

1688 and its Eighteenth Century Whig Interpreters: The Unmaking of a Revolution

Steve Pincus
Yale University

On 30 November 1789, just after the outbreak of the French Revolution, one Monsieur Navier stood up to address the Patriotic Society of Dijon, the chief city of Burgundy. “Why should we be ashamed, Gentleman,” he asked his auditors, “to acknowledge that the Revolution which is now establishing itself in our country, is owing to the example given by England a century ago? It was from that day we became acquainted with the political constitution of that island, and the prosperity with which it was accompanied; it was from that day our hatred of despotism derived its energy. In securing their own happiness, Englishmen have prepared the way for that of the universe. Whilst on all sides tyrants were attempting to extinguish the sacred flame of liberty, our neighbors with intrepid watchfulness and care cherished it in their bosoms. We have caught some of these salutary sparks; and this fire enflaming every mind, is extending itself all over Europe, for ever to reduce to ashes those shackles with which despotism has oppressed mankind.”ⁱ

That late eighteenth century revolutionaries turned to the Revolution of 1688-89 for inspiration is hardly surprising. The Revolution of 1688-89 was a radically transformative event. The English revolutionaries reoriented their country’s foreign policy -- from virulent hostility against the Dutch Republic before the Revolution, to war against France immediately after it. The revolutionaries completely transformed the direction of English economic policy. The post-revolutionary regime created England’s first national bank, the Bank of England, to signal its newfound enthusiasm for

manufacturing. England's new governors also transformed the religious character of the nation. The pre-revolutionary Church of England had been intolerant, insisting that Englishness and communion in the Church of England was one and the same thing. The post-Revolutionary church leaders demanded a broader church, and one that was willing to tolerate religious practice outside that church. The Revolution, and the Toleration Act of 1689, separated church from nation. All three of these transformations were intimately tied to a new vision of the English polity. The revolutionaries had rejected a French-inflected modernity in favor of a Dutch-inspired modern state,

Throughout the eighteenth century many Britons proclaimed that their Revolution represented a fundamental break with the British and European past. They saw the Revolution as inaugurating a new age of liberty. "The Revolution forms a new epoch in the constitution," David Hume proclaimed in his widely acclaimed History. From that period, the great Scottish philosopher asserted, the English enjoyed "the most entire system of liberty that ever was known amongst mankind." "From the era of the revolution," agreed Hume's fellow Scottish light John Millar, "we may trace ... a new order of things." This was not merely a Scottish view. "Since the Revolution in eighty-eight," declared the former ambassador Robert Molesworth in 1711, "we stand upon another and better bottom." In the middle of the century the most flamboyant of British politicians, John Wilkes, maintained that "the Revolution is the great era of English liberty." "From this most auspicious period," Wilkes explained, "freedom has made a regular uninterrupted abode in our happy island." The great Whig politician Charles James Fox dated "the brightest era of freedom known to the annals of our country" to the Revolution of 1688-89. "The Revolution is looked upon by all sides as a new era," agreed

the Tory leader Viscount Bolingbroke whose principles however were rather different from Fox's, "from thence we must date both king and people."ⁱⁱ

Not only did many eighteenth-century Britons believe that the Revolution of 1688-89 marked a fundamental turning point in their own history, they also saw the Revolution as setting an example for the rest of the world. At the beginning of the century Molesworth thought "no man can be a sincere lover of liberty," none could be a sincere exponent of Revolution principles, who was not "for increasing and communicating that blessing to all people." By the second half of the century many thought the principles of the Revolution had indeed been communicated far and wide. The English, thought John Wilkes, had since the Revolution become "the patrons of universal liberty, the scourge of tyrants, the refuge of the oppressed." The Glorious Revolution, chimed in the Presbyterian minister and translator extraordinaire Henry Hunter in 1788, ushered in a new "era" not only for the British Isles, "but to Europe; nay to mankind during the period of a hundred years." The benefits of the Revolution, agreed Andrew Kippis, "have not been confined to our country alone, but have extended to Europe in general." The great defender of liberty, Richard Price, was clearly not alone in believing that in 1688 an "era of light and liberty was introduced among us, by which we have been made an example to other kingdoms, and become the instructors of the world."ⁱⁱⁱ

Because the Revolution of 1688-89 marked a fundamental break in the history of the British state, because the Revolution was thought to be the harbinger of an era of liberty not only in Britain but all of Europe, the anniversary of the Revolution was widely celebrated throughout the British Isles. "The Revolution in 1688 in every view of it was

an event of such distinguished and indeed unspeakable importance,” noted the Revolution Society in 1789, that it was widely commemorated. Both the established church and other “religious societies” had annual celebrations of the Revolution. “Social meetings and festivals” also feted the occasion yearly. “Various institutions” devoted exclusively to the memory of 1688 “have subsisted in different parts of the kingdom and in different quarters of the metropolis.” Though the minute books of the Revolution Society have survived only from 1788, its members were certain that it had been “established soon after the Revolution and that it has annually met without interruption from that time to the present.” The Bristol Baptist minister and friend of the American Revolution, Caleb Evans, proclaimed that “even Popish priests avow and openly justify the principles of the Revolution.” The Revolution of 1688-89, though interpreted by different groups in different ways, was understood by Britons of every social class and every geographical locale as *the* decisive event in British history. “Not to be acquainted with the great event which distinguishes this illustrious day of the revolving year, “ said Henry Hunter of the official Revolution anniversary of November fourth, “is, in a citizen of Great Britain, a proof of the most shameful ignorance, or the most criminal coldness and indifference.”^{iv}

Popular familiarity with the Revolution of 1688-89 had diminished dramatically by the time of its tercentenary. By the 1980s, concluded Barry Price, the author of a government report on the tercentenary, the Revolution was “a relatively unknown period in our history which nowadays seldom gets a place in our school history syllabus.” Price recalled of his own school days that “1688 was a black hole in our history syllabus.” The former headmaster of Westminster School, John Rae, doubted “whether one school leaver in a thousand could give an account of 1688, let alone say why it was a turning

point in our history.” No wonder the leader of the House of Lords, Viscount Whitelaw, could assert confidently that there was no “general wish” for a lavish celebration of the Revolution of 1688-89. The Glorious Revolution, opined Patricia Morrison in the Daily Telegraph, had “little box office appeal.” The Victoria and Albert Museum was so “unenthusiastic” about plans for an exhibit commemorating the event that it “foundered.” In the end, the Tercentenary of the Revolution of 1688-89 was “passing largely unnoticed.”^v

Why has the Revolution of 1688-89 receded from the popular imagination? Why has an event that was once almost universally understood to be the touchstone of British identity become an obscure occurrence familiar only to learned antiquarians? The answer, most commentators would agree, is that the events of 1688-89 are no longer thought to have been transformative. “British history,” observes Charles Tilly, “now provides a much-thumbed manual for the avoidance of revolution.” The image of English stability, inevitably contrasted with French volatility, has now been long in the making. “The English have for the last century and more been insistent that their revolution [of 1688-89] was unique – so unique as to have been practically no revolution at all,” notes Crane Brinton.^{vi}

How did the Revolution of 1688-89 come to be a non-event? While many have assumed that the disappearance of the Glorious Revolution has gone hand in hand with the demise of a naïve, progressive Whig history, this is not the case. The hegemonic “neoconservative interpretation” of the Revolution is in fact nothing new. As outside observers like Tilly and Brinton are well aware, British historians have long insisted on the unrevolutionary nature of 1688-89. In fact, this became the establishment Whig

interpretation of the Revolution by the 1720s, and the virtually universal view by the turn of the nineteenth century. Britain's sensible Revolution was increasingly contrasted with the revolutionary excesses of first Europeans and then non-Europeans. The Revolution of 1688-89 that had once been a model for revolutionaries instead became a symbol of British exceptionalism. England's radical revolution had been transformed into a uniquely un-revolutionary revolution. It had become an exercise in restoration rather than in innovation. England in the seventeenth century, and Britain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries offered a stark and ostensibly successful historical contrast to the continental pattern of development. This process of unmaking the Revolution, I suggest, had less to do with historical scholarship^{vii} than with political positioning and historiographical fashion.

I

Eighteenth-century Britons were obsessed with the Glorious Revolution. The Revolution was not only commemorated and remembered, it anchored discussions of contemporary politics, society and culture. "Throughout the eighteenth century," writes Harry Dickinson, "no major debate involving any discussion of fundamental political principles took place without the events of 1688-89 being used as a source of inspiration or guidance."^{viii}

Political developments ensured that partisan interpretations of the Revolution took some time to congeal. In the immediate aftermath of James II's flight in 1688, especially in the early 1690s, many radicals were temporarily disappointed by the new regime's limited achievements. In their view the Revolution had been incomplete and was thus

liable to subversion from within as well as invasion from abroad.^{ix} Whig radicals feared that because William and Mary had wanted to consolidate their power by working with the Tories the opportunity for fundamental reform had been lost.

By the middle of the 1690s, Whigs were beginning to speak with a united voice about the Revolution. Clearly, by the first decade of the eighteenth century they had united behind a radical interpretation of the Revolution. That interpretation was given a full airing in the Whig regime's politically disastrous, but ideologically revealing, show trial of the conservative cleric Henry Sacheverell in 1710. Sacheverell had long been a fierce critic of the Whigs and the post-Revolution regime, but he attracted the interest of the government with his inflammatory sermon The Perils of False Brethren, delivered in front of the Lord Mayor of London at St. Paul's Cathedral on 5 November 1709. In that sermon Sacheverell argued forcefully that political resistance to James II in 1688 had been illegitimate. Whigs everywhere were outraged.^x

In 1710 the Parliamentary managers of Sacheverell's very public trial carefully outlined what was then the mainstream interpretation of the Revolution of 1688-89. Against Sacheverell's assertions, the Whig politicians argued, in short, that in 1688-89 there was a popular movement to overthrow a despotic king and they were justified in doing so. The revolutionaries, they asserted, had not only dethroned a tyrant, they had engineered a fundamental transformation of the English state.

The Revolution, the Whig managers and their allies insisted in front of the House of Lords acting in their capacity as judges, established the principle of popular sovereignty. In 1688, the Whigs unanimously claimed, the people had legitimately resisted a tyrannical king. "The glorious enterprise for delivering this kingdom from

popery and arbitrary power,” the parliamentary managers maintained in the articles they presented against Sacheverell, was brought about by “diverse subjects of this realm, well affected to their country.” “That there was a resistance, is most plain,” explained Sir John Holland, highlighting the fact that the English people took “up arms in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Cheshire, and almost all the counties of England.” “It cannot be necessary to prove resistance in the Revolution,” asserted the future Prime Minister Robert Walpole who was then very much a defender of a radical interpretation of the Revolution. “I should as well expect that your Lordships would desire me for form’s sake, to prove the sun shines at noonday,” he added sarcastically. “Self-defense and resistance” is lawful in cases of “extreme necessity,” chimed in Gilbert Burnet Bishop of Salisbury, and “this was the case at the Revolution.” “We owe the late Revolution” to “the people of all ranks and conditions, from the highest and holiest order, to the meanest and most secular employment,” added the London cleric and Whig controversialist Benjamin Hoadly in what was then an uncontroversial statement of the Whig position. For Hoadly, as for the Whig establishment in 1710, there was a close “connection between the present settlement, and that resistance which brought it about.”^{xi}

The ideological stakes in the Whig case was spelled out most clearly by another of the parliamentary managers of the case against Sacheverell, Nicholas Lechmere. Lechmere was both a prominent lawyer and closely associated with powerful Whig politicians. In 1688, Lechmere informed the House of Lords, in making his case against Sacheverell, “the subjects had not only a power and right in themselves to make that resistance, but lay under an indispensable obligation to do it.” This was because there was “an original contract between the crown and the people.” When “the executive part

endeavors the subversion and total destruction of the government,” which Lechmere asserted had clearly happened by 1688, “the original contract is thereby broke.” This contract stipulated not only a right in the people but a duty as well. “The nature of such an original contract of government proves,” Lechmere explained, “that there is not only a power in the people, who have inherited its freedom, to assert their own title to it, but they are bound in duty to transmit the same constitution to their posterity also.”^{xii}

While the setting and context of Sacheverell’s trial necessarily focused the attention of the Whig managers on questions of resistance and popular sovereignty, some Whigs did make clear the religious and political economic consequences of the Revolution as well. “The toleration of Protestant Dissenters,” asserted Lechmere, was “one of the earliest and happiest effects of the late Revolution.” Not only did the Whigs believe there had been a transformation of religious affairs, they also believed that the events of 1688-89 had ushered in a radical transformation of social policy. Robert Molesworth, who had been a strong supporter of the Whig ministry in the first decade of the century, clearly enunciated this position. Because defenders of the Revolution believed, along with John Locke, that labor rather than land was the basis of all wealth, Molesworth argued that a government according to revolution principles would have a wide-ranging social agenda. “The supporting of public credit, promoting of all public buildings and highways, the making of all rivers navigable that are capable of it, employing the poor, suppressing idlers, restraining monopolies upon trade, maintaining the liberty of the press, the just paying and encouraging of all in the public service,” all this and more, Molesworth argued was the consequence of the Revolution.^{xiii}

In 1710 the Whigs asserted with one voice that the Revolution was fundamentally transformative. The Whig parliamentary managers and their allies saw the Revolution as ushering in a new age of civil and religious liberty buttressed by a new social agenda. This liberty, they warned, was threatened not only by the combined forces of the French and the Jacobites, but also by high churchmen and Tories like Henry Sacheverell.

II

The Sacheverell trial and the ensuing Tory electoral triumph did not only put an end to the Whig ministry, it also eventually severed the close connection between the Whig establishment and the radical interpretation of the Revolution. When Robert Walpole, one of the most eloquent defenders of the radical reading of the Revolution, came to power as England's chief minister in 1720, he brought with him a change of heart. Walpole and his political allies now claimed that the Revolution had instantiated parliamentary rather than popular sovereignty, and that it had established a constitution rather than a blueprint for further reform. Walpole, in short, insisted that the Revolution was necessary and brief. The era of revolutionary transformation had come to an end. Because Walpole himself held onto the reigns of government for two decades and his political heirs quickly returned to power after his fall, those who remained committed to a radical interpretation of the Revolution were forced into opposition. The Whig party split between those who understood the Revolution to have been a brief and necessary adjustment in England's constitutional arrangements – the establishment Whigs -- and the opposition Whigs who insisted that the events of 1688-89 had initiated a period of revolutionary transformation in politics, religion and society.^{xiv}

From the early 1720s Walpole as chief minister modified many of the policies associated with the Revolution. He maintained peace with France, he sought no further relief for religious dissenters, and he reversed the progressive taxation schemes implemented after the Revolution. As a result defenders of the Walpolean Whig establishment emphasized a narrow and conservative account of the Revolution. “The principle, the great, the only end of the Revolution,” argued one typical pro-Walpole pamphleteer, “was then to settle the government upon its ancient and proper basis, which the measures of a mad bigot had almost destroyed.” There was, this pamphleteer insisted, no evidence to suggest that the revolutionaries had any intention of increasing the power of the people, or indeed of altering the government in any way. James had been the innovator, the revolutionaries were conservative and virtuous defenders of the ancient constitution. Not only did the establishment Whigs now distance themselves from the potentially reformist implication of the Revolution, they insisted that the Revolution had nothing to do with popular sovereignty. Those “who say our government is founded upon resistance,” wrote Walpole’s henchman John Hervey, “are as great enemies to this constitution, at least to the peace of it, as those who would advise the Crown, instead of maintaining its legal prerogative, to be watching every favorable opportunity to increase it.” While Walpole and his supporters still ascribed the Revolution an important role, it was in the re-establishment of liberty rather than in the initiation of an age of progressive improvement. The Revolution did not initiate a process of reform; it ended forever attempts to establishment absolutism in Britain. Walpoleans emphasized the tyrannical activities of James II, rather than the creative potential of the revolutionaries.^{xv}

From the 1720s, then, it was the opposition Whigs who argued that the Revolution had dramatically and fundamentally altered not only British politics, but British society and culture as well. It was the opposition Whigs who continued to argue that with the Revolution began a new era in British and ultimately world history. The opposition Whigs claimed that the Revolution was in fact based on popular resistance, that it changed the moral foundation of government, that it established a new era of religious liberty, that it radically altered the direction of English (then British) foreign policy, and that it transformed the socio-economic basis of the polity.

In pamphlets, treatises, formal histories, and popular toasts, opposition Whigs from the 1720s to the 1790s insisted that widespread popular resistance had occurred in 1688. They thus maintained that the Revolution established popular, not parliamentary, sovereignty. Violence, observed Walpole's great enemy William Pulteney, "hath often proved salutiferous, and preserved the liberty of popular states." "When King Charles's deluded brother attempted to enslave the nation," reasoned the great legal theorist Sir William Blackstone, "he found it was beyond his power: the people both could, and did, resist him; and, in consequence of such resistance, obliged him to quit his enterprise and his throne together." The Revolution, agreed the author of the opposition pamphlet the Livery-Man in 1740, "was brought about not by the Parliament, by the freeholders, or by any particular body of men, but by the people of Great Britain; and what they then did is the foundation of our present constitution." By the "people," this author made clear, he meant "the son of the peasant as well as of the peer." Henry Hunter was merely repeating a well-worn opposition Whig credo when he preached in November 1788 that "the

insulted genius of an injured people at length awoke to just vengeance” in November 1688.^{xvi}

For opposition Whigs, the popular resistance of the revolutionaries in 1688-89 was lawful because they believed deeply in the principle of popular sovereignty. William Pulteney referred his readers to John Locke’s Two Treatises and its endorsement of popular resistance as “the true principles of liberty; the principles of the Revolution.” Half a century later, the Bristol Baptist and Whig Caleb Evans argued that the Revolution marked the triumph of “the immortal Locke, the assertor of liberty” over Robert Filmer. “There is no man scarcely to be met with,” claimed Evans, “who is not familiar with [Locke’s] writings on the interesting subject of government by which the very soul of despotism in Great Britain has received its death wound.” It was therefore very much consonant with the historical views of the opposition Whigs that the Revolution Society declared that the first principle “confirmed by the Revolution” was that “all civil and political authority derived from the people.”^{xvii}

Opposition Whigs placed far less emphasis on the restoration of the ancient constitution than they did on the transformation of the moral and practical basis of politics brought about by the Revolution. Andrew Kippis was not alone in arguing that the Revolution not only put an end to James II’s infringements on the privileges granted by the ancient constitution but “it brought new ones of the utmost value. It conferred additional rights on the subject; fixed additional limitations on the crown; and provided additional security for the continuation of our felicity.” In particular, opposition Whigs maintained that, at the Revolution, “a decisive blow was struck at the doctrine of non-resistance, and passive obedience.” Radicals and opposition Whigs also emphasized that

changes in “the direction of the national revenue” at the Revolution created “a necessity of convening the Parliament annually.” Opposition Whigs and radicals placed less emphasis on formal institutions than on a change of political culture. While “a notion of general liberty had strongly pervaded and animated the whole constitution” prior to 1688, argued Sir William Blackstone, it was only at the Revolution that “particular liberty, the natural equality, and personal independence of individuals” were widely “applauded.” John Wilkes adopted Blackstone’s definition when he insisted that “liberty was the direct avowed principle of the English at the Revolution.” It was from the period of “The Revolution,” that Henry Hunter thought, “the country, possessed of spirit, wisdom, virtue, and power to assert their rights, to form and establish a system of government favorable to general liberty and happiness, began to enjoy the sweets of them.” As early as 1712, Delariviere Manley had observed correctly that the Whigs did not understand the Revolution to be merely “a re-establishment” but as initiating a “Great Change” so that “changing of law, liberty, and religion came to be the only true Revolution principles.”^{xviii}

Opposition Whigs, like the parliamentary managers of 1710, emphasized that the Revolution inaugurated an era of religious liberty. “Scarce can a period be assigned, in all ancient and modern history,” bragged the Presbyterian minister and fierce anti-Walpolean Robert Wallace, “of such a long continuance as the period of 66 years since the Revolution, in which any people have enjoyed such solid and substantial blessing,” chief among which were “an entire freedom from all kinds of persecutions; a perfect liberty of worshipping God according to our consciences.” After the Revolution, argued the author of The Advantages of the Revolution, “our minds are now happily freed from the ignominious bondage of ecclesiastical and state slavery, the flaming brands of bigotry

being well nigh extinguished.” “Soon after the Revolution,” agreed John Wilkes, “the English in a good degree, adopted the Dutch system of government, as to a general toleration of religious parties.” The Nonconformist Andrew Kippis admitted that the religious liberty established at the Revolution was “far short” of the “enlarged and philosophical principles” of the late eighteenth century. “Nevertheless,” he explained to his auditors, “when we consider the temper of the preceding age, it was a glorious advantage gained in favor of the interests of truth and conscience, and the natural rights of mankind.” It was on the basis of similar reasoning that the Revolution Society insisted that the “Glorious Revolution of 1688” established “the civil and religious liberties of the people of this country.”^{xix}

Opposition Whigs frequently noted that the revolutionaries of 1688-89 transformed English foreign policy. In the 1720s and 1730s Sir Robert Walpole’s opponents frequently emphasized that his pacific foreign policy represented a betrayal of revolution principles. In 1742 one opposition Whig asked the now-deposed Walpole “how do you think will the aggrandizing the House of Bourbon, at the expense of that of Austria, square with Revolution principles?” Political engagement with Europe, specifically opposition to French imperial designs, continued to be a central theme throughout the century. Blackstone recalled that the revolutionaries of 1688-89 “introduced a new system of foreign politics.” “From this period of the Revolution,” John Wilkes commented approvingly, “England has continued regularly and steadily to oppose the ambitious views of France.” The exceptions, according to Wilkes were “two short, critical and convulsive intervals” – the aftermath of the Tory peace of 1713 and

Walpole's ministry -- during which "the national interest" was sacrificed to the "views of a few particulars."^{xx}

Finally, radicals and opposition Whigs emphasized that the Revolution transformed the political economy of Britain. "Great changes in the state of society," argued the Scottish philosopher and supporter of the opposition Whig Charles James Fox, John Millar, "may be dated from the revolution." In particular, in the late seventeenth century, "the feudal institutions natural to a rude nation, were, in a great measure, abolished and forgotten." "The full establishment of a regular and free constitution," establishing "the secure possession and enjoyment of property," was, in Millar's view, "obtained by the memorable Revolution in 1688," ensuring that "commerce and manufactures assumed a new aspect." "The feudal constitution was far from being favorable to commerce," noted the commercial historian and friend of freemasonry Adam Anderson in the 1760s. So, "the establishment of this free constitution" in 1689, he concluded, "did most certainly contribute greatly in its consequences (as it was natural to suppose and expect) to the increase and advancement of our own commerce."^{xxi}

The opposition Whigs did not believe that the revolutionaries of 1688-89 had single-handedly demolished the feudal system; rather, they believed that a variety of developments had begun to alter dramatically English state and society. These were the necessary preconditions of revolution. The Revolution dealt the death-blow to the feudal system. David Hume, for example, emphasized that "the commerce and riches of England did never during any period increase so fast as from the restoration to the revolution." Anderson highlighted the roll that the "discovery of the East-Indies, and of Brazil by the Portuguese; and of the West-Indies" had in transforming the European

commercial world. Blackstone pointed to the development of the post office, the proliferation of hackney coaches, the “discovery of the Indies,” the advancement of learning as paving the way for the great climacteric of 1688. “The great revolutions that had happened in manners and in property,” he noted, “had paved the way, by imperceptible yet sure degrees, for as great a revolution in government.” Yet, Blackstone was careful to note, “while that revolution was effecting, the crown became more arbitrary than ever, by the progress of these very means which afterwards reduced its power.”^{xxii}

The Revolution, according to the opposition Whigs, had remarkably beneficial effects on British manufacturing and commerce. This was in large part because of the activities of the post-revolutionary state. In the 1730s especially opposition Whigs emphasized that the revolutionaries had adopted Lockean economic principles. They developed their economic policies on the assumption “that the lands of Great Britain are only made valuable by the number of people employed in foreign and domestic trade, and in the woolen and other manufactures of this kingdom.” The implications, based on “the authority of Mr. Locke,” was a policy of progressive taxation. After the Revolution, the regime, on Lockean principles, recommended “a Land Tax in preference to any duties on commodities, whether imported or our own production.” Others emphasized the post-revolutionary regime’s assault on “exclusive trading companies.” Still others pointed to the rage for social legislation, “salutary laws for the welfare of the public,” that became possible only after the Revolution.^{xxiii}

The opposition Whigs emphasized the tremendous political economic consequences of the Revolution. John Millar marveled at “the rapid improvements of

arts and manufactures, and the correspondent extension of commerce, which followed the clear and accurate limitation of the prerogative.” These in turn “produced a degree of wealth and affluence, which diffused a feeling of independence and a high spirit of liberty through the great body of the people.” “Another undeniable instance of the advantage which has accrued to this nation by the Revolution,” argued a polemicist in mid-century, “is the vast increase and flourishing condition of our manufactures.” “The good effects” of the Revolution of 1688-89, agreed Adam Anderson, “have in nothing been more conspicuous than in the great increase in commerce, shipping, manufactures, and colonies, as well as of riches and people, since that happy period.” At no other period in British history have “agriculture, manufactures and commerce” “been enjoyed in any such degree,” gushed Andrew Kippis, “as since the Revolution.”^{xxiv}

Opposition Whigs, then, developed an interpretation of the Revolution that differed dramatically from that offered by the establishment/Walpolean Whigs. Where the establishment Whigs, in what would become known as *the* Whig interpretation of the Glorious Revolution, understood the event to have been restorative and brief, the opposition Whigs understood the Revolution to be transformative and chronologically open-ended. The establishment Whigs argued that the Revolution ended in 1689 or 1690; the opposition Whigs insisted that Revolution principles should continue to drive a reformist agenda. In short, by the 1720s the establishment Whigs were emphasizing the immediate tyrannical *causes* of the events of 1688-89, while the opposition Whigs were highlighting *long-term* structural causes and the revolutionary *consequences* of 1688-89.

The centenary celebrations of 1788 proved to be the high-water mark of discussion about the Glorious Revolution. Not only were the celebrations of the Revolution ubiquitous in 1788, they were also wide-ranging and multivalent. Clerics, journalists, pamphleteers, and poets all expressed their interpretations of the great event. No one in England, Scotland, or Ireland, indeed very few in the Britain's colonies, could have been unaware of the centenary of 1688. However, continental developments soon put an end to these discussions and debates. The establishment Whig interpretation of the Revolution soon achieved hegemonic status.

Insert Revolution Jubilee Coin from British Museum

In November 1789, just months after the outbreak of the French Revolution, the most celebrated English Dissenting cleric of the eighteenth century and a prominent supporter of the American Revolution, Richard Price, delivered a sermon at the meeting house in the Old Jewry just outside London's Guildhall, a sermon that indirectly ended the historiographical controversy about the Glorious Revolution. His sermon, which instantly became a best-seller in Britain and on the continent, developed what had already become the opposition Whig interpretation of revolution principles. "By a bloodless victory, the fetters which despotism had long been preparing for us were broken," Price recalled, "the rights of the people were asserted, a tyrant expelled, and a Sovereign of our own choice appointed in his room. Security was given to our property, and our consciences were emancipated. The bounds of free enquiry were enlarged; the volume in

which are the words of eternal life, was laid more open to our examination; and the era of light and liberty was introduced among us, by which we have been made an example to other kingdoms, and became the instructors of the world. Had it not been for this deliverance, the probability is, that, instead of being thus distinguished, we should now have been a base people, groaning under the infamy and misery of popery and slavery.” The Revolution of 1688-89 had been act of popular resistance, allowing the British people to “frame a government for ourselves.”^{xxv}

Price’s optimistic, reformist, and radical commentary on the meaning of the Revolution of 1688-89 elicited a number of critical responses. But there was no more famous, more widely read, or more politically influential response to Richard Price’s Discourse on the Love of Our Country, than the interpretation of the Revolution offered by Edmund Burke.^{xxvi} In the context of the disturbing developments across the Channel, Burke felt himself impelled to write his Reflections on the Revolution in France to dispel the dangerous principles espoused and embraced by Dr. Price. Burke duly recorded “the dislike I feel to revolutions, the signals which have so often been given from pulpits” -- reminding his readers that Price had celebrated the principles of 1688-89 from the pulpit of the Dissenting meeting house in the Old Jewry. Burke, like his antagonist Price, found much to celebrate in 1688-89. But, unlike Price, Burke argued that there had been no innovation, no revolution, but merely a sensible and backward-looking restoration of the old order. The Revolution of 1688-89 was motivated by not a single new idea. James II had been the radical revolutionary, the English people had merely restored normalcy in 1688-89. “The Revolution was made to preserve our ancient indisputable laws and liberties, and that ancient constitution of government which is our only security for law

and liberty,” Burke explained. “The very idea of the fabrication of a new government is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess as an inheritance from our forefathers. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to inoculate any cyon alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformations we have hitherto made, have preceded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am persuaded, that all those which possibly may be made hereafter, will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority and example.” While Burke could imagine future tinkering with the British constitution, unlike Price he believed further reformation would never be needed. Burke claimed the people of England “look on the frame of their commonwealth, *such as it stands*, to be of inestimable value.”^{xxvii}

Burke’s rhetorically brilliant exposition of the establishment Whig position attracted a last gasp of opposition Whig scorn. The lifelong radical John Horne Tooke, for example, denounced Burke’s Reflections as “a libel on the constitution.” But with the French Declaration of War against Great Britain in February 1793, it had become unpatriotic to imagine that Britain had provided the model for French political developments. Britons now castigated revolutionary radicalism and denounced the inevitable excesses brought about by popular political insurrections. The Revolution Society’s 1789 and 1790 calls for unity with the French people discredited their interpretation of the Revolution of 1688.^{xxviii}

Radicals were not completely silenced in the 1790s, but they did abandon the notion that Britain had spawned a new universal age of liberty in 1688. Radical disquiet about the Revolution had begun much earlier. After the accession of George III, many

began to feel that Revolution principles had been abandoned. John Wilkes noted with dismay in 1762 that “almost every friend of liberty and of revolution principles has retired, or been dismissed.” The radical pamphleteer and journeyman printer Joseph Towers lamented the recent “extraordinary change in political affairs” by which those who adhered to “the old Whig principles” were “stigmatized as factious, seditious, disaffected, and even rebellious.” Wilkes and Richard Price claimed that this development proved that the Revolution was imperfect. Blackstone pointed out that while “the nominal” power of the crown had been weakened at the Revolution, the “real power” remained. “The stern commands of prerogative have yielded to the milder voice of influence,” he explained.^{xxix}

In the context of George III’s turn to new advisors with Tory ideological leanings, the outbreak of the American Revolution, and the creation of new more authoritarian empire in India, some radicals came to see the Revolution of 1688-89 as a disaster rather than as merely imperfect. The Revolution, some thought, had not created an age of liberty but rather an age of oligarchy. Instead of “admitting the plebeians into the full possession of liberty, according to their natural right,” complained the political reformer John Cartwright, those who brought about the Revolution “strove all they could to establish an aristocratical tyranny upon the ruins of the royal one, and they succeeded but too well.” Catherine Macaulay similarly, if more bitterly, argued that the Revolution of 1688-89 established “an unexampled mode of tyranny” and occasioned “an universal depravity of manners.” The reason was that at the Revolution “under the specious appearance of democratical privilege, the people are really and truly enslaved to a small part pf the community.”^{xxx}

The end of the American War and the passage of economical reform no doubt dulled the discontent among the radicals, making possible the enthusiastic celebrations in 1788. British opposition to the French Revolution, however, encouraged those who continued to defend the French cause to abandon the Revolution of 1688-89. Thomas Paine set the tone of future radical interpretations of 1688. He responded to Burke's assault on the opposition Whig interpretation not with a spirited defense, but with a tactical surrender. "The Revolution of 1688," he said in The Rights of Man, "may have been exalted beyond its value." It was now "eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the luminous revolutions of America and France." This was because, in Paine's view, the Revolution of 1688-89 was a mere courtier revolution in which "the nation" was left to choose between "the two evils, James and William." There was no possibility of radical reform. From the 1790s onward, radicals abandoned the Revolution of 1688-89. They ceased, in the words of one historian, "to examine the events 1688-89 for what they were, rather than for what they wished them to be."^{xxx}

From the time of the French Revolution, the Revolution of 1688-89 was celebrated less as a turning point in British history than as an event that distinguished Britain from the continent and the rest of the world. After the French Revolution establishment Whig history became *the* Whig historical narrative. Thomas Babington Macaulay's magisterial Whig History of England, published in 1849, was implicitly a study in comparative history. Macaulay set out to distinguish Britain from a Europe convulsed with revolution. Macaulay shared with Burke and the establishment Whigs the conviction that 1688-89 was a fundamentally conservative event. The "calamities" of continental revolutions were averted in England because the revolution in England "was a

revolution strictly defensive, and had prescription and legitimacy on its side.” Neither in act nor idea was there anything innovative in the English Revolution of 1688-89. “Not a single flower of the crown was touched,” Macaulay famously observed, “not a single new right was given to the people. The whole English law, substantive and adjective, was, in the judgment of all the greatest lawyers ... exactly the same after the Revolution as before it.” Nor did the actors behave as if they were doing something new. “As our revolution was a vindication of ancient rights, so it was conducted with strict attention to ancient formalities. In almost every word and act may be discerned a profound reverence for the past,” Macaulay wrote, very much echoing Burke. “Both the English parties agreed in treating with solemn respect the ancient constitutional traditions of the state. The only question was in what sense those traditions were to be understood.” Macaulay also shared Burke’s contempt for modern revolutions, claiming that “it is because we had a preserving revolution in the seventeenth century that we have not had a destroying revolution in the nineteenth.” Indeed Macaulay, in what would become a mantra for future commentators, believed that the events in England in 1688-89 were conceptually distinct from modern revolutions. “To us who have lived in the year 1848,” Macaulay argued, “it may seem almost an abuse of terms to call a proceeding, conducted with so much deliberation, with so much sobriety, and with such minute attention to prescriptive etiquette, by the terrible name of revolution.”^{xxxii}

Macaulay’s great nephew George Macaulay Trevelyan reached very similar conclusions in his establishment Whig history of the Revolution of 1688-89. While Macaulay wrote in the shadow of Jacobins and their atrocities, Trevelyan picked up his pen in the late 1930s filled with hatred for Fascists whom he compared to the French

Jacobins. Like Macaulay, Trevelyan insisted that in 1688-89 “there are no new ideas.” Like Macaulay, Trevelyan saw the Revolution as “a victory of moderation.” Nor did Trevelyan see the actions of those who expelled James II as particularly revolutionary. “The merit of the Revolution,” he insisted, “lay not in the shouting and the tumult, but in the still small voice of prudence and wisdom that prevailed through all the din.” Unsurprisingly, like both Burke and Macaulay, Trevelyan thought “the spirit of this strange Revolution was the opposite of revolutionary.”^{xxxiii}

The works of Burke, Macaulay, and Trevelyan reasserted the establishment Whig interpretation of the Revolution. For these three -- all of whom wrote hoping Britain would not replicate the violent and extremist revolutions that were consuming the continent in their own ages -- the great virtue of the events of 1688-89 was precisely that they prevented a real revolution from happening in Britain. Their interpretations became hegemonic not because they had uncovered new, irrefutable historical evidence, but because in the face of contemporary political events their interpretative opponents had abandoned the field. For all of the archival industriousness of Macaulay, for all of the rhetorical brilliance of Burke and Trevelyan, they assumed that their burden was to account for the resistance against James II’s tyranny, rather than to explain and detail the revolutionary consequences of 1688-89. Burke, Macaulay, and Trevelyan did not so much refute the arguments of the opposition Whigs as assume that in the contemporary political climate their claims were irrelevant.

Late twentieth century accounts of the Revolution of 1688-89 elaborated and reinforced the establishment Whig interpretation. Again and again scholars have narrowed their focus to the reign of James II and its immediate aftermath. Again and again scholars have discussed the revolution narrowly in terms of issues of domestic high politics and anti-Catholicism. Unsurprisingly, then, recent scholars have concluded, along with the establishment Whigs, that the Revolution was restorative rather than innovative. The Revolution, unlike more modern revolutions, did not mark a decisive break.^{xxxiv}

Scholars across the ideological and methodological spectrum have chimed in with a single voice. The Revolution of 1688, they all claim, was an act of recovery and conservation rather than one of innovation. The purpose of the Revolution of 1688-89, argues J. R. Jones, “was restorative and conservationist.” The revolutionaries in England, he affirms, “did not aim, like the dominant revolutionaries in France a century later, at transforming government, the law, society, and changing the status of all individuals who composed the nation.” In an essay explicitly defending Trevelyan’s account, John Morrill proclaims that “the Sensible Revolution of 1688-89 was a conservative revolution.” 1688-89 “was a ‘glorious revolution’ – in the seventeenth century sense of that word,” concurs Jonathan Scott, “because at last it restored, and secured, after a century of troubles, what remained salvageable of the Elizabethan church and state.” Hugh Trevor-Roper notes that since the Revolution “was essentially defensive, the product of determined resistance to innovation, it too was necessarily conservative.”^{xxxv}

The events of 1688-89, in these accounts, were in no sense akin to modern revolutions. The Glorious Revolution was not a social revolution either in terms of its

participants or its consequences. Dale Hoak has dismissed the Revolution of 1688-89 as “a dynastic putsch.” Because “the revolution was a successful coup d’etat,” argues David Hosford, “what happened in England during this period was not a revolution, except in the narrowest sense of the word.” There could be no popular radicalism in 1688-89, argues John Pocock, because “the peers were in charge.” “The Glorious Revolution was astonishingly conservative in its ruling illusions,” comments Mark Goldie, “in the welter of vindictory words, talk of popular revolution was marginal.”^{xxxvi}

Since those who took part in the events of 1688-89 came from the narrow political elite, had no revolutionary program and no social agenda, they were necessarily not modern revolutionaries. “The ‘glorious revolution’ of 1688,” notes John Western, “was so called precisely because so much of it was not in the modern sense revolutionary.” Robert Beddard has insisted upon “the particularly unmodern character of the Revolution of 1688.” William Speck makes clear that the Revolution of 1688-89 was no social revolution. It is for this reason that the sociologist Jack Goldstone has called 1688 “not really a revolution.”^{xxxvii}

By the late twentieth century, the scholarly debate over the Revolution of 1688-89 was narrow indeed. To most observers there appeared to be no debate at all. “It was generally accepted,” notes Howard Nenner, that “what had transpired in 1688-89 was essentially conservative.” Harry Dickinson remarks that “the latest works on the Glorious Revolution agree that it was a conservative settlement.” “Most scholars have reached a consensus,” chimes in Kathleen Wilson, “that the Revolution was largely an episode in patrician politics, unrelentingly ‘conservationist’ in ideological, political and social

effect.”^{xxxviii} The establishment Whig understanding of the Revolution of 1688-89 has achieved hegemonic status.

The Tercentenary of the Revolution of 1688-89 fell flat because there was very little left to celebrate. Two centuries of historical scholarship had reduced what had once been seen as a fundamental shift in the history of humanity to an aristocratic parlor game. English or British identity had not been reshaped; it had been reaffirmed. The British constitution had not been remade; its ancient constitution had been recovered. Above all, scholars have claimed with a united voice, the lives of most Britons were remarkably little affected. The Revolution of 1688-89, if it did anything at all, changed high politics.

In public and in private, historians and politicians of all ideological stripes agreed that not much had happened. The Catholic conservative Auberon Waugh dismissed the Revolution as “the last successful invasion and conquest of England by a foreign power.” The long-serving Labour MP Tony Benn, who shared few political principles with Waugh, told the House of Commons that “what happened in 1688 was not a glorious revolution. It was a plot by some people.” “Of course the glorious revolution did nothing to change the social order,” agreed the Conservative MP Sir Bernard Braine, “it did nothing immediate for the lot of the common man.”^{xxxix}

There may have been political changes as a result of the events of 1688-89, all could agree, but they did not constitute a revolution. When asked whether the events that began in November 1688 should be considered a revolution, Charles Wilson, the head of the historians’ committee involved in the Tercentenary celebrations, replied that “if by revolution you mean an upheaval comparable to the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, even the American Revolution ... certainly not. The magnates who invited

William to England had no intention to change the political or social order.” Noel Annan thought it was fair to conclude that, whatever their value, the events of 1688-89 were “not a real revolution.” “It was certainly a revolution,” insisted Sir Bernard Braine in the face of Labour attacks, “but more in the sense of the turning a wheel back to normality.” In 1988 politicians of the left and right could agree that there had been no revolution in 1688-89. Lord Hailsham was left the unenviable task of opening the Banqueting House exhibit marking the Tercentenary. He told the assembled audience that the Revolution of 1688-89 should be celebrated for what it was not and what it may have prevented. “Our own Glorious Revolution,” he explained, “coming when it did, spared us any convulsions comparable to the French Revolution of 1789 or even the Russian Revolution of 1917 or the fall of the Weimar Republic in 1933.” The significance of the Revolution of 1688-89, argued Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, was that it showed the irrelevance of popular radicalism. “Political change should be sought and achieved through Parliament,” she claimed, “it was this which saved us from the violent revolutions which shook our continental neighbors.”^{x1} Given this remarkable consensus, given the hegemonic exposition of the establishment Whig interpretation of revolution principles, it is hardly surprising that the Trecentenary events were sedate and dull affairs. Popular celebrations would have been antithetical to the spirit of the Revolution.

V

The Revolution of 1688-89 has receded from the popular imagination because it has ceased to be a very interesting event. Scholars, politicians, and journalists have come

to agree that the Revolution merely restored the English ancient constitution. It affirmed, rather than created, British exceptionalism. It was at best a heroic moment for a few British aristocrats, standing up for their honor, against an innovative and tyrannical monarch. The people were hardly involved. The Revolution set no new precedent for future political action – it merely reasserted parliamentary sovereignty. The Revolution set no model that was followed by others. If anything should be celebrated it is the recurrent moderation of the British. We have all become establishment Whigs.^{xii}

This was not, however, always the only available interpretation of the Revolution of 1688-89. Throughout the eighteenth century some Britons, some Europeans, and some North Americans, understood the Revolution to be a politically, morally, and socially transformative event. That this view, contested as it was throughout the eighteenth century, has disappeared owes little to historical research. Scholars have investigated the nature of James's rule, not the content and origins of the revolutionary consequences of 1688-89. This oversight derives from Britons' vision of themselves, since the 1790s, as the opponents of revolutionary change on the continent and as the targets of anti-colonial revolutions elsewhere. The political climate, rather than scholarly research, has narrowed the kinds of questions that have been asked about the Revolution of 1688-89. It is now time to find answers to the questions that the opposition Whigs raised in the eighteenth century.

ⁱ Monsieur Navier, Address, 30 November 1789, printed in Richard Price, A Discourse on the Love of Our Country. 4 November 1789. Second Edition. (London: T. Cadell, 1789), “Additions,” 14-15. The French Revolutionaries did not quickly abandon their admiration for the Glorious Revolution. In 1791 supporters of the Revolution in Marseilles wrote the English Revolution Society that “we have admired you for a century: for a century we have envied your happiness.” Revolution Society, Anniversary Meeting, 4 November 1791, BL, Add 64814, f. 48v. Many letters of a similar vein, extolling the influence of the Glorious Revolution on France, were published in The Correspondence of the Revolution Society with the National Assembly, and with Various Societies of the Friends of Liberty in France and England. (London, 1792). American revolutionaries in 1776 also claimed they were acting on principles established at the Glorious Revolution: James Wilson and John Dickinson, “Address to the Inhabitants of the Colonies,” 13 February 1776, in W.C. Ford ed., Journals of the Continental Congress. (Washington, 1906), 4: 145.

ⁱⁱ David Hume, History of England. (1841). 6: 329; John Millar, An Historical View of the English Government. 4th ed. (London: J. Mawman, 1818), 4: 95; Robert Viscount Molesworth, The Principles of a Real Whig. (London, 1775; orig. pub. 1711), 5-6; John

Wilkes, "Introduction to Proposed History," in The Correspondence of the Late John Wilkes, ed. John Almon (London: Richard Phillips, 1801), 5:161; Charles James Fox, The History of the Early Part of the Reign of James the Second. (London: William Miller, 1808), 58; J. R. Dinwiddy, "Charles James Fox as an Historian," The Historical Journal, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1969), 23-34 Henry St. John Viscount Bolingbroke, "Dissertation upon Parties," The Works. (Philadelphia, 1841), 2: 27. See the similar comments by Andrew Kippis, A Sermon Preached at the Old Jewry, 4 November 1788. (London, 1788), 2. The 6th Duke of Devonshire was thinking in this tradition when he had inscribed over the fireplace of the Painted Hall at Chatsworth House that it had been "begun in the year of English liberty 1688." Private communication from Charles Noble, Keeper of the Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House.

ⁱⁱⁱ Molesworth, Principles of a Real Whig, 1775 (1711), 13-14; Wilkes, "Introduction," Almon, 5: 204; Henry Hunter, Sermons. (London, 1795), "Sermon III, 1788," 2: 102; Kippis, A Sermon, 4 November 1788, 32; Price, A Discourse, 1789, pp. 31-32. Later that year the Revolution Society, with Price present, emphasized that British Revolution principles had taken root in America and were now "pervading Europe." Revolution Society, 30 December 1789, BL, Add 64814, f. 27r.

^{iv} Abstract of the History and Proceedings of the Revolution Society, 4 February 1789, BL, Add. 69814, ff. 12-13; Kippis, Sermon, 1788, 2-3. Kathleen Wilson, "A Dissident Legacy: Eighteenth Century Popular Politics and the Glorious Revolution," in J.R. Jones (editor), Liberty Secured? Britain before and after the Glorious Revolution. (Stanford, 1992), 301-312; Caleb Evans, British Freedom Realized. 5 November 1788. (Bristol, 1788), 28; Hunter, "Sermon III," 1788, in Sermons, 1795, 2: 101.

^v Blair Worden, Roundhead Reputations. (London, 2001), 228; Hugh Trevor-Roper, From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution. (Chicago, 1992), 233; Barry Price (Secretary of the William and Mary Tercentenary Trust), “Some Observations on the Tercentenary,” 25 June 1989, HLRO, WMT/2; Barry Price, Anglo-Netherlands Society Newsletter, March 1988, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. 2; John Rae, The Times, 16 July 1987, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt.2; Viscount Whitelaw, 27 March 1984, Lords Debates, HLRO, WMT/1/Pt. 2; Patricia Morrison, Daily Telegraph, 21 September 1988, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. 2; Financial Times, 12 September 1988, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. 2; (Liverpool) Daily Post, 4 November 1988, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt.2.

^{vi} Charles Tilly, European Revolutions, 1492-1992. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1993), 104; Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution. Revised and expanded edition. (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 19.

^{vii} Gary De Krey, “Political Radicalism in London after the Glorious Revolution,” Journal of Modern History. Vol. 55 (December 1983), 586-587. I disagree with J. P. Kenyon, “The Revolution of 1688: Resistance and Contract,” in N. McKendrick ed. Historical Perspectives. (London: Europa, 1974), 69; H. T. Dickinson, “The Eighteenth-Century Debate on the ‘Glorious Revolution’,” History, Vol. 61 No. 201 (February 1976), 44.

^{viii} H.T. Dickinson, “The Eighteenth-Century Debate,” 29; Peter N. Miller, Defining the Common Good. (Cambridge, 1994), p. 88.

^{ix} Worden, Roundhead Reputations, p. 162; Mark Goldie, “The Roots of True Whiggism 1688-1694,” History of Political Thought. Vol. 1 No. 2 (June 1980), 197, 220-225; Mark Goldie and Clare Jackson, “Williamite Tyranny and the Whig Jacobites,” in Esther

Mijers and David Onnekink eds., Redefining William III. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 178-179, 184-185

^x Henry Sacheverell, The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church and State. (London, 1709). I dissent from Goldie's claim by the later 1690s "the mainstream of whiggism" had "dissociated itself from radicalism." Goldie, "Roots," 195. Immediately after the end of the Nine Years War in 1697 the Whigs did briefly divide over whether it was necessary to maintain a standing army in the modern world. In chapters eleven, twelve and fourteen I demonstrate the continuity of a mainstream Whig radicalism in the 1690s.

^{xi} The Tryal of Dr. Henry Sacheverell. (London: Jacob Tonson, 1710), 7, 88, 94; Gilbert Burnet, The Bishop of Salisbury's and the Bishop of Oxford's Speeches in the House of Lords. (London, 1710), 2; Benjamin Hoadly, The Foundation of the Present Government Defended. (London, 1710), 22, 26. . In 1714 Walpole was an active member of The Loyal and Friendly Society of the Blue and Orange, a radical group dedicated to the celebration of the Revolution. Its members included Walter Moyle, the son of John Locke's close friend Sir Walter Yonge, and the West Country Whig Sir Francis Henry Drake: BL, Egerton 2346, f. 6r.

^{xii} Nicholas Lechmere, Tryal, 1710, 34. The clarity of Lechmere's position make sit difficult to agree with Dickinson's claim that there was a "general reluctance to rest the Whig case on the principles of John Locke." Dickinson, "Eighteenth Century Debate," 35.

^{xiii} Lechmere, Tryal, 1710, 36; Molesworth, Principles of a Real Whig, 1775 (1711), 15-16, 21-22.

^{xiv} J.P. Kenyon, Revolution Principles. (Cambridge, 1977), 202; Dickinson, “The Eighteenth Century Debate,” 36.

^{xv} Paul Langford, The Excise Crisis. (Oxford, 1975), 32-35; Paul Langford, A Polite and Commercial People. (Oxford, 1989), 9-44; The True Principles of the Revolution Revived and Asserted. (London, 1741), 14-15; John Hervey, Ancient and Modern Liberty Stated and Compar’d. (London, 1734), 45. I think the radical interpretation focused on a wider set of issues than the “principles of political accountability and trusteeship” which Wilson emphasizes: Wilson, “A Dissident Legacy,” 300, 314.

^{xvi} William Pulteney, A Review of the Excise Scheme. (London, 1733), 50; Sir William Blackstone, Commentaries on the Laws of England. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765-69), 4: 433. While Blackstone may have been involved in Tory politicking in Oxford, his Commentaries were decidedly opposition whiggish. The Livery-Man. (London, 1740), 7-8, 13; Hunter, “Sermon III,” 1788, in Sermons, 1795, 2: 105-106.

^{xvii} Pulteney, Review of the Excise Scheme, 1733, 49-50. See also, George Coade, A Letter to a Clergyman. Second edition. (London, 1747), 38; The Livery-Man, 1740, 6. The willingness of opposition Whigs to deploy Locke’s arguments either explicitly as here, and in discussions of political economy, or implicitly in references to the original contract, makes me unable to accept John Dunn’s claim that Locke’s Two Treatises “enjoyed no immediate éclat,” or that “it was only one work among a large group of other works which expounded the Whig theory of the revolution, and in its prominence within this group is not noticeable until well after the general outlines of the interpretation had been consolidated.” John Dunn, “The politics of Locke in England and America in the eighteenth century,” in John W. Yolton ed., John Locke: Problems and Perspectives.

(Cambridge, 1969), 57, 80. I share Mark Goldie's skepticism about this assessment: Mark Goldie, "Introduction," Mark Goldie ed. The Reception of Locke's Politics. (London, 1999), 1: xvii-lxxi.; Caleb Evans, British Freedom Realized. 5 November 1788. (Bristol, 1788), 14-15; Committee of the Revolution Society, 6 October 1788, BL, Add 64814, f. 5v.

^{xviii} Kippis, A Sermon, 4 November 1788, 26-27, 29; Bolingbroke, "Dissertation upon Parties," 1733-34, Works, 2: 71. Bolingbroke's "Dissertation" was written while he was making common cause with the opposition Whigs in the Craftsman; Wilkes, "Introduction," Almon, 5:162, 200-201; Blackstone, Commentaries, 1765-9, 4: 427; Hunter, "Sermon III, 1788, Sermons, 2: 108; The Examiner 6 November 1712 (No. 49), 237. Voltaire made a similar point: The Age of Lewis XIV. (London: R. Dodsley, 1752), 1: 238.

^{xix} Robert Wallace, The Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance Considered. (Edinburgh, 1754). 34-35; G. B., The Advantages of the Revolution. (London: W. Owen, 1753), 5; Wilkes, "Introduction," Almon, 5: 189. I see Wilkes's history as an opposition Whig document, not "the highly conventional" text described by Linda Colley, Britons. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 111; Kippis, A Sermon, 4 November 1788, 28; Committee of the Revolution Society, 16 June 1788, BL, Add 64814, f. 2r.

^{xx} Kathleen Wilson, The Sense of the People. (Cambridge, 1995), 140-165; Langford, Polite and Commercial People, 49-57; The Late Minister Unmask't. (London, 1742), 14-15; Blackstone, Commentaries, 1765-1769, 1: 315; Wilkes, "Introduction," Almon, 5: 186-187.

^{xxi} John Millar, An Historical View of the English Government. Fourth Edition.

(London: J. Mawman, 1818). 3: 1-2; 4: 78, 102-103; Adam Anderson, An Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origins of Commerce. (London: A. Millar, et. al., 1764), 1: vii; 2: 189.

^{xxii} Hume, History, 1841, 6: 336; Anderson, Origin of Commerce, 1764, 1: viii; Blackstone, Commentaries, 1765-9, Vol. I, pp. 311, 314; Vol. IV, pp. 426-7. The point that English society and economy was modernizing prior to the Revolution was also made in the nineteenth century by Alexis de Tocqueville: Alexis de Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution. Stuart Gilbert trans. (New York: Anchor Books, 1983), 18-19.

^{xxiii} Some Thoughts on the Land Tax. (London, 1733), 9, 12; Nicholas Amhurst, The Second Part of an Argument against Excises. (London, 1733), 55; Millar, Historical View, 4: 106-107; G.B., The Advantages of the Revolution, 1753, 8.

^{xxiv} Millar, Historical View, 4: 100; C. B., The Advantages of the Revolution, 1753, 17; Anderson, Origins of Commerce, 1764, 2: 195; Kippis, A Sermon, 4 November 1788, p. 33.

^{xxv} Price, A Discourse, 1789, 31-32, 34.

^{xxvi} I am in sympathy with the powerful reading of Burke offered by Don Herzog, Poisoning the Minds of the Lower Orders. (Princeton, 1998), pp. 13-33.

^{xxvii} Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France. (London: Penguin Books, 1968). First Published 1790, 110-111, 117. I am in sympathy with the powerful reading of Burke offered by Don Herzog, Poisoning the Minds of the Lower Orders. (Princeton, 1998), 13-33. Herzog is right to say that Burke's Reflections was less "a master text or

blueprint” than “a quirky crystallization of a disparate ensemble of practices and views.”

Poisoning, 13. These were the practices and views of the establishment Whigs.

^{xxviii} Revolution Society Minutes, 4 November 1789, BL, Add 64814, f. 22v; Revolution Society Minutes, 4 November 1790, BL, Add 64814, ff. 40-41. Horne Tooke toasted that “should Mr. Burke be impeached ... may his trial last as long as that of Mr. Hastings,” referring to the trial of Warren Hastings, Governor-General of Bengal, which had begun in 1787 and was not yet concluded. Burke played a leading role in prosecution.

^{xxix} Worden, Roundhead Reputations, 226; Wilson, “A Dissident Legacy,” 324; Dickinson, “The Eighteenth Century Debate,” 31; North Briton No. 30, 25 December 1762, p. 64; Joseph Towers, Observations on Public Liberty, Patriotism, Ministerial Despotism, and National Grievances. (London, 1769), 5; Wilkes, “Introduction,” Almon, 5: 180; Price, A Discourse, 1789, 35; Blackstone, Commentaries, 1765-69, 1: 325-326.

^{xxx} John Cartwright, The Legislative Rights of the Commonalty Vindicated. Second Edition. (London, 1777), 70. It should be noted that Burke gave plausibility to this argument. His great complaint against the new men brought in at the accession of George III was that they sought “to get rid of the great Whig connections,” the Whig aristocratic families. He sought to marginalize the importance of William Pitt and his populist Patriots: Edmund Burke, Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents. Third Edition. (London: J. Dodley, 1770), 20; Catherine Macaulay, The History of England. (London, 1783), 8: 330-334.

^{xxx} Thomas Paine, Rights of Man. (London, 1791), 82; Thomas Paine, Rights of Man. Part the second. Second edition. (London, 1792), 13-14, 52; John Callow, King in Exile. (Stroud, 2004), 28; Ann Hughes, The Guardian, 27 June 1988, HLRO, WMT/22, Pt. 2.

^{xxx} Thomas Babington Macaulay, The History of England from the Accession of James II. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1849), 2: 611-617.

^{xxx} ^{xxx} David Cannadine, G.M. Trevelyan: A Life in History. (London: Harper Collins, 1992), 85; G. M. Trevelyan, The English Revolution 1688-89. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), First Published 1938, 3-5, 129.

^{xxx} There are two recent exceptions to this rule, two recent scholars who have seen the events of 1688-89 as truly revolutionary: Melinda Zook, Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England. (University Park, 1999), xv; Tim Harris, Revolution. (London, 2006), 15. But in both cases the interpretative focus has been on James II's overthrow rather than on the consequences of the Revolution. Zook looks at radical writers on the constitution. Harris ends his narrative with 1690/91. Neither focuses on the socio-economic or foreign political consequences.

^{xxx} J. R. Jones, "The Revolution in Context," in Jones ed., Liberty Secured?, 12; John Morrill, "The Sensible Revolution," in Jonathan Israel ed., The Anglo-Dutch Moment. (Cambridge, 1991), 103; Jonathan Scott, Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683. (Cambridge, 1991), 27; Trevor-Roper, Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution, 246. See also, Eveline Cruickshanks, The Glorious Revolution. (Basingstoke, 2000), 18-19; Lionel Glassey, "Introduction," in Lionel Glassey ed., The Reigns of Charles II and James VII & II. (New York, 1997), 9.

^{xxxvi} Dale Hoak, “The Anglo-Dutch Revolution of 1689,” in Dale Hoak and Modechai Feingold eds., The World of William and Mary. (Stanford, 1996), 26; David H. Hosford, Nottingham, Nobles, and the North. (Hamden, CT, 1976), 120; John Pocock, “The Machiavellian Moment Revisited: A Study in History and Ideology,” Journal of Modern History Vol. 53 No. 1(March 1981), 60; Mark Goldie, “The Political Thought of the Anglican Revolution,” in Robert Beddard ed., The Revolutions of 1688. (Oxford, 1991), 104. Others have highlighted the lack of “revolutionary ideology,” and the relative unimportance of the ideas of John Locke: J. R. Western, Monarchy and Revolution. (London, 1972), 283; Cruickshanks, Glorious Revolution, 37; J. P. Kenyon, Revolution Principles. (Cambridge, 1977), 61; Gerald M. Straka, Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688. (Madison, 1962), viii-ix.

^{xxxvii} Western, Monarchy and Revolution, 1; Robert Beddard, Kingdom without a King. (Oxford, 1988), 11; W. A. Speck, Reluctant Revolutionaries. (Oxford, 1988), 242; Jack Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion in Early Modern Europe. (Berkeley, 1991), 318. It should be pointed out that J.C.D. Clark who agrees there was no social revolution, insists that the crown actually gained power after 1688: Revolution and Rebellion. (Cambridge, 1986), 89.

^{xxxviii} Howard Nenner, “Introduction,” in Nenner ed. Politics and the Political Imagination in Later Stuart Britain. (Rochester, NY, 1997), 1; Dickinson, “The Eighteenth Century Debate,” 29; Wilson, “A Dissident Legacy,” 299.

^{xxxix} Auberon Waugh, The Independent, 2 April 1988, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. 2; Tony Benn, 7 July 1988, Hansards, p. 1234, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. I; Sir Bernard Braine, 7 July 1988, Hansards, p. 1234, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. I. See the also The Times, 18 July 1988, HLRO,

WMT/22/Pt. I; John Crosland in The Times, 7 November 1988, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt.2.

Sir Geoffrey Howe appears to have expressed similar views, although this may well have been an instrumental assessment so as to procure Dutch financing of the Tercentenary celebrations: Sir Geoffrey Howe to Sir Charles Troughton, 17 December 1984, HLRO, WMT/1/Pt.2.

^{xi} Charles Wilson to Barry Price, 28 March 1988, HLRO, WMT/12/Pt.2; Noel Annan, “Glorious it was for British Liberties,” The Times, 22 August 1986, HLRO, WMT/12/Pt. I; Sir Bernard Braine, 7 July 1988, Hansards, p. 1234, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. I; Address by Lord Hailsham, Banqueting House, 29 June 1988, HLRO, WMT/12/Pt. 2; Margaret Thatcher, 7 July 1988, Hansards, p. 1230, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. I. The Labour MP for Liverpool, Eric Heffer, argued that “it was neither glorious nor a revolution. It was not a revolution because the real revolution had already taken place....” 7 July 1988, Hansards, p. 1242, HLRO, WMT/22/Pt. I. Henry Roseveare was the lone dissenting voice consulted by the historians’ committee. He complained about the “narrow and, probably, unhistorical emphases – with Parliament hogging the whole show.” Henry Roseveare to Charles Wilson, 5 January 1987, HLRO, WMT/12/Pt. I. The commemoration of the Revolution in the United States celebrated the high political achievement: Joint Resolution of the 99th Congress of the United States, Second Session, 23 August 1986, HLRO, WMT/25; Speech of Senator John Warner, 25 June 1986, 25 June 1986, HLRO, WMT/25. Senator Warner was long frustrated by President Reagan’s delays in signing the Joint Resolution.

^{xii} In this narrow point I dissent from Mark Knights, “The Tory Interpretation of History in the Rage of Parties,” in Paulina Kewes ed. The Uses of History in Early Modern

England. (San Marino, 2006), 349. Knights is right that “historians across the early modern period” *profess* to “reject both the Whig methodology and the Whig interpretation.” But most historians and public intellectuals have in fact propounded “Whiggish conclusions” about the Revolution of 1688-89.