Beyond Representation: The Revolution As Word, As Image, As Event

Almira Ousmanova

The "revolution" has been one of the key words in social and political thinking of the last two centuries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the closure of the era of political utopias (for many, the point of reference would be 1968 in Paris or in Prague), the word seemed to have vanished entirely from the current vocabulary. However, nowadays we are witnessing the return of the idea of Revolution to the political scene, to the media discourse, to social theory and to art. During the last few years, protest movements have became global and turned to be the real "festivals of resistance", and this has been perceived as a symptom of the new "revolutionary situation". The attempts of theoreticians (mostly of the post-Marxist thought) to critically revise the past experience vis-à-vis new political realities seem to be seriously retarded in comparison with the "revolutionary practice". Passing over to the political scenarios for the future development of the situation, I will focus on the convergence of theoretical discourses on revolution, the new forms of political actionism ("Occupy!" movement, flash-mobs, silent protests, etc.) and the contemporary aesthetic praxis. The history of modern art and cinema has provided a rich iconography of the Revolution as an Event (from Delacrois to Eisenstein and further); however, contemporary art (public art first of all), together with political actionism, tends to follow an entirely different strategy which consists in the circumspect resistance to the logic of representation and is based on the concept of revolution as a perpetual nomadic movement, "becoming", and evasion.

The Protest and Distribution:
The Cases of "Femen" *and* "Pussy Riot"

Gintautas Mazeikis

The article draws on the interrelations of manifestation, representation and distribution on the basis of the cases of "Femen" and "Pussy Riot" and the analysis of actions of the art groups "Voina" and "Zmena". The article maintains that the contemporary persuasion is based on the political economy of images rather than on the semiotics and psychoanalysis of pictures. However the modern political economy depends not only on the commercial market, but also on the social media, not only on the commercial but also on the social distribution of protest images. The stories of popularization of "Voina", "Zmena" and especially "Pussy Riot" show examples of building well organized chains from manifestation to the digital market distribution, reproduction of euphoria, desires and targeting their supply in the spheres of politicity. The article analyses two different tactics: the first is semi-commercial protests and the spectacles of "Feme", and the second is the independent street art activism and the self-distribution on the "Pussy Riot" social networks.

Sexual Nationalism: "I Love Lithuania"

Nida Vasiliauskaitė

In 2011, the major Lithuanian commercial television channel LNK TV produced and broadcast a notorious reality show "I Love Lithuania". Unlike similar local entertainment projects, this one was based on a particular political vision and had a strong political message behind. Moreover, it aimed at social engineering, providing some models of "being an exemplary Lithuanian", "a good and normal citizen", with the intent to change people's mind inspiring them to feel national unity and pride and to "revolt" against the obscure Enemy. The article deals with the political message of the show, reconstructing it from different subtexts and surrounding circumstances, and puts it as a kind of aggressive militant ethnocentric nationalism potentially directed against the "West", i.e. against Lithuania's membership ("subjection to") in the ES, going back to the pop-romanticism of the 19th century.

The show, however, has one more, "unofficial", but nonetheless developed topic – namely "love" in a plain sense of (heterosexual) "romance" and "making family", articulated in sexist terms. According to my thesis, it is not a coincidence or just a "soft" subject added simply to amuse the public, but rather a necessary (but not sufficient) condition and logical supplement of the nationalist "love for one's country". The article analyses this kind of "love" as well, asking what are its functions in the show, what does it mean on the political level, and claiming that the nationalist "love" as the only way to relate oneself politically to the state in this "order of things" reveals the same sexist presuppositions: the two regimes are interdependent.

Document and/or the Gaze of Power: "The Siege" Archive

Natalija Arlauskaitė

The article questions the order of contemporary film archive working with cinematic documents of mass extermination, dying and suffering. It scrutinizes how the forms of historical memory based on archive footage are constructed, what "acceptance" of these forms by general and professional public tells us about the collective identity of "acceptees" and the configuration of their historical memory. The main material is the World War II archive footage films, primarily films about the Holocaust and the Leningrad Siege.

The general framework of the article is based on the question of historical memory forms and the peculiarities of its cinematic construction. It starts with the concept of (war) archive (Michel Foucault, Allan Sekula) and moves to the re-interpretation of visual documents from the WWII in the European experimental film and visual arts. Then it surveys the ways of conceptualizing the experience of witnessing / looking at the sites challenging the limits of humanity (Giorgio Agamben, Georges Didi-Huberman). Finally, it analyses in detail the film "The Siege" (2006) by Sergei Loznitsa, a "consensual" film in regard to the common understanding of "the truth of the blockade".

The analysis shows what the form of archive is created / supported by the narrative strategies of the film, first of all by the visual and sound montage, what kind of power position it transmits, and how this film answers the question about the meaning of the WWII representation in Russia today.

Thus structured, the article "tests" whether the interpretative models and vocabulary of the "paradigmatic" – Holocaust case in terms of visual representation are applicable / limited in discussing other cases of mass killing, dying, or suffering, here – the Leningrad blockade.

The analysis of "The Siege" by Loznitsa shows that the historical memory consensus in the form of film (probably not only in Russia) pays its price: it engages into the retro-scenario (Jean Baudrillard, Thomas Elsaesser). It proves that archiving conventions are hardly to change significantly as long as the order of "witnessing" is grounded in the institutionally arranged archive and dominant modes of representation. Finally, "The Siege" demonstrates the validity and the limits of the Soviet version of the WWII cultural mythology still offering the ground for the collective positive identity: the WWII myth works until the enemies are punished and the Victory firework cast.

A Cinematic Museum of Memory:
Monuments of Deimantas Narkevičius

Rima Bertašavičiūtė

The paper aims at describing the problem of historical memory such as it emerges in the films of the contemporary Lithuanian video-artist Deimantas Narkevičius. The questions raised are whether it may be conveyed through cinematic means and which techniques in particular may well preserve and nourish it. In the oeuvre of Narkevičius, the problem is closely tied to the autoreflexivity of the medium itself, since cinema allows recalling events both personal and "universal" and moving them from one context to another, forcing them to lose their documental status in the process. Yet no manipulation of document and history may pass without consequences, and all historic images, traumatic narratives and translating between different languages and experiences reveal ruptures in the narrative texture. This, in turn, makes us question the possibility and probability of memory itself. These questions are in the forth of Narkevičius' films, yet they are posed wordlessly, through images alone, thus making the spectator wonder as to whether cinema might have its own techniques of working with the memory, history, and forgetting.

Editing is the main cinematic technique used in the process, and the "Role of a Lifetime" of Narkevičius, to quote his another film proves to

be the one of the Great Editor. Editing empowers one with the means of control over cinematic discourse and thus provides a very particular type of cinematic memory. Instead of merely showing things, the editor has control over what shall and shall not be seen. Yet Narkevičius chooses not to merely tell documentary stories about a life long gone. Instead, he reviews the once-traditional ways of looking (soviet filming techniques, film and TV genres) aiming at revealing their own inner instability, forcing them to display their own ruptures and discontinuities. A strategy like that closely resembles such practices of the Soviet Lithuanian art as the so-called "Quiet Modernism" or "Aesop's language"; yet the overall status of Narkevičius' work is under the question. Is such a strategy merely a suggestion of a way of remembering? Or, is it a convenient and institutionally approved way of opposing the mainstream? The films analysed here provide no definite answer; however, they do prove that the means of the medium play a significant role in how we perceive and understand our past.

Ideology and fiction ("Die Hard")

Nijolė Keršytė

The first, theoretical, part of this article presents a brief survey of the Marxist tradition concerning ideology. The aim is to compare the conception of ideology in Althusser's neo-Marxism and Greimas' structural semiotics. The second part is devoted to a semiotic study of the action film "Die Hard" with the purpose of disclosing the organisation of its ideological dimension. The analysis shows that four different ideologies intersect in this cinematographic narration.