

## “The Greening of the Cuban Revolution” and Malinowski’s Children

Takashi Osugi

The aim of this paper is to compare the “revolution of contextualization” executed by Bronislaw Malinowski, the father of modern anthropology, with “the Greening of the Cuban Revolution” that contemporary revolutionaries strive for, and to grasp the unique nature of context-making found in each of the two. Malinowski drove his revolution by creating a new academic context that placed his objects of study in their own contexts, namely double contextualization. This revolution of contextualization has been repeated in various forms by his successors throughout the course of development of anthropological theories, in the latest phase of which we find the Actor Network Theory (ANT). However, we cannot appropriately understand the activities of Cuban experts related to “the Greening of the Revolution,” or more particularly their experiments in sustainable and ecological agriculture, by trying to place them in the extensive context that ANT tries to cover prompted by the academic context in which ANT situates itself. Cubans’ experiments are supported by, and are heavily dependent upon, international NGOs and are characterized by a particular way of erasing “the middle distance view” in any of their projects’ representations in which global issues and concrete achievements are directly connected. From the perspective of ANT, this erasing, or black-boxing, appears to prove their failure in putting their own activities into a “real” context, or in other words, to commit an unacceptable de-contextualization. However, when we compare their experiments to second-order cyberneticians’ dealings with black-boxes, we come to the realization that by black-boxing they convert ungraspable objects known as “sustainability” and “ecology” into things with which one can actually interact. I also argue that the erasure of “the middle distant view” by Cuban experts is necessary for carving out the context of their engagement in the time of post-Utopia, and plays an indispensable part in their art of connecting the concrete particular with the universal. This in turn helps us, Malinowski’s children, to reflect upon our own anthropological distancing between “we” and “they,” and our search for a general study of “human beings” based on “their” concrete particulars.