

continued optimism that Christ was going to return and institute a better world is amply demonstrated in this detailed and worthy study.

Steve Pincus. *1688: The First Modern Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009, 2011. xiii + 647 pp. \$25.00 pbk. Review by NEWTON KEY, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

In 1989, Margaret Thatcher used a bicentennial of the French Revolution to contrast it unfavorably with England's anti-revolution of 1688. Steve Pincus, however, in his massive study of the revolutionary decade, 1685-1696, rejects any notion of a quiet revolution rooted in tradition, a notion he ascribes to Thomas Babington Macaulay's interpretation which dominated virtually all future explanations of 1688-89 (from popular ideas of English exceptionalism to Marxist, Whig, or revisionist arguments). Unlike revisionist critiques of Macaulay's Whig interpretation of history, however, Pincus happily models revolution. Whereas Macaulay's 1688 is bloodless, Protestant, its consensual nature reflective of English character, and propelled by religion and dynastic not social conflict, Pincus's 1688 is violent, its protagonists advance competing, secular views of government and political economy, divisive, and includes a popular, social revolution. In this, 1688 presaged modern revolutions that succeeded it and did not mirror previous religious or baronial wars. Moreover, Pincus suggests that the revolution arose from two divergent roads to the modern state: one bureaucratic and centralized, the other committed to the free market and individual rights.

Eighteenth century "establishment" voices first minimized revolutionary changes and later voices buried the modernity of 1688. (So many historians are blamed for furthering this conspiracy that there is a certain dark humor to be had from Pincus's willingness to take on and smite scholars of all viewpoints, as being "wrong," "flawed," "fundamentally mistaken" (3, 94, 90, etc.). Opposition Whigs, however, continued to laud 1688 as a "salutiferous" violent, popular revolution (William Pulteney, quoted, 17). Edmund Burke, horrified by the shock of the news in the wake of 1789, constructed a vision of 1688-89 as a Restoration which dominated interpretations through

to Macaulay. In an admirably succinct chapter on social science theorizing on revolutions Pincus clearly lays out his guiding postulate: “[s]tate modernization ... is a necessary *prerequisite* for revolution” (33, 37, etc.). Graduate exam preparations begin here. The introductory chapters on previous interpretations divorce antiquity too readily from revolutionary thought (see Janelle Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*, 2006). And the theoretical discussion at times reads like a late-twentieth-century debate in Harvard Square: a modification of Theda Skocpol here; a correction of Jeff Goodwin there; ultimately, a rethinking of Barrington Moore, Jr.’s *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1967).

1688’s core ten chapters divide into three sections: pre-revolution, revolution, and post-revolution (Pincus convincingly argues that we cannot evaluate the Revolution solely by examining the ideas and actions found in those few, key months of late 1688 and early 1689 alone). The first section begins with an exhilarating walk through “English Society in 1685,” which differs from that of Macaulay in that it is dominated by trade, manufacturing, and cities, not landed society. Pincus’s paean late-seventeenth-century England as an urban, “capitalist society” (59) *tout court* is oddly Whiggish: a literate, well-insured populace is housed in brick dwellings and walking well-lit streets. We must turn elsewhere (e.g., Paul Griffiths, *Lost Londons*, 2008) to find the costs paid by people on the margins for all this rapid, metropolitan expansion. In considering English politics at the accession of James, Pincus does a balancing act between asserting that “anti-Catholic sentiment” or “identity politics” had limited impact (99), while at the same time noting how Monmouth’s supporters came to him with banners “painted with Bibles” (108), and that his rising in the Summer of 1685 failed in large part because it was the last of the wars of religion. That is, England was ripe for a modern, secular revolution throughout the 1680s, but not until 1688 would it actually have one.

Much of the pre-revolution section attempts to debunk the revisionist view of James as a ruler focused on religious toleration and not absolutist. A chapter considering “Catholic Modernity” under James criticizes without fully disproving the revisionist “Anglican revolution” argument advanced by Mark Goldie. Neither James’s

government nor his Anglican opponents were guided primarily by religious ideology; instead, Pincus argues that one must look beyond the “narrowly British context” (122) to see that James’s policies were simply one path to a centralized, statist modernity and Gallican as much as Catholic. Gallican refusal to countenance subjects questioning a monarch’s decision does help explain James’s unpolitick response to the Seven Bishops better than, say, a steadfast commitment to religious toleration. One brief chapter describes how James put this theory of a Gallican, modern monarchy into practice by focusing on modernization attempts in the military and government at the center and in the localities. The story—quartering troops, remodeling corporations, insisting on ideological purity in churches and universities—is familiar; the main difference being that Pincus emphasizes that this was all in the service of “re-Catholicization” (178), not toleration. A chapter on “resistance to Catholic modernity” discounts the patina of “long-held anti-Catholic prejudices,” and emphasizes instead “secular and legal” justifications (197). Thus, the opposition developed a Whig sense of modernity, few attempted to return to a conservative past, and few Whigs or Dissenters collaborated with James’s regime. (While generally convincing, this account does accept too readily what Whigs and Dissenters later claimed they did or did not do during James’s reign; as such it is susceptible to the Mandy Rice-Davies retort: “they would say that, wouldn’t they?”)

Most exciting is the brief middle section on the revolution itself, divided into chapters on the revolution as popular, violent, and divisive, respectively. Historians from both the right and the left have repeatedly told the story that 1688-89 was at best a revolt of the landowning/propertied classes not the populace; that the “Bloodless Revolution” was exactly that; that the “Sensible Revolution” was consensual and not divisive, unlike later revolutions which resulted in civil war. *1688* clearly demonstrates that other groups besides landed aristocrats were present at the Revolution. Pincus marshals evidence of widespread revolutionary sentiment: from contemporary reports of “a universal defection ... of nobility, gentry, and commonalty” (235), to “broad popular support” (244) for the Anglo-Dutch force as it made its slow march to London, to the Irish Fright of December 1688. Perhaps it is too much to hope that such evidence of lower and

middling sort involvement would also show that these players were driven by secular and civil rights concerns and not religion as had been Monmouth's maids of Taunton. The Irish Fright and anti-Catholic violence certainly help dispel the idea of a quiet revolution; but they also echo the pre-modern xenophobia of Evil May Day of 1517, as much as they bear "a striking resemblance to the French Great Fear of 1789" (247). While Pincus has to admit that both Whigs and Tories helped oust James, he argues that they had divided again even before the exiled King sailed across the Channel. The Declaration of Rights resulted from "tactical compromise, not ideological consensus" (293). Jacobite criticisms and conspiracies help exemplify a political nation divided not brought together by revolution.

The longest chapter is found in the "revolutionary transformation" section. A chapter on the consequences for foreign policy, takes its theme from a contemporary comment that debate was "whether we enter into a close correspondency with France or Holland" (Roger Morrice quoted, 316). Pincus draws upon his own work on universal monarchy (*Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650–1668*, 1996, and numerous articles). Hollandophobia or Francophobia could be and often was expressed in confessional terms; but Pincus quotes many contemporaries who framed the revolution and resulting Nine Years' War in terms of politics and trade: "not a war of religion" (Sir William Dutton Colt, quoted 342), but "to oppose ... universal monarchy" (John Petter, quoted 343). Pincus argues that the revolutionaries were nationalists ("We are Englishmen," the Edinburgh-born Bishop Gilbert Burnet somewhat surprisingly announced in 1689, quoted 348); at the same time he sees their purview beyond the boundaries of the nation, as his extensive account of the impact of Robert Molesworth's *Account of Denmark* (1693) reveals. (Pincus's claim that "Whig scholars wrote English foreign policy ... out of the history ... of 1688-89" [477], appears overblown; even the classic *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714* by George Norman Clark, 1934, 1956, highlights the international context.) Pincus elsewhere has done much to re-examine late-Stuart political economy, and his long chapter on how the revolution transformed political economy debates crucially adds to the historiography. Commercial and imperial questions called for modern answers, not

a Machiavellian recourse-to-antiquity moment. When he asserts that James II “embraced a Tory rather than a Whig political economy” (372), however, the argument becomes somewhat circular. The Williamite revolution and the modern future was anti-monopolist. A glaring exception was the East India Company which, like a modern oil company, weathered many changes in government. A revolutionary transformation of the Church is claimed based on a prosopographical examination of William and Mary’s episcopal appointments for the first four years of their reign: not “moderate Tory” (411, 423, etc.), but “Whiggish” (423) “Low Churchmen” (433-4, etc.).

A final, substantive chapter analyzes the 1696 Association Rolls and the Allegiance Controversy between 1689 and 1694 to show how the revolution “had produced a transformed and vastly expanded political nation” (437n.). Politics had become post-confessional. Political culture had experienced “a revolutionary change” (471). The conclusion admirably ties together the implications of the book’s various arguments for a social revolution in the 1680s. It even entertains a useful counterfactual—what would England at the turn of the century have looked like if James’s Weberian bureaucratic, “Catholic modernizing regime” (484) had resisted the Williamite descent?

The strength of this work—two clear paths to modernity—is also a fault. Many individuals and even groups resist such polar identities. Country Tories, for example, developed during the 1690s out of a group of committed Whigs under Charles II and James II. Rather than their world view shifting 180 degrees, it is at least as likely that the situation had changed under William. And argument clarity sometimes comes at the expense of the narrative. For the latter, one might profitably turn to W.A. Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries* (1989), Tim Harris, *Revolution* (2006), or two breezy, but effective popular narratives—Patrick Dillon, *The Last Revolution* (2006) and Edward Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution* (2007). Also, Harris, Dillon, and Vallance share in large part Pincus’s view that 1688 was violent, popular, and divisive. This very long book again and again repeats its main argument and corollaries. The length might explain why the index ignores provincial cities, counties, and any except the most obvious personages. But I would be reluctant to lose some 130 pages of notes which read as an alternate history of print and political culture. And

for all its heft, the book is well illustrated—contemporary medallions and coins heading each chapter, playing cards retelling the story of the 1680s—and clear descriptions accompany the images. Scholars working on the meaning of modernity in late-Stuart Britain and beyond must read this book. Lengthy critiques of the work have been released (we especially await Scott Sowerby's book on the religious politics of James II's reign), which question Pincus's ascription of groupings based on inferred motives, his downplaying of confessional politics, and on his use of quotes for proof without due context. and others. But at least one group of graduate students have appreciated *1688's* clear, at times dogmatic, arguments, which help situate existing scholarship and will likely spark future work on the Revolutionary era.

Brenda M. Pask with Margaret Harvey, eds. *The Letters of George Davenport 1651-1677*. Rochester, NY: The Surtees Society Publication by The Boydell Press, 2011. xv + 296 pp. + 1 illus. \$90.00. KAY J. BLALOCK, ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

Letters, especially in an age in which text messages, emails, memos, and other forms of quick, easy, got-to-have-it-today communication, offer a more personal touch at a time when social media is actually not that social. Letter writing is an art, a decorative mirror into the past. Reading a letter allows one to identify with the writer on a more intimate level; it offers a conversational communication between two individuals and can provide the reader with a picture of everyday life during the letter writer's era as well as an insight into the thoughts and character of the one speaking through the written word. Brenda Pask and Margaret Harvey's edited collection introduces the reader to George Davenport, not just the man of note, the bibliophile, the caretaker of Bishop Cosin's library, but the personal man, described in his memorial as an intelligent, charitable, caring individual to members of his parish, friends, and family.

The editors place the personal man within the context of England's political turmoil and religious troubles of the 1640s through the post-Restoration period of the 1660s. *The Letters of George Davenport 1651-1677* includes 148 epistles written, mainly to his former tutor