Revolutions

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Finished and Unfinished,
From Primal to Final

Edited by

Paul Caringella, Wayne Cristaudo
and Glenn Hughes

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To the memory of Thomas Hollweck, a wonderful and humane spirit. He was present at the conference from which this volume arose, and is the author of a paper in this volume. Sadly he did not live to see this work. We all miss him.

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PREFACE

In some ways this book is a testament to a fact too infrequently appreciated by social philosophers: the vast amount of human reality is formed through dialogue and encounter, and the inherent tension of those encounters and dialogues. This volume is the result of a series of chance encounters - or we could say fate; for if fate is shorn of superstition, it is the name we give to the tapestry of the myriad of chance encounters that form us. Every contributor to the volume was either known to me or Paul Caringella, or Glenn Hughes, whom I met through Paul.

The pathway to Paul led through a sequence of chance encounters triggered by a day in the open stacks of the University of Adelaide library when my hand, inadvertently, paused upon a book called *Law and Revolution* by Rosenstock-Huessy's student, the legal historian and Soviet Law expert, Harold Berman. That book contained a number of footnotes to Rosenstock-Huessy's *Out of Revolution*, which compelled me to read more by him. It just so happened that the book, along with four or five other books by Rosenstock-Huessy, was in the library at the University of Adelaide. (More than twenty years after reading that book, while on sabbatical at Flinders University in South Australia, I would briefly share a room with a man who had ordered a number of books by Rosenstock-Huessy for the University of Adelaide Library in the 1960s.)

So overpowered was I by the opening sentences of *Out of Revolution* – "Our passions give life to the world. Our collective passions constitute the history of mankind" – that I had to hunt down and find everything I could by this author, most of whose books in English had to be ordered directly from the small publication company, Argo Books, set up by Rosenstock-Huessy's former student Clint Gardner. God knows why Frances Huessy (the grand-daughter-in-law of Rosenstock-Huessy) happened to be looking through the back orders of Argo one day and spontaneously called up the Australian who had ordered all these books. Indeed, the phone-call I received that day did feel like a phone-call from, if not God, exactly, someone with a message from God. (Forgive my theological archaisms, but, allowing for metaphorical rather than metaphysical speech, is this not the vocabulary that best expresses those rare moments which change the entire direction of our life?) I was very depressed at the time, and thus

instead of being at work in my office, I was lying down on the lounge room floor staring at the ceiling, when the phone rang; and as the conversation progressed, I was invited to visit the Huessys. That eventually led me on a journey through the US to talk to people about Rosenstock-Huessy. That journey began with Bill Cane and the historian Page Smith, whose wife had just been given weeks to live (and he himself would die with forty-eight hours of her). Bill had met Paul Caringella when they attended a seminary together in the 1960s. I will not recount the various synchronicities that led from Bill to Paul - there were many - but one piece of serendipity I must mention is that as an undergraduate I had learnt about Eric Voegelin, who was presented by my Political Theory teacher as an odd, but interesting Christian political theorist. I was neither interesting nor Christian as a student, but I was odd enough to become somewhat intrigued by him. And Voegelin remained intriguing for me throughout the rest of my post-graduate studies and through to my university appointment. So much so that when I became interested in Rosenstock-Huessy's connection of revolutions and Christianity, I was struck by the contrast between how he and Voegelin saw Christianity, and how different they were in their appraisals of the significance and meaning of revolutions. Thus when I decided to visit the Rosenstock-Huessy circle in the United States, I wrote a paper comparing Eric Voegelin and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy on the topic of Christianity and revolutions.[1] I had no idea that when I was in the United States I would meet the man who had been Eric Voegelin's personal assistant for the last eight years of Voegelin's life. That man was Paul. Nor, when Paul and I first met, at a forum where Page had asked me to give a talk on Voegelin and Rosenstock-Huessy, would I guess that almost twenty years later we would celebrate those two great spirits whose work had shaped our lives and brought us together. The intensity of the initial encounter – 'murderer, gnostic!' if I recall correctly, were but two words hurled at me by Paul after the paper – was only matched by the intensity of the friendship that followed it.

I hope I may be forgiven this lengthy prefatory statement, but it is a sad reflection on the state of the human sciences that we treat knowledge as something involving a subject, or an object that is perceived or construed by a subject, when in fact, as Michael Polanyi once formulated it, all knowledge is "personal knowledge". Our knowledge is as much shaped by the gamut of encounters that are constitutive of our relationships

[1] This would eventually be published as 'Philosophy, Christianity and Revolution in Eric Voegelin and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy' in *European Legacy*, Vol. IV/6, December 1999, pp. 58-74.

(indeed of our very selves) as by the desire to know. The three editors of this volume, as I have indicated, met through our intellectual loves, and personal journeys. Had it not been for Paul Caringella, I would have left Voegelin behind many years ago. But Paul would not let me let him go. There were more things that he needed to say to me, more encounters he needed to establish, more people he needed to bring together—and it must be said that Paul Caringella's genius is in introducing people to ideas and to each other. It is a neat symmetry of German, a symmetry which has no English equivalent, that the term for representation or idea—*Vorstellung*—is the same root as the verb for introducing one another (*sich vorstellen*).[2] And it is a fact that our ideas are enhanced through what we are introduced to, and through whom we are introduced to—and also, we must add, what we are *re*introduced to.

Paul, who had known Rosenstock-Huessy's work many years prior to our meeting, grasped immediately that the tensions I detected between Rosenstock-Huessy and Voegelin in their respective writings on revolution were the source of some new cluster of ideas. And to bring this out he just needed to introduce Voegelin and Rosenstock-Huessy to each other (actually, when we first met in 1995, he introduced me to the fact that there was a very small correspondence between Rosenstock-Huessy and Voegelin consisting of one letter each!), in part by engaging me, but also by bringing friends of his, who, for the most part, were also scholars of Eric Voegelin, together for a conference at the University of Hong Kong. The result is this volume on revolutions. (We also have done something similar on philosophical and theological visions of history).

Those introductions and reintroductions could only have taken place because my then Head of School and dear friend Heung-wah Wong had not only created a School with a great budget surplus, but who, having heard of Paul, insisted I do everything possible to bring him to Hong Kong and have him run some events for us. Again, the personal encounter had contributed to an event, and eventually to a volume on revolutions. The particular theories, aspects, and examples of revolution we discuss in this volume are due to the particular interests of the contributors. This is

[2] Cf. "In every healthy society, one is inducted and introduced (*vorgestellt*), because life continues as a chain of people and things who have been introduced/represented (*Vorgestellten*). That's how one enters history, in so far as one asks after my name and then one acclaims the other…The human world does not consist of 'will and representation' but as love and introduction/representation." Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy *Ja und Nein, Autobiographische Fragmente aus Anlass des 80. Geburtstags des Autors im Auftrag der seinen Namen tragenden Gesellschaft*, ed. Georg Müller, (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1968), 22.

invariably the case with any edited book, but this particular book is largely informed by the spirits of Eric Voegelin and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, two thinkers who looked at revolution from very different angles. It was, however, Paul Caringella who grasped that together in tension those spirits would be even more valuable than if taken separately, especially when it came to addressing one of the most important topics that confront modern men and women: revolution. For modern men and women, for better or worse, are, *inter alia*, the products of revolutions.

Apart from the serendipities alluded to, and the generous financial support provided by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures of the University of Hong Kong, who hosted the conference out of which this volume grew and financial support for formatting the work, I would like to thank Charlotte Wong for formatting the book. But once again I would like to thank the then Head of School and my good friend Heung-wah Wong for encouraging this project by bringing Paul Caringella to the Unviersity of Hong Kong for two months.

INTRODUCTION

This volume was born out of tension, which is no bad thing since tension is the moment that precedes the break: the moment in which things are intense, strained to fever pitch. Such moments are highly significant. Although they may not be quite as significant—that is, as eventful and fateful and as scarring of human experience—as the explosions that force us to wake up or perish (and we are the species that can learn or perish and seem to ever waver between those paths.) The two spirits who inspired this volume, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and Eric Voegelin, both reflected deeply on tension, and, in somewhat different ways, built their entire thought on the principle of (if it may be so called) "tensionality".

With Voegelin, it was the centrality of our human in-between-ness, *the metaxy*, that makes us what we are—we are ever drawn toward transcendence, but also within a world that is decisively not transcendent; and that there is no "immanent *eschaton*" is a key tenet of Voegelin's diagnostics of the spiritual pathologies of the species. Our lot is bound up with our orientation, and our orientation is the key to what limited majesty, and what dignity, we may have.[1] Once, though, we substitute our symbolic power, which is the gift that enables our participation in reality to be endowed with spiritual meaning, for a misplaced—gnostic—sense of infinitude, we enter into a phantasmagoric labyrinth bereft of any real possibility of salvation. For Rosenstock-Huessy, tensionality was intrinsic to what he called the metanomical reality of multiple times and social memories, which is constitutive of our post-World-War circumstance. That circumstance is one in which we can no longer escape the fact that we survive or perish together, and that survival requires dialogue. When Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and Franz Rosenzweig emphasized the dialogical nature of thinking in their 1916 correspondence, released in English by Rosenstock-Huessy as *Judaism Despite Christianity*,[2] they

[1] For a view of human dignity that resonates deeply with Voegelin, and one that contrasts strikingly and powerfully with Kant's, see Glenn Hughes, "The Concept of Dignity in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*", *Journal of Religious Ethics* 39, no. 1 (March 2011): 1-24.

[2] Recently this has been reissued as Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, Harold Stahmer, and Paul Mendes-Flohr, *Judaism Despite Christianity: The 1916 Wartime*

were both engaged in fighting a war that had been the culmination of all the unresolved forces and resentments flowing through Europe's nations and empires and spreading out globally.

Beginning with a work which can be translated as *The Marriage of War and Revolution*, Rosenstock-Huesy would spend much of his life exploring an epiphany that he had on the battlefield of Verdun, viz., that the Great War (and he would see the Second World War as but the extension of that War) could be traced back at least a thousand years to the revolutionary ferment that began with the vision of Odilo of Cluny to unite all Christians into one great community of souls, and Pope Gregory VII's response to Odilo's call, which required a revolutionary revamping of the Church and a reaffirmation and reapplication of the Gelasian doctrine in which the spiritual or heavenly power should take priority over the temporal power so that the appointment of bishops should no longer be in the hands of the Emperor and his representatives. Rosenstock-Huessy would argue that Western "man" and the European nations were revolutionary creations forged out of the confluence of the hatred of corruption, of the encrustation of social forces that accompanies the failure of institutions and groups to adequately create environments of sufficient solidarity (which is to say, shared and common loves) that they may continue into the future, and a messianic faith in a future worthy of being loved. His two great works on revolution, *Out of Revolution* and *Die europäischen Revolutionen*, were surveys of the core achievements of what he called the "total" revolutions of Europe. Those revolutions took place on Christian soil, and he also argued, particularly in his magnum opus, the two volume *Die Soziologie*, that these revolutions could have taken the shape they did only because of the expectations and motivations, and institutional configurations, that had been cultivated by the Christian faith and the Church.[3]

This book includes writings from Rosenstock-Huessy as well as a chapter where I compare him with Hannah Arendt, so I do not wish to enter into further detail on his ideas here, except to say that Rosenstock-Huessy saw the total revolutions of the West as providential, which is to say that they are woven into the fabric of who and what we are today: that our most important institutions and values have revolutionary origins (and thus, less conspicuously, but no less necessarily, also Christian origins).

Correspondence Between Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and Franz Rosenzweig (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011).

[3] The corpus of Christopher Dawson contains striking parallels with that of Rosenstock-Huessy, and together they provide a most powerful narrative of the role of Christianity in the history of Europe.

To say this does not simply mean revolution is good. Revolutions occur because of social disease, a view shared by Voegelin and Rosenstock-Huessy. Nevertheless, if we contrast Voegelin with Rosenstock-Huessy, we see immediately that one of the differences between their works is that Voegelin highlights the disorder and sickness of revolution, and, in particular, the deep disorder and toxic aspects of modernity which are all too easily concealed in the smokescreen of revolutionary rhetoric; while Rosenstock-Huessy is looking at what freedoms, what new human capabilities—capabilities that are cultivated over time through our social and political institutions (which are but our means for the selection and enhancement of human potencies)—have come out of revolution. We might say Rosenstock-Huessy considers, above all, the new health that recurrently emerges from the fevered and dying body of an old order.

For his part, Rosenstock-Huessy was only interested in those revolutions that claimed to be total, and which, on account of their totalizing aspirations, opened up unprecedented pathways for the species. This volume, while undertaken in the spirit of tension between the spirits of Voegelin's more Platonic, even mystical reading of history, and the ruptures and horrors of revolution, and Rosenstock-Huessy's more activist and providential reading of revolutions and history, brings together a range of diverse points of view about different revolutions and their meaning. Some of the essays are theoretical reflections on the nature of revolution, others consider specific revolutions.

Amongst the revolutions discussed in this volume the contributions by Louis Herman and Chris Hutton may be said to stand at the extremes of our understanding of the topic. Herman takes us back to prehistoric times and to what we may call the *Ur* revolution, that turning around which commenced humanity on a path that made it different from all other known species; Hutton, on the other hand, draws our attention to a revolution that has taken place within our time, and one which he sees as having no good end, the managerial revolution. This most recent of Western revolutions is one undertaken without violence (though it violates many peoples' lives), yet it has entirely transformed our public institutions and thus the way we interact with each other and the world around us as well as the way we move into the future. In point of fact, the managerial revolution is but the culmination of the mechanistic or scientific revolution that took off in the early seventeenth century. Significantly, it is based upon ideas that have been utterly discredited by all the major philosophical schools and movements of the twentieth century, but it has been able to occur precisely because modernity reproduces itself via disconnected/staggered processes, methods, and historicities, and the

stakeholders of this discourse have discovered opportunities for power and wealth in the slumber of liberal democracies and the paucity of the social science and humanities wing of their education systems. Ironically, the damage done to the education system was largely done by educators. It began with the compartmentalization of knowledge, and became intensified through the 1970s with the politicization of knowledge. The process of instrumentalism was completed through the ambitions of Business Schools and Education Faculties under the auspices of administrative efficiency, quality controls, and knowledge deliverables which would ostensibly satisfy the business community and electorate. Modernity (or if one prefers to accept a certain ubiquitous meta-narrative post-modernity) is literally out of control, and different power complexes (spheres suggests a symmetry which does not exist) which are constitutive of our social and personal existence reproduce themselves as if untouched by others. And yet, they manage to smash into each other, and affect each other, sometimes seemingly randomly, at other times when a crisis/ catastrophe is of global proportions – the world wars most obviously, but also global economic crises – while there seems to be some confirmation of determinism at work. The managerial revolution is a stark reminder of how something may set something in a revolutionary motion, and how it may continue perilously unstoppable. Revolutions are by their nature imperiling matters – destroying, as they do, all manner of traditions and life ways, and setting up new forms, forms that may be more imperiling than those that preceded them. One thing though is common to revolutions – like wars, even when, as in the managerial revolution, they are not inherently violent, they sweep up peoples and institutions, launching them into new futures.

I am well aware that the enormity of this topic is one which cannot be constrained by one discipline let alone one voice. And we have tried to provide a balance between broader theoretical appraisals of the meaning of revolution itself. All of the essays in this volume are theoretically informed. Some such as those by Thomas MacPartland, Klauss Vondung, Matthias Riedl (who provides a remarkably interesting refutation of Voegelin's reading of Joachim of Flora as one of the leading pioneers of Gnostic revolt), Manfred Henningsen and the late Thomas Hollweck deal overtly with more thematic aspects or features of revolutions. And, as we have indicated above, Herman's essay touches something at the very axis of human experience which triggers the possibility of history, while others take historical revolutions to think both generally about revolutions as well as the revolution under discussion. Thus we have papers on: the English Revolution by Rosenstock-Huessy; the American Revolution by Glenn

Moots; the French Revolution as explored by Rosenstock-Huessy and Arendt by me; two accounts of the Russian Revolution: one fittingly I think, given the claims of that revolution, by an economist, Michael Bernstam; the other by the political philosopher, Glenn Hughes; William Ratliff's essay on the Chinese revolution; and Arie Amaya-Akkermans's astute analysis of the most recent revolutionary occurrence of our time, the so-called "Arab Spring," which provides a rich theoretical discussion, that also includes Arendt and Rosenstock-Huessy.

This volume, then, is a small contribution to our understanding of revolution itself and some of the major revolutions which have shaped and still shape us and our world. It is a topic that has been approached in many ways, but I believe the tensionality that instigated this volume, emerging out of the editors' appreciation of the spirits of Voegelin and Rosenstock-Huessy, makes this a valuable contribution.

CHAPTER ONE

REVOLUTION AS A POLITICAL CONCEPT[1]

EUGEN ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY

The word Revolution as a political concept is a rather young word. A sudden, unmanageable event that defies our notions of peace and order was called, in antiquity, *mutatio rerum*. Rebellion and sedition or Civil War was used in Latin for the 'cock-fight' as the-Greek called internal strife and fratricide within one city.

Rebellion or Civil War often could be long and slow affairs. *Mutatio rerum* stresses more their sudden, unexpected character. Rebellion was lawless, *mutatio rerum* a merely descriptive term, without moral qualification. The temporal changes could be called *reversiones* or *volumina*, too. Revolution was not in use, except for the metempsychosis, the migration of the soul through a series of bodies.

After 1200 A.D. however, this changed. With Dante, Revolution is used for the astronomic / rotation of sun, moon and stars. And in the late 14th Century, the turmoil in Italian cities often led to political constellations of so unexpected a type that they for their breath taking abruptness, were called "revolution". In this same sense, the Italian term-seemed the only available word, when Henry the IV, the Huguenot King of France went to mass in 1594. This took the breath of his fellow countrymen and for that reason seems to have been termed *"la revolution*" with a loan from Italian political theory which, at that time, influenced the "politicians" widely.

In all these cases, the term is indifferent to value. Morally, Revolution before 1700, could be styled ± 0, that is to say: the event is cosmic,

[1] We would like to thank the heirs of Rosenstock-Huessy for granting permission to publish this previously unpublished essay. This essay, written in 1938, was originally transcribed by Lise van der Molen, and thus it is possible that minor errors were introduced into the text. With this in mind, I have on occasion, which I have footnoted, edited glaringly obvious grammatical errors.

transcending the earth, of astronomical size. Useless to argue about its merits. It was like hail or rain, "beyond me". A revolution, than, was an event surpassing human understanding.

This is a valuable feature of the term revolution for any theory, as we shall see very soon.

In 1688, the term revolution, for the first time, lost its character of the "beyond". The Whig "Revolution" was that first cosmic intrusion on the political globe which was acclaimed as "not" only enormous but as Glorious as well. The grateful acceptance was the new feature. A Revolution dinner took place annually on the 5th of November.

Revolution, in England, never lost its positive sign of +, after that. This is important to remember because on the continent of Europe, this was not so. There, Revolution was still an event of ± 0, as the French and German dictionaries of the 18th century show. The Revolution was neither "glorious" nor "progressive", nor "inevitable". It was a break in continuity, unpredictable, unmanageable.

In the American Revolution, the element that we moderns would classify as revolutionary was not in the term Revolution at all. For, as the norm for a Revolution, the American Revolutionists looked back to 1688. Even today, the 10 first amendments to the American Constitution are called a bill of rights and the author of the Declaration of Independence derived the Right of Resistance from 1688. The American Revolution contained a revolutionary element; this however, is to be found in the word Americans. Here, a political creation[2] was cut out of the wide realm of nature, and the manifest destiny of the inhabitants of a vast continent was disclosed by the authority of geography.

The American Revolution was the reassertion of the Glorious Revolution Principle for a New World the creation therefore, not of the political principles, but of the United -States of America, was the revolutionary event.

"I am an American", a revolutionist of 1776 had to exclaim lest he be mistaken for a British subject. As a revolutionist, he might have been a loyalist. The notion and term of a revolutionary, as a man who fostered future revolution was unknown at that time.

And now, we enter, another period with the French Revolution. The French, shot through with British ideas and slogans from the English enlightenment, expected some great event in the summer of 1789. The fall of the Bastille, on July 14 they took to be the equivalent of James II's departure from England in 1688. Only, they erred. The fall of the Bastille

[2] The transcript reads "a political created."

was not the end of the struggle. It was a beginning to be compared to the British rebellion in 1641. The fall of the Bastille needed to be followed up, to be interpreted, to be defended. Thus, after the 14 of July 1789, the cosmic event of super-human validity, the Revolution, was claiming for human and political support by mortals. The supporters of an existing state of Revolution, with a new and, in fact, absurd term, were called revolutionaries. Those who refused to see that the revolution had happened and was irresistible, became counter-revolutionaries.

The French Revolution, carried forward by Revolutionaries against Counter-revolutionaries, became the paradigm for the rest of the world. It was the Great Revolution, from which Mexico and Poland, Belgium and Greece derived the standards for how to make a national revolution. The Glorious Revolution of an Island was followed by a Great Revolution setting up the law for the whole continental world of Nations and allowed the national democrats everywhere to think of themselves as potentially revolutionaries.

Even these liberals, however, reserved the adjective revolutionary to that minimum of violence and lawlessness that society had to pass through in order to shed the feudal fur. Revolution though positive in result, was not acclaimed as positive in itself. The terror of 1794 struck so deep and people disclaimed to be revolutionaries except when no other lawful way could be found.

The British who wished to foreclose any second Glorious Revolution, resented the subjective character of the French term. And they, with great sagacity, coined a phrase that eliminated the continental infiltration by revolutionaries, effectively. Their Glorious Revolution of 1688 had transcended all the wilful planning or plotting of individuals. As a parallel, for the 19th century, an equally objective “revolution” was put in the place of the French. This was called [an] “Industrial Revolution.” In the usage of “Industrial Revolution,” the pre-democratic, pre-French way of thinking of a revolution was preserved in the English political dictionary.

Industrial Revolution corresponds to Glorious Revolution about as accurately as sportsman to gentleman or as 19th century to 17th. It was a face-saving term because it allowed [it] to liberalize British institutions without reference to the Jacobin principles of 1789 although, in fact, their pressure forced the hands of the British Reformers throughout. Industrial Revolution, then, is a counterrevolutionary term, from the French viewpoint, or a term within the framework of English institutional life for digesting new problems.

The objective Italian - astronomic - usage of Revolution, the objective mixed with positive appraisal (British - American), the subjective - objective of the French did not exhaust the potentialities of our term.

In 1847, the Communists declared war [on] the French Revolution. They acclaimed the right of changing the political world in its entirety logically. This is a remarkably bold attempt to insert Revolution in[to] the rank and file of man-made products, yet leaving to her the cosmic and universal character. "All the alterations of the orbs from whom we do exist and cease to be,"[3] now had to become correlated to the process of logical dialectics of human brains: the unpredictable event that overthrows human political concepts. The World Revolution, was going to be, altogether, a logical, arithmetical, mathematical result, too.

The men who predicted, forethought, pre-calculated revolution, long before it happened or could happen, a kind of cooks of the revolution, became a new type of professionals. Anyone who shunned loyalties, legality, career and conventions of the existing order could claim to pre-live and to anticipate that cosmic surprise of the future, and label himself a "revolutionary."

This cold, technical, scientific usage of Revolution is inherent to Marxian and Bolshevik principles. Where the French Revolutionary, defenders of the ideas of 1789 are hot, lyric, pittoresque, the Russian chemists and cooks are Dry-cut, scientific, logical.

Still it is important not to mistake their aloofness and coolness for the impartiality of a liberal observer of Revolution. Nothing would be more misleading. The Marxian-Russian cold-headedness of social engineers of Revolution is balanced by their claim of being scientific. The sober, cold private individual may see his own interests. The revolutionaries of the World Revolution claim to realize the world's laws, the world's process of evolution. This superb arrogance of knowing the divine spirit and its movements to the minute, makes them akin with the former worshippers of super-human Revolutions.

Nearer and nearer does man get to the cosmic universality and scientific necessity implied in our term. When it was used first, in Italy, the political unity was smallest, a city; the, astronomic and celestial dignity of the term was in all their minds.[4] In [the] glorious Revolution, the term conquered a whole nation, in the Great Revolution the civilized nation, in the Russian [revolution] the World. It is, today, nearest to a universal event including all of us, inescapably, in our ways of thinking, working,

[3] *King Lear*, Act 1, Scene 1.
[4] Original "in all the minds".

planning, hoping or fearing. The fascist powers are making Communism the Issue in China and Japan, in Spain and Brazil. As if it were, a compensation to this growth into a universal catastrophe, we think of the part to be played in it by man, to a larger extent than four hundred years ago. Then, the event was beyond all human planning. Today, if at least, we may become conscious of the maelstrom we are in, in time. We may time the cosmic event.

Table 1-1

Revolution of the sky	Area of the revolution	Human share
1400	City	None
1688	Country	Positive appraisal Grateful acceptance
1789	Civilisation	Defence of its ideas
1917	World	Conscious of its materials

The Philistines of Revolution

All the four usages which we listed, agree in one viewpoint. All of them respect Revolution as a cosmic fact about which there is no argument. It may be like a thunderstorm, it may be one Glorious and gracious Opening, once and for ever, it may be the Dawn of Reason for all the civilised nations or as with Russians, it may be the acceptance of a perpetual world struggle of the underdog - in all these cases, the speaker who uses the term, bows to great superhuman necessities.

There exists, however, the overwhelming majority of Philistines who simply wish to be left alone, with their everyday Peace and evolution and endless discussion of things. To them, revolutions, even today, are the things that simply ought not to be. They profane and abuse it as an abortion, like any crime. Revolution is madness, to them, sterile, destructive.

It is outside the pale of the human affairs which they deign to consider, like museums, concerts, discoveries etc. Mr. Sorokin and Mr. Merton are good examples of writers on revolution who feel absolutely sure that they are unbiased, untempted, disinterested onlookers. They see a strange, alien, abominable crowd and mob psychology domineering during the revolutions and they shrug their shoulders. This group is the counterrevolutionary group. It consists of that brittle part of society which is no longer conducive of electric waves and subterranean currents. These Philistines once they become the majority of the ruling class, make the

outbreak of revolutions inevitable since they themselves no longer are in touch with what is going on.

As in illnesses of the body our only safety lies in immunity acquired by vaccination or similar anticipation of the disease, the only attitude towards revolutions of the body politic which promises survival, is vaccination. A man who thinks that never could he become a revolutionary either ignores his heart or has none. In both cases, he excludes himself from the body of mankind that experiences revolutions. And, he denies the one great truth, conveyed by all and every right usage of the term Revolution. And this great truth is that Revolutions in order to deserve their name, must be events of cosmic rank, concerning all humanity, disclosing new political principles valid universally. And furthermore, that there are those breathtaking, "shocking events". The totality of a revolution must include anyone who wishes to talk about it. A scientist who tries to theorize Revolution from the outside, cripples its very object to insignificance. The scientist is not expected to be or to become a revolutionary.

I am none. What he, however has to admit that this or that revolution has given him a mental knockout, that it has overthrown his political concepts to which, otherwise, he might cling. A revolution must upset the standards of common place and common sense political reasoning or it is no cosmic event. Revolution, then, is an event that throws our political concepts out of gear, why this is possible and even inevitable, is not under discussion here, where we try to save, from the development of seven hundred years, the majesty of the term Revolution. As an unexpected unmanageable event that overthrows our human notions, it claims universal character, and this word universal must be taken literally enough. It must include the sociologists who study revolution or it is no revolution.

A comparison may help us. In physics, the effect of dynamite falling on a rock, will be studied as part of the science dealing with dynamite. The rock's reaction is a part of the action of the agent dynamite. Similarly, no medical man will describe a new remedy and omit, in its description, its effects on the human body. Quite the contrary. The biological scientists easily will put the reactions of his patients to his new medicine first. They are the really important thing.

With a revolution, the mind of the sociologist must be saturated. His mind is shot through, with emotional repercussions from the revolutions he has studied. His brain is the rock, his mind is the biological system which is reacting against the vaccination with the germ revolution. As a rock in a wisely manipulated blasting will move out of our way, as a medicine will cure the patient because it is administered in a slight dose, the shock from the revolution in the human mind may be small. Only, we must not deny

the shock. Or we deny our scientific qualification for dealing with the facts. Physical events are marked in rocks. Biological events leave their marks in bodies. Social events are retraceable through changes they produce in our minds.

Now a revolution, by definition is that social event the traces of which are to be found universally in every mind. The detached sociologist who claims that he is not changed shell shocked, tempted, remodelled from standing at the edge of the abysses called revolution, is less vital, less fit, less representative, in his opinion or judgement than the man in the street.

CHAPTER TWO

REVOLUTIONS: PROGRESS OR DECLINE?

THOMAS J. MCPARTLAND

Zero Year commenced on April 17, 1975 (according to the traditional calendar) in what had been called Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge seized the capital city of Phnom Penh. The entire population was marched out into the countryside, including the lame and infirm, who were dragged from hospitals. The very young and old began to fall by the wayside—and die. This was only a harbinger of things to come. The new country of Kampuchea was proclaimed with its new calendar as a symbol of the New Society. Relations with all governments except China were cut off. The party elite led by Pol Pot, who had been trained as an engineer at the Sorbonne, had the momentous task of completely destroying the corrupt old society and creating the society of the people. This social engineering meant the eradication of urban life, of the accoutrements of modern Western life (postal system, currency, telephone, medicine), of the family, and of "individualism". This "eradication" required an unrelenting war against the "enemies of the people"—concretely, death to army officers, civil servants, teachers, policemen, and any others associated with the Old Regime, to anyone educated, to those who violated the strict new rules of behavior. So ensued a reign of torture, terror, and mass killing. While the methods were often primitive, given the assault on modern civilization, the results were effective with the use of such implements as axe handles and such techniques as disembowelment and burying alive. Perhaps up to a quarter of the population perished in the "killing fields" (from several hundred thousand to two million). The Khmer Rouge justified these drastic measures because previous attempts at revolution in Russia, China, and elsewhere were failures. Only in Kampuchea was there true revolution. Indeed this was a revolution in the most radical sense.

Anyone sufficiently familiar with the Cambodian Revolution must ask historical questions about how could such events occur and about other

revolutions. For the Khmer Rouge claimed to have superseded all other revolutions. And there were other radical revolutions. In fact, the more we were to look, the more we would find. The experience of historical encounter with these revolutions inevitably raises acute philosophical questions about human nature—about human aspirations for betterment and human evil, about progress and decline. How could such ideal aspirations as those for the new society lead to such horror? Could the next revolution succeed in finally creating the perfect society? Or should the historical observer of these revolutions retire in utter cynicism? Should we conserve the current order of society at all costs lest we see society collapse into other killing fields? But in our contemporary world of vast ongoing changes, where becoming triumphs, can any standards and norms endure so that we might assume responsibility for the *responsible* direction of history in light of those standards and norms? Can there be a kind of revolution that is an alternative to such a radical revolution as that in Cambodia? Our questions, then, are both historical and philosophical. This paper, accordingly, intends both an historical investigation and a philosophical encounter with the history of revolutions. This is a reflection on our historicity, an attempt at an appropriation of our past at the intersection of the functional specialties of history and philosophy.[1]

Radical Revolution and Revolution in Its General Sense

We could arguably define the modern world as an age of revolutions insofar as the self-definition of modernity seems to entail the notion of revolution (if not always the actual word itself). Every day in the news we hear the actual term "revolution" used, whether to describe revolutionary activities, revolutionary regimes, a revolution in medicine, a revolution in sexual mores, a revolution in electronics, or a revolution in philosophy. When we examine the history of the modern world we confront such topics as the Scientific Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution. The term "revolution" is used here in a very general (and descriptive) sense to refer to any irreversible, significant change, or attempt at change. Such change covers the entire field of historical life from technology (the printing press, steam power, the computer), to the

[1] On the notion of functional specialties, see Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), chap. 5; on the relation of historical disciplines and philosophy as functional specialties, see Thomas J. McPartland, *Lonergan and Historiography: The Epistemological Philosophy of History* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010).

economy (scientific agriculture, capitalism, socialism), to society (the bourgeoisie, the masses, gender roles), to politics (liberal democracy, a people's democracy), to culture (the Enlightenment, Romanticism). If revolution in this very general sense is such a prevailing feature of modern history, it is because modern history has seen unprecedented, continuous, cumulative changes in every aspect of human living to such a degree as to make modern history a period unique in world history. In the wake of the unprecedented development of modern scientific method and its heliocentric and mathematical cosmology, along with the radical attempt by the Enlightenment to employ that method in all fields of intellectual culture, the modern age has witnessed the most far-reaching technological and economic transformations since the domestication of plants and animals in the Agricultural Revolution (c. 8000 B.C.E.) and the birth of cities in the Urban Revolution (c. 3000 B.C.E.). So we see in succession the First Industrial Revolution from 1750-1850 (steam and coal); the Second Industrial Revolution in 1850 (railroads); by 1900 the telegraph, the telephone, the assembly line, the airplane; by 1935 widespread use of electrical power; by 1945 nuclear power; by 1980 microcomputers. This breath-taking succession of changes over a very short period of time has not only spurred the growth of sophisticated commercial and financial systems in an increasingly global network of economies but also has led to necessary social, political, and cultural adjustments, including the various political revolutions of the past two centuries. Change is so rapid that social commentators no longer speak of styles and tastes in terms of a century or a generation, but now in terms of a decade.

But why use the term "revolution"?[2] The term first attained prominence with the publication of Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium in* 1543, where the word referred to the revolution of the heavenly spheres. This notion of "revolving" was applied in the seventeenth century to the revolving of the forms of government as articulated in classic fashion by the ancient historian Polybius. The natural course of forms of government, according to Polybius, was the revolving of kingship into tyranny, tyranny into aristocracy, aristocracy into oligarchy, oligarchy into democracy, democracy into mob rule, and mob rule into kingship to start the cycle again. The so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England was seen by its supporters as the revolving of tyranny into aristocracy (with a constitutional monarch). But by then the term had merged with other

[2] For a recent study of the term, see Ilan Rachum, *'Revolution': The Entrance of a New Word into Western Political Discourse* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1999).

overtones, derived from the explicit meaning associated with two Italian words, *rivuluzione* and *rivolgimento*, since the fourteenth century—namely, of an extraordinary alternation of government by force or commotion. The usage was in the vernacular and had the status of popular slang. It entered into more prominent political discourse during the European crisis of 1640-1660 in England and France (where the French monarchy could actually use it to describe the putting down of opponents by force!). The usage was principally rhetorical, largely politically incorrect, and, as a consequence, not widespread.

By the eighteenth century this meaning of the term "revolution" was gradually adopted by *philosophes*, who changed its meaning. Under the influence of the Idea of Progress current in the Enlightenment, it began to refer to irreversible, significant change. "Revolution" in this sense first referred to cultural transformation, but in the 1780s it began to be applied by a few French and English authors to the American War of Independence (as earlier Gouverneur Morris had done in a pamphlet in 1779). With the shocking experience, however, of the vast political upheaval in France starting in 1789, the term was more widely applied to politics. In the wake of the French Revolution—arguably the most significant political event in world history in the past few centuries—the term "revolution" with something like this resonance was retrospectively associated with the American War of Independence. The experience of the French Revolution not only conveyed the sense of irreversible, significant change but also of irreversible, significant change on such a scale as to be molded by historical forces beyond individual, if not human, control. But it did more. It not only conveyed the sense of change of great quantitative magnitude; it carried the sense of change of great—indeed unprecedented —*qualitative* magnitude. The word "revolution" was linked to an idea, and the idea was associated with certain sentiments, symbols and aspirations that had long antedated the French Revolution, that burst out in a most powerful and transformative way in the French Revolution, and that would come close to dominating the Western political landscape and much of the world political landscape in the twentieth century. There have been parallel aspirations in Chinese history and in Islam. The attraction of the word "revolution", therefore, is not solely the result of the experience of vast changes in the past few centuries, but also the result of the increasing power of certain aspirations that give meaning, interpretation, and direction to those changes. These aspirations point to transformations of metaphysical proportions.

Ever since the French Revolution, the term revolution has had two meanings: *Revolution in the general sense*, as we have seen, refers to

irreversible, significant change, or attempt at change, of any sort (for example, the Neolithic Revolution, the Scientific Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Hungarian Revolution, the Orange Revolution). *Revolution in the strict sense*, on the other hand, refers to a complex of ideas and sentiments of radical political transformation driven by grand-scale historical forces the aim of which is the veritable transformation, beyond the merely political realm, of human society and the transformation of human nature itself. "Political revolutions" in the general sense are primarily political in nature and are efforts at reform, even drastic reform, of political society and other social institutions. By contrast, "radical political revolutions" in the strict sense go beyond mere political reform to seek a radical solution to evil in society: hence more is at stake than the political in any ordinary interpretation.[3]

Let us define "*radical revolution*", therefore, as the attempt through political violence and substantial social change to transform human consciousness and human nature, eliminating the major source of evil in

[3] Most comparative studies of revolution, whether by historians or by social scientists, do not differentiate between political revolutions in the general sense and radical revolutions, but they do amass significant data, present numerous case studies, and offer insights on such topics as preconditions, typical catalysts, morphology of leaders, sociology of followers, ideology, techniques to seize power and to retain control, role of "modernization", and outcomes (including social stratification). See, for example, Jack A. Goldstone, ed., *Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986); Thomas H. Greene, *Comparative Revolutionary Movements: Search for Theory and Justice*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1984); Jaroslav Krejci, *Great Revolutions Compared: The Search for a Theory* (Thetford, Norfolk: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983); Bruce Mazlish, Arthur D. Kaledin, and David B. Ralston, et. al., eds., *Revolution: A Reader* (New York: Macmillan, 1971). The classic historical analysis is Crane Brinton's celebrated *The Anatomy of Revolution*, rev. ed. ((New York: Vintage, 1965). Brinton's paradigm is the French Revolution with its "moderate", "terror", and "Thermidor" stages. He applies this model with dubious results to the English, American, and Russian Revolutions. It is questionable, for example, whether the English and American Revolutions ever got beyond the moderate phase. We claim, below, that England was on the "brink of revolution" and that the American Revolution, some radical sentiments notwithstanding, was an historical alternative to radical revolution insofar as it aimed at containing, rather than eliminating, evil. And, as we shall see below, the Russian Revolution differs from the French Revolution in many aspects, including the fact that professional revolutionaries were involved from the beginning. Closer to our sense of radical revolution is C. W. Cassinelli, *Total Revolution: Comparative Study of Germany under Hitler, the Soviet Union under Stalin and China under Mao* (Santa Barbara, California: Clio Books, 1976).