

***Portugal: The Impossible Revolution?*(Second Edition) by Phil Mailer. PM Press, 2012. Pp. 300. \$24.95 (Paperback). ISBN: 9781604863369**

**Reviewer: Philip Daniel Louro<sup>1</sup>**

*[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2012 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

It is difficult to imagine waking up one morning and suddenly finding that everything we knew about society has been reset. How would we keep yesterday's iniquities from becoming embedded into the social architecture of tomorrow? That was the question posed to Portuguese activists on April 1974, when a military coup abruptly ended the forty-four year reign of fascist rule. In *Portugal: The Impossible Revolution?*, Phil Mailer chronicles the euphoric optimism, crushing disappointments, and hard-fought struggles of the chaotic two years following the coup. Antonio Gramsci, who experienced firsthand the hardships of living under fascism, famously wrote about how the cultural values of a bourgeoisie transform into the 'common sense' values of an entire society. Similarly, Portuguese society had long been adjusted to the values of strong arm bosses and degrading workplaces, the fatalism of poverty, and the chilling fear of torture for speaking out against injustice. Without a fascist leadership to reinforce this cultural hegemony of oppression, the 'common sense' of the Portuguese was radically altered. The people found they could now demonstrate against injustices, make demands for a better quality of life, and use their voice without fear of retribution. For the Portuguese working class, their new-found voices were loudly and fearlessly Marxist. The chance to build a true communist society had come swiftly in the night. In this book, Mailer documents a tiny, yet important, history of working class efforts to achieve this daring task.

---

<sup>1</sup> **Philip Louro** is a graduate student alumnus of William Paterson University in the Political Science department. Address correspondence to: Philip Louro, e-mail: [pdlouro@gmail.com](mailto:pdlouro@gmail.com).