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**The Long-Term Consequences of the English Revolution: Politics, Political Thought
and the Constitution**

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Abstract

This chapter argues that the second revolution of the seventeenth century, triggered by the invasion of William of Orange in 1688, should be seen as conceptually yoked to the first revolution of the 1640s and 1650s. The two revolutions should be seen as part of a linked *process* of revolution that lasted well into the early eighteenth century and which *cumulatively* had a major impact on politics, political thought and the constitution. Seeing the two seventeenth century revolutions as part of a revolutionary process, rather than as two separate ‘events’, enables analysis of themes, such as partisan divisions, print culture, state formation and religious toleration that spanned the two revolutions. The first revolution did not cause the second; but the second revolution addressed many of the issues left outstanding by the first.

Keywords

revolution; state; toleration; Britishness; empire; political culture; parties; print; public sphere; political discourse

Contributor’s note

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Fanaticism in the Early English Enlightenment (Oxford, 2011) and he is now working on a study of early modern corruption, from Reformation to Reform.

One of the first acts of the restored monarchy in 1660 was to pass an act of ‘oblivion’ which sought to eradicate the memory of the 1640s and 1650s. The act made it illegal for ‘anyone maliciously to call or alledge of, or object against any other person or persons, any name or names, or other words of reproach any way tending to revive the memory of the late Differences’. For a period of three years any offender was to be fined. And yet the same act also listed a number of people excepted from its general pardon, including the Irish rebels, anyone who had held traitorous intelligence with a foreign state, and the regicides. As a result, ten signatories of Charles I’s death warrant were tried and executed, and a further nineteen imprisoned for life. The post-revolutionary generation thus held a deeply ambiguous attitude to the mid-century events: the yearning for retribution and punishment often outweighed the official desire to forget. In truth, forgetting such a major upheaval proved impossible. Consequently, the mid-century crisis cast a long shadow over the next fifty years, and arguably for a century after that, until the French revolution provided a more immediate threat, and even then it is striking how resonant the debates of the 1790s were of seventeenth century ones. This chapter therefore seeks to outline some of the ways in which the memory of the civil wars and interregnum shaped the political culture of the later Stuart period and beyond.

A key aim of the chapter is to argue that the second revolution of the seventeenth century, triggered by the invasion of William of Orange in 1688, should be seen as conceptually yoked to the first revolution of the 1640s and 1650s. The two revolutions should be seen as part of a linked *process* of revolution that lasted well into the early eighteenth

century and which *cumulatively* had a major impact on politics, political thought and the constitution. Seeing the two seventeenth century revolutions as part of a revolutionary process, rather than as two separate ‘events’, has the advantage not only of analysing themes across the two revolutions - such as partisan divisions, print culture, state formation and religious toleration - but also has the advantage of seeing the second revolution through contemporary eyes, since those living in 1688 never forgot the precedent and lessons of the earlier revolution. The argument put forward here is not that the first revolution caused the second; but that, as Jonathan Scott argues, because the ‘settlement’ of the 1660s failed to settle much, the second revolution addressed many of the issues left outstanding by the first.¹ The chapter also challenges conventional periodisation, for the ‘early modern’ period is often taken to end in 1660 or 1700. Reuniting the revolutions and assessing their cumulative impact requires venturing into the later Stuart period and the eighteenth century.

Nevertheless discussing the two revolutions together runs counter to much of the historiography, which has considered them as fundamentally different and hence treated them separately. For most scholars, the revolutionary credentials of the 1640s and 1650s are seldom in doubt (even if the period before could be termed ‘unrevolutionary’ by Conrad Russell²); but 1688 has seemed to many to be either a ‘conservative’ or ‘moderate’ revolution pursued by ‘reluctant revolutionaries’ or little more than a palace coup, in which James II was replaced by his son-in-law William.³ Such views are increasingly unsustainable and more attention is now being paid to the revolutionary nature of 1688. Tim Harris’s *Revolution* highlights the radical revolutions that took place in Scotland and Ireland in 1688-9, and Steve Pincus’s *1688: The First Modern Revolution* forcefully asserts the popular, violent and divisive nature of 1688 (in England as well as its neighbours).⁴ Even so, both works consider the second seventeenth century revolution as rather divorced from the first. Showing the links between the two, however, may help to reshape how we conceive of both revolutions. From

the perspective of the restoration of the monarchy and state church in 1660, the first revolution appears something of a failed experiment; but seen from 1725 or 1750, the cumulative legacy of the two seventeenth century revolutions seems to have been a transformative one. Nicholas Tyacke's suggestion that we should think of the English revolution as spanning a long seventeenth century, from c.1590-1720, has the considerable advantage of conceptualising the revolution as a process that played out over a very long time.⁵ Just as we now recognise that the reformation was a process that was on-going throughout much of the seventeenth century, rather than being a sixteenth century event, so we should see the revolutions of the seventeenth century as linked and the process of revolution as far more protracted than has previously been allowed.

The transformation of the state

One theme that links both revolutions is the transformation of the state. As social historians have pointed out, state power was not simply a top-down series of commands that secured obedience and implementation.⁶ As Sir Thomas Smith recognised in his work *De Republica Anglorum* (1583) it was not always easy to tell those who governed from those who were governed: subjects were also sometimes in a position of authority because the state lacked a bureaucracy of paid officials, relying instead on large numbers of voluntary office-holders. Mark Goldie has suggested that perhaps one in ten adult males held office in some capacity.⁷ This could either be a structural weakness or a strength, depending on whether the government was attempting to enforce measures with which the majority of that citizen magistracy agreed. Either way, it created a sense of self-government, of a 'monarchical republic' in Collinson's apt phrase.⁸ This was particularly strong in the urban corporations, as Phil Withington's work has shown: towns were largely self-governing communities with

traditions of citizen participation.⁹ They were what Thomas Hobbes and his pupil the duke of Newcastle saw as dangerous commonwealths gnawing at the inside of the monarchical state. Moreover, the extent of office-holding shaped how many Britons conceived of themselves: independent, privileged, citizens as well as subjects, with rights as well as duties. And the institutions of the state were not so much centrally located, in Westminster and Whitehall, but were located in every parish and every locality. The state was, for much of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, de-centered, local and run by un-salaried officers.

That participatory, dispersed state relying on voluntary office-holders persisted for much of the eighteenth century but was nevertheless fundamentally challenged and reshaped by the seventeenth century revolutions. In part the driver was the need to finance war: both the civil wars of the 1640s and then the wars between revolutionary England and France after 1689 put unprecedented pressures on state finances and on the structures that existed to raise revenue. The regimes of the mid-seventeenth century were able to crack a problem that had bedevilled the Tudor and early Stuart state: how to extract sufficient revenue from a population on whom the state relied for its office-holders. The introduction of the excise, for the first time in early modern history, gave the regime sufficient funds to fight war. These mid-century precedents about how to fight war were not lost, even though during the 1660s and 1670s there was a return to pre-war hand-to-mouth fiscal methods. As John Brewer has shown for the period after 1688, the state was able to raise enormous sums of money to fight foreign wars because of what Peter Dickson called the ‘financial revolution’ of the 1690s: the creation of the bank of England in 1694, which loaned money to the state; the establishment of a national debt with interest payments being met by receipts from taxation; the fostering of a stock market in which private investors made their money available to state-backed private enterprises that loaned money to the state; and a series of fiscal experiments, in lotteries and annuities, that again made private capital available to the state.¹⁰ John Brewer calls this

resulting state a 'fiscal-military one' because it had the capacity to raise sufficient money to fight large-scale war and to do so on a prolonged and repeatable basis. But it was also a state that harnessed the commercial power of England's precocious economy in return for state-sponsored (rather than royal) monopolies and military protection. Between them, the two seventeenth century revolutions solved one of the structural problems of the Tudor and early Stuart state, how to fund and fight war.

Yet the fiscal-military state initiated in the first revolution, and consolidated in the second, also aroused anxieties. A graphic satire of 1683 depicted 'The common wealth ruling with a standing army' as a dragon devouring civil and religious liberties and excreting the numerous taxes needed to pay for this monster state.¹¹ Concerns about the fiscal-military state endured. As Lois Schwoerer showed, the debates about the necessity of keeping up a standing army were particularly intense during the late 1690s.¹² Hostility to war-time high taxation also featured in the propaganda produced by the Stuarts trying to recover their throne and became associated with a 'Country' strain of thinking that attacked government office-holders and their City cronies for benefiting financially from the pursuit of war and accused them of corruption. The larger resources of the state opened the way to peculation, fraud, bribery and extortion. The liberation of self-interest, unleashed by the rise of the fiscal-military and commercial state, was thus felt even more strongly to have occurred with the second revolution. As the resources of the state grew, so the temptations to corrupt, self-interested behaviour also grew - or at least, that was the perception. Whereas corruption had, in the sixteenth century, been primarily about the corruption of faith, it was increasingly being seen as fiscal corruption that was linked to the self-interested behaviour associated with the rise of the new state which lacked codes of behaviour, inherent in the restraining and self-regulating voluntary office-holding model of public duty. The two revolutions of the

seventeenth century created the system that became known as ‘Old Corruption’ and which was the target of reformers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Indeed, ‘country’ rhetoric saw the fiscal-military state undermining the ‘patriot’ ideal who voluntarily and selflessly put country before private interest. Corrupt behaviour also manifested itself in the type of hypocrisy that politicians had shown during the first revolution, when, to some, the pursuit of a religious war was a veneer for the advancement of power and self-interest. Just as tyranny and hypocrisy seemed fused in the first revolution - literally so in the title of William Walwyn’s 1649 tract *Tyrannipocrit* - so it also seemed to pervade the political culture of the fiscal-military state enlarged by the second of the revolutions. One legacy of the revolutions was thus the oppressive, tax-levying state that favoured a group of self-interested parasites who fed off it; another was a tradition of protest against this that championed the ideal of participatory, self-governing communities resting on an ideal of disinterested office-holding. That dualistic legacy will recur in subsequent discussion of other themes.

Such dualism was certainly evident in the divided and pluralistic religious culture left by the first revolution, with adherents to the church of England, which was restored in 1660, ranged against a variety of (not always united) protestant sectarians who scrupled at conformity with it. These divisions profoundly shaped the politics of the later Stuart period and ultimately reconfigured the boundaries between church and state.¹³ The restoration of a persecuting state church, the ending of religious toleration and attempts to repress nonconformity - or ‘dissent’ as it became known - ensured that the thirty years after 1660 were plagued by the failure to achieve a religious settlement. At the heart of the issue was the demand for some degree of religious toleration for the protestant sects that had flourished in the 1640s and 1650s, or a relaxation of the church’s doctrine and ritual that would allow the re-established church to encompass - or ‘comprehend’ in contemporary discourse - moderate

dissenters. Securing either toleration or comprehension was nevertheless an intensely political business. Adherents of the restored church mobilised their forces to block attempts at comprehension. And if the king suspended the penal laws enacted in the early 1660s against catholic and protestant dissenters - as Charles II did in 1672 and James in 1687 and 1688 - it suggested that royal prerogative power was superior to Parliament and therefore threatened that institution, placing the king's will above the law. Yet during the 1660s and 1670s toleration was unobtainable in Parliament, where Anglican royalism was particularly strong.

It took the second revolution to make a Toleration Act possible, in 1689, and even then the position of dissenters in relation to the state remained a hotly contested issue. In 1709 a zealous cleric, Henry Sacheverell, preached an inflammatory sermon attacking the toleration and the dissenters, who he represented as seditious, as well as moderate churchmen who, he claimed, were indifferent to religion and the fate of the church. Sacheverell was tried by Parliament in 1710, an impeachment that produced one of the largest print controversies of the eighteenth century, with over 1000 titles being published in 1709-1710. Yet the Toleration was never repealed. Religious controversy continued to flourish in the eighteenth century but a dividing line between state and religious power had been achieved. Perhaps as importantly, the zealotry of the puritan revolution became increasingly out of fashion, amid a culture of 'politeness' that prized rational and moderate argument. The Biblical and millenarian language used by polemicists in the 1640s and 1650s became much rarer, changing the tone and nature of debate. Although the idea that Britain became more secular is a controversial one, the state was less often conceived in the eighteenth century as endeavouring the type of godly rule favoured by Puritan revolutionaries. Indeed, the moral reform movement at the end of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century relied on paid informers to bring prosecutions (itself another sign of the evolution of the state).

A physical redrawing of the boundaries of the state was also a long term consequence of the first and then the second revolution. Whereas a union with Ireland and Scotland had been imposed by force, and formalised in the Instrument of Government, the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 dissolved the British experiment in union. Yet a British dimension of the second revolution was striking. More radical than the revolution south of the border, the Scots abolished church government by bishops and instituted the Presbyterian kirk. Unlike the English Bill of Rights, which was offered to William and Mary at the time of their coronation, the Scottish Claim of Right was more assertive and radical, stating that James had 'forfeited' his crown. But it was the need to secure the protestant succession after the death of Queen Anne's sole surviving child that forced England to ensure unification in 1707 with Scotland to form the new state of Britain. Whilst this did not entirely solve the problem of the multiple state - Scotland remained a refuge for sympathisers of the exiled Stuarts who staged rebellions there in 1715 and 1745 - the legislative union achieved by the Cromwellian regime was made permanent (at least, until recent devolution). Linda Colley's suggestion that a Protestant national identity was a product of the eighteenth century has been challenged but arguably a distinctive 'Britishness' was a legacy of the first and second seventeenth century revolutions.¹⁴ But this was a Britishness without catholic Ireland. The Cromwellian, Protestant conquest of Ireland given renewed energy as a result of James II's military stand there. William III was forced personally to head an army to defeat the Jacobite forces at the Boyne in 1691 and the later 'peace' treaties further eroded catholic property rights and liberties in favour of the Protestant minority. But instead of union, the Irish was subordinated, with colonial status emphasised by the 1720 Declaratory Act. The union of England, Scotland and Ireland, temporarily achieved in 1653, had to wait until the creation of the United Kingdom in 1801.

The boundaries of the state were also expanding into a British Atlantic world. Before 1640 colonial expansion had been the result of royal encouragement of noble proprietors with little engagement by the state; but after the first revolution this was reversed, with the state taking a leading role, and the religious tensions that had exploded in England were also key to conflict in North America. By 1660 the Atlantic world was centralised but diverse, religiously divided, polarised and prickly, with an increasing shift towards black labour. Of course the great migration had begun in the 1630s; and religious divisions already existed; but the first revolution had a profound effect in creating an Atlantic sensibility that linked the colonies. Owen Stanwood has recently shown how the second revolution significantly accelerated this process.¹⁵ Whereas in the seventeenth century the American colonies were plagued by rebellions, he suggests that the second revolution allowed Britain to rebuild its empire into a powerful resource. Just as the fear of catholic conspiracy had permeated English politics in the 1630s and 1640s, and again in the 1680s, so anti-popey initially helped to trigger revolution in Boston, New York and Maryland in the late 1680s but then provided an ideological glue that held the emerging empire together. American colonists thus saw themselves as Britons part of a potent Protestant union. In that sense the wars of religion of the mid seventeenth century helped to forge a global empire, though this was one with a labour force drawn not from the white indentured workers who still composed the bulk of Caribbean populations in 1650 but black, African slaves. It is striking how, as William Pettigrew has shown, ‘revolution principles’ established by the second revolution (such as of liberty to trade) ironically, as he puts it, upheld ‘a freedom to enslave’.¹⁶

Pettigrew’s case study, the Royal African Company, also reminds us that the achievement of global trading companies became part of the transformation of the state. Brenner’s *Merchants and Revolution* showed the connections between commercial and political power (thereby resuscitating some of the Marxist, social perspective of the

revolution), and the struggle in the first revolution between different conceptions of the role of the sovereign vis a vis trade. Brenner also sees the seventeenth century revolutions as a coherent pair: 'The Revolution of 1688 and its sequels not only realised the project of 1640-1641 of the Parliamentary capitalist aristocracy; in so doing, it also realised, in a politically subordinated form, the project of 1649-1653 of its leading allies outside the landed classes, the American colonial and East Indian-interloping leadership.'¹⁷ Steve Pincus has given Brenner's thesis a renewed interest and vitality by suggesting that the second revolution also witnessed a struggle between rival political economies, one based on land and the other on manufacture, rather than a fundamentally religious conflict. Indeed, his *1688* suggests that political economy was a central concern to the revolutionaries. Certainly the revolutions unleashed the trading corporations from royal control (a problem that was to resurface with the East India Company, once significant territorial acquisitions were made from the mid C18th onwards). But we might also note the ways in which these trading companies, which secured parliamentary monopolies as a result of the second revolution, shaped Britain's interactions with a wider world. The revolution in foreign policy ushered in by the second revolution, reversing Cromwell's decision to go to war with Spain rather than France, ensured a century of rivalry with France that necessarily spilled over into a global theatre. This, combined with the consolidation of the British state noted earlier, fostered the forging of a British national identity. Whilst Britishness owed much to the reformation it was also fundamentally reshaped by the two seventeenth century revolutions.

The state, then, underwent long-term change as a result of the two revolutions. It became capable of fighting and sustaining large-scale war, initially at home but then, after the second revolution, abroad. This was in part the result of, and in turn accelerated, a financial revolution that created new forms of public finance that relied on a new notion of public credit that underpinned the state's capacity to raise money and hence necessarily became the

focal point of political and public debate. The state also became more geographically unified within the isle of Britain but also increasingly imperial in North America, the Caribbean and the East Indies. At the same time, clearer boundaries between the state and private religious belief were put in place. As this suggests, these changes affected how the public interacted with the state and the type of political culture that prevailed.

Political Culture

A legacy of both seventeenth century revolutions was institutionalised partisanship. Partisanship had, of course, been evident at least since the reformation but in the later seventeenth century it became more formalised and institutionalised with the emergence of party politics.¹⁸ The party labels of Whig and Tory emerged in 1681, when polarisation over the succession, toleration, and the powers of king and people reached a height. From then on, to varying degrees of discipline and intensity, something like a party system operated. Yet although this was novel - and it took several generations for parties to be distinguished from factions and for pluralism to be grudgingly accepted as inevitable - it is striking how many observers of the emergence of party politics in the later Stuart period drew the lines back to the divisions of the mid-century revolution. The mapping of Cavaliers and Parliamentarians on to Tory and Whig was not, of course, a perfect one, and arguably became rather fuzzy in the 1720s, 30s and 40s. Nevertheless the identity of the first Whigs and Tories owed a good deal to enduring stereotypes drawn from the first revolution.¹⁹

To the Whigs and Low Churchmen (those who sought a more broad-bottomed state church with some measure of toleration) the Tories were crypto-Laudians intent on resurrecting the power of the church, magnifying the prerogatives of the monarchy and denying civil liberties. The Whig version of the Tories thus played on notions of Stuart

tyranny and a crypto-catholic conspiracy theory reminiscent of the 1630s and early 1640s. Indeed a Whig version of the history of the revolution highlighted the growth of popery and arbitrary power. But the memory of the first revolution proved far more powerful to the Tories and High Churchmen (those who upheld a strict notion of the established church with no room for latitude for nonconformists), since the civil war and the interregnum gave them plenty of ammunition against dissenters. Thus to Tories and High Churchmen, the Whigs were republicans, dissenters and atheists intent on undermining church and state, just as the puritan revolutionaries had done a generation earlier. The slogan '41 is come again' proved a useful Tory rallying cry during the succession crisis of 1678-1682, when it seemed possible that the nation might once again descend into civil war. Roger L'Estrange, the principal propagandist for the Tories, endlessly repeated the claim that the spirit of the first revolution had revived to pose a renewed danger to the country. Indeed, the fear of a return to civil war proved both enduring and an important element of the Tory psyche. 30 January became an annual fast day allowing clerics to thunder out warnings about the past and ongoing danger of regicide, and prints of Charles the Martyr were published as further reminders. One of the high church cleric Henry Sacheverell, prosecuted in Parliament in 1710, depicted him holding Charles I's portrait, and in his offending sermon Sacheverell had very clearly drawn the parallels between the dissenters of the early eighteenth century and those of the mid seventeenth. That theme was echoed elsewhere. One early eighteenth century print, *A Genealogy of Anti-Christ Oliver Cromwel Triumphant, as Head of ye Fanaticks and their Vices, supported by Devils*, showed Oliver at the head of a tribe of dissenters who, it alleged, produced 'strife', 'sedition', 'rebellion', 'discord' and 'civil war'. Indeed, the historical interpretation of the first revolution was in part seen through party lenses, with Whig and Tory versions of the causes and course of the civil war and Cromwellian rule.²⁰ It is significant that Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* was published to coincide with a Tory

election campaign in 1702, since the memory of the civil war was thought to be an electoral asset.

As that use of the memory of the civil war in electioneering suggests, the bitterness of later Stuart politics owed much to the seventeenth century shift from relatively consensual ‘selection’ to partisan ‘election’ of MPs described by Mark Kishlansky, who has also argued that 1646 marked a key turning point from consensus to competition within Parliament.²¹ The later Stuart period built on earlier developments but also accelerated trends as a result of frequent elections that occurred, on average, every two and a half years between 1679 and 1716. The first revolution’s concern for free and fair elections also endured. The second revolution was in part triggered by James II’s attempts to purge and pack Parliament and after 1689 a series of measures reached the statute book to try to regulate electioneering. There were also discussions about reorganising the distribution of parliamentary seats and altering the franchise, and some of these echoed the innovations of the 1650s. The Leveller demand for annual parliaments, for example, continued to be made after 1660, especially when Charles II failed to call a general election between 1661 and 1679. Annual sessions of parliament became the norm after 1689, since the need to raise war-time parliamentary taxation made them routine; and in 1694 a Triennial Act, similar to the one conceded by Charles I in 1641, was passed until its repeal in 1716 in favour of less frequent elections every seven years. The size of the electorate also grew in the later Stuart period, so that by 1715 a higher percentage of the adult male population could vote in an election than at any other time in the eighteenth century and even after the 1832 Reform Act. Nevertheless the systematic recasting of the franchise, envisaged by the earlier revolutionaries, failed to reach the statute book, though there were attempts to introduce a standard scot and lot franchise in boroughs, and even, in 1679, to introduce the £200 voting threshold introduced by the Instrument of Government.²² The earlier calls for a redistribution of seats were also kept alive

by a series of attempts to highlight the disparity between the number of MPs, tax and population. Even so, it would be almost two hundred years before extensive reform was enacted.

The electioneering of the later Stuart period owed another debt to the first revolution: a free press. Although pre-publication censorship was restored in 1661, it lapsed during the succession crisis in 1679, resulting in a flood of material that matched levels achieved in the 1640s. Control was re-imposed by extra-parliamentary measures in 1683 and by statute in 1685 but the second revolution saw the demise of the 'licensing' system of control, with the system being allowed to expire permanently in 1695.²³ This opened the way in the eighteenth century for a market-regulated press that expanded according to demand rather than being restricted by governmental pre-publication censorship. It is clear that the two seventeenth century revolutions thus achieved a transformation of the press and its role in politics and society.

If we add to that increase in print the improvements in the postal system and the introduction of the coffee house (first in Oxford in 1651 but spreading to most provincial towns by 1700) we could talk about a communications revolution. The implications of that can nevertheless be exaggerated: oral and manuscript cultures were not simply displaced by print. But print did change how the conversations within and beyond the state could operate. The greater availability of print in the 1640s and 1650s helped to change the way in which public opinion was articulated and represented; and the power of this as a force on government was consolidated after the second revolution. One indication of this is the transformation of the periodical. The newspaper was largely the creation of the first revolution but came of age after the second, so that by the early eighteenth century Britain had daily, morning and evening papers, and, from the 1700s onwards, regional ones. Enterprising publishers experimented with the potential of periodicals to engage and interact

with the public. John Dunton in the late seventeenth century thus developed a question and answer format, a printed dialogue between readers and writers, and this was soon adopted elsewhere.

Such developments enlarged what Jurgen Habermas described as the ‘public sphere’ which he saw as emerging in the 1690s.²⁴ Although commentators have suggested that this was already in existence by the 1640s, so that we should acknowledge that the later period built on earlier foundations, the 1690s public sphere was both more robust (in part because of the free press established after 1695) and, because of discussions about the fiscal-military state and public credit, slightly different to that of the first revolution.²⁵ Habermas was clear that the public sphere was a bourgeois one: knowledge about the state was economically as well as politically powerful. As we have seen, the fiscal innovations of the 1690s created a system of public credit that both stimulated discussion about economic issues but also made the financing of the war dependent on public investment. Similarly although notions of ‘civility’ had permeated much of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the later Stuart public sphere was also a self-consciously ‘polite’ one. One of its champions, the third earl of Shaftesbury, was clear that politeness could only flourish in conditions of freedom and hence that it was a consequence of the defeat of tyranny in the second revolution.²⁶ Yet there is also a sense in which politeness was a reaction against the first as well as the second revolution. Politeness urged reason over passion and abuse, and moderation over zeal; and to that extent (although it remained an ideal far more than Habermas allowed) it was a cultural mechanism for ensuring that the excessive political and religious heats of the mid century revolution could be contained within civil society without recourse to civil war.

An interesting test-case for the achievement of the seventeenth century revolutions in changing communicative practices is petitioning. Before the civil war petitions were written in manuscript; presented to someone in authority who was perceived to be in a position to

offer redress; and were regarded with enormous suspicion by the government when appropriated as a means of trying to exert popular pressure on the those authorities. During and after the first seventeenth century revolution they were often printed: their ostensible audience was now not only the addressee but also those who read the petition. Printed petitions thus provoked counter-petitions, leading to the type of on-going conversation that helped to invoke public opinion.²⁷ Petitions, addresses and associations became a new and important way of articulating popular grievances and exerting popular pressure for national campaigns. Although one of the first acts of the newly restored regime in 1661 was to pass an act forbidding ‘tumultuous’ petitions (ironically modelled on Parliament’s 1648 restraint of army petitioning), mass petitioning was revived in 1679 to try to force Charles II to summon the parliament that he had prorogued and thereafter subscriptions to petitions, addresses and associations became an important way of mobilising public opinion and using it as a political instrument. Although the right to petition Parliament remained contested, and the number of petitioning campaigns on national political and religious issues declined in the 1720s, 30s and 40s, the revival of mass petitioning campaigns in the 1760s, early 1780s and early 1790s was a key means of articulating popular opinion.

The addresses signed in their thousands during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century to express loyalty to the monarch (on accessions, deaths, military victories and national threats) nevertheless remind us that an important legacy of the first revolution was popular loyalism as much as radicalism. Allegiance to the church and monarchy survived the experiences of the 1640s and 50s to flower - sometimes in an aggressive form of Anglican royalism - during the Restoration era and beyond. Robert Beddard suggested that the revolution of 1688 was initially a revolution by those Anglican-royalists who resented what they saw as James II’s breach of the understanding of the union of protestant church and state, a revolution that was hijacked in its later stages by those seeking a more Whiggish

outcome.²⁸ Certainly a good deal of the success of the Tory party after 1688 derived from an ardent loyalism to the church of England (though it is true to say that many Whigs were also moderate Churchmen). Expressions of duty and loyalty to the monarch were plentiful enough to show what in Queen Anne's reign in the first decade of the eighteenth century bordered on a national cult of monarchy, a collective attempt to exorcise the memory of the regicide. The Sacheverell affair in 1710 also produced an outpouring of loyalty to the established church. Floods of loyalist, Tory addresses in 1710 and 1713, for example, repeatedly attacked the republicanism and atheism associated with the Whigs. Similarly it is clear that popular radicalism on the streets and at the polls was more than matched by popular loyalism. This militant High Church Toryism - a legacy of the first revolution's Anglican royalism - remained a persistent feature of popular politics through to the Church and King riots in 1791 and the 'vulgar conservatism' described by Mark Philp.²⁹ The important point to note is that the two revolutions left a divided political culture and discourse, leaving a legacy both of political, religious and social radicalism but also an equally powerful adherence to church and monarchy. These conflicting and contesting strands shaped each other and the parameters of political debate and thought.

Political Discourse

Was there a set of revolutionary ideas or a revolutionary language bequeathed by the first seventeenth century revolution to the second revolution and beyond? Or was there a counter-revolutionary ideology with its own counter-revolutionary language? Given the dualistic legacy outlined earlier, the conclusion that both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary ideologies persisted and competed against each other should not be surprising.³⁰ Both revolutions of the seventeenth century generated and left rival, antagonistic ideologies that

provided a resource of ideas and ways of expressing them that could be invoked by later politicians for their own purposes. It is true that much of the eighteenth century invocation of the seventeenth century past focused on the revolution of 1688-9 rather than that of the 1640s and 1650s: revolution societies were set up in 1788 but there was no equivalent in 1742 or 1749. Much of the discussion of the first revolution occurred in histories.³¹ Yet there was also a small group of ‘commonwealthsmen’ who did very consciously seek to keep the commonwealth experiment alive, through republications of mid-century texts or the absorption of commonwealth principles into their writings.³² This did not mean the survival of republicanism, if the latter is taken to advocate a state without a prince; there were very few calls for the abolition of monarchy after 1660. But if republicanism or ‘commonwealth’ principles amounted to a set of values and a language of public virtue then a commonwealth tradition did persist.³³ Moreover, although ‘revolution principles’ were debated after 1689, their formulation owed a good deal to the first revolution, the memory of which was never far below the surface of public debate. These points can be illustrated through a brief sketch of the debate over ‘revolution principles’ that erupted in Anne’s reign, when party divisions were at their most bitter and came to a head during and after the trial in 1710 of the High Church cleric Henry Sacheverell.³⁴

One very important link between the first and second revolutions was the doctrine of popular sovereignty and the right of resistance that it conferred. In the sermon for which he was prosecuted Sacheverell alleged that those who upheld these notions approved of ‘the horrid Actions and Principles of Forty One’. He saw the dissenters and republicans of the first revolution as active again: ‘the Old Leaven of their Fore-Fathers is still working in their present Generation’ and their ‘Poison still remains in this brood of Vipers, to Sting us to Death’.³⁵ Yet the Whigs did uphold a right of resistance which was seen as a key revolution principle. Countering Sacheverell’s attack, Robert Walpole argued that ‘to plead for

Resistance' was 'to assert and maintain the very Being of our present Government and Constitution; and to assert Non-resistance, in that boundless and unlimited sense in which Doctor Sacheverell presumes to assert it, is to Sap and Undermine the very Foundations of the Government'.³⁶ Establishing a right of resistance was so important because a good deal more flowed from it, including the rule of law as opposed to the arbitrary whims of monarchs; a protestant, parliamentary-determined succession; and the war against France. Denying a right of resistance, the Whig managers of Sacheverell's prosecution argued, questioned the Queen's own right to sit on the throne. The right of resistance was the most important revolution principle, bearing the weight of the change of dynasty and acting as short-hand for a series of other positions about civil governance derived from the people.

A second revolution principle running across both revolutions was religious toleration. The defence of this took several days of Sacheverell's trial. Lord William Paulet asserted that 'the good Effects of the Wisdom of the Legislature in making that Act had been seen' and Spencer Cowper insisted that 'Indulgence was requir'd from them as Christians and as men professing Humanity and Good Will towards one another'. On the other hand Sacheverell, the doctor's prosecutors suggested, wanted a 'Church that would destroy all those who brought about, and had since supported, the happy Revolution. A Church, which upon Anti-Christian principles, profess'd Burning for Conscience-sake ... A Church that would turn all the Blessings they enjoy'd under the present Administration into all those Miseries they had got rid of by the late glorious Revolution'.³⁷ Such views hardened amongst some into a long-lasting anti-clericalism - a fear of 'priestcraft' - that also drew nourishment from attacks on all forms of clerical power made in the 1640s.³⁸

A right of resistance and religious toleration stood at the core of 'revolution principles', though there were many different ways of grounding these: historically, through an 'ancient constitution', scripturally or by deriving them from reason or natural rights,

natural equality and natural liberty.³⁹ Other ‘revolution principles’ flowed from them or were sometimes connected to them: freedom of the press and of Parliament.⁴⁰ The popular tract *Political Aphorisms*, first published in 1690, was a compendium of revolution principles (including sections of John Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government*, which Richard Ashcraft has argued owed a good deal to Leveller ideas).⁴¹ The tract was re-published in 1709, during the Sacheverell affair with the fuller title *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, suggesting (as revolutionaries in the 1640s had) that the voice of the People was the voice of God. The tract set out, as its title-page proclaimed, the following principles: that all power derived from and for the good of the people and was the product of a contract between King and People; that resisting tyrannical power was allowed by scripture and reason; and that the High Church Tory doctrine of ‘passive obedience’, that is to say obedience to all the monarch’s demands, was a ‘damnable and treasonable’ one. The tract, republished in a different form with the title *The Judgment of Whole Kingdoms*, went through at least 12 editions by 1714, making it one of the best sellers of the eighteenth century.

Yet revolution principles were also bitterly attacked by those who sought to uphold notions of a strong monarchy and church. The tract by Robert Filmer for which Charles I had refused a licence, *Patriarcha*, was nevertheless republished during the succession crisis in 1680 in order to re-state a doctrine of patriarchal royal authority in which power was divinely given, owing nothing to popular sovereignty, and without any right of resistance. Although Filmerian ideas were dealt a major blow by the transfer of the Crown to William III in 1689, divine right ideas did persist and found expression in the Jacobite movement seeking the restoration of the Stuarts. But even if divine right was largely abandoned, the attack on revolution principles was uncompromising. Francis Atterbury, a future Jacobite plotter and bishop in 1713, published a refutation of *Vox Populi Vox Dei*. Making every individual’s will the law for church and state, he claimed, would create ‘no other than Confusion’ and sully

the word of God. ‘The Voice of the People is the Cry of Hell, leading to Idolatry, Rebellion, Murder and all the Wickedness the Devil can suggest’. It was, he claimed, ‘the Voice of the People, rais’d in frequent Mutinies and Seditions, that began the Rebellion against King Charles the first of England; that maintain’d it for so many Years, that brought him to a Tryal and Murder’d him on a Scaffold’.⁴² The history of loyalist political thought has yet to be written but it would be a rich one, linking the two revolutions of the seventeenth century with the counter-revolutionary ideology and popular loyalism of the 1790s, and stressing a high strain of loyalism to monarchy and church. It is no coincidence that John Reeves called his anti-Jacobin society ‘The Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers’ and that in 1793 it published ‘The Fatal Effects of Republican Principles, exemplified in the History of England from the Death of Charles I to the Restoration of Charles II’.⁴³

It is of course possible to exaggerate the part played by the memory of the civil war and interregnum in the century after 1660. The observation of 30 January fast day, for example, seems to have waned in the first decades of the eighteenth century.⁴⁴ In 1710 the decree of Oxford University that had been passed in 1683 to proscribe revolution principles and authors who were thought to enunciate them (including Hunton, Milton, Owen, Baxter, Hobbes, the Quakers, and Fifth Monarchists) was ceremoniously burnt along with Sacheverell’s sermon and condemned by Parliament. Nevertheless the shadow of the first revolution was a long one, influencing the character and shape of the second seventeenth century revolution and the ensuing hundred years. The cumulative effect of the two revolutions was to transform the state’s fiscal and military capabilities, establishing a framework that would facilitate a global empire. Similarly the two revolutions transformed the public sphere, embedding printed, national discussion and systematic partisanship at its heart and enabling a bourgeois set of investors to acquire a stake in the state, both directly

through their capital and indirectly, through public opinion. Finally, the two revolutions left a complex and rich ideological heritage, a dualistic revolutionary and counter-revolutionary set of ideas and languages. The varied set of traditions could be invoked many years later for polemical purposes and in that sense, the civil war never really ended.

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