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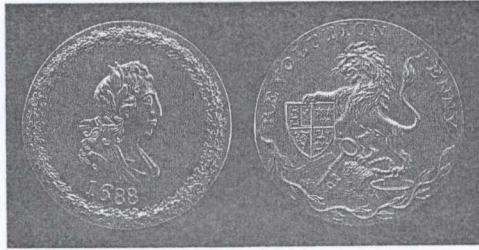
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1688

*THE FIRST MODERN
REVOLUTION*

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YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS NEW HAVEN & LONDON



CHAPTER TWO

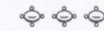
Rethinking Revolutions

There is no part of history better received than the account of great changes and revolutions of states and governments," wrote the Anglican cleric and future revolutionary Gilbert Burnet in the middle of the seventeenth century. This was so, he claimed, because "the variety of unlooked for accidents and events, both entertains the reader and improves him." Another early commentator on revolutions emphasized that revolutions were not only entertaining but difficult to interpret. "When great revolutions are successful their causes cease to exist," explained Alexis de Tocqueville. "The very fact of their success has made them incomprehensible." Little has changed in the century and a half separating us from Tocqueville. Revolutions continue to fascinate and to baffle. In the late 1970s Theda Skocpol observed that "during the last two decades theories of revolution have sprung up thick and fast in American social science."¹ The pace of scholarship on the subject of revolution has only accelerated since Skocpol wrote those words.

Revolutions continue to fascinate and amaze because each new revolution seems to raise doubts about the previous generation of sophisticated theorizing. Unfortunately, each new revolution has encouraged scholars to develop ever-more elaborate explanations, with new variables and new sets of possible outcomes. Each new account of revolutions is more complex than the last. Along with new causes have come new distinctions in the

(above) *Centenary of the Revolution, 1788*. Struck in 1788, in commemoration of the Revolution of 1688–89, this medal depicts the British lion, with symbols of Catholic domination underfoot. See Laurence Brown, *A Catalogue of British Historical Medals, 1760–1960*, Vol. 1: *The Accession of George III to the Death of William IV* (London: Seaby, 1980), 68.

typology of revolutions. We now hear of political revolutions, social revolutions, great revolutions, lesser revolutions, Third World revolutions, and twentieth-century revolutions. This chapter offers a more parsimonious explanation for the causes of revolutions *tout court* and suggests some new directions in explaining their outcomes. The general model developed here makes clear why the Revolution of 1688–89 in England should be understood to be the first modern revolution.



Revolutions are relatively rare and distinctive events. They fundamentally transform states and societies. "A revolution," suggests the political scientist Samuel Huntington, "is a rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and policies." Revolutions are thus distinguishable from violent leadership changes in which social and political structures remain as they were. They are also separable from wars of independence in which the former colony's social and political structures remain but the locus of sovereignty is shifted. Useful as Huntington's definition is, it needs to be qualified and amplified. The rapidity of revolutions must be measured in years, not in months. "Revolutions," one recent commentator has pointed out, "are best conceptualized not as events, but as processes that typically span many years or even decades." Revolutions, too, possess a common ideological element: a self-conscious commitment to epochal change. Revolutionary actors insist that their achievements, or their aspirations, represent a fundamental temporal break from the past. "True revolution," notes the political theorist Isaac Kramnick, "seeks a new beginning." So for Richard Price, the American Revolution "opens a new prospect in human affairs, and begins a new era in the history of mankind." Almost a century earlier the Swiss observer of English society Guy Miegge had described England's Glorious Revolution as spawning "a new face of things."² It was this same conception of a temporal break that prompted the French Jacobins to construct a new calendar in 1793.

Revolutions thus constitute a structural and ideological break from the previous regime. They entail changes to both the political and socioeconomic structures of a polity. They involve an often violent popular movement to overturn the previous regime. Revolutions change the political leadership and the policy orientations of the state. And revolutionary regimes bring with them a new conception of time, a notion that they are beginning a new epoch in the history of the state and its society.

Class conflict, then, is incidental to revolutions. Despite the central role that class struggle plays in some influential accounts of revolutions and the role that class divisions clearly have played in some revolutions, to insist that class struggle is constitutive of revolution is to narrow unnecessarily the field of analysis. The French Revolution of the late eighteenth century, once the classic case of class-based social revolution, is no longer universally thought to have had the class basis that Georges Lefebvre and Albert Soboul

among others assumed.³ Some twentieth-century revolutions, such as the Iranian Revolution, would also appear to be excluded from a definition of revolution that places class struggle at its center. Class conflict may have determined the shape of some revolutionary movements, may have been the outcome of revolutionary transformations, and may have informed the political goals of the revolutionaries and their opponents in some cases. But not all revolutions have been about class conflict. Such a narrow definition of revolution would seem to have little social scientific value. Revolutions must involve popular movements; those popular movements need not be class based.

Nor is it useful to distinguish between social and political revolutions. Events that "transform state structures but not social structures" are civil wars, rebellions, or coups d'état; they are not revolutions. Revolutions must involve both a transformation of the socioeconomic orientation and of the political structures. That transformation must take place through a popular movement, and the transformation must involve a self-consciousness that a new era has begun. The distinction usually drawn in the literature between social and political revolutions, it seems to me, is normative as much as it is analytical.⁴ Scholars draw a bold line between social and political revolutions because they admire some revolutionary outcomes and disdain others. Analytical language has been used to disguise political preferences.



Why, then, do revolutions happen? Social scientists and historians have not been at a loss for explanations. As books and articles have proliferated, so have the stories scholars have told about the causes of revolutions. Despite the richness of the literature, it is possible to discern two types of explanations that now dominate the discussion, both associated with prominent social scientists. The first explanation of revolution is that the old regime is overturned by modernizers. The second analysis specifies that the old regime is done in by a new social group, a class that seizes power and overturns the structures of the state and society. For all of their differences, both explanations of revolution are modernization stories.

"Revolution," Huntington declares, "is characteristic of modernization. It is one way of modernizing a traditional society." In particular Huntington argues that revolution "is most likely to occur in societies which have experienced some social and economic development and where the processes of political modernization and political development have lagged behind the processes of social and economic change." Although Huntington distinguishes between a Western and an Eastern pattern of revolution, in both cases, as Charles Tilly perceptively points out, "the immediate cause of revolution is supposed to be the discrepancy between the performance of the regime and the demands being made upon it. . . . Which in turn occurs as a more or less direct effect of rapid social and economic change."⁵

The class struggle explanation for revolution differs from the classic modernization story in two fundamental ways. Whereas the classic modernization story focuses on

a generalized transition from a traditional to a modern society, the class struggle model highlights the transition from one mode of economic production to another. "The conception of social revolution used here," Theda Skocpol emphasizes, "draws heavily upon Marxist emphases on social structural change and class conflict." And whereas the classic modernization story focuses exclusively on internal domestic transitions, Skocpol, in particular, highlights the international context. "Modern social revolutions have happened only in countries situated in disadvantaged positions within international arenas," she points out. "The realities of military backwardness or political dependency have crucially affected the occurrence and course of social revolutions." This situation of comparative backwardness is itself inextricably tied to modes of production. "All modern social revolutions," says Skocpol, "must be seen as closely related in their causes and accomplishments to the internationally uneven spread of capitalist economic development and nation-state formation on a world scale." It is in this sense that Skocpol argues that "revolutionary crises developed when the old-regime states became unable to meet the challenges of evolving international situations."⁶ For defenders of the class struggle paradigm, revolutions happen when members of a particular class overturn the old regime because the old sociopolitical structure had made the state uncompetitive on the world stage.

Despite these important interpretative, analytical, and (one suspects) normative differences, these two dominant explanations for revolution share a great deal. Both are fundamentally stories about modernization. Both emphasize that revolutions occur in societies in which social and economic modernization has made the state appear to be outmoded, to be an *ancien régime*. Despite the differences in approach, Skocpol shares with Huntington the notion that "epochal modernizing dynamics in part cause and shape revolutionary transformations."⁷

In contrast to both the classical modernizing and class struggle perspectives, I suggest that revolutions occur only when states have embarked on ambitious state modernization programs. Revolutions do not pit modernizers against defenders of an old regime. Instead revolutions happen when the political nation is convinced of the need for political modernization but there are profound disagreements on the proper course of state innovation. For all the emphasis that the approaches of Huntington and Skocpol place on "political and institutional factors," I suggest, they have missed this crucial point.⁸ State modernization, as political aim and as political process, is a necessary *prerequisite* for revolution. The extent and nature of modernizing social movements may encourage state modernization. These social movements may help to shape the nature of the revolutionary process. But social movements do not spark revolution unless state modernization is already under way.



Before I lay out the case that state modernization is a necessary prerequisite to revolution, it is important that I acknowledge one powerful analysis of revolutions that

does not stress modernization. Jack Goldstone, in his widely discussed *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World*, has advanced an altogether different thesis. "Revolutions," Goldstone insists, "are not provoked by a battle between the past and the future, or between good and evil; they are instead provoked by imbalances between human institutions and the environment." The key factor in promoting state breakdown, according to Goldstone, has nothing to do with social or economic modernization. "The motivation for change," Goldstone insists, "[comes] from ecological shifts in the relation of the population size to agricultural output, which produce[s] diverse conflicts between elites and states, among elite factions, and between popular groups and authorities."⁹ In Goldstone's breathtaking analysis, which traverses the early modern world from Europe to East Asia, traditional Malthusian crises, not modernizing economies, promote state breakdown and revolution.

The demographic explanation for revolutions and state breakdown relies on an important empirical claim. Goldstone suggests that there was "state breakdown not merely in Europe but on a world wide scale, clustered in two marked 'waves,' the first culminating in the mid-seventeenth century, the second in the mid-nineteenth, and separated by roughly a century, from 1660 to 1760, of stability." The periods of instability were periods of demographic growth; the period of stability was one of population stagnation. "If population decline restores a traditional balance of people and resources," Goldstone explains, "traditional institutions may be revived."¹⁰

Though innovative and interpretatively exciting, Goldstone's analysis fails to make sense of the early modern world that is his focus. Monumental state breakdowns and revolutions occurred during his "century of stability" of 1660–1760. Goldstone dismisses England's Glorious Revolution of the later seventeenth century as "not really a revolution." This view contrasts with that of classic commentators and the interpretation developed here. Karl Marx thought the Glorious Revolution marked "the first decisive victory of the bourgeoisie over the feudal aristocracy." The great jurist Sir William Blackstone agreed that it was the Glorious Revolution, "the happy revolution," that marked the decline of feudalism in England and the full establishment of England's "civil and political liberties."¹¹ The Glorious Revolution, I will show, was a popular and violent event in which both the nature of English governance and the socioeconomic orientation of the regime were radically transformed. Not only did the new regime alter its foreign, imperial, economic, and religious policies, but subsequent commentators—whether supportive or critical of the revolution—almost universally described the revolution as a new beginning in English history.

England was not the only European state to undergo a state breakdown, a state transformation, or a revolution in the century of so-called stability. The United Provinces of the Netherlands were convulsed by violent and spectacular state upheavals. In the face of military reverses at the hands of the French in the summer of 1672, a wave of popular protests and riots swept across the wealthiest state in Europe. The rioters eventually forced

the great republican leader John De Witt to resign from office in early August. Then, on 20 August, De Witt and his brother Cornelius were ripped limb from limb on the streets of The Hague. The result was to make William of Orange stadholder in July 1672, "transforming the structure of power." Popular political violence had changed the Netherlands from a republican into a quasi-monarchical regime.¹²

Scandinavia, too, suffered state breakdowns between 1660 and 1760. Between 1660 and 1683, Frederik III and Christian V transformed Denmark from an elective monarchy into one of the most absolute states in Europe. Frederik III, in the wake of Denmark's disastrous military defeat by the Swedes in 1657–60, "staged a coup" to ensure that the monarchy would become hereditary in 1660. In the following decades "the old oligarchical social order" was replaced "by a meritocracy in which the talented could reach the top irrespective of their social origins." The Danish Law of 1683 created "order and transparency in every aspect of life." The Danish political and social order had been permanently transformed.¹³ Despite its victory over Denmark, the Swedish state was also dramatically transformed after 1680. In the Swedish case, in fact, it was not so much defeat and comparative backwardness but anxiety that Sweden did not have the resources to maintain its hard-won status as a great power that provoked the transformation from an elective to an absolute monarchy. In 1680 Charles XI formally achieved the status of absolute monarch. In the words of one scholar, Charles XI "effected a revolution in the power of the monarchy." The Swedish diets lost the power to limit his authority. He was then able to restructure radically the Swedish army, the Swedish navy, and Swedish finances. Significantly, the transformation of the Swedish state, which some interpreted as a royal coup, involved a massive transfer of resources from "private hands to the public domain." In essence, the Swedish nobility was emasculated.¹⁴ Swedish state and society had been transformed.

Northern Europe was not the only region that underwent state breakdown in the so-called era of stability. The Spanish state was spectacularly transformed in a pan-European war, the War of the Spanish Succession. Europeans from London to Vienna and beyond were convulsed by the downfall of the Spanish Habsburg monarchy in the early eighteenth century. Spain devolved into civil war. The Bourbon monarchy that emerged from the war altered the nature of the Spanish state. The new state generated a new "bureaucratic elite" and "a shift in power towards the central government." After 1714 the new Spanish royal line engaged in further state reforms.¹⁵

The demographic explanation for revolution and state breakdown asserts that states are at risk of upheaval only during periods when population growth outstrips economic resources. During periods of population stability, there should be state stability. Yet the period of population stability, 1660–1760, was an era of frequent and dramatic state breakdown and revolution throughout Europe. We must therefore look elsewhere for the causes of revolution.



The key factor in explaining revolutions was neither population pressure nor socio-economic modernization. In some cases both factors may have played a role, but the key factor was state modernization. In all revolutions the old regime had ceased to exist before the revolution. Revolutions, then, do not pit modernizing elements against defenders of the traditional order. Instead revolutions occur only after the regime in power has set itself on a modernizing course. State modernization itself cannot occur without prior socio-economic modernization. But that socioeconomic modernization is a necessary though not a sufficient cause of state modernization.¹⁶ It is for that reason that revolutions are the often-violent working out of competing state modernization programs.

Scholars have long perceived empirical problems with both the classic and class struggle versions of the modernization story. Charles Tilly, for one, has pointed out that the historical record suggests "no direct relationship [between] the pace of structural change" and revolution. Indeed, Tilly notes the evidence suggests a negative relationship: "rapid change, diminution of political conflict." "Large-scale structural changes" indirectly affect "the probabilities of revolution," Tilly concludes, but "there is no reliable and regular sense in which modernization breeds revolution."¹⁷ Social and economic transformation—that is, social modernization—may lead to political changes but not to state breakdown. Rather, state modernization makes a regime ripe for revolution.

By state modernization I mean a self-conscious effort by the regime to transform itself in fundamental ways. State modernization will usually include an effort to centralize and bureaucratize political authority, an initiative to transform the military using the most up-to-date techniques, a program to accelerate economic growth and shape the contours of society using the tools of the state, and the deployment of techniques allowing the state to gather information about and potentially suppress social and political activities taking place in a wide range of social levels and geographical locales within the polity. State modernizers almost always deploy the same rhetoric of creating new beginnings that we normally associate with revolutionaries. They insist that they are initiating a fundamental break with past modes of governance.

Louis XVI's France, Tocqueville long ago suggested, was a classic case in which attempts to modernize the state made the regime ripe for revolution. "Experience teaches us," writes Tocqueville, that "the most perilous moment for a bad government is one when it seeks to mend its ways." Tocqueville was generalizing from his knowledge of the French case. There, in the decades before the revolution, "modern institutions" had emerged "within the shattered framework of the feudal system." So extensive were the programs of state modernization that "the whole nation seemed to be in the throes of a rebirth." Far from being a reactionary, Louis XVI was a determined reformer. "During his entire reign Louis XIV was always talking about reform," notes Tocqueville, "and there were few institutions whose destruction he did not contemplate." In the later eighteenth century the French state was becoming increasingly centralized, "more systematic in its methods and more efficient." In 1787 Louis XVI initiated a "wholesale remodeling of the entire

administration." The following year, 1788, the king "issued an edict overhauling the entire judicial system." In response to France's demoralizing and devastating defeat in the Seven Years' War (1757–63), "the government had become more energetic [and] had launched into a host of activities to which until then it had not given a thought." The point is neither that Louis XVI's regime anticipated all the changes later brought about by the revolutionaries nor that Louis XVI was a misunderstood radical but that Louis XVI was a modernizer.¹⁸ His activities shifted the terrain of political discussion and activity. The French Revolution was the violent working out of competing modernization programs.

The French Revolution was not the first example of this phenomenon. A century earlier, England had been convulsed with a similar revolutionary pattern. James II and the English political nation were also concerned that recent military setbacks, this time against the Dutch, had rendered the kingdom a second-rate power. James II also benefited from an expansion of English foreign trade that enabled him to modernize and expand the English army, to massively increase the state bureaucracy, and to impose central control on local government. James also developed a wide-ranging and efficient surveillance system, deploying numerous informers in England's coffeehouses, taverns, and churches. He used the newly created post office to open letters and thereby keep tabs on the political pulse. He also used extensive political surveys to assess political sentiment and to ease the removal of political dissidents and replace them with loyalists. The revolutionaries who overthrew James implemented an alternative modernization program. The postrevolutionary regime was also determined to modernize, centralize, and augment the state. But that regime did so with a very different economic strategy—one committed to developing England's manufacturing sector rather than seeking to expand the agrarian sector through territorial acquisition—a different foreign policy, and a profound commitment to religious toleration.¹⁹

Twentieth-century revolutions followed the same pattern as those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. State modernization was a necessary prerequisite to revolution. The Mexican Revolution was preceded by a period of extensive state modernization. Mexico's president Porfirio Díaz had initiated a series of reforms that the historian Friedrich Katz has christened the "Porfirian road to modernization." Díaz modernized the Mexican army along Prussian lines, making it into a career open to talents. Díaz's finance minister, José Limantour, "balanced the budget, reformed the treasury, abolished internal tariffs and overhauled the country's banking institutions." As a result, the size of the state bureaucracy "greatly increased." Díaz also used his power to bring Mexico's opposition press "under control." Díaz's achievement was to create a "national ruling class" that ran "a strong, centralized regime."²⁰

The Russian and Turkish Revolutions of the early twentieth century both followed attempts to modernize the state, though in both cases the modernization was in part forced on the old regime. In Russia, the czars had already taken steps toward emancipating the serfs in the nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, state reforms "had managed

to turn the state administration into a uniform and modern institution."²¹ Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War and the subsequent 1905 Revolution quickened the pace of state modernization. Czar Nicholas created the Duma, a national elected parliament, and legalized political parties and trade unions. He had at his command the largest standing army in Europe. And before the Revolution that began in October 1917 Nicholas had initiated "a major program of social reform."²²

Sultan Abdulhamid II similarly embarked on a series of state reforms before the Turkish Revolution of 1908. Aware that European powers were anxiously awaiting the opportunity to carve up the once formidable Ottoman Empire, the sultan reluctantly but actively pursued modernization. He greatly expanded the state school system and the railway network. He initiated a wide-ranging program to modernize the Turkish army along German lines. Before the revolution of 1908, then, the sultan "had managed to create major modernized sectors within the Ottoman military and bureaucracy, sectors that began to operate on the basis of legal/rational rules of conduct."²³

State modernization was also a precursor to the Chinese Revolution. In this case, China's defeat at the hands of the Japanese (1895), followed by the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901), had encouraged a series of rapid and far-reaching reforms. Large sections of the military were reformed in the Western tradition. In 1905 the classical Confucian examination system was abandoned, making possible wide-ranging educational reforms. According to the historian of China Jonathan Spence, "government control of the economy was also strengthened, as more state-directed but merchant-run companies were founded and the railway network was gradually extended." In September 1906, the government proclaimed that a constitution and further administrative reforms were being prepared. In early-twentieth-century China all parties "were advocates of political modernization." The conflict that would soon rise to the level of revolution "concerned the form of modern government China should have and the method by which modern government should be introduced."²⁴

The Iranian Revolution of 1979, so problematic for scholars who understand revolutions to be about the triumph of modernization or the ultimate victory of the peasant class, was yet another example of an ambitious state modernizer paving the road to revolution. Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was the architect of a thoroughgoing modernization program. His army of more than four hundred thousand men was supplied with modern weapons, advisers, and technologies. His vast "bureaucracy managed such diverse functions and enterprises as the oil industry, the steel industry, ports, railroads, and even atomic energy." The shah, of course, had also fine-tuned a secret police force that was widely feared and despised. According to one commentator, the Iranian Revolution was "a political struggle set in motion by the centralization and modernization of the state." The revolutionaries were not reactionaries. They had different visions for a modern Iran. This reflected the broad base of the opposition to the shah, including, in addition to the clergy, "the bazaar merchants, the tribes, the intellectuals, the technocrats, the students,

the industrial workers, the usually timid civil servants, and in the end even a segment of the armed forces." Even the ultimately triumphant Islamists could be said to have had a vision of a modern Islamic republic.²⁵

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 would at first glance appear to pose the greatest interpretative problems. Most commentators suggest that Fulgencio Batista's vulnerability stemmed in large part from his desire to deprofessionalize the army. Yet even Batista was an aggressive, if quirky, state modernizer. Batista's recipe for political survival included promoting rapid economic growth, which he fostered in part "by the state's development banks." He had, in the view of another commentator, "embarked on an industrialization program." Batista, who had emerged as Cuba's leading political figure in 1933, had developed an immense state bureaucracy in which one in nine Cubans was a state employee. Of course, one element of Batista's modernizing state—as in all the other examples of state modernization—was an arm of political repression. As many as twenty thousand Cubans may have been killed by the state between 1952 and 1959.²⁶ Fidel Castro rose to power offering an alternative vision of Cuban modernization.

Why should state modernization be a necessary step on the road to revolution? The answer is both sociostructural, the social effects of the extension of the bureaucratic state, and ideological. State modernization necessarily brings a huge swath of people into contact with the state. Modernizing states tend to create vast new centralized bureaucracies. Tax collectors, local governors, postmasters, and secret police descend into the localities as never before. This new contact with the state in everyday life encourages those for whom national politics was previously distant and largely unimportant to care deeply about the state's ideological and political direction. By creating a demand for information and a means of supplying it, modernizing states create newly politicized peoples. Modernizing state institutions also employ large new sectors of the population.²⁷ Modernizing armies and bureaucracies not only make large groups state employees but educate these new employees in new methods and new worldviews, and, in many cases, teach them to embrace a national rather than regional or local identity. It is for this reason that many revolutions involve radical cadres from within the modernizing institutions, such as the Young Turks in early-twentieth-century Turkey, or the army deserters led by the future Duke of Marlborough in late-seventeenth-century England. Modernizing states create new publics that suddenly care about national politics.

By announcing a break with the past, modernizing states create an ideological opening. In order to explain and justify state expansion, state transformation, and the necessary intrusions in everyday life, modernizing states have to proclaim and explain their new direction. In so doing, they are compelled to concede the need for radical change. Would-be revolutionaries are no longer obliged to explain to a potentially skeptical or conservative populace why change is necessary. Revolutionaries have the far less imposing task of explaining why the state's chosen modernization path is doomed to failure or deleterious. Modernizing states necessarily stir up wide-ranging debates about the means

and ends of modernization. Modernizing states create the ideological space for a modernizing opposition.

Modernization of the old regime is not one step in an ineluctable progression to revolution. States have not necessarily modernized in response to revolutionary pressures. The Russian Romanovs and the Chinese Qing may have modernized their states in unsuccessful attempts to thwart revolution. But in other cases the regime was responding to other pressures. James II modernized the English state apparatus at the apex of his domestic popularity. The great state reforms proposed by Louis XVI were a response not only to domestic discontent but to a perceived competitive disadvantage in the face of British power. The ambitious programs of state development embarked upon by Díaz in Mexico and Pahlavi in Iran were not counterrevolutionary programs. In both cases the agendas appear to have more to do with international status than with silencing a well-defined revolutionary opposition. Statesmen rarely developed modernization programs to stave off revolution. However, statesmen who chose to initiate ambitious and transformative modernization programs did, in some instances, unintentionally spawn revolutionary opposition.

What are the differences between my account and previous ones? Most theorists of revolution have emphasized the creation of social movements with the potential to overthrow the old regime. I argue by contrast that the origins of revolution are to be found in the state modernization that begins within the old regime, a modernizing program that makes the old regime into a modern state. This account contrasts with that of Huntington, who claims that "revolutions are unlikely in political systems which have the capacity to expand their power and to broaden participation within the system." It is precisely the state's capacity to broaden contact that creates new politicized groups. Although I share with Skocpol the view that international developments may place extreme pressure on old regimes, I don't agree with her suggestion that "the repressive state organizations of the pre-Revolutionary regime have to be weakened before mass revolutionary action can succeed." In the English, Cuban, or Iranian cases, the repressive elements of the state were strengthening rather than weakening at the moment of the revolution. In fact, the expanding power of the state often creates a desperation to act before resistance becomes futile. I disagree, in turn, with Jeff Goodwin that revolutionary movements develop on the periphery of states that are "organizationally incoherent and militarily weak especially in outlying areas of society."²⁸ It is precisely the modernizing state's actions to extend its authority more deeply into society that politicize and mobilize people on the periphery. State modernization, not state breakdown—increasing state strength, not impending state weakness—is a presage to revolution.



Of course, not all state modernization programs have given rise to popular revolutions. The ambitious and extensive reformulations of the state in Sweden and Denmark

created more stable rather than more volatile regimes. Louis XIV pursued a remarkable program of state modernization that centralized his power, limited the possibility for judicial opposition, created a variety of new state industries, and modernized both the army and the navy. The outcome was not revolution but a golden age of French government.²⁹ Similarly, the Meiji Restoration in Japan (1868) "established a system of universal education, formed a modern army and navy, and recruited an efficient administrative bureaucracy both nationally and locally."³⁰ In this case, too, the new state was not overturned by a revolutionary movement but rather created an effective military machine.

Why, then, have some state modernizations led directly to revolution while others have produced a stable and efficient state? In answering this question I am on shaky ground. Because most scholars have focused on the social prerequisites for revolution rather than on state modernization, there is a paucity of scholarship on which to draw. The work of historians, because not usually comparative, is largely unhelpful in this regard.

The best explanation for why some modernizing regimes suffer revolution and others enjoy stability and political success is offered by Carles Boix. "Given some uncertainty about the technology of repression in the hands of the wealthy," Boix posits, "revolutions and some forms of armed conflict should erupt with some positive probability."³¹ This suggests that revolutions are more likely in situations in which the modernizing regime is not clearly perceived to have a monopoly of the forces of violence. This may happen when the modernization program has been so rapid as to create the perception of administrative weakness, as in the case of late-eighteenth-century France or late-seventeenth-century England. Or it may happen when the regime has proven unable to repress fledgling opposition movements, as in Cuba and China. When the modernizing state quickly demonstrates its control of resources and disarms the opposition, as in seventeenth-century Denmark and Sweden or late-nineteenth-century Japan, revolutions do not occur.

Ideology must play a role as well. Opposition groups can be silenced either by physical repression or by high levels of ideological consensus. Louis XIV was almost certainly aided in his massive modernization project by his successful self-representation as the leader who would allow France to achieve universal dominion.³² In general, when regimes can marshal patriotic rhetoric so as to depict successfully their political opponents as enemies of the nation, they are much more likely to avoid revolution. Naturally, should the patriotic language be cause or consequence of international conflict, military victory becomes essential to remaining in power. Would the Russian Revolution have happened if the czar's armies had been victorious in World War I?



Why did some revolutions generate relatively open regimes whereas others produced more repressive, closed societies? Why did some revolutions, like the Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution, create more competitive political cultures whereas the Russian and Chinese Revolutions created less pluralistic regimes?

This, of course, is a modification of the classic question posed by Barrington Moore in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Why, Moore asks, did some states become democracies, other states fascist, still others communist? His answer is rich in historical detail and analytical subtlety. But it can be neatly summarized. Moore suggests that in England, France, and the United States, "capitalism and democracy" were achieved "after a series of revolutions." These revolutions, Moore concludes, were "bourgeois revolutions." This is because "a vigorous and independent class of town dwellers has been an indispensable element in the growth of parliamentary democracy." "No bourgeois, no democracy," Moore crisply puts it. In Germany and Japan, by contrast, Moore sees the development of capitalism without democracy. Economic modernization happens in those countries without "a strong revolutionary surge," culminating ultimately in "fascism." In these cases, in contrast to England, France, and the United States, modernization was brought about by a strong "landed upper class." Although Moore refers to this model as "revolution from above," he makes it clear that these are revolutions without revolutionary activity. Modernization happened without "popular revolutionary upheaval." The cases Moore describes in this category are what I have called state modernization projects that are not followed by revolution. Finally, communist revolutions, those that occurred in China and Russia, were revolutions that had "their main but not exclusive origins among the peasants."³³

For all of Moore's historical sophistication and analytical acumen, his account is ultimately not persuasive. Both the French Revolution and the English Civil War were followed by periods that could hardly be called democratic. Napoleon certainly celebrated the image of the Frenchman, and he did codify French law, but Napoleon's pursuit of the old French goal of universal dominion was not based on the political support of a democratic regime. The English Civil War, which was quickly followed by the execution of Charles I in 1649, did not lead—as I argue in the next section—seamlessly to parliamentary democracy. Charles II and especially James II (1685–88) created a strong absolutist state that had to be overthrown by a violent popular revolution in 1688. Had Napoleon not been defeated, had James II crushed the revolutionaries in 1688, the path to parliamentary democracy would have been far less smooth in both countries. A strong bourgeoisie does not ineluctably produce parliamentary democracy. Nor does state transformation from above necessarily lead to fascism. Both Denmark and Sweden experienced state modernization led by an absolutist king. Yet both countries are more closely associated with social democracy than with fascism. There are basic truths in Moore's analysis, but the argument depends heavily on feats of historical gymnastics.³⁴

An alternative answer to the question why some revolutions result in more democratic regimes while others spawn more authoritarian ones has been advanced by Hannah Arendt. For Arendt, the reason why the French Revolution ultimately followed "a disastrous course" whereas the American Revolution created a democratic society had everything to do with the aims of the revolutionaries.³⁵ From "the later stages of the French Revolution up to the revolutions of our own time," laments Arendt, "it appeared to revolutionary

men more important to change the fabric of society . . . than to change the structure of the political realm." Revolutions focused on social rather than political questions inevitably produced authoritarian regimes. This was because, as in the French Revolution, the revolutionary energy was diverted away from attention to freedom. "The direction of the French Revolution was deflected almost from its beginning from this course of foundation [of freedom] through the immediacy of suffering," Arendt posits. "It was determined by the exigencies of liberation not from tyranny but from necessity." This logic, according to Arendt, "helped in the unleashing of a stream of boundless violence."³⁶

Arendt's explanation for the varying political outcomes of revolution is even more pessimistic than Moore's. Like Moore, Arendt relates her outcomes to "historical stages." Whereas Moore suggests that the democratic and fascist stages have passed, Arendt posits that ever since the French Revolution, revolutionaries have sought to remedy social rather than political problems. Nevertheless, there are significant historical problems with Arendt's analysis. Social issues *were* part and parcel of England's Glorious Revolution, the revolution that paved the way for parliamentary democracy. That social issues played a prominent role in England's later seventeenth-century revolution is hardly surprising since it was John Locke (1632–1704) who, in Arendt's view, invented the central idea of social revolutionaries: the notion that "labour and toil" were not the activities "to which poverty condemned those who were without property" but "were, on the contrary, the source of all wealth." Locke's notion that labor created property made property potentially infinite; therefore it would be humanly possible to eliminate poverty. It was precisely this ideology that motivated many of the revolutionaries of 1688–89 to transform England from an agrarian to a manufacturing society, from a society bounded by limited raw materials to a society fueled by the limitless possibilities of human creation. Even more damaging for Arendt's argument is the fact that her quintessential political revolution, the American Revolution, had a social dimension. Tim Breen's recent work has placed the "consumer boycott" at the center of his account of the American Revolution. "The American Revolution was," Breen argues, "the first large-scale political movement to organize itself around the relation of ordinary people to manufactured consumer goods."³⁷ Colonial subjects in North America were turned into revolutionaries when British taxes deprived them of the consumer goods that had made them feel civilized. Social questions were at the heart of the concerns of America's revolutionaries.

Why then have some revolutions created democratic states while others have given birth to authoritarian societies? The answer has a great deal to do with economic structures of the societies in which the revolutions have taken place. The French Revolution, like all other revolutions, as Tocqueville noted, "created an atmosphere of missionary fervor and, indeed, assumed all the aspects of religious revival."³⁸ Revolutionaries are certain of their own position. They voluntarily brook no compromises. Faced with political resistance, revolutionaries left to their own devices are willing to force people to be free. However, when the revolutionary states depend on foreign trade for their economic survival, they

in turn depend on merchant communities. Merchant communities demand free flows of information to conduct their trade and are thus hostile to authoritarian regimes that monopolize information. It was the economic and political clout of the foreign trading communities, I suspect, that prevented England after 1688 and the United States in the early national period from adopting one-party rule. In both cases the resources of the merchant communities were vital to national defense. In relatively economically self-sufficient states—France under Napoleon, China, and the Soviet Union—relatively authoritarian regimes with a single dominant party triumphed. Iran has been able to remain a closed society because of the state's control of the vast oil revenues. Cuba, though not economically self-sufficient, is a special case. In its formative years the Castro regime was able to depend on a single trading partner, the Soviet Union.

In a sense, I am offering a refinement of Barrington Moore's thesis. It is not so much that the lack of a bourgeoisie means no democracy. Iran had a robust bourgeoisie, Cuba a significant one. Rather, unless the survival of the state depends on the economic activities of the bourgeoisie—especially those involved in foreign trade—there will be no democracy. Because revolutionary states have a tendency toward missionary zeal, they find it difficult to accommodate ideological opposition. Democracy persists only when the state has insufficient resources to survive without negotiating with the bourgeoisie and international economic interests. It is not the size or quality of the bourgeoisie that matters. It is their economic power. Scholars interested in explaining the political outcomes of revolutions should focus less on the class composition of the revolutionary society and more on the financial structure of the state within that society.



The methodological and interpretative stakes in the analysis I have been tracing are profound. If state modernization is a prerequisite for revolution, then scholars have been asking the wrong questions. Instead of offering a bewildering set of causal factors that trigger revolutions or, as in the older literature, a broad menu of preconditions and precipitants, scholars should separate the study of revolutions into three questions.³⁹ First, why have states modernized? Here, it seems to me, the kind of analysis of the international context proposed by Skocpol is most useful. Second, why have some modernizing states and not others undergone revolutions? The answer to this question is still not well understood. Third, why have revolutions that have pitted competing models of the modern state against one another had different political outcomes? Again, the answers are not well known to this important question. The smorgasbord of causal factors offered by students of revolution fails to distinguish among these questions. I suspect that the answer to the first question has very much to do with the international political context, the second has much to do with the ideological and economic resources of the state, and the third is best answered by understanding the degree to which the country in question can achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Whatever the answers to these questions, the prevailing models for explaining revolutions have wrongly assumed that revolutions occur when an old regime is incapable of adjusting to changed circumstances. Instead, revolutions happen only when the old regime commits itself to state modernization. "One of the most evident uniformities we can record," offers Crane Brinton almost as an afterthought in his preliminary discussion, "is the effort made in each of our societies to reform the machinery of government." Similarly, in her analysis of the Russian Revolution, Sheila Fitzpatrick concludes that "there was progress" in the political realm before 1917. "But," she suggests, that very progress "contributed a great deal to the society's instability and likelihood of political upheaval: the more rapidly a society changes (whether that change is perceived as progressive or regressive) the less stable it is likely to be."⁴⁰ These historical insights should inform the way we think about revolutions. Revolutions are not struggles to overturn traditional states. They occur only after regimes have determined, for whatever reasons, to initiate ambitious modernization programs. Revolutions, then, pit different groups of modernizers against one another.

The rest of this book is devoted to charting the development of two competing modernizing programs in later seventeenth-century England. In 1688–89 these two modernizing programs came into direct conflict, but their proponents had been honing their arguments for much longer. And although 1688–89 was a turning point, the full implications of the triumph of one modernizing program over the other would not be clear until well into the 1690s. Both the Jacobite and Williamite modernizing programs, it is clear, were made possible by England's remarkable social and economic divergence from the Continent in the later seventeenth century. Both were made urgent because of the implications of the great ideological, geopolitical, and military confrontation between France and the United Provinces of the Netherlands in the later seventeenth century.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Conclusion

The First Modern Revolution

Enlightenment commentators from David Hume and Voltaire to John Wilkes and Monsieur Navier of Dijon understood the Revolution of 1688–89 as a fundamentally transformative event in English and European history. This book has recovered the reasons why these men thought, and were right to think, that something radical and radically new happened in later seventeenth-century England. What, then, have been the central claims of this book?

England's Revolution of 1688–89 was the first modern revolution. It was a revolution that took place over a number of years rather than a number of months. It had both long-term causes and long-term intended consequences. Many of the revolutionaries wanted to radically remake English state and society. And they succeeded in doing so. The Revolution of 1688–89 drastically transformed, and was intended to transform, English foreign and imperial policy, English political economy, and the Church of England. The Revolution of 1688–89 resulted in a war against France, the creation of the Bank of England, and the Toleration Act of 1689, which had widespread support among the new English episcopal bench.

The Revolution of 1688–89 was the first modern revolution not only because it transformed English state and society but also because, like all modern revolutions, it was

(above) *William and Mary: Coronation*, by R. Arondeaux, 1689. This medal, showing an orange tree growing up where an oak has fallen, celebrates the accession of King William and Queen Mary. The open book that sits beneath the busts of the two monarchs is inscribed "The Laws of England," and it is flanked by cornucopias inscribed "The Safety of Kingdom" and "Public Happiness."

popular, violent, and divisive. The revolutionaries of 1688–89 numbered in the thousands. They were not a tiny political elite. England in 1688–89 was ripped apart by violent acts against property and people. This was not a bloodless revolution. Thousands more lost their lives in the set-piece battles that took place on the Continent, in Ireland, and in Scotland as a direct consequence of the revolutionary transformations in England. James II and his regime may have provoked passionate resentment among a wide range of the English population, but it did not generate unanimous opposition. A substantial minority of the English retained their loyalty to James and his political projects. There were deep divisions even among those who took arms and expended their resources to get rid of their king. Tories, by and large, wanted merely to dismantle the state edifice erected by James. Whigs not only believed that England's political troubles began long before James ascended the throne but fervently hoped that the revolution would allow them to create a radically different and new English polity. The Revolution of 1688–89 was not the aristocratic, bloodless, and consensual affair described in establishment Whig historiography.

The Revolution of 1688–89 was popular, violent, and divisive precisely because James II had not been a defender of traditional society. He had been a radical modernizer. James, to use Max Weber's terminology, promoted a modern bureaucratic rather than a traditional patrimonial state. In contrast to patrimonial regimes, he promoted "binding norms and regulations" for his tax collectors in an effort to create a "well-disciplined bureaucracy." He sought to centralize his authority by replacing the local official, reliant on "his own social prestige within his local district," with technical experts of known ideological reliability. And at least after the defeat of the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion in 1685, James was not overly concerned to legitimate his claims with reference to the "traditional" powers of English rulers.¹ He had followed the French Sun King, Louis XIV, in trying to create a modern Catholic polity. This involved not only trying to Catholicize England along Gallican lines but also creating a modern, centralizing, and extremely bureaucratic state apparatus. The French-style Catholicism James favored and promoted was ideologically suited to creating a modern polity. The emphasis of French Catholic apologists, such as Jacques-Benigne Bossuet, on ideological unity and unfettered sovereignty was perfectly suited to the French model of modern state building. Gallicanism provided the ideological prop necessary to expand significantly the state bureaucracy—from the post office to Hearth Tax collectors—and to devise ideological tests to enforce the loyalty of the local bureaucrats to the central regime. The effectiveness, efficiency, and unity of this civil bureaucracy, coupled with the massive new standing army, made it certain that any attempt to overthrow James II's regime would have to be violent. That James II (and his brother, Charles II) had extended the tendrils of the central state much deeper and farther than they had ever gone before did much to ensure that the revolution against the Catholic modernizing state would be popular. And James's jettisoning the rhetoric of continuity in favor of one of change divided his opponents between those who wanted to maintain the old order and those who disagreed with his vision of modernity.

The Revolution of 1688–89, then, like all modern revolutions, was a struggle ultimately waged between two competing groups of modernizers. The revolution did not pit defenders of traditional society against advocates of modernity. Both Whigs and Jacobites were modernizers. It was the Tories who wished to defend a version of the old order. The Tories were placed in the unpalatable position of having to choose between two very imperfect political outcomes.

Nevertheless, it was not immediately clear that the Tories would fail. By focusing so heavily on the immediate aftermath of James's flight, scholars have overemphasized the extent of Tory political success. Between the middle of 1689 and late 1693 the Tories were winning the majority of political skirmishes; these victories infuriated most Whigs. But from 1694 onward the Whigs began to consolidate their position. They convinced the largely unsympathetic King William that winning the war against France required him to adopt their political and economic vision. They demonstrated that they were the only party fully committed to William's plan for Continental warfare. And, most important, after the failed Assassination Plot of 1696 the Whigs were able to show that only their political ideology and their version of the Church of England could guarantee political stability. The Whigs felt free in 1696 to emphasize the revolutionary transformations they had begun since 1688. While apologists for the oath of allegiance between 1689 and 1694 felt constrained to leave ambiguous the question as to whether James II had been legitimately deposed, the Association of 1696 unequivocally stated that the revolution was a justifiable act of political resistance. The hundreds of thousands of signers of the Association of 1696 formally accepted that the Revolution of 1688–89 had signaled the death knell of the theory of indefeasible hereditary divine right.² Revolutions take years rather than months. A narrow focus on the immediate aftermath of the events of 1688–89 has obscured the radical implications of the revolution.

Why have commentators on the Revolution of 1688–89 misunderstood its significance for so long? No doubt much of the answer lies in the political utility of insisting that English history was fundamentally different from that of the rest of world. But two basic misconceptions have also led interpreters astray, misconceptions founded on central assumptions of the establishment Whig account of the revolution. These Whig assumptions have been largely accepted by late-twentieth-century revisionist scholars as well. First, the great achievement of Thomas Babington Macaulay's celebrated third chapter of his *History* was not so much the invention of social history as it was the successful severing of questions of social and economic change from those of religious and political transformation.³ By insisting that England's great social and economic development happened only after the revolution, Macaulay and his followers were able to ignore any possible socioeconomic causes of the revolution. In this book I have argued, by contrast, that English society and the English economy was changing rapidly in the second half of the seventeenth century. England deviated from the Continental pattern in these years, and these transformations had a number of profound implications for later seventeenth-century politics. The growth

of English trade buoyed the intake of royal customs and made the Crown less dependent on extraordinary parliamentary grants and hence on Parliament itself. The development of the post office and the extension of the road system, among other improvements in English infrastructure, facilitated the geographical expansion of James II's modern state apparatus. These developments in English infrastructure, including the rapid spread of coffeehouses across England, radically extended and socially deepened the possibilities for popular political discussion.⁴ And England's rapid transformation into a trading nation transformed the very nature of political argument there. In the later seventeenth century English politicians for the first time began to argue openly and explicitly about issues of political economy. By the early 1680s, the Tories and Whigs had clearly adopted differing approaches to England's economic future.

Second, Macaulay and subsequent Whig scholars wrote English foreign policy and English popular concerns about developments overseas out of the history of the Revolution of 1688–89. In the view of most scholars, only on William's arrival were the English forced to look beyond the North and Irish Seas. In fact, as we have seen, the English and their governors were intensely interested in foreign affairs. Neither James II nor his opponents prioritized domestic over foreign policy. This was hardly surprising. Both James II and his opponents agreed that one of the primary duties of an English monarch was to reestablish the kingdom's status as an important player on the European scene. A central function of the state, almost all early modern commentators concurred, was to fight foreign wars. Because so many agreed that foreign affairs were a crucial issue of statecraft, it was in this arena that ideological and political tensions came to the fore. James's decision to ally himself with France against the United Provinces revealed not only his predilections for absolutism as against more popular forms of government, but also his government's belief that the Dutch rather than the French represented the greatest threat to England's economic well-being. Because the scale of early modern warfare had increased dramatically since the late sixteenth century, the decision of later seventeenth-century monarchs to involve themselves on the world scene required them to marshal resources on an unprecedented scale. This need for greater resources, in turn, brought a wider range of people—from metropolitan merchants to provincial consumers—into the political process. All of these people inevitably asked questions about what the government was doing with the money they were collecting in hearth taxes or customs assessments. By writing off English foreign policy, by assuming that James had no international agenda, scholars have missed a central and dynamic area of political contestation.⁵

The English Revolution of 1688–89 was the first modern revolution. It transformed the English church, the English state, and, in the long run, English society. It was an event that involved large swaths of the English nation in political violence and partisan political contestation. In many ways the Revolution of 1688–89 was an inspiration for late-eighteenth-century revolutionaries in France, in North America, and elsewhere. This was not the conservative and restorative revolution described in the establishment Whig historiography.

What of the revisionist scholarship? What of the claim that the Revolution of 1688–89 was fundamentally a confessional struggle in which a Catholic king was overthrown by narrow-minded Protestant English men and women? What of the claim that Tory defenders of the Church of England disposed of James because they detested his tolerationist policies? At the heart of this now dominant interpretation is that James was a political moderate who had modest aims. James was overthrown not because he was an absolutist but because he offended traditional religious sensibilities.

James II was known to be a devout Roman Catholic when he ascended the throne in 1685. James's Catholicism and the knowledge of English antipathy for "popery" prompted the Duke of Monmouth to invade England's West Country in the summer of 1685. Monmouth may have had radical friends, and he may or may not have shared their political ideas, but it is clear that his army was made up of men who were interested in replacing a Catholic James with a Protestant James. They were much less interested in radically transforming the monarchy. In fact, many of the radical revolutionaries of 1688, even those from the West Country, wanted nothing to do with Monmouth. His rebellion failed precisely because few people were willing to engage in rebellious activity for exclusively religious reasons.

That the uprising against James II in 1688, in the West Country and throughout England, was so much more successful owes a great deal to the nature of his regime. James's regime was not merely a Catholic regime; it was a modernizing Catholic regime. Its operating ideological premises were taken from French Catholic arguments directed not against Protestants in the first instance but against pope Innocent XI and his defenders. James's modern Catholic monarchy married notions of absolute sovereignty to a campaign to re-Catholicize England. James's bureaucratic state built on the Gallican model infuriated English Catholics as well as English Protestants.

James was not overthrown in a confessional struggle. But James's policies did heighten and transform religious divisions within England. By offering liberty of conscience while severely restricting the discussions that could take place in religious gatherings and simultaneously increasing royal authority in other areas, James divided the Nonconformist community. Some, like the Quaker William Penn, were grateful that James had ended a brutal period of religious persecution. Most, however, came to believe that religious liberty was of little value without civil liberty. Most religious Dissenters turned against James by 1688, became active revolutionaries, and were the postrevolutionary regime's most active supporters. Anglicans, too, were deeply divided by James II's actions. A few Church of England clerics and laymen exalted in James's firm use of sovereign powers. Many more were deeply disturbed by James's Catholicizing policies but felt paralyzed by their own deep commitment to the Anglican doctrine of passive obedience. Anglican Low Churchmen, with an active group of London clerics playing a prominent role, took the lead in responding to the mass of French Catholic apologetics flooding into England. This group of Anglican clerics developed an increasingly principled commitment to religious tolera-

tion and eventually came to believe that political resistance, as distinct from religious resistance, was sometimes necessary.

The study of religion in the Early Modern period has been bedeviled by a set of false binary oppositions. Scholars have argued that later seventeenth-century England was either a secular society or a religious society. This narrow set of interpretative options has made it difficult to narrate, describe, and analyze religious change. The resulting interpretative schema either that "religion ceased to be such an important issue after 1660" or that "domestic religious issues" were of "central significance" are unsatisfactory. The issue in the later seventeenth century was not that religion came to mean less to English men and women but that it came to mean something different.⁶ Recent scholarship has demonstrated how complex and dynamic religious disputes were in the later seventeenth century and how much of their syntax depended on earlier debates. But none of that signifies that religion meant the same thing. It did not. Religious discontent was a necessary but insufficient explanation for the Revolution of 1688–89.

The Revolution of 1688–89 was not a struggle between Catholics and Protestants. It was not one of the last battles in the war between the forces of the Protestant and Catholic Reformations. This was in part because the binary confessional divisions that had cut across Europe in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had been superseded. In northern Europe, visions of Protestant political unity had been replaced by the reality of bitter divisions between Calvinist and Lutheran states. The Lutheran king of Sweden, for example, was more concerned about the Calvinist elector of Brandenburg than he was about the Catholic king of France.⁷ Louis XIV had succeeded in dividing Catholic Europe into groups that supported France and those that supported the pope. The Holy Roman Emperor saw the French king rather than Europe's Protestant monarchs as his greatest enemy. By failing to place English religious debates in the context of the broader European discussions of which they were a part, scholars have overemphasized continuity in the religious sphere. They have mistaken the extensive and brutal anti-Catholic violence of 1688 and 1689 for a manifestation of traditional anti-Catholic prejudice, when those acts can be better understood as attacks on the instruments and symbols of James II's modern and Gallican state. Similarly, scholars have been too ready to understand the postrevolutionary regime's fanatical commitment to a war against Catholic France as the realization of early-seventeenth-century ideals of the Protestant cause. In fact, the English fought the Nine Years' War in formal alliance with Catholic Spain and the Holy Roman Empire. English men and women were aware of this and understood full well that papal sympathies lay with the empire, Spain, England, and the Protestant United Provinces of the Netherlands rather than with Catholic France. This was explicable to the English because most of them knew that the early Protestant worldview, the view that Protestants and Catholics were locked in a final eschatological struggle for religious hegemony, was no longer tenable.

Revisionist scholars, those who see the revolution as a Protestant struggle against a

Catholic king or an Anglican struggle against a tolerationist king, are also wrong to focus so narrowly on religious issues. Although religious issues were important both to James II and to his opponents, they were not the only issues that energized them. The advocates of a religious interpretation of the revolution have shared with the proponents of the establishment Whig interpretation the view that English men and women of the seventeenth century were too insular to interest themselves in political and economic developments beyond the British Isles and too traditional to engage in political arguments about the economy at home. In fact, matters related to both foreign policy and political economy convinced a wide range of English men and women to risk their lives and fortunes in 1688. The revolutionaries of 1688–89 were motivated to overthrow James II and create a new kind of English government because they were concerned not only about their religion but also about England's foreign policy and England's political economy. The revolutionaries of 1688–89 were motivated by a far broader ideological vision than defenders of the religious interpretation have allowed.

If the Revolution of 1688–89 was the first modern revolution, where does that leave the Revolution of 1640–60, which has so fascinated generations of scholars? It was that earlier revolution which Perez Zagorin calls "the first great manifestation of the modern revolutionary temper." It was that revolution which Christopher Hill describes as "a turning point in human history." It was those events that, according to John Adamson, ended "the 'military age' of the nobility" in England. It was the "revolution of the Saints" that took place between 1640 and 1660 which Michael Walzer claims marks "a crucial phase in the modernization process." In fact, students of the two English revolutions, that of 1640–60 and that of 1688–89, long battled for interpretative supremacy. By the early nineteenth century, however, "the balance of sympathy" had "shifted in favour of the first upheaval." It was this sense of competition and priority that leads Christopher Hill to dismiss the Revolution of 1688–89 as "a restoration to power of the traditional ruling class." Robert Brenner more sympathetically sees the Revolution of 1688–89 as "the consolidation of certain long-term patterns of development that had already marked off socio-political evolution in England from that of most of the continent during the early modern period."⁸ From the 1640s, in this view, England decisively diverged from the European pattern of social, political, and cultural development. The events of 1688–89 were at most putting the finishing touches on the great changes that had been set in motion at midcentury and before.

In fact, I suggest, many of the great changes England experienced between 1640 and 1660 proved ephemeral. From the Restoration in 1660, and especially after James II's accession to the throne in 1685, England did not diverge from the European pattern of political development. England was quickly becoming an absolutist regime. Between 1660 and 1688 the later Stuart kings did much to ensure that the monarch would have a monopoly of political power not only in theory but also in practice.⁹ More precisely, Charles II increasingly and James II with fanatical energy committed themselves to adapting the French political model to England. The modern absolutist state of the Restoration Stuart

kings, one that had the infrastructure to make good its older theoretical claims, was not doomed to failure. At various points in the later seventeenth century both later Stuart kings even enjoyed widespread popular support for their state-building projects. They were not pursuing ill-advised strategies whose failure was preordained, as advocates of the decisive midcentury break have implied. It was not inevitable that James's Catholic modernization strategy would fail. James II was overthrown because of the contingent confluence of two factors. First, he squandered the political capital he enjoyed in the wake of Monmouth's rebellion by moving too quickly to modernize the English state. In so doing he provoked widespread popular political opposition within England. Second, sealing James's demise, his ally Louis XIV fomented a European political crisis that simultaneously gave William broad political support within the United Provinces and across Europe and made it possible for William to risk an invasion. Had James not stimulated so much political opposition, his massive standing army would have been free to crush William's force. Indeed, without widespread political discontent in England, William might have had trouble financing and manning his invading force. Had the Anglo-Dutch invading force not arrived in England in November 1688, it is also likely that James's crack troops would have eventually been able to subdue the widespread popular uprisings. In either case, the English polity would have followed far more closely the French pattern. James almost certainly would have succeeded had it not been for the combined effect of the widespread popular uprisings and the Anglo-Dutch invading force.

To say that the Revolution of 1688–89 was not inevitable, however, is not to say that it lacked long-term causes. The socioeconomic changes that had taken place in England over the seventeenth century did make it inevitable that English state and society would be fundamentally transformed. The question was whether the modernized polity would follow the path desired by James or that desired by his Whig opponents. The mid-century crisis played a central role in shaping the contours of Whig notions of statecraft and political economy. The fundamental Whig notion that labor created property and that property was therefore infinite emerged as an important theme in radical critiques of Oliver Cromwell's protectorate. It was during the 1650s that a number of writers, for the first time, publicly advanced economic arguments against the political regime. It was also during the 1650s that many of the same critics began to highlight the dangers of growing French power and to insist that foreign policy be discussed in terms of national interests rather than religious groupings.¹⁰ Just as important, fissures in church and state, from the Elizabethan period onward, opened up a space for public discussion that widened and intensified during the midcentury crisis. Without these developments, without the mid-century crisis, there would not have been a Revolution in 1688–89.

The English Civil War and its aftermath did have radical and transformative effects. Those events, as Michael Walzer points out, generated "whole sets of clamorous demands . . . for the reorganization of the church, the state, the government of London, the educational system, and the administration of the poor laws." Those years did witness "the

formation of groups specifically and deliberately designed to implement those demands." It was in the period between 1640 and 1660 that "political journalism" emerged in England. And many English men and women in that period did enunciate an "awareness of need for and the possibility of reform." But for all that, Walzer's first three revolutionary effects—the transformation of "the very nature of monarchy," the "appearance of a well-disciplined citizens' army," and the effort "to write and re-write the constitution"—were all reversed with the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660.¹¹ Many English men and women became revolutionaries in the middle of the seventeenth century. But they did not achieve a revolution.

Why was this? Why were the revolutionaries of the midcentury unable to make all of their achievements permanent? There were, of course, a range of social, religious and political reasons for the fall of the Commonwealth and the demise of the Protectorate. However, what fundamentally distinguished the later seventeenth-century Revolution from its midcentury predecessor was the nature of the monarchy itself. Charles I, for all of his political ineptitude, was fundamentally willing and able to defend the traditional society and the traditional polity. The document that did more than anything to define royalist ideology after Charles I's death was the deeply traditionalist *Eikon Basilike*, which essentially reasserted the divine basis of royal power while simultaneously narrating Charles I's saintly life. It was thus possible for royalists both before and after his death to offer the English a political choice between tradition and modernization, and ultimately between stability and revolutionary instability. Each political misstep by the governments in the 1650s made restoration a more palatable option for an ever larger group of people. "People are not so easily got out of their old forms," John Locke perceptively observed. The "slowness and aversion in the people to quit their old constitutions, has in many revolutions, which have been seen in this kingdom, in this and former ages," noted Locke in obvious reference to the events of midcentury, "still kept us to, or, after some interval of fruitless attempts, still brought us back again to our old legislative of king, lords, and commons: and whatever provocations have made the crown to be taken from some of our princes' heads, they never carried the people so far as to place it in another line." Given a choice, Locke argued, most people preferred an old, imperfect government to any innovative alternative. Locke implied that things would be different in the later seventeenth century. Neither the revolutionaries nor the king were defending the "old forms." James II, in contrast to his father, chose to cast himself as a modernizer. He modernized England's infrastructure, England's army, England's navy, English local government, and English political techniques. He and his polemicists asserted a modern, more expansive view of royal power and insisted on new limits on political expression. When forced to defend his grant of religious liberty without civil liberty, James and his polemicists described their effort in terms of a "new great charter for liberty of conscience."¹² By embracing modernity, by adopting a program of political and social modernization, James had eliminated conservatism as a viable political option. There was no possibility of restoring the old regime.

In 1688, unlike in the 1640s and 1650s, English men and women were forced to choose between alternative paths to modernity.

The Revolution of 1688–89 was not a self-contained event lasting only a few months. To understand it in such narrow chronological terms is to miss the radical significance of the revolution. Instead, it is best to understand the revolution as a process set in motion in the wide-ranging crisis of the 1620s, which unleashed an opposition movement deploying modernizing polemical strategies and coming to an end only when the Whig prime minister Sir Robert Walpole chose to consolidate his power by guaranteeing that revolutionary change would go no farther. Walpole's decision in the 1720s and 1730s to appeal to moderate Tories by rolling back the land tax and by refusing to extend civil rights to Dissenters marked the end of the Whig revolution. Revolutionary rumblings had begun with debates over foreign policy, the nature of the English Church, and the role of state finance in the tumultuous decade of the 1620s.¹³ By the end of the revolutionary century, English state, society, culture, and religion had been transformed. England had diverged from the Continental pattern on every dimension.

Was this revolutionary transformation a bourgeois revolution? Not in the sense that a self-conscious class, the bourgeoisie, overthrew another class to place itself in power. The middling sort of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as one historian has noted, were characterized by "conflict, insecurity, and uncertainty" rather than by "unity or group consensus." There was no cohesive middle class to bring about a bourgeois revolution. In fact, the popular uprisings that ultimately overthrew James II involved the spectrum of English society, from humble men and women who volunteered with their pitchforks as their only weapons to wealthy businessmen and aristocratic landowners who provided their considerable prestige and thousands of pounds to the cause. Jacobites came from similarly diverse backgrounds. Unsurprisingly, given the social diversity of the revolutionaries, they did not transform the class basis of English politics. The percentage of merchants in the House of Commons rose only marginally from about 9 percent of the total in the period from 1660 to 1689 to 10.7 percent in the years from 1690 to 1715.¹⁴

Nevertheless, it is, I claim, justifiable to understand the Revolution of 1688–89 as a bourgeois revolution in a cultural and political sense. England in the later seventeenth century was, a wide variety of commentators agreed, a trading nation. "It is very well known," observed one commentator, "that the strength, riches, and welfare of this kingdom, is supported and maintained by trade and commerce."¹⁵ "Till the Civil Wars in the reign of Charles I," recalled the social commentator Guy Miege, the nobility set the cultural standard in England; but now "the case is altered." In the later seventeenth century, England had become "one of the most trading countries in Europe" where "the greatest body of the commonalty is that of traders, or men that live by buying and selling." In England, according to two French diplomats, merchants played a critical role in shaping public opinion.¹⁶ Both James II and his opponents were well aware that England had become a commercial society. But James II's modernizing program, for all its commitment

to trade and empire, was not a bourgeois vision. The exponents of James II's political-economic program were critical of urban populations and placed territorial acquisition at the heart of their imperial program. Merchants were to have no independent political role. Indeed, the social ideal expressed in Sir Josiah Child's economic writings was for the merchant to make a fortune so that his heirs could live as landed gentlemen. James's ideological achievement was to harness commercial society to landed norms. His program was simultaneously modernizing and antibourgeois.

Had the revolutionaries not succeeded in overthrowing James II's Catholic modernizing regime, it is hard to imagine that eighteenth-century English culture and society would have developed the way it did. James had no interest in restoring the cultural world of Charles I, a world in which the English aristocracy and gentry "lived with suitable splendor and magnificence; keeping a plentiful table, and a numerous attendance, with several officers; delighting in noble exercises, and appearing abroad according to their rank and quality." James found this world abhorrent precisely because of the decentralization that it implied. In that world each "Lord's house was then looked upon as a well disciplined court."¹⁷ James wanted discipline to flow exclusively from the court at Whitehall. James also had no truck with the open and unfettered discussion valued by the urban middle classes. While merchants yearned for a world in which economic, political, and social information was freely available, James saw informational transparency as politically dangerous.¹⁸ His cultural vision, not surprisingly, had much more in common with that of Louis XIV and Jean-Baptiste Colbert than it shared with that of James's father.

James's opponents, the revolutionaries of 1688–89, by contrast embraced urban culture, manufacturing, and economic imperialism. The ideological descendants of the new colonial merchants of the middle of the seventeenth century emphasized commercial rather than territorial hegemony.¹⁹ These men and women not only wanted England to be a commercial society, they also wanted it to be a bourgeois society with urban rather than landed values. This was the revolutionaries' cultural program. These were the Whigs' revolution principles. England increasingly became a bourgeois society in the wake of the Revolution of 1688–89 because the political-economic program of the revolutionaries privileged urban and commercial values.

The Whig revolutionary triumph brought with it a new bourgeois culture. The revolution in political economy brought with it a revolution in cultural values. Political economic transformation—new tax structures, new institutions, and a new imperial agenda—encouraged the new cultural dominance of the urban middle classes. Even though the urban middle classes made up no more than 5 percent of England's population in 1700, in the wake of the Revolution of 1688–89 it was able to set the cultural agenda. Whigs, one scholar points out, succeeded in "identifying 'politeness' as the cultural concomitant of post-1688 liberty." The new culture of politeness consolidated by Locke's student the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury and popularized by the great Whig journalists Joseph Addison and Richard Steele in Whig hands had a "self-conscious modernism." Despite its origins in courtly cul-

ture, politeness in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had become a bourgeois ideology. "Politeness represented an alternative to the picture of the English gentleman as a denizen of the country attached with fierce loyalty to his economic independence, his moral autonomy and his virtuous simplicity." "During the seventeenth century," concurs one literary critic while commenting on less elite sources, England had been transformed from "a rural culture to an urban one—or, rather, from a rural past into one that looked toward modernity with eagerness and anticipation." "The middle classes were creating a completely new culture for themselves," concurs one social historian. This culture was "a bourgeois culture that was destined to become the dominant national culture."²⁰

The Revolution of 1688–89 did not make England into a commercial society, but it did ensure that the cultural values of the bourgeoisie would become predominant. The bourgeoisie came to matter out of all proportion of their numbers. This was true in politics. Merchant associations were able to influence parliamentary activity disproportionate to their numbers in the general population "particularly after 1689." After the Revolution, noted a recent commentator on English merchant culture, trade became "a party issue" under "the sustained pressure of the commercial classes." After the revolution the "success-rate" for economic legislation in the House of Commons was "dramatically enhanced." Most dramatically, of course, Whig merchants and their political allies were able to create the Bank of England in 1694 and destroy the Land Bank in 1696. No doubt because of these successes, the Revolution of 1688–89 represented the victory of those who supported manufacturing, urban culture, and the possibilities of unlimited economic growth based on the creative potential of human labor. This effect of the revolution meant that traders felt no need to aspire to the culture and estates of the landed elite. In fact, the aristocracy and the gentry began to act more bourgeois in the wake of the Revolution of 1688–89. The Buckinghamshire Verneys were surely not the only gentry family that "gradually absorbed the values of London's urban culture." Margaret Hunt is certainly right to see "a deep ambivalence among trading people toward upper-class mores." The powerful urban middle classes, especially those who shared Whig political and ideological preoccupations, had no desire to become aristocrats.²¹

The Revolution of 1688–89 was the first modern revolution because England was already quickly becoming a modern society before 1688. The crisis of the middle of the seventeenth century had guaranteed not that England would diverge politically from the Continental pattern but that no English government was likely ever again to rest on patrimonial principles. Both the later Stuarts and their political enemies understood this. All understood that for England to be a major player on the European scene, England needed to harness its commercial energies to a bureaucratic state. Revolutionary change became possible when Charles II, and particularly James II, harnessed the new economic and administrative resources at their disposal to the creation of a modern state. The revolutionaries of 1688–89 offered their version of English modernity as a powerful alternative to that created by James II and his supporters. Both groups wanted England to be a first-

rate power both in Europe and throughout the world, both groups wanted to modernize English religious practice, and both groups wanted England to be a commercial society.²² They differed, and differed dramatically, in their proposed means to achieve those ends. Modernization, in this as in all subsequent revolutions, was a cause, not a consequence, of revolution.

The First Modern Revolution radically transformed England and ultimately helped to shape the modern world. I have necessarily told a complex story about the transformation of a society, a state, a church, and an empire. A central point of this narrative has been that the hyperspecialization of history has not only made historical writing accessible to ever narrower audiences but that the breakdown of historical processes into social, religious, intellectual, political, constitutional, military, and diplomatic history has made it impossible to specify broad revolutionary shifts and identify their causes. Early modern men and women experienced their lives whole. It is time that historians return to writing history tout court.

Historical reintegration is essential in a second sense. Because the mid-seventeenth century crisis and the Revolution of 1688–89 were part of the same process, they need to be integrated into a single story. Scholars miss a great deal by defining their periods as beginning or ending with 1640, 1660, or 1688. By writing about a modern period that begins after 1688, scholars also miss the extent to which the radical transformations that were cause and consequence of the Revolution of 1688–89 shaped the contours of modern British and world history.

The Revolution of 1688–89 was a radically transformative event in England's century of revolution. The revolutionaries reversed England's foreign policy, rearranged England's economic priorities, and reconfigured the Church of England. Like all revolutions, the Revolution of 1688–89 arose out of competing visions of social, economic, and political modernity—visions made possible only by the social and economic developments of the second half of the seventeenth century. The Revolution of 1688–89 was the culmination of a long and vitriolic argument about how to transform England into a modern nation. The depth of the argument, the intensity of the ideological differences, and the breadth of the social implications explain why the revolution involved such a broad swath of English society, why it was so violent, and why it was so divisive. It was this protracted argument, rather than a speedy palace coup against an inept king, that transformed England and then Britain into a great European and imperial power.

Abbreviations

Add.	Additional manuscripts
AWA	Archbishop of Westminster's Archives
<i>Axminster</i>	K. W. H. Howard, ed., <i>The Axminster Ecclesiastica, 1660–1698</i> (Sheffield: Gospel Tidings, 1976)
Beinecke	Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University
Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford University
BL	British Library
Campana	Marquise Emilia Campana di Cavelli, ed., <i>Les derniers Stuarts à Saint-Germain en Laye</i> , 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Academique, 1871)
CKS	Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone
CSPD	Calendar of State Papers, Domestic
CSPV	Calendar of State Papers, Venetian
DWL	Doctor Williams Library
EIC	East India Company
<i>Evelyn, Diary</i>	E. S. De Beer, ed., <i>The Diary of John Evelyn</i> , 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955)
Foley	Henry Foley, ed., <i>Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus</i> , vol. 5 (London: Burns and Oates, 1879)
FSL	Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC
Grey	Anchitell Grey, ed., <i>Debates of the House of Commons</i> , 10 vols. (London: D. Henry and R. Cave, 1763)
HEH	Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA
HLRO	House of Lords Record Office, London
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HRC	Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas