currently witnessing during the Arab Spring. However, history tells us that in general little good can be expected from resentment.

Hans Magnus Enzenberger correctly argued that as soon as the powerless obtain power, revolt and destruction are soon to follow.

In the second part of this paper I will address the question whether and how resentment and the feeling of powerlessness are flourishing in present Western societies. Is a revolt against our democratic values at hand, and what can we do about it? In order to overcome resentment, we need to remove the feelings of powerlessness, and make real (positive) freedom and equality prosper. There is much truth in Scheler's claim that legal, political inequalities and merely formal, negative freedoms – negative freedom is, as Isaiah Berlin said, the freedom of the strong at the expense of the weak (or powerless) – breed resentment. This means that we need to combat the excesses of neo-liberalism, for neo-liberalism is the political ideology of negative freedom *pur sang*. What we need to do in order to reduce resentment, is to reduce power-inequality and to turn merely formal rights and liberties into positive freedom and practical *capabilities* (cf. Nussbaum, Sen, et. al.). The main question is therefore how to make such possible.

Richard Gilman-Opalsky, University of Illinois, US
Insurrection and revolt as philosophical modalities

While philosophy has its professors, at its best it is not a profession. This is an old and unoriginal statement. Plato understood the point well, and clarified the argument in relation to the sophists. I want to take this sensibility further: When something happens in the world that reframes critical questions in a provocative and compelling way, that destabilizes ideology, we could recognize such eventuality as philosophy broke loose. And nothing does philosophy better than insurrection and revolt. We could ask: Who better raises the key questions of public and private spheres, Jürgen Habermas or the water war activists who made a rebellion in Cochabamba, Bolivia in the spring of 2000? Today, does Karl Marx reveal the instabilities of capitalism as well as occupations and upheavals in Greece, Spain, New York, London, and elsewhere? Could Thomas Hobbes or John Locke raise the questions of sovereignty as sharply as Tunisians and Egyptians in revolt? Inasmuch as insurrection and revolt raise some of the same questions and inasmuch as they precisely mean to do so, we can recognize their philosophical content— we can recognize upheaval as a philosophical movement.

Utilizing and extending the theoretical contributions of Guy Debord, I argue that the theory of practice and practice of theory are superseded whenever upheavals do the work of philosophy. I argue not only for a new philosophy of praxis, but for praxis itself as the delivery mechanism for philosophy—for the field of human action, of contestation and conflict, to raise directly the most irresistible questions about the truth and morality of the existing state of affairs. No text can any longer expect to be as provocative and compelling as creative and unpredictable uprisings that seize attention and ignite imaginations. In short, I suggest we rethink riot, revolt, and revolution as philosophical modalities.

Lelia Green, Edith Cowan University, Australia
Technology convergence and culture: revolutionary or reactionary

Between 18 December 2011 and 10 February 2012 twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and ninety Avaaz subscribers made a personal submission to the Australian government's Convergence Review. Avaaz is generally constructed as a progressive organisation, but on this occasion they were arguing for the status quo – for the retention of what have historically been called Australia's cross-media ownership regulations. Since 1992, these rules have restricted media organisations from acquiring too great a 'voice' in any geographic area by placing limits upon ownership. In the words of the Australian Prime Minister of the time, Paul Keating, a media magnate had to choose between being 'a prince of print' or 'a queen of the screen', since it was forbidden to be both.

The Convergence Review was announced in December 2010, to be a 'landmark review of the regulation of media and communications in Australia', recommending new legislation and to replace some 20 years' worth of law-making around separate media and their audiences. The Convergence Review was to be revolutionary. It was to forget about separate media in terms of radio and television broadcasting, print, publishing and the internet. Instead it was to reconceptualise everything from spectrum allocation to protecting children from inappropriate content.

But Avaaz supporters failed to share the vision of a converged media offering a cacophony of 'voices' to a communication-rich population. Instead, they argued that 'Hard ownership limits are essential to protect against dangerous media monopolies and the abuse of power those monopolies encourage' and suggested that 'our system must guard against the bully tactics we know Rupert Murdoch's media used in the United Kingdom'. Who in these circumstances is the reactionary, who the revolutionary? Does it matter?

Ashraf Hamed, Nottingham Trent University, UK
Imad El-Anis Nottingham Trent University, UK
From spring to summer?: Democratisation in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya

The reform movements that have swept across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) since December 2010 are transforming the region's political landscape. The *Arab Spring* has now reached a critical stage for Tunisia, Egypt and Libya as political transitions are underway. While there are similarities in the political direction that these states may take, the experiences of regime change and the nature of political transition vary greatly. In Tunisia, the Ben Ali regime was removed from power, elections have been held and a new transitional government has been formed. However, Ben Ali and many of the governing elite fled the country and have not faced trial or investigation. In Egypt, Hosni Mubarak and many of his governing elite have been investigated, detained and put on trial but the military has maintained its position in economic matters and furthered its influence in political affairs although

parliamentary elections have been held. Libya experienced over eight months of civil war before the Gadhafi regime was ousted and a new civilian transitional government has emerged.

This paper explores how the political transitions taking place in these states are likely to develop over the coming years and considers if there will be significant differences in their future governments. Drawing on Raymond Hinnebusch's understanding of potential post-authoritarian politics in the MENA,[1] as well as a large number of interviews conducted with citizens and politicians in these states (including interviews with the former Prime Minister of Libya's National Transitional Council, Mahmoud Jibril, and other high-level government officials), this paper argues that the nature of regime change influences the pace and outcome of political transition. In particular we consider if pre-revolution political structures and international relationships have changed or remained the same following regime change and what impact this has had on the pace and extent of democratisation. As such this analysis offers insights into how democratic transitions in the wider MENA may unfold over the coming years. The findings of this project suggest that the process of regime change has directly affected the pace of political change in these three states with Egypt having the slowest pace of change and being the least likely to transition to democracy.

Marcelo Hoffman, Marian University, US
Provocations of the militant lives of Cynics

Michel Foucault in *The Courage of Truth* distinguished ancient Cynicism as a mode of life that exhibited truth and he considered the manifold repercussions of the Cynic mode of life right up into his present. Foucault identified one point of transference of the Cynic mode of life into the modern world as "'militantism'" understood as a life devoted to revolution. Militantism consisted of three forms: secret societies, parties and unions and styles of existence. The latter form entailed ruptures with the "conventions, habits, and values of a society" that revealed "the concrete possibility and the evident value of an *other* life, which is true life". Foucault insisted that styles of existence remained central to 20th century leftist movements. Even Communist and socialist parties testified in an inverted way to the significance of styles of existence by encouraging members to conform to conventional behavior. Foucault further accentuated the affinities between Cynicism and modern militancy by contending that the Cynic themes of relentless battle for the common good to the point of sacrifice and impoverishment approximated modern conceptions of militancy. His schematic observations about the links between Cynicism and militant practices suggest not only that Foucault was going back to antiquity to address his present, as Michael Hardt argues, but also that he was returning to antiquity to reflect more precisely on the very practice of militancy. Foucault thus highlighted a theme that had pervaded his own life, namely, a militancy consisting of ongoing, perilous struggles with the self and others. Indeed, Foucault's lectures on Cynicism were delivered only two years after his activities on behalf of Solidarity in Poland. More generally, however, Foucault examined the militant lives of Cynics as a means of exploring (rather than

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[1] Raymond Hinnebusch, 'Authoritarian Persistence, Democratization Theory and the Middle East: An Overview and Critique', *Democratization* 13, 3 (June 2006): 373-395.

proposing) alternatives to modes of subjectivity in his present, especially disciplinary modes of subjectivity.

Ian Hunt, Flinders University, Australia
Strategies of resistance to neo-liberal domination

Some Marxists might say that the recent publication of Terry Eagleton's "Why Marx was Right" is no accident. Issues of class conflict are returning to the public agenda, if in vague and unformed terms. It is argued that these are initial forms of struggle over passive acceptance of the role of the self-interested individual, which could provide a basis for new strategies of resistance.

It is argued that a fusion of Foucault's insights into power, especially those expressed in *Surveillance et Punire*, together with Marx's theory of the capitalist mode of production, provides the theoretical means for the formation of a strategy of resistance as the counterpart to strategies of power under what may be called the "Neo-Liberal form of domination."

In his summary of his views on power and freedom, Foucault ('Power and Strategies', p. 142 of *Power/Knowledge*) speaks of 'strategies of power', which are inter-connected 'relations of power,' whose 'interconnections delineate general conditions of domination ... organised into a more-or-less coherent and unitary strategic form.' Foucault argues that disciplinary power is a form of Domination in modern society, where power is relatively one-sided, rigid and relies on negative sanctions. It is argued that Neo-Liberalism is the most recent strategic form of this domination, whose key feature is concerted public ridicule and discredit of forms of collective action outside the ambit of capitalist social relations of production.

Foucault fails to develop a corresponding sense of the possibility of struggle over conduct that would resist and ultimately defeat disciplinary power. The paper argues that Marx's theory of capitalism provides a way of closing this gap in Foucault's picture of modern society by showing how strategies of resistance around social class might overcome Neo-Liberal Domination.

James Ingram, McMaster University, Canada
Sylwia Chrostowska, York University, Canada
Film and revolution

"La révolution est ouverture: déclaration du nouveau à partir de quoi s'ouvre un espace agrandi de visibilité auquel le politique va pour un temps s'identifier." (Jacques Rancière)

Film is a language of revolution. It can record the contingency of radical action, which, in reconfiguring

the scene of politics, seeks in its visibility a confirmation of its effects. This reconfiguration is symbolic, as revolutions look, in their staging, to earlier revolutionary movement(s), borrowing their clothes and reviving their significance while at the same time setting themselves apart. It is tempting to claim that film (from Eisenstein or Vertov to the documents and propaganda of anticolonial struggle) abets emancipatory movements, making discontent visible and its manifestation resonant or contagious. Not only was the long century of revolution which we have not yet exited also the century of film; film was, in many ways, the medium par excellence through which revolutionary artist-activists chose to reflect on their own activity and the causes they supported, and one of the principal workshops for the construction of revolutionary symbolism and iconography.

We want to suggest that, if film has aided revolution, in more recent times it has also played an important role in complicating it. In particular, it is documentary or essayistic film that, by stepping in a sense closer to immediate experience and therefore the ambivalence and polyvalence of events, does justice to revolution precisely by exploring its uncertainties. We focus on two instances of this new wave of revolutionary film-making, Jean-Luc Godard et al.'s *Ici et ailleurs* (1976) and Harun Farocki's *Videograms of a Revolution* (1992), to show how they mark a new, if you like 'postmodern,' regime in the experience and representation of revolution – one that both reflects and reflects *on* the revolutionary struggle against the existing regime of representation, bringing out the processual character of political and aesthetic transformation in all its complexity and indeterminacy.

Lesya Ivasyuk, University of Vienna, Austria
The Polish Revolution of 1846 in Austrian Galicia from the Austrian and
Polish perspective: its aim, consequences, and modernization effects

The Polish Revolution of 1846 is still an unexplored field both in terms of history and literature. Its aim was the reunification of a Poland partitioned between Prussia, the Austrian Monarchy and the Russian Empire through three partitions performed at the end of the eighteenth century.

It was the attempt of Polish revolutionaries with their headquarters in France to rise against the Austrian Empire with the intention of gaining the support of the Polish and Ukrainian peasants as the core of the military actions against the Habsburgs and later to spread the Revolution onto the Prussian and Russian territories. Contrary to the expectations of the Polish revolutionaries the peasants not only refused to support the idea of recreating the Polish state and fighting for it, but even suppressed the Polish uprising by organizing a massacre. According to different sources the peasants killed 1000-2000 Polish aristocrats and hundreds of them were delivered to the local Austrian authorities and faced charges of high treason.

This controversial revolution triggered off many discourses in the whole of Europe led by the representatives of the Polish, Austrian, German and French intellectuals and politicians. The revolution,

identified by different authors as a riot, an uprising, a revolt, carnage or a massacre, was based on a clear but deficient strategy and the inadequate national ideology of the Polish revolutionaries. The uprising had both positive and negative consequences for the Habsburg Empire one the one hand and for the Polish nation on the other.

In my interpretation I focus on the modernization effects and progressive moments by analyzing literary and historical texts representing mainly the Austrian and Polish perspectives.

Paul Jackson, University of Birmingham, UK
Of Maoists and men: Revolution in Nepal

When the rest of the world was heading straight in to a neoliberal consensus in 1996, a breakaway element of the Communist Party of Nepal launched a Maoist revolt. With no obvious external support for a revolt, the Maoist movement in Nepal managed to spread from two small districts in the hills to virtually the whole country by the time of the peace agreement in 2006, ten years later. This begs a series of questions, not least why Maoism and why then? This paper outlines nature of Maoism in Nepal and how it has developed throughout the war, the role of ideology and the state of the Maoist party in the post-conflict environment. It also looks at the result of the peace process and outlines the core issues that remain within Nepal that explain the continuing appeal of communist and related ideologies and the risks of continual revolt that categorise Nepal today.

Mikko Jakonen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
Multitude and revolution

The concept of multitude has been neglected in the language of political theory and political philosophy ever since the breakthrough of the modern conception of the sovereign. The concept of sovereign, most clearly expressed by authors such as Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes, was in fact designed to oppose the chaotic and anarchic powers of the multitude. Thus, the concept of multitude was used as a negative opponent to sovereign power, which promised peace and order in societies raged by civil wars. Rather soon after 17th century the concept of multitude vanishes from the vocabulary of the political theory.

Recently such Marxist scholars as Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt and Paolo Virno have put new emphasis on the concept of multitude. Their reading of the multitude is, however, coloured by the deleuzian interpretation of Spinoza. Thus they place Spinoza's idea of the alleged democratic multitude as an opponent of the Hobbesian idea of monarchic sovereignty. They emphasize the early modern dichotomy between Hobbesian and Spinozian conceptions of multitude to build up the new political subjectivity, which could overcome the old conceptions of the working class and operate as a key in the vast social and economic revolution that would end the capitalist rule, the Empire.

This paper is not interested that much about the contemporary revitalization of concept of the multitude, but instead its older variants. Such concepts as Greek *oi polloi* and *plethos*, Latin *multitudo* and Italian *moltitudine* have played a significant role in the history of political thought. This history is mostly unknown and recent Marxist discourse on multitude has not put much emphasis on the historical background of the concept of the multitude. While reading such authors as Plato, Aristotle, Polybius, Cicero and Machiavelli regarding the their uses of the multitude it becomes obvious that the very concept was always related to the riots, "revolutions" and rebellion. Hence, this paper aims to show the classical relation between the concepts of multitude and revolution, and thus it also aims to give more reasonable explanation for the neglect of the concept of multitude in the early modern period. Putting the contemporary Marxist concept of the multitude in the mirror of classical concept of multitude it is perhaps possible to say something new about the real possibilities of the political subjectivity in contemporary times of crisis.

Mouhiba Jamoussi, Modern College of Business & Science, Oman
The Arab Spring: The new Arab identity

On December 17, 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a young Tunisian, set himself ablaze in protest against poverty and humiliation. By doing so, he triggered a movement that spread like fire throughout Tunisia and beyond. Within few weeks, on 14 January 2011, the Tunisian dictator fled the country and the *Tunisian Revolution* was seemingly *over.* In fact the Tunisian Revolution signaled the beginning of a much wider movement spreading throughout the Arab World from Morocco to Oman. The *Arab Spring* toppled quite a few dictators and *liberated* one Arab country after another. It went on to Europe, the United States, to Asia and back to Africa, igniting protest movements as different, or so it seemed, as *Occupy Wall Street* and the anti-Putin protests -- different expressions of a *Global Revolution*. The Tunisian Revolution refused to be called the *Jasmine Revolution*, out of respect for its victims. Nor did the *Arab Spring* accept to be called the *Arab Awakening* because the Arabs were fully awake before, during, and after their revolutions.

The change that the Arabs are going through is to be found in the way they perceive themselves and are perceived by the other. The change is first cultural, concerning identity and identification, while the socio-economic and political changes are likely to take longer to come. It is precisely this change, extraordinary yet fragile, which is most noticeable in the Arab World. Throughout the Arab Spring, the Arabs have spoken of having overcome fear and feeling free. Arab leading figures such as opposition party leaders and human rights activists, as well as less prominent people, have used concepts such as *izza* and *karama* --grandeur and dignity -- before any talk of socio-economic solutions or political reform. What I would like to address is indeed the identity change in the Arab world which has accompanied the Arab Spring and is replacing earlier perceptions of the self and of the other. This change is indeed at the heart of the Arab Spring. It is at the centre of intellectual debates, and is essential in shaping new economic, social and political policies throughout the Arab World.

Chris Jury, Bath Spa University, UK
John Newsinger, Bath Spa University, UK
Political or cultural revolution: Which comes first?

Much historical analysis of political revolutions concentrates on the economic circumstances and power-relations that led to revolt. These models of revolution often adopt a politico-economically deterministic view that revolution is the result of macro-economic forces that are beyond the control of individuals, communities or even governments and emphasising the sudden and unexpected nature of revolution – that revolutions are a result of the 'tide of history' if you will.

But it is our contention that cultural is as important as economics and politics in stimulating revolt and that without cultural activism political revolt is unlikely, regardless of the economic circumstances; in effect economic and political revolt cannot take place without cultural contestation.

For the powerless to seek to overthrow the powerful requires the powerless to believe that, (i) the existing power structure is illegitimate; (ii) that unseating the powerful will bring about a more legitimate regime; (iii) that it is instrumentally possible to unseat the powerful; (iv) the resources (human and economic) required to unseat the powerful will be proportionate to the gains achieved by doing it.

For an informed minority these ideas will usually be exchanged via non-fiction writing such as, articles, pamphlets, essays, histories, academic monographs, papers and books and so on. But these forms of discourse are also most often under the control of the powerful and so for the population at large, ideas of revolt are far more widely, and effectively, exchanged through works of creative activism such as songs, cartoons, novels, graphics, posters, theatre and most recently video, film and social-networking.

It is our contention that an historical exploration of revolution that includes the cultural context in which revolutions occur will demonstrate that cultural activism and resistance necessarily precede political resistance and revolt. Political revolt cannot take place without a preceding revolution in the disposition of the powerless towards the powerful and cultural activism plays a central part in bringing about this revolution in attitudes.

Maha Khalil, Independent Scholar, Egypt
The Arab revolts: Change or continuity

The purpose of this research is to show that "Arab Spring" will bring dramatic change, regardless what kind of change will come. The West claims that "Arab Spring" is inspired by Iran's Islamic revolution, but the political movements of the Arab Spring are unrelated to Iran's revolution, ideology, or vision for the region. However, the biggest sign of political conflict protesters have seen since the revolution is the rise of the islamists, but protesters are very much aware and they can preclude them from reaching mean

political objectives by political awareness campaigns. By relying on tools like internet, political awareness campagins and frequent protests to fight political corruption, protesters can readily achieve the revolutionary objectives.

We have to address the democratization process and how a state progresses from an authoritarian regime towards becoming a democracy. Democracy is built upon the principle of citizenship and citizenship revolves around the rights of people to be treated as equals and the obligation of making equality available to all citizens. Feminists in the MENA region have played a full role alongside men in overthrowing former regimes. They face a very gender- specific range of risks out on the street, in part due to their flouting of the norms of women remaining at home. Despite the successful uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, the future of Egypt is still unresolved because Egyptian protesters did not expect the negative consequences of the long-term corruption in the recent political arena. Domestic political conflict presents opportunities for positive change with long-term effects despite the "inherent plausibility" of its harmfulness. Arab Spring countries oppose foreign and military intervention and still prefer to resolve the crisis within "the Arab house". Most dictator rulers are exploiting this tool, foreign and military intervention, to convince simple-minded people that foreign intervention threatens the stability of the country.

Arab societies in the non-oil-producing countries face profound economic crises with huge younger generations confronting a depressing future of unemployment and poverty. Thus, the disempowered and the dispossessed have risen up against the alliance of tyranny and corruption in Middle Eastern societies, yearning like all peoples of the modern world for the universal values of freedom, justice and prosperity. However, after the uprisings in some countries, the economy of the country is getting worse because the corrupt people, who still remain in the post-revolution government, are attempting to re-produce a " pre-corrupt system" to manipulate simple-minded people by letting them blame revolutionists for the economic crisis. But it does not mean that the corrupt politicians and businessmen will control over the economy, especially after the uprisings, because pro-democracy protesters have their own projects to stimulate the economy. By that way, they can both achieve their revolutionary objectives and fight the corrupt businessmen over the long-term period. Now, people broke the barrier of fear, and they are readily to donate to promote and stimulate the economy, and move the country forward.

Andy Knott, University of Brighton, UK
Revolution in (Hardt and) Negri: constituent power, *Insurgencies* and *Declaration*

This paper analyses the theory of revolution developed by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. It will begin by critically interrogating the theoretical foundation provided by Negri in *Insurgencies*. In this text, Negri contrasts constituent power (the insurgent force that explodes open a dying, established order) with constituted power (the closure of the revolutionary process, and the establishment of a new order and

the norms associated with it). It is through the dichotomy provided by constituent power and constituted power that many of the key concepts Hardt and Negri develop in their collaborative project – multitude versus people, democracy versus sovereignty, immanence versus transcendence – can be understood.

This will provide the basis for considering the recent upsurge in political activity, including the food riots of 2008, the *Indignados* and related movements, student protests, UK Uncut and Occupy. Hardt and Negri have responded to these events with the publication of *Declaration* this year. This short text will be considered in light of both the theoretical foundation provided in *Insurgencies* and this rich and proliferating array of responses to the extended crisis produced by neoliberalism.

Louise Lachapelle, Collège de Maisonneuve et Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada
WASTE: Conflict, resistance and the disquieted space of ethics
Red Square, "Maple Spring" (the 2012 protests in Québec) and other "cultural housebreaking"

> Three or four thousand soldiers drive the wandering races of the aborigines before them;
> these are followed by the pioneers,
> who pierce the woods, scare off the beasts of prey, explore the courses of the inland streams,
> and make ready the triumphal procession of civilization across the waste.

> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

"The present state of the world is not a war of civilizations. It is a civil war: it is the internal war of a city, a civility and urbanity, as they are being deployed to the limits of the world". (NANCY)[2] This globalized, yet broken, world is acting out its cultural flaws. According to Nancy, the community is now separated, face to face, confronted (by a gap) within itself. Consequently, this author puts forward the necessity to think through the possibility for this confrontation as being a law of human togetherness.

The *law of the house* (*cf.* the etymology of the word economy) demands that choices be made. Whether on a global or domestic scale, the human house is also a place for sorting: "Non trash belongs in the house; trash goes outside." (STRASSER)[3] Forms of "cultural housebreaking" (as we say of a domesticated animal that it is 'housebroken') contribute to the cohesion and sense of belonging of human settlements, family groups and social bodies, as do their indispensable counterpart, the forms of warehousing for displaced, redundant and disposable people. In the context of a globalized world, these conflicting, often violent, dynamics and events are exacerbated. In answer to a set of security, identity and cultural imperatives, the sites of domicide – "the murder

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[2] Jean-Luc Nancy (2001), *La Communauté affrontée*, Paris, Galilée, « La Philosophie en effet ». (My translation.)
[3] Susan Strasser (2000), *Waste and Want : A Social Hisstory of Trash*, New York, Owl Books.

of Home" (PORTEOUS & SMITH)[4] are also expanding, offering a colonizing and dominating response to human coexistence, at real risk for the common habitat.

To live, one has to kill. When this complex and common reality of survival – which is not "resolved" by culture – becomes aggravated by mutual exploitation, the choice leading to the decision of what and whom to kill in order to (better?) live is one of the most cultural of choices. In what other way can we possibly address the continuity of the living and the issue of human coexistence? Borrowing a page from Robert Antelme's experiential book, *The Human Race* (1947), this intervention and visual essay will invite participants to explore the transformative power of conflict, a certain performativity of resistance – namely resistance to opposition within a (self)confronted community, as well as resistance to forms of choice-making that reinforces inclusion/exclusion – and the disquieted space of ethics: "It's now, alive and living as waste, that our reason triumphs." (ANTELME)[5]

David Lea, American University of Sharjah, UAE
Revolution, rebellion and humanitarian intervention

International law has come to recognize the principle of humanitarian intervention under the principles of *erga omnes* and *jus cogens*. The principle of humanitarian intervention despite its conflict with the doctrine of state sovereignty is receiving increased support in the light of the events, which have come to the forefront with the so called Arab Spring, initially significantly in Libya and presently in Syria. However, the principle of humanitarian intervention has been strongly criticized by very disparate voices on   the political spectrum. The Marxist left has criticized it on the grounds that in the matrix of international human rights law a right to humanitarian intervention has been shaped which legitimizes intrusions in the sovereign political space of Third World countries. To put it differently, where "low intensity democracies" collapse ("failed states"), the industrialized world has given to itself the right to intervene (often through the UN) to restore "polyarchy". On the other hand, subsequent to the first World War and the creation of the League of Nations, the famous Nazi jurist Karl Schmitt saw humanitarian intervention as the product of American universalism (universal values promoted by America) that condemn parties engaged in armed conflicts by distinguishing between just and unjust uses of force. According to Schmitt, these principles violate national sovereignty by undermining a state's decision to remain neutral in such conflicts by obligating all states to oppose a state that is allegedly acting illegally or unjustly. Consequently he argues, such rules internationalize conflicts and transform them into what he calls a tremendous civil war or total war. In this paper I consider both these criticisms from the left and right and evaluate.

· Porteous J. D. & Smith, S. E. (2001). *Domicide: The Global Destruction of Home.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
· Robert Antelme, *The Human Race*. (Translated by Jeffrey Haight & Annie Mahler from the original 1947 French text.) Evanston: The Marlboro Press/Northwestern. First published in 1992. (My translation.)

John Lea, University of Brighton, UK
Riots and the crisis of the neoliberal state

This paper will examine the history of public disorder in the UK from the riots in Brixton in 1981 through to the recent disorder in August 2011. The paper will chart the changing character of the riots from the clear political demands that underpinned the earlier waves of disorder through to the more generalised and diffuse rage characteristic of more recent disturbances. The paper also examines the changing official discourses that define the government response. Where the earlier waves of disorder were seen by commentators like Lord Scarman as indicative of a society that had failed the populations from which the rioters came, we move gradually towards responses that lay the blame for riots increasingly at the door of deficiencies in the rioters themselves and their communities. This narrative reaches its conclusion in the official line of outright criminalisation that has been adopted to explain the August 2011 disorder as simply an "outbreak of mindless criminality" coupled with a reluctance to engage in any substantial inquiry or investigation into causes. The paper locates both the changing form of the disturbances and the official responses to them in the context of the increasing incapacity of the British state to respond effectively to the decomposition of social structure and culture by neoliberal capitalism.

Timothy Luchies, Queens University, Canada
Anti-oppression and anarchist revolutions: Prefigurative praxis and prospects

Experiments in alternative political, economic and cultural institutions saturate the radical left in North America. Including free schools, radical childcare provision and the latest wave of financial district 'occupations', the most compelling projects have developed multidimensional analyses of violence impacting their communities. An applied theory called 'anti-oppression' has emerged with these experiments, providing a new language to facilitate the construction of radically inclusive and empowering forms of political community.

With roots in anti-nuclear and radical feminist organizing, anti-oppression draws from multiple resistance discourses (anarchist, anti-racist, feminist, queer and indigenous) to actively reinvent social movement praxis. While academic work has only tangentially engaged with this grassroots project, activist writing and workshopping has facilitated the spread of anti-oppressive principles throughout the radical left, supplying practical tools to problem-solve privilege and oppression within social movements. Notably then, anti-oppression is a political project more often concerned with developing practice than theory, yet a project embedded in rich theoretical terrain.

In this paper I explore this terrain as part of a larger research project examining the emergence of anti-oppression in North American anarchism. Introducing anti-oppression theory as it has been developed in key activist texts, I suggest that it represents a powerful development in the painstaking but empowering struggle to politicize racism, hetero-sexism, and ableism within radical and revolutionary organizations. I

theorize anti-oppression's relationship to anarchist and feminist struggle in terms of 'prefiguration', referencing its intensification of the anti-authoritarian impulse central to anarchism and its radical response to feminist work on intersectional privilege and oppression.

Vivienne Matthies-Boon, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Towards a critical theory of the Arab Spring: Crony capitalism in Egypt

In this paper, I will argue that current dominant frameworks employed to understand and 'make sense' of the Arab Revolts that spread through the MENA region in 2011 and 2012 do not grasp the deeper underlying crisis of the neoliberal political order underpinning these revolts. Rather, in mainstream commentary, the Arab Spring is either perceived as the demand for the 'same' liberal capitalist so predominant after 1989, or as a Huntingtonian clash of civilisations. The problem with this binary lens is that it not only fails to take seriously the local revolutionary demands, but also fails to engage with the wider socio-economic and political grievances underlying these revolts. Yet, I believe that, as ordinary citizens emerged on the television screens in the West, we are faced with an opportune moment to break out of the binary lens so tainted by 9/11. However, this requires the employment of a self-reflexive framework, inspired by the Frankfurt School tradition, that does not hesitate to criticise the toxic mix of securitisation and neoliberalisation which has characterised international policies and lenses towards the Middle East for far too long. By particularly drawing on the case of Egypt, this paper will moreover outline that so long as these issues are not seriously addressed the revolutionary demands are left unnoticed, this despite the 'sout al hurreya' of millions…

Peter Minosh, Columbia University, US

Washington D.C. and the paradoxes of a revolutionary enlightenment

The architecture of Washington D.C. has commonly been read as the legitimation of the American state. In this interpretation, the neoclassical expression of such buildings as the White House and the Capitol building stand as manifestations of a national sovereignty. However, while 18th century constitutions specifically described a transference of sovereignty from individual to state (the French in particular), the American Constitution made no such claim, and the legitimacy of the state rested perpetually on the unalienated sovereignty of its citizens. This paper reexamines Washington D.C. through the claims of the American Revolution, with particular focus on the writings of Thomas Paine, James Madison, and especially Thomas Jefferson, who as an amateur architect oversaw much of the building of the Capital, occasionally submitting his own designs for consideration.

The White House, the Capitol, and L'Enfant's plan for the city sought to resolve the necessity of a capital city with an anti-urban ideal of agrarian individualism, and as such, they articulate both the goals and contradictions of the American enlightenment. It is fitting that French neoclassicism was chosen for the capital, it was both the architecture of the French enlightenment, as well as the common form of

southern plantation estates. It is thus at the site of the capital that the ideal figure constituting Jeffersonian democracy – the anarchic individual in the form of the "Yeoman Farmer" – confronts its constituent other in the form of the slave.

Through this lens, I read the architecture of Washington D.C., following Rancière's terminology, as an architecture of "dissensus," or an articulation of the paradoxes of political inclusion. As the capital of an agrarian republic this architecture serves as an expression of Jefferson's aims for a "Radical Enlightenment" resisting claims of sovereignty, yet the realities of the global agricultural trade expose the territory of the southern plantation beneath its perfected enlightenment plan.

Marc Mulholland, University of Oxford, UK
The bourgeoisie and the 'Spectre of Communism'

In 1842, the German poet, Henrich Heine, wrote that the bourgeoisie, 'obsessed by a nightmare apprehension of disaster' and 'an instinctive dread of communism', were driven against their better instincts into tolerating absolutist government. Theirs was a 'politics are motivated by fear'. Over the next 150 years, the middle classes were repeatedly accused of betraying liberty for fear of 'red revolution'. The failure of the revolutions of 1848, conservative nationalism from the 1860s, fascist victories in the first half of the twentieth-century, and repression of national liberation movements during the Cold War – these fateful disasters were all explained by the bourgeoisie's fear of the masses. For their part, conservatives insisted that demagogues and fanatics exploited the desperation of the poor to subvert liberal revolutions, leading to anarchy and tyranny. Only evolutionary reform was enduring.

From the 1970s, however, liberal revolution revived on an unprecedented scale. With the collapse of Communism, bourgeois liberty once again became a crusading, force, but now on a global scale. In the twenty-first century, the armed forces of the United States, Britain, and NATO became instruments of 'regime change', seeking to destroy dictatorship, and to build free-market democracies. President George W. Bush called the invasion of Iraq in 2003 a 'watershed event in the global democratic revolution'. This was an extraordinary turn-around, with the middle classes now hailed as the truly universal class which, in emancipating itself, emancipates all society. The debacle in Iraq, and the Great Recession from 2008, revealed all too clearly that hubris still invited nemesis.

Ema Pires, University of Evora and CRIA, Portugal
Cultural battlefields: Collective action and contested spaces in Malaysia

This paper discusses relations between space, collective action and resistance to change. Based upon twelve months of ethnographic research, I discuss the cultural meanings underlying collective action and contestation practices in West Malaysia.

Empirical focus is put in analysing collective action practices developed by the residents of Malacca's Portuguese Settlement (an urban neighbourhood located in the outskirts of Malacca town) in reaction to changes in the seashore near their dwellings. Planned under colonial rule (as a low-income residential area for the minority group of Portuguese-Eurasians), this residential area has also become, in post-Colonial Malaysia, a Gazetted Heritage Site. Due to the agency of multiple actors, this spatial and symbolic appropriation of space for tourism purposes has been followed by a land reclamation process along the seashore, in line with the urban growth policies in the region.

Using a constructivist approach, some of social and rhetorical aspects of this spatial transformation are discussed here, focusing on the role collective action plays, within processes of resistance to change. I argue that the residents' collective action is more than a reaction (and a contestation) to spatial change; it is a political statement reacting to profit making practices around the seashore line (a process which has been developed by national as well as transnational institutions).

Paul Reynolds, Edge Hill University, UK
Between riot and revolution: A question of political literacy

There is a temptation amongst the left to regard any direct and violent reaction to contemporary society as a positive – such as the riots of summer 2011. To some extent, of course, they are a positive political step in confronting the forces of reaction and embedded privilege. At the same time, it is a recipe for being found in bed with interesting (in the Chinese sense) and sometimes offensive partners, and justifying reprehensible acts at the edge of political legitimacy. This discussion, however, seeks to explore the importance of having a sense of when a riot becomes rebellion and/or revolutionary, and to suggest three tests, all which underline the importance of political literacy. These are: the sense of awareness of the rioters and the connection between their sense of engagement and its political articulation as a revolutionary activity; the sense in which disturbances have a sense of politics inherent in their discourse or events and its relation to political leadership and strategy; and the sense in which the disturbance weaves into the ethics and politics of a political narrative that diagnoses political oppression, exploitation and alienation, and provides a prognosis that is democratic and direct in its action. This is not to suggest that there is a necessity for rioters to have their underlined copies of the *Communist Manifesto* with them when they riot – though that would be refreshingly constructive. It does

however suggest that the left have to be a little more careful about how they follow, explicate and intervene in 'events' and, reflecting on this, there should be an imperative for the left of engaging in raising the political literacy of those who are impoverished and oppressed so that direct action is more strategically political.

Jacquelien Rothfusz, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Where there is power, there is resistance

"Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power." (Foucault, 1990, p.95)

The fear of marginal migrant-groups and the desire to control them have grown recently. However, the strong urge to 'normalize' people who deviate from dominant societal norms, also creates new counter forces. Normalizing power is immanent, anonymous and can be found in many places. It constructs the modern subject (Foucault 1961, 1977, 2002). Is there any possibility left to resist normalizing power?

Foucault elaborates dandyism as an individual escape from power strategies, but unfortunately he does not have time to develop a comprehensive model of the interaction between power and counterpower on a larger scale. In order to find out how those interactions work I was looking for an 'exemplary situation', in which government and professionals invest a lot of effort in 'normalizing' power strategies, without the intended results. I found B-East. Here the 'Top 50', consisting of Dutch-Caribbean men, refuses to assimilate to the dominant native Dutch norms. An analysis of this case shows how power and counterpower can be understood as forces in a strategic field. By analyzing interviews with different actors and analyzing the policy papers and social theories to which they refer, different coherent clusters of thoughts and activities have been found. They can be described as 'logics'(Mol, 2008). This concept offers possibilities to describe a multiform reality in which different practices can be distinguished, not only between different groups of actors, but also as different options for one person. Contrary to Foucault's work, no dominant discourse seems to structure power and counterpower strategies. There are different discourses, which may relate in different manners. They may clash, harmonize or compromise. This creates new opportunities to think about normality, power and counterpower.

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Lennert Savenije, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Bart Verheijen, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, The Netherlands
The historical discourse of the Dutch resistance: a historical approach

Allegories of the past play an important role in the discourse of resistance. This seems to be a universal and timeless truth. We want to make this clear by comparing two moments of resistance in the modern history of the Netherlands, a country that has been occupied by the French armée during 1810-1813 and by Nazi-Germany during WW2. At first: these two occupations are difficult to compare – society changed off course dramatically in the intervening decades – however as we want to demonstrate in our paper, some of the forms, discourses and repertoires of resistance are interesting similar. Intellectual resistance uses, if one compares, per formative schemes that are much the same in meaning and purpose. For instance: the way in which the narrative of struggle or freedom is used in resistance texts and pamphlets, or the way in which a glorious past (in this case the glorious Dutch freedom struggle in the seventeenth century) is used. By looking at actions and narratives (two clearly different ways of resistance) we want to show in two related papers that there exists a certain Dutch repertoire or discourse of resistance, in which general themes, preoccupations, repetitive arguments, patterns and metaphors can be discerned through time. We hope to show that there are two fundamental aspects to the discourse of resistance. Resistance is considered a timeless phenomenon and, at the same time, articulated in its own contemporary horizon during the two periods of foreign occupation of the Netherlands.

Moritz Sommer, London School of Economics, UK
Re-reading the riots – a post-structuralist perspective on public discourses in the aftermath of disorder

“Criminality pure and simple” (Cameron)*, the acts of a *“feral underclass”* (Clarke) or *“consumerism coming home to roots”* (Bauman)? After 29-year old Mark Duggan was shot in Tottenham in August 2011, thousands of young people unleashed their frustration, despair and rage in three following nights of rioting and disorder. Soon after the events, politicians, journalist and commentators were quick to offer a wide range of different interpretations and analyses.

Discourses form their own realities. Using critical discourse analysis, this paper provides as post-structuralist perspective on the diverse interpretations in the aftermath of “the riots”. Perceived as shock or moral panic (Cohen), I argue that “the riots” should be understood as a window of opportunity for the (re-) construction of dominant moral discourses and their institutional manifestation. In this sense, the paper highlights the societal *function* of “the riots”:

Arguing with Baudrillard, “the riots” exist to produce a generic crisis within society that serves to rejuvenate the dominant morality principle. The “moral decay” in districts like Tottenham is a necessary counter-point: It gives sense and meaning to the (hyper-) reality of Cameron's *Big Society* that cannot

exist without its excluded antidote. The absolute and ultimate negative and "shameful", embodied in the narrative of rioters looting their independent neighborhood businesses makes everything else look real, moral and true in comparison. Moral exclusion turns the failure to prevent social coherence and stability, into its re-stabilized opposite. This is the self-referential dynamic of the hyperreal.

This intervention does not focus on the social, economic and political roots of "the riots". Its relevance lies in its contribution to make sense of the logic of de-politization and discursive interpretation. In the context of a gradual reconstruction of social power relations, it is this logic that produces the real policy impacts for the people of Tottenham.

Jeremy Spencer, Colchester School of Art, UK
Aesthetics of revolution and the social history of art

Karl Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) contrasts 'the social revolution of the nineteenth century' to the revolutions of the bourgeoisie, which to accomplish their revolutionary tasks of social transformation, appropriated 'the names, slogans and costumes' of the historical past. The proletarian revolution, however, discovered its imagery not from ancient Romans and Greeks but 'from the future'; it had no need of their heroic imagery or phrases to conceal a prosaic content. So, what Marx named the *social* revolution looked to the future for it imagery, demarcating its aesthetics from the existing and historical worlds. What emerges from the *Eighteenth Brumaire* is a model for a political aesthetics that is self-conscious and critical in its relationship with history and that can be understood as a drama of creative self-recognition. My proposed paper for the 'Riot, Revolt, Revolution' Interdisciplinary Conference seeks to explore these themes, and with reference to Walter Benjamin, Stanley Mitchell, and Harold Rosenberg, will discuss Marx's contrast of bourgeois and proletarian revolution and the political aesthetics that result. The paper will then discuss the earlier writings of the art historian T. J. Clark on the imbrication of avant-garde practices with revolution. Clark uses a concept of negation to understand this project of art as revolutionary: 'the transvaluation of all values and the destruction of all that prevents it'; in his work on Courbet, Clark wanted 'to establish what happened to art when it became involved [...] in a process of revolution and counter-revolution'. Thus, revolution is firmly established within the methodology of the social history of art - Clark's disciplinary intervention. The paper concludes by addressing the relation of Marx's political aesthetics of the *Eighteenth Brumiare* to Clark's histories of avant-garde and political art.

Thomas Swann, University of Leicester, UK
'If you take Frodo Baggins from Lord of the Rings and give him a mobile phone, the story ends very differently': Social media, organisational cybernetics and non-hierarchical organisation

The UK riots of 2011 saw social media coming to the fore in a seemingly horizontal form of organisation. The availability of real-time information allowed unconnected groups to coordinate action in efficient and successful ways. This presentation aims to discuss the notion that the organisational structure of the riots signals the importance of a temporary or mediated community (Baker 2011) brought together for a definite goal. It looks at the use of social media during these uprisings within the framework of organisational cybernetics.

Organisational cybernetics, an approach developed by Stafford Beer (1979; 1981), proposes that the most efficient form of organisation is that which allows individual operating units to work autonomously within their own niche. These autonomous units are able to self-regulate their activities in coordination with one another and in line with the goals of the organisation. This is achieved by information sharing between operating units and higher level, more centralised units which redistribute information as opposed to distributing orders.

Hierarchy and centralisation are not, however, essential to this organisational model (Espinosa, Harnden and Walker 2007; Walker 1991). In this presentation, I want to highlight how the use of social media allows this information sharing to occur without the need for centralised information hubs. Different levels of the hierarchy become functional roles played by different people at different times according to how the information is being transmitted. This, I will argue, is how temporary, mediated communities can organise in ways that eschew the centralisation, hierarchy and established structures of community central to past social uprisings. The relevance of this model for both anarchist and autonomist thought will also be discussed.

Milo Sweedler, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada
An-archy on Wall Street

The Occupy movement has been widely criticized for lacking a coherent message and a clear set of demands. While such criticisms accurately characterize the diversity and open-endedness of the movement, they also represent either a profound misunderstanding of the protests or, more likely, a calculated attempt to defuse their disruptive potential. For what underlies the oft-cited concerns about the movement's lack of focus or its unclear demands is, in effect, the idea that business should continue as usual, with a few modifications to an otherwise healthy system. Politicians and pundits who voice such concerns ask that a heterogeneous group voicing generalized discontent with the current state of the world from a variety of perspectives articulate a homogeneous message and a delimited set of

grievances, presumably presented by a legitimate spokesperson or two, who would in turn leave the "real work" of drafting policy to those who have expertise in such matters.

In the face of such criticisms, this paper argues that the power of the Occupy movement resides in its *refusal* to articulate a set of "realistic" demands and its simultaneous *affirmation* that things must nonetheless change. This argument is developed through recourse to Jacques Rancière's critique of Hannah Arendt's conception of politics as an institution of the *arkhé* – a conception according to which those who have the propensity to lead, lead; and those who are destined to follow, follow. For Rancière, on the contrary, political action entails an essential "miscount" of the parts of the society, which creates aberrant situations in which those who have no business leading, lead. The Occupy movement, whose slogan, "We are the 99%," enacts this fundamental miscount of the parts of society, constitutes, I argue, a prime example of this an-archic power of the people.

Leila Taha, DePaul University, US
The internationalization of regional conflict: Syria in perspective

In this paper I will argue that it is necessary to consider the relationship between the Syrian uprisings and how these uprisings may potentially lead to the internalization of a regional conflict. The sectarian undertones, as propagated by the Assad regime, in addition to regionally funded opposition have tainted the initial peaceful movement, for non-violent protests against the Baathist regime.
I contend that the regional dynamics of the Middle East have played a significant role in the Syrian revolution, by potentially internalizing a regional conflict. Many argue that the nature of the Syrian uprisings is comparable to that of Libya or Egypt. These statements are true to the extent that the initial motives behind the protests may be analogous, but such a position fails to address the unique regional interests that are at stake in the Syrian revolt. Such statements underestimate the sway of regional factions such as the Western aligned/Gulf funding and support of the proclaimed opposition via the internal channels of the Muslim Brotherhood on the one hand, and the Iranian/Hezbollah support of the Baathist regime in its crackdown on protestors on the other.

I will describe the initial motives behind the non-violent protests in Syria as they began in March 2011. Civil unrest which broke across rural poverty-stricken areas due to lack of infrastructure and ongoing droughts since 2009 was further spurred by the wave of revolutions that have been taking place across the region. I will then proceed to discuss the role of regional players such as the GCC on one hand, and the Iranian/Hezbollah bloc on the other. I will describe how these actors emerged in the conflict via direct and indirect means. Means such as military and economic assistance towards the self proclaimed Free Syrian Army in the case of the GCC, and political and financial assistance towards the Syrian regime in the case of Iran and Hezbollah. Additionally, I will touch upon indirect support from both sides, which is materializing via Iraq. I will then conclude that due to the pressures of such regional actors the opposition, as represented by the Syrian National Council and the Free Syrian Army, has failed to gain momentum. Rather than being able to facilitate a unified stronghold against the regime, the current

opposition has in fact eliminated potential support by cooperating with militias that are heavily sectarian in nature partially due to regional pressures. I will also discuss domestic attitudes towards the internalization of this regional conflict, and the potentially dire consequences such internalization may lead to, drawing parallels with previous conflicts in both Iraq and Lebanon.

With these factors in mind I will conclude that in constructing a potential means to form a unified opposition against the Assad regime, regional alliances and biases must be overcome. I will argue that regardless of the Assad regime's presence or lack thereof, without an opposition that reiterates the democratic and progressive values the revolts were based upon, Syria's political future will be in serious question.

Hassan Tahiri

Arab awakening as a major shift in the centre of power

The Western world, politicians and observers alike, seems to be very surprised how a sudden and an insignificant incident that happened in a tiny country led to sweeping changes in what considered to be the most stable pro-Western Arab regimes. They did not realise that that grave and forbidden act was in fact the final straw that broke the camel's back. Even veteran journalists and experts such as Robert Fisk expressed his deep skepticism concerning the spreading of the Tunisian social uprising to other countries like Egypt: "But the idea that these manifestations against dictatorship and corruption and so on are going to flip flop across borders I cannot believe" he declared in an interview with an international news channel and he concluded: "The fear of "Islamism" is so great that the European Union, individual Western Countries, America will not want this to contaminate other countries in the region." After more than one year other kind of doubts are expressed concerning this time the nature and radicality or genuity of change as the affected countries struggle to find their new way. And once again the classical external geo-political factors are put forward as justification given the hegemony of the Western powers led by the US. This paper provides a different not to say an opposite analysis that could explain why change was long overdue, the important question therefore is not so much why change has happened in the first place but why it did not happen earlier. The paper will defend an internal view of regime change by making the Western powers part of the equation in the bitter internal struggle for change. I will argue that the real change that swept through the Arab world, including unaffected countries by the social upheaval, is the emergence of society as a major heavy weight that shifts the centre of power.

Catherine Tedford, St. Lawrence University, US

Contested terrains: Contemporary sticker art in Berlin, Montreal and NYC

Street art stickers, a form of post-graffiti, are ubiquitous in urban environments around the world, adorning most every surface of the built environment. Using primary examples drawn from my personal collection of over 6,000 original stickers gathered by hand, I will compare and contrast how rebellion and

resistance are represented in political stickers from Berlin (GER), Montréal (CA) and New York City (US) during the last three to five years. Topics include civil liberties, urban development, police brutality, and student strikes, among others. Small stickers. Vast subjects.

Relatively speaking, stickers from Germany and Canada reflect a citizenry that is actively engaged in political dissent, and at times through anger and violence. Historically, Berlin and Montreal have both been sites of contested terrain, geographically and politically. Unprecedented urban re-development and gentrification have created massive change in Berlin since the fall of the Wall in 1989, which in turn has led to various efforts to "rette dein Staat!" or "reclaim the streets." In Montréal, stickers decry police brutality witnessed during recent student protests against tuition hikes, while other stickers reveal tensions between the French/English Canadian colonizers and First Nations aboriginals across the country.

In Berlin and Montréal, stickers and street art in general call for participation. By contrast, most stickers from the United States, and New York City in particular (post-George W. Bush), convey messages that are markedly different, focusing on entertainment and consumption, while attempts to affect social change through opposition and critique inevitably become absorbed by corporate America.

Mikkel Thorup, University of Aarhus, Denmark
'Un-kinged himself' – marching backwards into the revolution

This paper will explore legitimization strategies in the American and French revolution seeking to understand how they bypassed the inherent illegitimacy of any revolution. This was done by legitimizing the revolution as a restorative rebellion against an usurpation and abuse of power by the king. A king, who had by his actions 'un-kinged himself', placing the king as the rebel and the revolutionaries as the restorers of ancient rights, seeking only to restore what had been lost or violated. The paper will use the legitimization struggles of these two revolutions to generalize about the languages of resistance available to 'revolutionary' actors seeking to be both legitimate and rebellious at the same time.

Tero Toivanen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
Elina Turunen, University of Helsinki, Finland
Degrowth movement and the common – remarks on exploitation in capitalism

In last few years the so called degrowth movement has spread among European activists. Degrowth movement has questioned the economic growth as a policy objective in a situation of environmental crisis and global inequality. It proposes a framework for transformation to a lower and sustainable level of production and consuption that increases human well-being and enhances ecological conditions and equity.

To us degrowth debate seems to be a bit disconnected and therefore we'll propose some concepts to provide the discussion a bit more assertiveness. We argue that degrowth discussion can have critical theoretical tools to challenge capitalist economic growth by analysing the structural changes in postfordist capitalism in general and exploitation in particular. We attempt to open this perspective by using three always evolving categories to research capitalism: labor, class and property.

First, degrowth discussion seems at least partly to miss the relevance of historical forms of exploitation of *living labor* (Marx). We approach this aspect by describing labor's position in the process of production of surplus value and analyzing present exploitation in a form of 'socialism of capital'.

Second, degrowth movement seems to have a tendency to analyse class as an empirical concept based in consumption. We argue that it, as a social movement, should also see class as a *political* concept.

Finally, private property is a constitutive category for capitalist economic growth, this is why degrowth debate should have a more critical theoretical analyses on property relations. This perspective can be opened by the concept of *common*, by which we mean both the natural 'commons' (land, water, air, etc.) of the planet and the social production of living labor as common. This way we can conceptualise growth not as economic growth based on exploitation of nature and labor, but as 'society's growth' (Hardt & Negri 2004), by which we refer to a base and a result of all social life in common world where people are not situated outside from nature.

Mathijs van de Sande, KU Leuven, Belgium
The prefigurative politics of Tahrir Square – or: against the sceptical reception of the "Arab Spring"

Although received with great enthusiasm at first, the so-called "Arab Spring" now is widely considered to have largely failed in realising what it strived for: bringing an end to violent dictatorship and enforcing democracy in the Middle East and North-Africa. As is arrogantly concluded in "the West", the people of Libya, Syria and Egypt apparently were not "ready" for democracy after all: in some cases the upheavals were successfully repressed, elsewhere they resulted in a devastating civil war. In Egypt a military junta took over power, effectively restoring its dictatorial regime. Several countries saw Islamist fractions win its first democratic elections. So how could one speak of substantial progression after all?

This scepticism, however, is not only based on a misconception of the "Arab Spring" in particular, but also of political practice in general. It is retrospectively that a distinction between the means and ends in such a practice is drawn, and that it is evaluated solely on basis of its outcomes. This abstraction of political action, however, prevents us from grasping it from its own perspective -and, if we do want to understand what happened during the "Arab Spring" or the subsequent waves of "Indignados" and "Occupy"-movements, such a perspective is needed.

The aim of this contribution, therefore, is to define the "Arab Spring" -or, most particularly, the occupation of Tahrir Square- as a "prefigurative" practice. Originally derived from contemporary

anarchist literature, "prefiguration" refers to a political practice in which the means and ends of this practice are "mirrored". This conception may help us both to challenge the sceptical reception of the "Arab Spring" in particular, and, more generally, to question our common understanding of political practice.

Mathijs van de Sande, KU Leuven, Belgium
The riot and the joke

In the aftermath of the August 2011 riots, several British teenagers were given prison sentences of up to four years for posting messages on Facebook inciting others to riot in their home town, even though no causal relation between the satirical posts and actual riotous events could be proved. Harsh as these measurements may be, judges, politicians and journalists argued, the young men in question did contribute to the violent atmosphere that made these very riots possible. The Facebook-posts, moreover, could not be 'trivialised' as 'jokes' or 'satire.' After all: there is nothing funny about riots.

Or is there? In fact, one could argue, riots are hilariously funny in many ways -not only for the passive spectator, but, not in the last place, also for those taking active part in it. Why is it that, for many of us, the images of violent clashes with the police, burning cars, or trashed hamburger restaurants sometimes invoke a smile on our face? Is it just cruel 'schadenfreude,' or the adrenalin kick we get from participating or witnessing riotous acts? Or is there something else going on?

Departing from Sigmund Freud's essay on humour (and its liberating and elevating characteristics), via Simon Critchley's reflections on humour and ethical subjectivity, and Paolo Virno's paper on the joke and innovative action; we will argue how humour in fact shares many characteristics with the violent riotous act. The radical, disruptive -and yet, in a way, self-mocking- manner in which both the joke and the riot put reality into question is very similar in many ways. Moreover, rather than showing a mere analogy between the two, we will aim to prove how the riot itself is essentially humorous.

Evert van der Zweerde, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
The limits of counter-democracy

One of the better-known conceptions in academic democracy theory is that of "counter-democracy", developed by Pierre Rosanvallon. This valuable conception makes it possible to articulate the place and role of a variety of democratic forms and repertoires that are not, at least not initially, part of the established and self-reproducing political regime that we can call "liberal-democratic Rechtstaat ["rule of law state"; LDR]," but which can be or become fitting parts of it. While thus opening political space, Rosanvallon's conception at the same time closes it again, confronting us with one of the dilemma's of political philosophy today (confronting at least *me* as a political philosopher), viz. the fact that, on the one

hand, we have good reasons to prefer LDR over some of its alternatives –we rightly prefer rule of law over arbitrary rule, we rightly prefer frequent and fair elections over rigged ones, we rightly prefer accountable politicians over corrupt kleptocrats-, but, on the other hand, we cannot –or do not want to- deny the attraction and legitimacy of "democratic impulses" that fall outside the scope of Rosanvallonian counter-democracy, and that are hinted at by the key notions of this conference: riot, revolt, and revolution. My argument will be that a clear-cut distinction between "genuine" and "fake" LDR, justifying riot and revolt as democratic means in the second case –think of Egypt, for example- and denying their legitimacy in the first case –which would set limits to, say, Occupy-, does not work. Not only because LDR is *also* a means of concealing exclusion and oppression, but because "genuine" and "fake" cannot be so easily opposed. To declare LDR sacrosanct means to kill democratic politics. At the same time, however, to adopt a purely "instrumentalist" –"Leninist" if you like- attitude kills democratic politics, too: politics needs form, form and content cannot be abstractly opposed, and forms and procedures need "care". To address the issue of Riot, Revolt, Revolution from the perspective of democracy means, therefore, to "stretch" the notion of counter-democracy beyond its dependence on the existence of "established electoral representative democracy within the framework of the nation-state" - but the question is: how far and in which direction can or should it be stretched?

Phil Vellender, London South Bank University, UK
Catherine Boyle, London South Bank University, UK
Shelley's discourse of resistance

The events surrounding the notorious Peterloo Massacre of 1819 sparked in the radical poet Percy Bysshe Shelley a 'torrent of burning indignation' and the outpouring of the 370 lines of his highly political ballad *The Mask of Anarchy* in just 6 days. What had stung Shelley into action were the reports he had read in Italy of a brutally repressive state rioting against its own people who had assembled peacefully in order to press for electoral reform.

What struck Shelley, and others who actually witnessed the 'Manchester work' first hand, was the palpable fear the Regency authorities felt when faced with a disciplined, organised and orderly industrial working class. Indeed, it was their very 'orderliness'that was perceived as the real threat to the Regency government's rule and hence provoked its 'Anarchic' response. This paper reflects on some of Shelley's sometimes contradictory thoughts on political struggle and non-violence evidenced in the poem and their relevance to more recent episodes of social unrest.

Bart Verhoeven, University of Nottingham, UK

The Education of an Americanist: Robert Welch, business nationalism and the origins of the John Birch Society

In the face of the recent congressional fiscal gridlock, soaring public debt, Tea Party versus Occupy activism and the raging Republican primaries, the historians among us tend to look backwards in an attempt to discern patterns that may explain the present and suggest answers for the future. In this vein, I would like to look at the role of the anticommunist, conspiratorial John Birch Society, which is also the theme of my doctoral thesis, in perpetuating – or rather resuscitating – the anti-New Deal legacy of the American Liberty League, McCarthyism, Taft-Hartley right-to-work legislation etc. In a similar approach to the research performed by Elizabeth Tandy Schermer, Kim Phillips-Fein and Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, I am focusing on how certain long-standing forces within the American business community helped mobilize resources and manpower to tarnish the liberal "establishment" in a wider effort to revolt against liberalism and roll back the public spending initiatives, progressive tax rates and internationalist policies of the Roosevelt era in post-war America. Responding to eight years of "modern Republicanism" under Eisenhower, Robert Welch and his Bircher allies anticipate the later rift within the GOP on spending and foreign policy, and help us nuance the image of the "lunatic fringe" Radical Right that fully emerged in the 1960s and helped nominate, if not elect, Barry Goldwater in 1964. In short, I'm sketching a basic historiography of Welch's life and the business networks that led him towards breaking with Republican politics and mobilizing the far right in an age of Cold War liberalism.

Vilhelm Vilhelmsson, University of Iceland, Iceland

The limits of social control: Hegemony and everyday resistance in nineteenth-century Iceland

Every society is at all times entangled in a web of power relations where domination and resistance simultaneously and uneasily co-exist. This is clearly visible during times of open revolt and revolution but more often hidden off-stage, buried within daily activity and various modes of discourses that anthropologist James C. Scott calls "public and hidden transcripts." Historical analyses tend to overemphasise the former, focusing on periods of revolution or episodes of open revolt, or at least on established social movements for revolutionary change while discounting other periods as being dominated by hegemonic social relations due to their apparent stability and peacefulness. Such histories underestimate the cumulative effects of low-key everyday forms of resistance on historical change as well as the varieties and extent of such resistance. This study will attempt to counter such histories by tracing the multiple ways individuals and social groups in subordinate positions resisted social and economic domination through informal, everyday actions in nineteenth-century Iceland. At the time Iceland was an impoverished rural society with an intricate and inflexible juridical, political, social and economic system of social control yet contemporary sources indicate that disobedience and countless other forms of informal everyday resistance was widespread. The main questions I will pose include:

What spaces existed for resisting domination in nineteenth-century Icelandic society and how were such spaces used by subordinate individuals? What was the impact of such disobedient acts of resistance on the modernizing transformation of Icelandic society around the turn of the twentieth century? How does such resistance fit into theoretical models of hegemony and social change?

Philipp von dem Knesebeck, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany
When do revolutionaries represent their people? A contractual perspective

Even though John Rawls' work on international relations marks a step away from the traditional concept of the nation-state, the scope of his non-state actor definition is limited to liberal peoples. This means that a variety of actors, from revolutionaries to tribal warlords, are outside the scope of his model.

I will offer an alternative account of the social contract governing international relations. I will focus on an ideal theory for international relations that does not judge the actor's mode of internal organization, thus allowing not only what Rawls calls "outlaw states", but also other non-liberal or non-state societies as actors in international relations. Behind a veil of ignorance, the common elements and interests of opponents in asymmetrical conflicts like civil wars and revolutions will be highlighted, providing the symmetry required for the rules of war. I will show that "rebels" or "revolutionaries" can be legitimate actors in international relations even before the struggle for power has been decided. Furthermore, I will show that basic rules of war are agreeable for vastly different societies.

In order to achieve this, it is most important to find a conception of "society" that is broad enough to account for the vastly different actors that we see not only in asymmetrical warfare, but also in non-violent international relations, while at the same time accounting for the fact that not every group of individuals automatically achieves the status of a legitimate actor in international relations, even if the group's members thrive for it.

After laying out my conception of a society that can be seen as an actor in international relations, I will provide an outlook on one feature of international relations agreed upon in this social contract: The *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bello* rules of just war.

Nicolai von Eggers**,** Aarhus University, Denmark
How to govern in revolutionary times?

In 1850, German jurist Lorenz von Stein published his magnum opus on the *History of the French Social Movements from 1789 to the Present*. It is split into three volumes according to the three French revolutions of resepctively 1789, 1830 and 1848. In contrast to one of the other upcoming social scientists at the time, Karl Marx, von Stein was not in favor of revolutionary actions, and therefore did not

perceive the social sciences as ones to have revolutionary aims. Instead the social sciences should mediate between the social movement(s) and the government, thereby encompassing the social movement(s) in the overall political measures, aims and strategies of the government. As von Stein already knew, this is not an easy governmental task – especially when dealing with genuine revolutionary movements who do not recognize the legitimacy of the rulers.

By analyzing the theory of von Stein developed in the backdrop of European revolutions, and by comparing it with some points made by the early Karl Marx, I outline some of the reflections that would influence the governmental strategies towards revolutionary subjects and political active populations. Maybe there are some lessons to be learned from the state of things around 1850. I will claim that governing a politically active population is still one of the main challenges of present day governments. This has of course become apparent in the Arab world these days, but as I see it, it also goes for the Chinese and the Western governments.

Martin Walter, University of Nottingham, UK
The 15M movement revisited: Valencian protest, populism and return of hegemony

In my paper I will talk about the role of theory in understanding acts of resistance and demonstrate how Ernesto Laclau's and Chantal Mouffe's theory of hegemony can be applied to specific case studies; in this case the M-15 demonstration on 19 June, 2011 in Valencia, Spain. Since the publication of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* in the 1980s, Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical framework has remained fairly influential (especially in cultural studies) in explaining the emergence and dynamics of collective political identities. In the first few years of the new millennium, however, the validity of their theory has been repeatedly challenged in books such as Jon Beasley-Murray's *Post-Hegemony*, which argues that "we live in cynical, posthegemonic times" and that ideology has largely lost its mobilizing capacity. Without a doubt, last year's protests demand for a general reevaluation of hegemony theory and Laclau's subsequent work on populism.

The protest actions of the 15-M movement in spring and summer are particularly interesting due to their position in the chronology 2011's global protest wave. They denoted a crucial turning point between the anti-regime protests of the Arab Spring and the, then, globalized protest of the Occupy Movement. They were thus crucial for the translation/invention of movement tactics and political imagery for more post-industrial liberal democratic settings. With the help of Laclau and Mouffe's analytic categories of overdetermination, discourse, antagonism, populism, empty signifiers, and hegemony I will reexamine the protests in Valencia in June 2011 and look at the emergence of a global political imagery, ambiguous enough to be inclusive and specific enough to address the concrete demands of individual protesters.

Luke White, Middlesex University, UK
Kung-fu cinema's Shaolin heroes in the longue durée of Chinese revolt

Martial arts have been a theme of Chinese cinema going back to the 1920s. However the late 1960s and early 1970s saw a major shift in their on-screen protrayal, ushering in the genre of 'kung fu'. This was a genre whose violence, anti-authoritarian rebelliousness and proletarian heroes arguably echoed the rise of youth countercultures and the anti-colonial revolts which swept East and South-East Asia in the late 60s in the wake of the Cultural Revolution and the Vietnam War. Hong Kong itself experienced widespread riots and political turmoil in 1966 and 1967 – the very moment of the birth of the new style of 'kung fu' cinema.

Such a genre, in fact, connects strongly to longer folk traditions of riot and revolt in China. The real Shaolin heroes whose lives and exploits became a central stay of kung-fu movie plots were members of Cantonese revolutionary secret societies that resisted both Manchurian colonial rule and Western encroachment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, the 'authentic' performance of these folk heroes' martial arts was central to the kung-fu genre's pleasures and aesthetic effects. Such martial arts have in fact themselves been intimately intertwined with a history of peasant uprising and revolt that reaches back at least to the Yellow Turban revolt of 184AD.

My paper will set out to examine the ambivalent political valence of kung-fu cinema and its aesthetic of violence in the context of the rise and defeat of the revolts of the 1960s, and in turn attempt to write these into the long histories of revolt, resistance, and revolution in China. Are such cultural expressions as the kung-fu film to be understood as fostering the energies of a radical moment, or as recuperating it?

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Hannah Arendt, Reinhart Koselleck and the anthropology of revolutionary experience

This paper will argue that both Hannah Arendt and Reinhart Koselleck, driven by existential understandings of temporality and pessimistic views of Cold War politics, developed anthropologies of historical experience, specifically of the self-understanding of revolutionary agents.

Hannah Arendt's ambivalent attitude toward revolution stemmed from a tragic view of transformative politics, shaped by the collapse of the Communism into Stalinism. In *On Revolution* (1963), she argued that radical political change must always run the risk of degenerating into terror; a result of the hubristic confidence of agents in their ability to master the historical process. Similarly, German historian Reinhart Koselleck, in his dissertation *Critique and Crisis* (completed in 1954), associated invocations of history to justify revolution with Enlightenment utopianism, especially through concepts of progress. Like Arendt, he argued that violent alterations of power relations led to their re-establishment under different orders of legitimation.

For Arendt however, revolutionary traditions offered something worth saving. Reflecting on the American Revolution, the 1956 Hungarian Uprising, and the Civil Rights and anti-war movements, she theorised the creation of new political spaces – town hall meetings, councils and Soviets – as fragile achievements of spontaneity and novelty. These observations were theorised in *The Human Condition* (1958), in the claim that 'while strength is the natural quality of an individual seen in isolation, power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse'.

This striking anti-Weberian claim about power, I will argue, has to be read against her understanding of revolt and revolution, which was in turn a politicised version of a crisis-oriented historical anthropology shared by many German thinkers in the post-war period, though here I will focus on Koselleck. The theorisation of the conditions and limits of revolutionary action that emerges provides valuable ways of understanding revolutions both historical and contemporary.