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Afterword: Some Reflections on Rupture

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In keeping with the commitment to ethnographic complication rather than grand theorizing that marks the approach of this collection, I write this final reflection not to provide an overall synthetic reading of all the previous chapters, but rather to offer a few rather scattered thoughts on the notion of rupture. I come to this task as someone who has on the one hand been working at this topic for a long time (at least since an article published in 2003), but who on the other came to it not by the road marked ‘revolution’, but rather by the one named ‘conversion’. At an abstract level, conversion is like revolution in that both are, at least in their fullest forms, processes of change undertaken in light of a story about how such change can work. That is to say, both are kinds of transformations rooted in cultural models of cultural rupture – in models, to borrow terms from Caroline Humphrey’s chapter in this volume, that specify things to ‘break from’ as well as things to ‘break toward’. Based in part on this similarity between revolution and conversion, there has been in the recent past, albeit fading a bit now, some movement toward erasing the distinction between these two paths to rupture, particularly on the part of continental thinkers such as Žižek (2003), Badiou (2003) and Agamben (2005). These figures, generally considered closer to political philosophy than to theology or other forms of religious thought, have taken St Paul’s sudden and thorough conversion as a possible model for revolutionary process (see also Robbins 2010; Robbins and Engelke 2010). I hope that the similarities between revolution and conversion, along with this recent move toward holding these two types of change together, might mean that my reflections in what follows will be relevant to those interested in both kinds of rupture. Yet it will remain the case that even as I start with a brief discussion of one important work on revolution, I will focus my
remarks mostly on some new developments in thinking about Christian conversion as a process of rupture.

My primary interest is in rupture considered as cultural process – that is to say, I am inclined to ask how ruptures in social life can arise out of conceptual resources shared by the people who experience or create them. It is this concern that motivates the observation I made in my opening remark that both conversion and revolution are changes undertaken in the light of stories about or models of change. One can, of course, imagine kinds of rupture that affect cultural and social life but do not arise from within it, situations of change in which people are simply overtaken by events or phenomena they neither find they can readily understand nor attempt to direct. But I want to set those kinds of ruptures aside to consider instead radical breaks that people bring about at least in part by deploying culturally meaningful tools.

An argument for rupture as culturally driven cultural change is easier to assert than it is to really work through, for in theoretical terms it is not as simple as one might imagine to construe rupture as a cultural process. This is so because culture is generally taken almost by definition to be, and in fact often is, a force for its own reproduction (Robbins 2007). Defined as structure or tradition, culture is all about steering social action along well-worn grooves, and this means rupture ought not to be part of its modus operandi. This is one of several reasons many contemporary anthropologists do not want to have anything to do with culture, being more interested in what the editors, in their introduction, describe as vitalist or life-affirming conceptualizations of human being that find notions of well-worn grooves, social forms or structures of any kind to be misguided at best and pernicious at worst. From this point of view, as the pioneering electronic composer Edgard Varèse put it, ‘tradition is simply a bad habit’ (cited in Stubbs 2018, 64). But I would argue that if we do not posit culture or some other force that pushes for reproduction, rupture itself becomes uninteresting – just the norm, or at most little more than a fancy name for an increase in the scale of processes of change that are always under way. To put this another way, vitalist or immanentist anthropologies, with their strong commitment to nominalist views of the world, render the question of rupture or change generally moot, since nothing ever stays the same in any case. To keep rupture firmly in focus, then, I propose to hang on to some conception of culture – a conception that sees it as a mechanism mostly of order and reproduction – and then try to account for how culture so conceived can sometimes foster radical change by means of processes that are not outside or in excess of culture, but are rather themselves cultural.
One hypothesis I want to explore is that if any given case of rupture is to be seen as a result of cultural processes, then it will need to involve at least in part shared conceptualizations of rupture itself. On this account, only cultures of rupture, or cultures that at least conceive of the possibility of rupture, produce ruptures that are culturally meaningful and of real interest to the people involved in them. This is a strong assertion, and I am more than willing to be wrong about it. But I want to float it here and see how far it might be able to take us.

The thought of a number of scholars has inspired this claim, most importantly Marshall Sahlins, whose work I have discussed in related terms elsewhere (Robbins 2016). But to launch my argument here, I turn first to another scholar strongly influenced by Sahlins, the historian William Sewell (1996). Writing of ‘events’ rather than the narrower notion of rupture (narrower not in terms of its purported effects, but only in the sense that revolutions might be seen as a subcategory of the broader category of event), Sewell insists in terms very close to my own ‘that social relations are profoundly governed by underlying social and cultural structures and that a proper understanding of the role of events in history must be founded on a concept of structure’ (1996, 842). In the superb 1996 article from which this quotation is taken, ‘Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille’, Sewell exemplifies his approach by considering a key event of the French Revolution. The taking of the Bastille on 11 July 1789, Sewell argues, was in the conception of the actors who undertook it no more than an effort to secure gunpowder stored in the former fortress so that they could better resist Louis XVI’s attempt to retake Paris by military force. In its initial performance, it was not an event in the strong, socially transformative sense Sewell reserves for this term, but rather a familiar form of popular contention. It was only in the days that followed that the General Assembly transformed the taking of the Bastille into an event, a feat they accomplished by working out a cultural model of revolution as ‘a rising of the sovereign people whose justified violence imposed a new political system on the nation’ and then applying it to what had transpired (1996, 859). Initially applied retrospectively, this new notion of revolution immediately began to do prospective work by encouraging further radical transformation of French social life, and in time of course it became a shared cultural model for similar practices of cultural rupture the world over; or, as Reinhart Koselleck (2004, 50) puts it in an analysis that covers ground similar to that covered by Sewell, it ‘became a metahistorical concept … charged with ordering historically recurrent convulsive experiences’ (emphasis in original). Inasmuch as it was the development and
rapid cultural diffusion of the very notion of ‘revolution’ itself during the heat of the events of mid-July 1989 that pushed forward the rupture that became known as the French Revolution, one must accept that it was precisely the development and diffusion of a new cultural model of change that allowed for the production of a major rupture in French culture and social life, not some acultural force.

I find Sewell’s article enormously helpful in thinking about rupture as a cultural process, but as I have already noted I came to an interest in rupture and discontinuity not through the study of revolutions, but rather by way of an interest in Christian conversion. It is to this topic I now want to return in an effort to explore some aspects of Christian notions of rupture that I think anthropologists (myself included) have neglected in the past. I hope that in doing so I might raise some more general questions about a few of the less remarked upon aspects of rupture as a cultural process.

Before launching into a broad argument about the nature of Christian notions of rupture, it might be useful very briefly to summarize the ethnographic experience that brought me to this topic in the first place. In the early 1990s, I carried out fieldwork among the Urapmin of Papua New Guinea. Only a little over a decade before I arrived in Urapmin, all of the adult members of the community had converted to a charismatic, spirit-filled form of Christianity in the midst of a revival movement that was then moving through their country. People in Urapmin consistently and frequently insist that their conversion changed their lives dramatically. As they often say when discussing aspects of their lives that were important before revival but are not any more, ‘that was before, this is now’. And the list of things that were important to them before their conversion but not after it is long, attesting to the extent to which the revival did in fact count as a major rupture in their lives. Thus, for example, Urapmin no longer think their ancestors created the human world in which they dwell, and they no longer practise any of the many rituals directed at these ancestors. The cult houses in which Urapmin men used to practise such rituals have been torn down, and the paraphernalia involved in these rites, including the bones of the ancestors themselves, have been, as people put it, ‘thrown out’. More than this, the complex system of taboos that used to govern who could eat what and that strictly regulated contact between the sexes is gone. Now, the Urapmin say, using a phrase borrowed from English, is ‘free time’: because God made everything and gave it to his children, people can eat whatever they want. And women and men no longer sleep in separate houses or walk on different paths through the community – they can be together all the time now if they
want to be. All of this has changed, Urapmin say, because to follow any of the ancestral rules or customs is to live in a way that God does not approve – it is to sin. For a group of people strongly focused on following God’s ‘law’ in order to reach heaven, it has been morally necessary to bring about these major ruptures in their social life in order to come into compliance with His commands, and the Urapmin are glad they have done so.

So far, so much rupture as straightforward radical discontinuity with the past. This is indeed how Urapmin talk about their conversion, and as I tried to suggest above, they are able to marshal plenty of evidence for a reading of their past framed in these wholly transformative terms. If you push the Urapmin to name anything traditional that might still matter to them and count as good, they will sometimes say that they still build houses mostly as they did before, and that these houses are good; and they will add that so are their gardens, which, though now watched over by God and not the ancestors, also look pretty much the same. But they are not inclined to expand the list of enduring and good traditional things much beyond these few items. On the surface, their model of rupture is one that holds out complete abandonment of traditional culture as the ideal; to quote Kirk Dombrowski (2001) writing about Native American charismatics in Alaska – Urapmin Christianity initially appears quite thoroughly to be a culture ‘against culture’.

In a complicated way I will come back to later, I think the Urapmin are right in the way they understand the model of rupture at the heart of their Christianity as a matter of radically changing everything. But to understand the complication involved, it is best to start with some ways in which one might imagine that on the face of things Urapmin assertions are wrong about the kind of change Urapmin converts have actually accomplished. There are at least two major elements of Urapmin life in the early 1990s that might lead us to this conclusion. I have written about both in great detail elsewhere, so I will just mention them here. The first is that the morality that guides most of Urapmin social interaction is still much as it was before, despite the fact that this morality conflicts with the Christian moral understandings that are central to Urapmin religious thinking and that people regularly proclaim should govern everything that they do. In my book Becoming Sinners I argue that it is this conflict between their traditional and their Christian moral systems that accounts for people’s deeply felt conviction that they are sinful (Robbins 2004).

The second piece of evidence that not all vestiges of the past except houses and gardens are gone is that the Urapmin still believe all illnesses are caused by nature spirits, and they sometimes still practise modified
forms of traditional sacrifice to these spirits in order to heal the afflicted. Urapmin are reluctant to practise these sacrifices, but nonetheless they do occasionally resort to them. I have in other places analysed these sacrifices and the controversy among the Urapmin that surrounds their practice in relation to the first point I made about lingering aspects of traditional Urapmin culture, for it is possible to see the sacrifices as exemplifications of the tenets of traditional Urapmin morality (Robbins 2009). But I do not need to rehearse that argument here. For present purposes, I merely want to note the continued existence of these two important elements of traditional Urapmin culture in the Urapmin Christian era in order to pose the questions of what their presence means for our understanding of the Christian model of rupture the Urapmin promulgate and for our judgement of their own success in living in the light of that model.

To answer these questions, I want to step back from the Urapmin for now and consider some recent work on Christian models of rupture more generally that reveal it to be more subtle than our first interpretation of the Urapmin version would lead us to believe. French historian Rémi Brague (2002, 54) notes that Christianity is at its core a religion of ‘secondarity’ – one that understands itself as appearing in the wake of a prior religion with which it has a complex relationship that is not in any simple terms one only of rejection. Christianity, after all, never wholly rejected the Jewish Tenakh, instead incorporating a version of it as its own ‘Old Testament’ and therefore requiring that its followers always have some or other understanding of Christianity’s relationship with the religion that preceded it. In situations in which converts have had little contact with Christianity before, it is evident that part of what makes Christianity attractive to them is the way its self-conscious secondarity leads it to acknowledge that converts start from somewhere else and must forever negotiate a relationship with that origin. The demand that Christianity as a religion of secondarity sets up for such negotiation is a key feature of Christian models of rupture.

Along with Brague’s model of Christian secondarity, there is also another, closely related, aspect of Christianity that drives forward processes of cultural rupture and gives them a distinctive Christian shape. The work of the theologian Katherine Tanner (1997, 97) is useful in laying this out. She argues that Christianity rarely attempts to construct an entire culture or create a whole society in its own terms. Instead, she notes, ‘The majority view in Christianity for most of its history never favored efforts to make Christian social practices into the sort of group that modern anthropologists would think of as possessing its own way of life.’ For this reason, she goes on to assert, Christians have often
participated in the ‘educational, economic, familial … [and] political’ institutions of the wider societies of which they have been a part (see also Brague 2002, 160–5). This point is helpful, for as with Brague, Tanner helps us to see why the existence of ‘pre-Christian’ or not wholly Christian aspects of a culture may not stand as evidence of the incomplete application of the cultural model of rupture that Christianity installs, but instead as fulfilments of it.

But Tanner does not end her argument on the point that Christian ruptures tend to leave some aspects of social life as they are. After making this claim, she develops the argument that Christians do not generally relate to these prior or non-Christian institutions in a manner of straightforward acceptance. Rather, in the spirit of Brague’s continual negotiations between forms of Christianity and the older cultures they do not wholly discard, Tanner (1997, 116) suggests that Christians ‘trope’ on the prior social forms that endure in their lives, giving them new Christian meanings or otherwise bringing them in line with Christian concerns (1997, 116). This point brings her work into line with some of the best recent anthropological work on Christian rupture.

Consider, in this regard, Simon Coleman’s (2006, 3) argument that at least some forms of Christianity, and Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity in particular, take the form of ‘part cultures’ that are designed so as to be able to relate to other cultures with which they come into contact not by endeavouring to replace them wholesale, but by coming into ‘tension’ with their values. Making a related point, Courtney Handman (2015) has argued that Christianity is a religion that tends to promote criticism of past and current social and religious practice to a central place in the lives of its adherents. This fact is responsible for the tendency of some of Christianity’s forms to over and over again produce the ruptures we call schisms, even as in less dramatic cases this sacralized critical impulse keeps up the kinds of tensions between Christianity and aspects of the world it is breaking from that suggest that no rupture ever quite completes its work of making that world wholly anew.

Drawing on the work of Handman, Coleman, Tanner and Brague, we might say that Christianity is a religion that is inclined to create what we might usefully call duplex cultural formations. These are formations in which converts do not in fact completely discard their traditional cultures, or even transform all of their parts in ways that lead them to be unrecognizable in relation to their previous forms, but are rather ones in which Christians are enjoined constantly to take an evaluative position with regard to their previous traditions. In a recent book on Navajo Pentecostalism entitled *Upward, Not Sunwise* that stands as the most
sophisticated recent anthropological interrogation of Christian notions of rupture that I have read, Kimberly Marshall (2016) adds a final, important, moving part to the Christian model of rupture as I have been laying it out here. An ethnomusicologist as well as an anthropologist, Marshall does this by arguing in detail that Christianity works by means of establishing what she calls ‘resonant ruptures’. These are cultural formations in which, as in musical resonance, some vibrations amplify others without becoming identical to them (2016, 15). In cases of Christian rupture, this means that Christian forms resonate with older ones in ways that do not erase them, even as they assert dominance over them. This happens, for example, in the cases of both Urapmin traditional morality and sacrifice to the nature spirits – forms that are sometimes highlighted in Urapmin consciousness because of their entanglement with Christian concerns, but that are never able to reassert the taken-for-granted status they once had. The point that Marshall (2016, 8) makes, and that I am keen to borrow here, is that this kind of ‘complicated nexus of continuity and rupture’ does not mark cases in which Christian notions of rupture have failed to fully realize themselves. They are, rather, precisely the kind of enduringly dynamic kinds of ruptures Christianity aims to produce. It is because the Urapmin are fully caught up in just this kind of dynamism, a kind of dynamism that is captured in similar ways in all of the models of Christian rupture I have been discussing, that they are right to say that their conversion has changed everything about the way they live; nothing is left as it was, at the very least the ways Urapmin evaluate all aspects of their lives has changed; but this does not mean that no elements of their tradition are in any respect present in their lives. Tobia Farnetti, in his chapter on the lives of Japanese Catholics in this volume, offers a portrait of different version of these same kinds of dynamics, one that at once indicates how diverse they can be in practice and how recognizable they remain as species of a broader genus of Christian rupture.

What I have aimed to lay out here is a model of Christian rupture that on the one hand expects it to set up duplex cultural formations in which parts of the cultures from which people break remain in play even whilst they also remain in tension with the converts’ new Christian understandings, and that on the other hand thrives on the energy these tensions produce, making of rupture a continuing ideal rather than a settled accomplishment. It is this kind of enduring impetus to continually work toward rupture that some Christians capture in such slogans as ‘reformed and always reforming’ or ‘God has no Grandchildren’ (i.e. each person and each generation has to experience the Christian rupture for themselves – it is an experience that cannot be inherited). My suggestion
is that these kinds of dynamics are also in play in many changes guided by
cultural models of revolution, beset as they are by the temptation to put
new purifying measures in play in the wake of their initial success. But
others will be more competent than I am to cash this point out empirically.

Among the many reasons that scholars are not always quick to
group Christian conversion and revolution together as kinds of rupture,
and this even in the wake of the recently flagging vogue for doing so in
some corners of continental thought, is that in many times and places,
and often as a matter of theological principle, Christian ruptures are
seen by converts as involving individuals in the first and ultimately most
important instance, while most scholars assume that revolutions are by
nature collective (at least if they are those that succeed in driving radical
change). Indeed, it is a bit of a critical cliché amongst politically minded
secular thinkers that Christian conversion is ultimately quietest because
it focuses only on individual change, and when Christians respond to this
charge by asserting that making changes within individuals is the only
way to change society more broadly, these same thinkers are inclined to
feel that they are misguided. The Urapmin case I discussed above, which
features a group of socially related people all undergoing individual con-
versions within a short span of time, and which also features the adop-
tion of a version of Christianity that itself possesses a strong model of
cultural change, somewhat sidesteps this issue in a way not all cases of
conversion do. Situations such as that of the Danish Lutheran movement
discussed by Morten Pedersen in his chapter in this volume fit the stere-
otype more closely and are perhaps more common. In this case the indi-
vidual, personal and subjective nature of conversion and of ongoing faith
is self-consciously crucial for participants’ understandings of both their
religious and their political lives in ways that point in a direction other
than that of work toward radical social or cultural transformation (see
also Bialecki 2009).

The recognition of tensions between conflicting evaluations of per-
sonal and cultural ruptures in some kinds of Christianity sets up a host
of new questions for research in the study of change. Nicholas Lackenby
(n.d.), who has worked with strongly committed and engaged Orthodox
Christians in Serbia, has explored some of these questions in seeking to
give strong personal senses of rupture their due in a situation in which
people understand themselves to be transforming their lives by returning
to an ancestral religion marked by a strong commitment to continuity.
The study of the revival of Orthodox Christianity in post-socialist times
more generally raises issues of the concatenation of rupture and contin-
uity across the personal–social boundary with great clarity because,
at least within the anthropology of Christianity, the Orthodox tradition, along with Catholicism, has often been held up as exemplary of forms of Christianity that do not value rupture (Hann and Goltz 2010, see Freeman 2017 for a review). Yet as Timothy Carroll (2017) nicely argues, there are serious limitations to the image of Orthodoxy as monolithically committed to continuity. This makes this tradition an excellent place to explore how personally experienced ruptures, whether as part of a ‘return’ to a religion that one never really practised before, as Lackenby explores, or by taking part in the disruptive presenting of the transcendent in Orthodox liturgy, as Carroll documents, intersect with a simultaneous investment in the continuity of what Lackenby calls the ‘overarching historico-religious tradition’.

The question of how subjective experiences of rupture relate to broader movements either of rupture or continuity also raises a pressing problem for any theory of radical cultural change: how do personal desires for or commitments to change ever become effective cultural projects? This question besets discussions of revolution as much or more than it does those of conversion. In an important recent discussion of rupture in the anthropological literature on Christianity, Dena Freeman (2017) has begun to explore one potential answer to this question that is rooted in the relationship between the impetus provided by religious models of change and the practical openings to transformation afforded by people’s political and economic situations. My goal here is not to evaluate her argument, but just to note that, along with work like Lackenby’s, it indicates the extent to which a more nuanced understanding of the personal side of rupture could help us develop better answers than we have been able to offer in the past to the question of how personal and broader social and cultural ruptures relate to one another.

The matter of rupture as profoundly felt personal experience – of the undoubted presence of Pauline moments of intense personal disruption in some person’s encounters with Christian or revolutionary models of change – suggests a perhaps unexpected connection between the study of rupture and another topic of broad contemporary concern within anthropology and the human sciences more generally. I have in mind here the study of trauma as the negative experience of the disruption of one’s life and thought by the appearance within them of unassimilable phenomena that are often but perhaps not always violently imposed (Das 2007 is an already classic discussion; see Robbins 2013 for a brief review of some other important contributions to the literature on this topic). Revolution and conversion have in common with trauma the quality of constituting a life-altering force, and in neither are experiences of violence always
absent as the old life is made to give way in the face of the new. The presence of these similarities leads us to the question of how it is possible to understand these two phenomena of rupture as different from trauma. This is a question that requires an answer if the study of conversion and revolution is not to become simply a subset of a broader investigation in which trauma is taken to be the kernel of all disruptive experience.

My own sense of this issue, and the brief sketch of an approach to it I will offer here, comes out of some recent reading in theology. The prominent German Lutheran theologian Eberhard Jüngel, who grew up in what became East Germany and taught there before moving to Switzerland and then, after German reunification, to West Germany, has lived through more than his share of radical changes. Perhaps drawing on his own background, and certainly drawing on the Lutheran tradition, he reckons Christianity as a religion based upon experiences of what he calls ‘interruption’, a phenomenon that fosters an ‘experience with experience’ that leads those who undergo it to re-evaluate all of the understandings that have previously constituted their lives. He is not alone in linking Christianity and religious experience more generally to interruption – indeed another prominent German theologian, in this case a Catholic, once offered ‘interruption’ as ‘the shortest definition of religion’ (Metz 2007, 158; see also Boeve 2007; Hart 2001). But Jüngel stands out for our purposes for having asked a necessary follow-up question to such a definition of interruption: what is it that distinguishes Christian interruptions from other kinds?

Jüngel answers that question by asserting that the Christian interruption is unique because it ‘has the peculiarity of interrupting human experience unequivocally to its benefit’ (Jüngel 2014, 209; original emphasis). For Jüngel, the Christian interruption is peculiar in this way because it is caused by the Christian God. In the terms in which he offers this explanation, it is unlikely to satisfy the demands of the kind of secular social scientific and humanistic thought that has shaped this collection (and that has shaped my own reflections here as well). But he may nonetheless point us in a fruitful direction that can also be explored in those terms. A younger theologian from the United States, Kevin Hector (2015), gets us closer to these terms when he argues that modern theology (a lineage that for him runs from Kant through Schleiermacher and Hegel to more recent figures such as Tillich) has been preoccupied with answering the question of what he calls ‘mineness’: this is the question of how it is that individual human beings – beings that are not themselves the most potent force in the universe or even in their own lives – can claim as their own and integrate into their senses of
themselves experiences that profoundly interrupt them (he does not use Jüngel’s term or cite him, but something like interruption is a fair gloss on the kinds of experiences he has in mind). On Hector’s account, the philosophers and theologians he treats offer different answers to this question, all of which turn on some notion of ‘faith’ as a trust in the beneficial potential of disruptions that one experiences. This need not be faith in God per se, but only in the ability of radical disruption to improve one’s life in its wake.

I think there is a lesson in Jüngel’s and Hector’s writings about how the possession of the kind of self-conscious models of change I have been discussing – models such as those of conversion and revolution – allow people to trust in the benign potential of changes they participate in bringing about but do not alone fully control. Put otherwise, having such models at hand allows people to have experiences of radical rupture that do not traumatize them. Such experiences do not confront people, as Jüngel (2014, 207) puts it, with the threat of the ‘non-being’ of the older self that is being transformed, but instead solicit their active engagement in change and by doing so become parts of that self’s own life-projects. This quality of mineness that is critical to conversion and revolution as forms of practice is thus at least one key feature that sets them apart from many other types of change that people experience, including those that are traumatic in the currently accepted sense.

I have come to the end of my remarks. I know that I rest my argument here leaving many questions unanswered. Some of these may be theoretically consequential. For example, it is fair to ask where new cultural models of rupture come from, and if they themselves might have acultural causes (arising, for example, out of genuinely unprecedented experiences). There are some hints about this as regards the notion of revolution in Sewell’s (1996) work and in Larry Hurtado’s (1998) study of Christian origins, where he offers a theory of the advent of Christianity as a new religion that also looks to acultural causes to explain the rise of new Christian models of change. It is at least arguable that even models of rupture that have their own origins outside culture only become effective forces for change when they themselves achieve cultural status, and this would preserve the value of some of the arguments I have made here. But it is clear that these issues need further investigation.

A second important question I regrettably have to tackle in the same absurdly limited way is that of whether a culture of rupture – that is to say a culture that gives one or more models of rupture a central place in its conceptions of social life – is only working out its own reproduction when it generates ruptures that follow the lines its own models set out.
When cultures that are heirs to cultural models of revolution undergo revolutionary transformation, should this count as a rupture or is it just more of the same? If we answer that it is a rupture, then we might have to say that cultural processes of rupture by their very nature count simply as performative contradictions – claims to foster something new that are themselves nothing more than routine. I do not think this argument should rest here, but I will leave figuring out how to get beyond this position for another time.

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