



Political Ceremony

A one day workshop at the Department of Politics, University of Sheffield,

Tuesday 7th June 2011

Room 109

The workshop has been organised by the Leverhulme programme on Gendered Ceremony and Ritual in Parliament which examines how struggles over the meanings and performance of ceremony and ritual in parliaments secure and reproduce as well as challenge and transform institutional norms. The work of the programme, focusing on the opening ceremony of the parliaments in Westminster, India and South Africa, offers a chance for the programme to engage with scholars working on political and public ceremony more broadly. Political ceremony has long been an object of study for anthropologists and historians and the workshop seeks to draw on the expertise of these fields in developing its own work. The workshop is chance for an interdisciplinary conversation about how political ceremony should be understood and analysed and what it can tell us about the transformations of societies.

A focus on political ceremony and ritual draws attention to the role of the symbolic within political systems. The workshop seeks to debate how best public and political ceremony can be studied and what conceptual theories are most useful for understanding the significance of ceremony and its location in wider social practices of national and transnational formations. The programme's comparative work on Westminster, India and South Africa invites exploration of colonial legacies and the multiple effects of Empire on political cultures, for former colonies and in the metropole. The workshop also seeks to grapple with debates surrounding the invention and 'subvention' of tradition and the place of continuity amidst narratives of change and transformation. The workshop will debate the rich and diverse insights that can be gained from the study of the symbolic and public ritual for understanding the practice of politics.

The workshop is structured into three sessions: the first session will look broadly at political and public ceremony; the second focuses on the work of the GCRP programme on the opening ceremony of parliaments; the third session will be a round table discussion on the insights offered by the study of the symbolic and political ceremony.



Room 109, Department of Politics

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| 10:00 – 11:15 | GCRP TEAM MEETING |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Workshop Arrivals and Coffee |
| 11:30 – 01:00 | <p><i>Public and Political Ceremony</i> <i>Chair: Joni Lovenduski (Birkbeck College, London)</i></p> <p>Dominic Bryan (Queen’s University Belfast): <i>title tbc</i></p> <p>Alastair Mann (University of Stirling): <i>title tbc</i></p> <p>Arundhati Virmani (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales Marseille): <i>The Material Dynamics of Political Ceremonies: India in the 20th and 21st Centuries.</i></p> <p>Discussant: Georgina Waylen (University of Sheffield)</p> |
| 01:00 – 1:45 | Lunch |
| 1:45 – 3:15 | <p><i>Ceremonial Openings of Parliaments</i> <i>Chair: Sarah Childs (University of Bristol)</i></p> <p>Rachel Johnson (University of Sheffield): <i>A Pageant Apart From Politics? The Opening of Parliament in South Africa 1910-2010</i></p> <p>Carole Spary (University of Warwick): <i>title tbc</i></p> <p>Faith Armitage (Birkbeck College, London): <i>title tbc</i></p> <p>Discussant: Gary Rivett (University of Sheffield)</p> |
| 3:15 – 3:30 | Coffee |

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| 3:30 – 4:30 | <p data-bbox="384 394 1337 479"><i>Roundtable Discussion: Why study the ceremonial and the symbolic in politics?</i></p> <p data-bbox="384 566 1086 712">Shirin Rai (University of Warwick) Daphne Halikiopoulou (London School of Economics) Daniel Hammett (University of Sheffield) Colin Hay (University of Sheffield)</p> |