Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World

Population Change and State Breakdown in England, France, Turkey, and China, 1600-1850

25th Anniversary Edition

Jack A. Goldstone

ROUTLEDGE

Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World

25th Anniversary Edition

What can the great crises of the past teach us about contemporary revolutions? Jack Goldstone shows the important role of population changes, youth bulges, urbanization, elite divisions and fiscal crises in creating major political crises. Goldstone shows how state breakdowns in both western monarchies and Asian empires followed the same patterns, triggered when inflexible political, economic, and social institutions were overwhelmed by cumulative changes in population structure that collided with popular aspirations and state-elite relations. Examining the great revolutions of Europe—the English and French Revolutions—and the great rebellions of Asia, which shattered dynasties in Ottoman Turkey, China, and Japan, he shows how long cycles of revolutionary crises and stability similarly shaped politics in Europe and Asia, but led to different outcomes.

In this 25th anniversary edition, Goldstone reflects on the history of revolutions in the last twenty-five years, from the Philippines and other color revolutions to the Arab Uprisings and the rise of the Islamic State. In a new introduction, he re-examines his pioneering look at the role of population changes—such as rising youth cohorts, urbanization, shifting elite mobility—as continuing causal factors of revolutions and rebellions. The new concluding chapter updates his major theory and looks to the future of revolutions in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.

Jack A. Goldstone is Virginia E. and John T. Hazel, Jr. Professor of Public Policy and Eminent Scholar at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University. He has previously taught at Northwestern University, the University of California, and Caltech.

PRAISE FOR THE NEW EDITION

Books that significantly reorient fields of study are rare. *Revolution and Rebellion* did just that with the study of revolution when it first appeared in 1991. Rarer still are books that seem just as relevant, or perhaps more so, a quarter of a century after their initial release. As the new material in the 25th anniversary edition makes clear, *Revolution and Rebellion* belongs in this rarified second group as well.

Doug McAdam, *Stanford University*

I read *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* for the first time when I was a graduate student—a time when my own ideas about what to study and how to study it were just starting to gel. Jack Goldstone's now-classic book provided me with the tools to solve a range of puzzles related to social movement activism and consequences, public policy implementation, voting behavior, intergroup conflict, and inequality, and has powerfully shaped my own thinking over the past twenty-five years. His distinct analysis remains fresh, relevant, and broadly applicable today.

Rory McVeigh, *University of Notre Dame*

Jack Goldstone's *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* is as worthy of study and emulation today as it was twenty-five years ago. The book demonstrates clearly how outstanding works of comparative-historical analysis generate stable findings that hold up over the years. A stunning breakthrough in 1991 becomes a timeless classic in 2016.

James Mahoney, *Northwestern University*

Jack Goldstone's powerful and persuasive book dramatically changed how we understand revolution; a generation later, it has lost none of its punch and proven prescient in any number of ways, not least about waves of revolution and the demographic trends that keep them real and relevant. An updated final chapter is a fitting coda and must-read for those interested in socio-political change. Theoretically sophisticated, substantively rich, and beautifully written, this remains a classic for our time and those to come.

Eric Selbin, *Southwestern University*

Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World remains a classic in the lively and ever-growing literature on revolutions. By broadening the scope to include revolutions that failed, Jack Goldstone is able to highlight the crucial role played by demographic transitions in prompting rebellion and revolution. This book, an essential contribution when it first appeared, is even more timely as we become more and more aware of environmental limits to economic growth.

Steven Pincus, *Yale University*

PRAISE FOR THE ORIGINAL EDITION

- Winner of the 1993 American Sociological Association's Distinguished Scholarly Publication Award

This remarkable and brilliant book arrives not a moment too soon … A major intellectual achievement which will redraw the map of early modern history.

William Doyle, *Times Higher Education Supplement*

Surely the most interesting general statement on revolutions in a long time.

John Markoff, *American Journal of Sociology*

A book of real stature—high powered, provocative, and ambitious.

John A. Hall, *Contemporary Sociology*

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Jack A. Goldstone

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To my teachers—

S. N. Eisenstadt, George Homans, Nathan Keyfitz, and Theda Skocpol
and to the Cambridge Group for the Study of Population and
Social Structure and the worldwide network of demographic
scholars they have stimulated and inspired:

omnes eruditi, collegae, et amici

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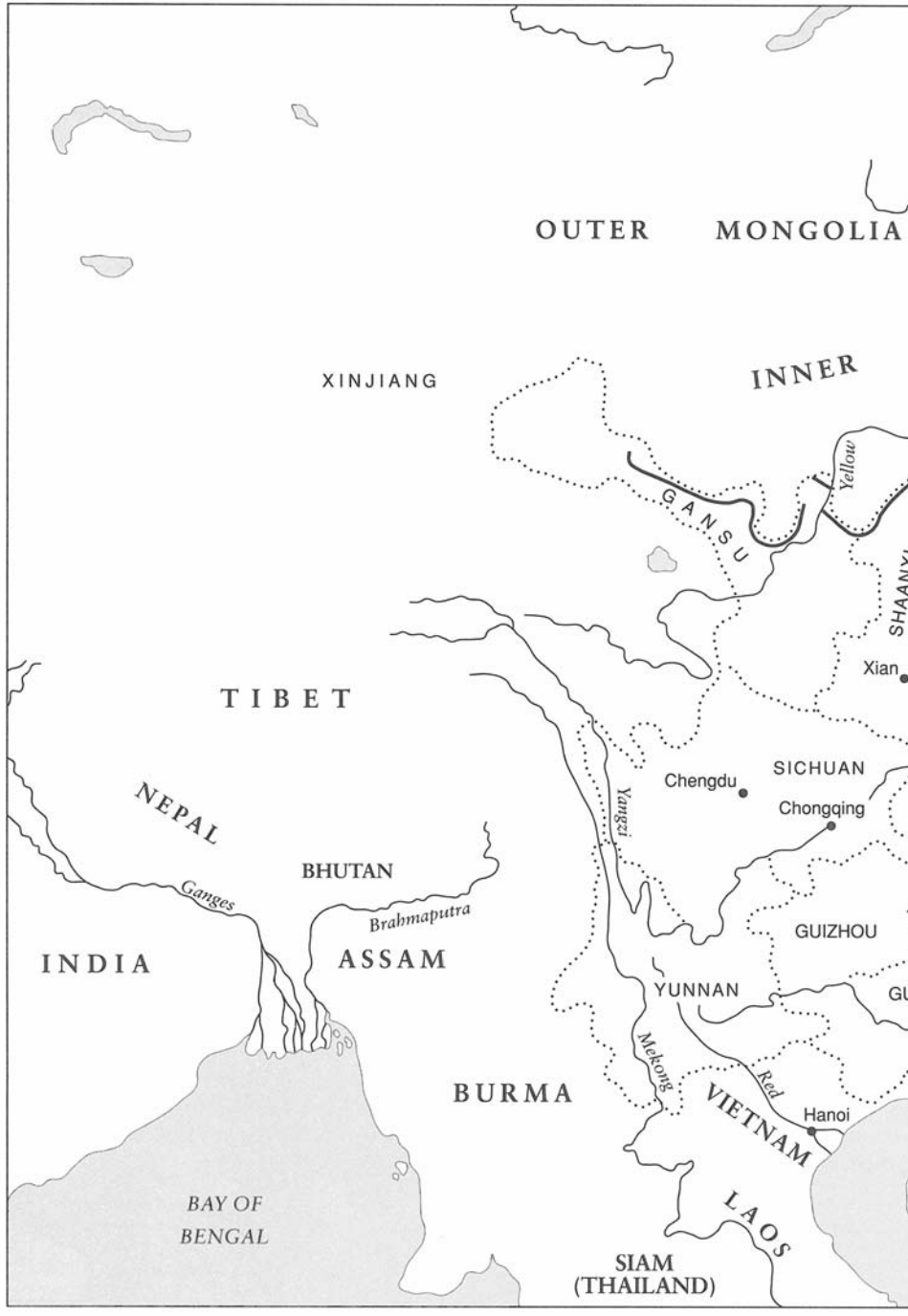
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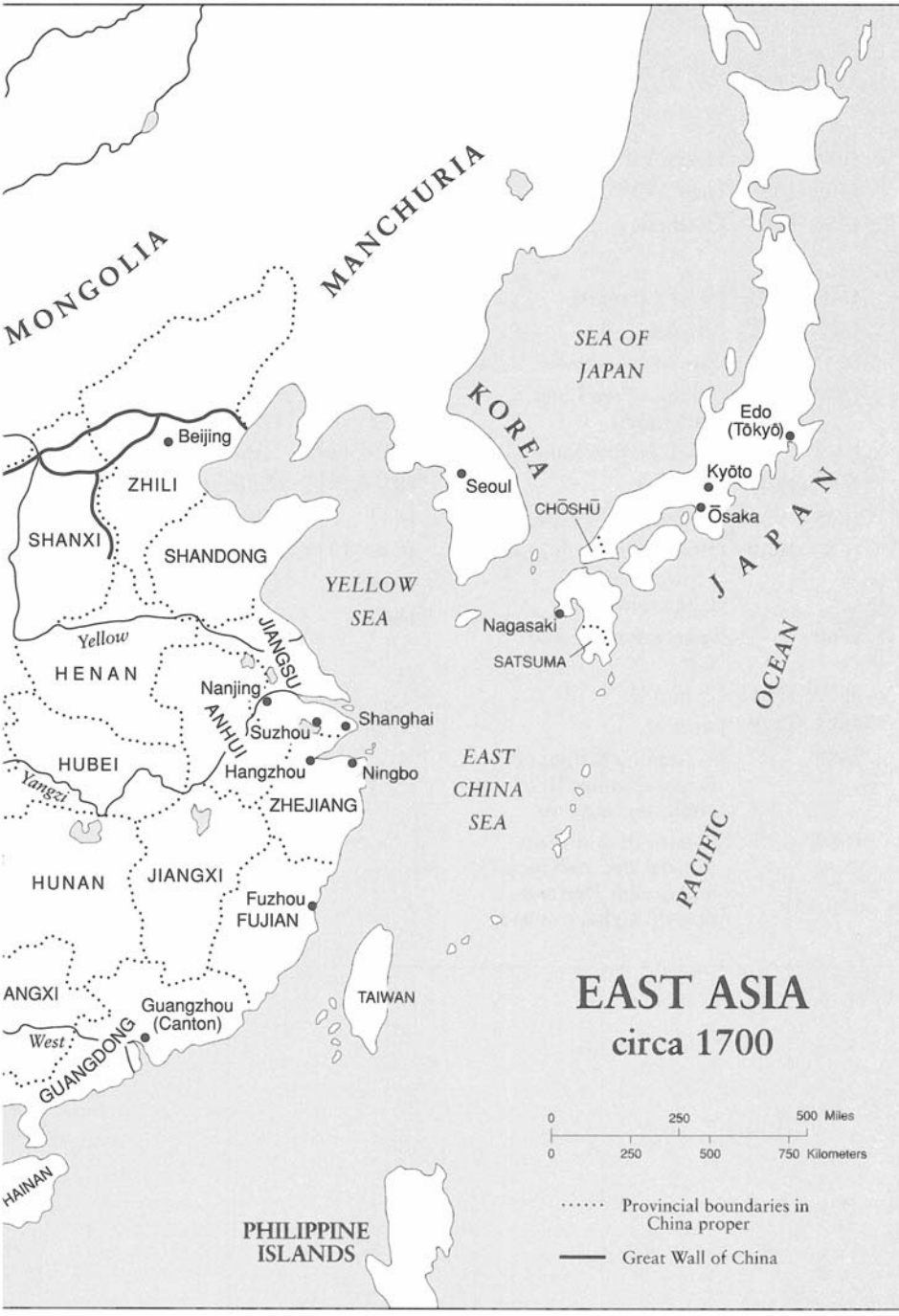
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	1509–1547	Henry VIII
	1558–1603	Elizabeth I
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	1625–1649	Charles I
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	1640	Calling of the Long Parliament
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	1642–1649	Civil wars
	1649	Execution of Charles I
	1649–1660	Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth
	1660	Restoration of Stuart rule
	1660–1685	Charles II
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	1688	Invasion by William of Orange; James II abdicates and flees
	1689	William III and Mary (Stuart) declared king and queen; Declaration of Rights enacted
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	1819	Peterloo riots
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	1832	First Reform Bill
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	1792	Louis XVI executed
	1792–1799	First Republic
	1795	Robespierre executed
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	1815	Bourbon Restoration
	1815–1830	Louis XVIII (Restoration Monarchy)
	1830	Revolution of 1830
	1830–1848	Louis Philippe (Orléans) (July Monarchy)
	1848	Revolution of 1848
	1848–1851	Second Republic
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	1851–1870	Napoleon III (Bonaparte)
	1870	Franco-Prussian War; Napoleon defeated; start of Third Republic

Ottoman Empire

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	1520–1566	Süleyman I The Magnificent; conquest of Hungary, N. Africa
	1596	Ottoman victory over Hapsburgs; thousands of *timar* holders dismissed
1600		
	1603	Military revolts; celali revolts in Anatolia begin
	1623–1640	Murat IV
	1620–1629	Loss of Iraq, revolts in Egypt
	1629–1632	Rebel forces take control of Anatolia and Istanbul
	1632–1640	Murat IV regains control of Istanbul, attempts reforms.
	1648	Sultan Ibrahim strangled in his palace
	1648–1656	Janissaries rule Istanbul, celali rebels rule Anatolia
	1656–1683	First Köprülü grand viziers restore order
	1659	Defeat of last celali rebel, Abaza Hasan Paşa
	1669	Conquest of Crete
	1683	Ottomans lay siege to Vienna
	1683–89	Failure of siege, major losses
	1689–1691, 1699–1702	Köprülü viziers again appointed, lead re-conquest of Belgrade
	1699	Treaty of Karlowitz recognizes loss of Hungary, Transylvania, Morea
1700		
	1711	Ottoman victory over Peter the Great at Pruth, gains in Russia
	1789–1807	Selim III, modernizing reforms
1800		
	1804	Serbian revolt
	1807–1808	Selim III and Mustafa IV deposed by army
	1821–1830	Greek revolt
	1831–1839	Revolt by Muhammad Ali of Eg, governor Egypt; he gains autonomy

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1500		
	1522–1582	"Single Whip" tax reforms
	1573–1582	Grand Secretary Zhang Juzheng
1600		
	1604–1627	Donglin academy formed, persecuted
	1631–1644	Rebellion of Li Zicheng
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	1644	Li takes Beijing; last Ming emperor hangs himself
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Preface

The Duke de Liancourt, loyal servant to King Louis XVI of France, softly entered his master's bedroom the night of July 14, 1789. Louis had been informed that angry crowds in Paris had taken the Bastille, but seemed unruffled and went to bed early. Concerned that the King did not realize the extent of the danger, Liancourt sought to rouse him to action. "What then," asked the King, "is it a revolt?" "No sire," answered Liancourt, "it is a revolution."

This story may be apocryphal, but it makes an important distinction. Louis's question was whether the attack on the Bastille might be a "mere" revolt—the kind of angry crowd outburst that frequently flares up, only to be violently put down. From early modern times to our own, riots, demonstrations, and vandalism frequently disturb the peace, but remain scattered episodes; they do not generally overturn governments. Louis hoped that the events of July 14, 1789, would be simply another such episode. Liancourt, however, thought otherwise. He judged the day's events as evidence that the pillars of the French state had grown rotten and that the government was tottering. The monarchy itself was in grave danger; thus the fall of the Bastille heralded "a revolution."

What we might call "Louis XVI's problem" has been a problem for statesmen and social scientists ever since: how do we tell, amid the swirl of current events, whether an outburst of violence is a passing storm or the beginning of a cataclysm? In other words, how can we tell when a state is truly threatened by revolution?

In the late twentieth century, revolutions have become familiar to us.

for revolutions and rebellions have created our world. A revolt against English colonial rule gave birth to the United States. The Soviet Union emerged from a revolution in Russia. The great states of Asia—China, India, and Japan—took their modern shape from rebellions and revolutions, against Imperial, British, and Shogunal rule, respectively. In Western Europe the revolutions and rebellions of the early modern era (c. 1500–1850) left an indelible mark; and in Latin America and Africa, most nations began their modern political life through revolutions. More recently, revolutions have transformed politics in Eastern Europe.

Yet we do not understand revolutions well. America's failure to anticipate and then respond effectively to revolutions in Vietnam, Iran, and Central America has been a study in frustration. At the same time, the U.S.S.R. came to grief in Afghanistan's revolution, while its efforts at internal reform, to its great consternation, spawned rebellions in the Soviet Union and revolutions in its Warsaw Pact allies. Revolutions and rebellions still burst onto the world stage unexpectedly, creating shocks and crises, from the still-unfolding revolutions in Iran and Central America to the struggling democracies of East Asia and Latin America, from the instability of communist rule in Eastern Europe to the prospects for change in South Africa.

This volume examines the causes of revolutions and major rebellions in the early modern world. It analyzes periods of history very much like our own—periods of *worldwide* state crises. I focus mainly on the English Revolution of 1640 and the French Revolution of 1789. Yet the English Revolution was part of a wave of revolts from 1600 to 1660 that stretched across Portugal, Italy, Spain, France, central Europe, and Russia, even to Ottoman Turkey and Ming China. Although the century and a quarter that separated the English Revolution from the French Revolution was largely free of crises, in the years from 1789 to 1848 governments again shook and fell, not only in France, but all across Europe and in the Middle East and China. The central question I address is why these waves of crises occurred on such a broad scale, reaching from England to China, in these particular decades.

The details of the causal model that I develop apply only to the early modern period. But its basic principles may be useful in understanding even today's (and tomorrow's) crises. In the last part of this volume, I return to the present to consider some of the issues surrounding modern revolutions, and the reasons for America's international decline.

My approach has two main features. First is an analysis of how worldwide population trends affected early modern societies. Most political

scientists and historians have underestimated the role of demography in political crises by thinking only about aggregate population changes. They have thereby overlooked the disproportionate impact that even moderate overall population change has on particular groups—urban workers, landless peasants, the young, and noninheriting offspring of elites—as well as the massive indirect effects of population change on prices, government revenues, and income distribution.

Second, this volume develops a *conjunctural* model of state breakdown. Much social theory is one-sided—political history is isolated from, or submerged under, economic history. Cultural forces are often neglected. Moreover, the various social actors—states, elites, and regionally distinct rural and urban popular groups—rarely all receive due attention. This volume stresses that social order is maintained on a *multiplicity* of levels. A theory of state breakdown must thus address how changes in economic, political, social, and cultural relations affect states *and* elites *and* different popular groups.

Uniting these two elements—demographic analysis and a conjunctural causal framework—creates some surprising results. Grasping how population changes and their impact on prices simultaneously unbalanced a wide range of state, elite, and popular social institutions allows us to predict the timing of early modern state breakdowns all across Eurasia, and with greater precision and understanding of their particular features than any existing theories of revolution or early modern crises. In addition, this approach provides powerful insights into a number of puzzles in early modern history—the "boom" and "bust" of university enrollments, the rise and fall of aristocratic and monarchic power and prestige, and, most importantly, the alternation of periods of state crisis and stability. It also highlights some of the profound similarities and differences between European and Asian development.

The result is a simple theory of revolutions. In this theory, revolution is likely to occur only when a society *simultaneously* experiences three kinds of difficulties: (1) a state financial crisis, brought on by a growing imbalance between the revenues a government can securely raise and the obligations and tasks it faces; (2) severe elite divisions, including both alienation from the state and intra-elite conflicts, brought on by increasing insecurity and competition for elite positions; and (3) a high potential for mobilizing popular groups, brought on by rising grievances (e.g., regarding high rents or low wages) *and* social patterns that assist or predispose popular groups to action (e.g., large numbers of youth in the population, increasingly autonomous rural villages, growing con-

centrations of workers in weakly administered cities). The conjunction of these three conditions generally produces a fourth difficulty: an increase in the salience of heterodox cultural and religious ideas; heterodox groups then provide both leadership and an organizational focus for opposition to the state.

This theory leads us to ask, regarding the timing of revolutions and rebellions, what historical conditions would lead to these different kinds of difficulties arising simultaneously, and why would such conditions occur all across Eurasia in some periods but be absent in others? Revealing answers lie in the broad-based impact that sustained population growth (or decline) had on the economic, social, and political institutions of agrarian-bureaucratic states.

This simple theory also has implications for the nature and outcome of revolutions. By arguing that revolutions are the result of multiple problems, arising from long-term shifts in the balance of population and resources, it suggests that no quick resolution can be obtained simply by a change of government. Therefore the fall of the old regime and its replacement by a new government should not be expected to end a period of social difficulties. Instead, the immensity of continuing problems is likely to create further conflicts. The breakdown of the old order may provide a zesty period of competition for popular support, marked by promises of freedom, democracy, and popular rights. But in practice, a society convulsed by severe problems is more likely to find solutions in stern authority and, in some cases, by the last resort of politics—civil and international war. Revolutions therefore create great debates about freedom but often shrink from establishing it. Uncovering the deep and multiple causes of revolutionary crises may help suggest why revolutions liberate ideas but tend to enslave men and women.

This theory of revolutions has further implications for the belief that revolutions have been carriers of historical progress. Revolutions have often been depicted as struggles between the "bad" defenders of a dying social order and the "good" builders of a new one; successful revolutions should therefore put an end to outmoded ideas and institutions and usher in a new era. In the theory of revolutions presented here, however, revolutions are not provoked by a battle between the past and the future, or between good and evil; they are instead provoked by imbalances between human institutions and the environment, governed by those factors that affect population and its sustenance, such as disease, weather, and the productivity of the soil. In this ecological battle, gains come

slowly, and the political crises that indicate underlying difficulties will not necessarily lead to a "new" world.

Thus if population decline after a revolution restores a traditional balance of people and resources, traditional institutions may be revived. This makes it possible to suggest some reasons why after the English Revolution of 1640, which was followed by fifty years of declining or stagnant population, England in many respects experienced a revival of traditional monarchic, aristocratic, and high Church prestige, even though all of these institutions had been overturned during the revolution itself. On the other hand, renewed or sustained population/resource imbalances may lead to further revolutionary outbursts; this makes it possible to suggest some reasons why after the French Revolution of 1789, which was followed by continued (if slower) population growth, France experienced further revolutionary crises again in 1830 and 1848, despite the changes in political and agrarian organization brought by the Revolution of 1789.

These observations should not be taken to imply that there was no escape from ecological pressures. Economic innovation, both in the organization of labor (what is often called the "rise of capitalism") and in the tools of production, was to liberate most of Europe from such pressures by 1850, England somewhat earlier, Eastern Europe somewhat later. But in the years prior to 1850, economic progress and revolution were not at all synonymous; their relationship was more problematic. As I shall argue below, revolutions and rebellions could accelerate or retard and reverse economic progress. And although certain narrow elements of economic growth (e.g., the rise of newly affluent groups competing with traditional elites for privileged positions) could contribute to revolutionary conjunctures, it was often where broad-based economic progress was greatest that revolutions and rebellions were *least* likely to occur.

This approach has a major advantage and two major disadvantages. The advantage is that in focusing on population movements and their consequences, particularly as measured through price movements, we are forced to deal with measurable quantities. The causal explanations I offer in this book assert a particular relationship between sets of numerical data and are therefore falsifiable. Much comparative history has something of an ad hoc quality that makes it difficult to test. In my explanations, if the data or the analysis is found to be faulty—in particular, if our estimates of past population and price trends should sig-

nificantly change—then much of the argument of this book would be demonstrably wrong. As a college freshman, I had a professor (the late physicist Richard Feynman) who drummed into me the precept that if one had an explanation that no facts could prove wrong, then one did not have a triumph, but a tautology. For a theory to be right, it must be able to withstand being confronted with facts that could decide whether the theory is right or wrong. I hold to a certain satisfaction that the explanation offered in this book can be tested, and therefore could possibly be right.

The first disadvantage is that the mathematical models, and the methods of testing them, may be unfamiliar ground for many readers. However, the main arguments should be clear from the text. Furthermore, because the data for the Asian cases are weaker than for the European cases, I have dispensed with the mathematical models entirely in addressing those cases. Thus readers who are inclined to skip over the mathematical elements in the analyses of the European cases can easily confirm their understanding by reading the Asian case studies, where essentially the same causal argument is deployed.

The second disadvantage is that because I ground my argument in changing demographic trends and rely on demographic data, there is a danger that readers will attach too much weight to those trends and suppose that I am espousing demographic determinism. I should make clear that the argument of this book is not merely demographic, but is a demographic/*structural* analysis, in which what matters is the impact of demographic trends on economic, political, and social *institutions*. Demographic trends alone determine nothing. Where I find similar consequences of demographic trends, it is only because I also find broad similarities in *institutions* in different historical settings.

Writers of comparative historical studies typically face a dilemma: on the one hand, if they treat each of several cases equally, they will necessarily treat them briefly, to keep within manageable bounds. This approach can produce case studies that lack depth and fail to deal fairly with the specialist literature. On the other hand, treating each case in detailed fashion would produce an impossibly lengthy, and impossibly dreary, tome. I have thus chosen a somewhat unbalanced compromise in organizing this work. I have treated the case of the English Revolution at length, building a full mathematical model, testing it, and engaging current debates among specialists in English history. I have then treated the French Revolution somewhat differently, still engaging the current heated historical and sociological debates, but using only very slightly

the mathematical analysis developed for England. In discussing the cases of the Ottoman crisis and the Ming-Qing transition, I then proceed much more rapidly, providing briefer analyses of the origins of these political crises and examining how they resembled or differed from those of Europe. I hope the result, though it will fully satisfy neither specialists nor comparativists, will yet prove engaging to both.

A comparative historical work such as this one of course relies on the research of specialists. And specialists will find little that is novel, and much to cavil at, in my accounts of particular events. However, specialists often approach comparative works in a way that is of little benefit to them. For example, a historian of England might read this book's introduction, and its chapter on England, to see how well my treatment informs him or her regarding that one case. Such an approach will yield little, for I am not attempting in each chapter to compose a case history that surpasses the work of specialists. What I am attempting in each chapter is to emphasize those elements that are common across cases—that is, those elements that seem to be consistently related to early modern state breakdowns. Thus an English historian might find, in my treatment of the Revolution, that economic and demographic forces are overemphasized and details of political or Puritan doctrine are given insufficient attention. That would certainly be correct, were I attempting a complete description of each case. But my goal is to help historians and social scientists understand what forces, broadly speaking, created general waves of state breakdown in certain periods, and stability in others. Thus the most useful way for an English (or French, or Chinese, or Ottoman) specialist to approach this work is to take for granted that there will be differences in the treatment of England (or France, etc.) from what he or she might prefer, and to focus instead on the *other cases*. The specialist should then ask, are there interesting similarities between the other cases and my own? Do these similarities force me to reconsider, and better identify, the elements that I thought were unique to my case? If so, then this volume will have been worthwhile.

I also apologize if I have slighted or overlooked research that any reader feels to be of special interest. For the past decade I have tried to keep abreast of all the major research on English, French, early Ottoman, and late Ming demographic, economic, social, and political history, as well as being aware of research in these fields on Western Europe in general and on the Middle East, China, and Japan from 1500 to 1800. This is, of course, simply an impossible task. My files still bulge with citations to hundreds of additional works I would yet like to consult. I

have stopped only because I believe my interpretation of this material is now firm enough to stand against future research. I thus offer my interpretation, despite knowing that my coverage of any particular case is doomed to remain incomplete.

During the writing of this book I have had so much help and encouragement from colleagues and students, and from institutions that provided opportunities to present these ideas, that I feel like no more than a front man for a vast collaborative enterprise. No doubt many who have had a hand in debating and influencing my ideas would differ with this final expression of them. And no doubt I have failed to remove all the errors and missteps from which they tried to save me. Still, I wish to thank those individuals without whom this book would not have been written: Rod Aya, Daniel Chirot, Randall Collins, S. N. Eisenstadt, Arnold Feldman, Gary Hamilton, Michael Hechter, George Homans, Christopher Jencks, Nathan Keyfitz, George Masnick, Joel Mokyr, Charles Ragin, Roger Schofield, Theda Skocpol, Paul Starr, Arthur Stinchcombe, Charles Tilly, Frederick Wakeman, Jr., Harrison White, Christopher Winship, and E. A. Wrigley. I am also grateful to the organizations that supported my work with released time, funding, and hospitality: the College of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, and the University Faculty Research Grants Committee, all of Northwestern University; the Group for the History of Population and Social Structure at the University of Cambridge, England; the Program on Population Studies at the University of California, Berkeley; the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles; the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences at the California Institute of Technology; the American Council of Learned Societies; and the Research School of Social Sciences of the Australian National University.

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For Chinese words, I have used the Pinyin romanization (with the help of Don Price, whose assistance I gratefully acknowledge). For Ottoman terms, I have used modern Turkish romanizations (with the help of Stanford Shaw, whose assistance is also deeply appreciated). For quotations from works in French, I have rendered my own English translations.

J.A.G.
Davis, California
March 5, 1990

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Introduction to the 25th Anniversary Edition

Are Revolutions Over? Or Just Beginning?

In 1991, when the first edition of *Revolution and Rebellion* appeared, scholars of revolution were starting to talk of the "end" of the historical era of revolutions. The most recent violent social revolutions had occurred in 1979, in Iran and Nicaragua. Although the communist states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union had just fallen, these events were generally seen as non-violent democratic transitions brought about by peaceful protests; the bloody wars these events would unleash in Chechnya and Tajikistan, and the brutal dictatorships that would arise in many post-Soviet states were not yet apparent. Timothy Garten Ash (1989) coined the term "refolutions" to describe these events as more like reforms than revolutions. Scholars such as Jeff Goodwin (2001) and Robert S. Snyder (1999), building on the structural theory of Theda Skocpol (1979), argued that revolutions would only take place in certain kinds of states, namely traditional monarchies or repressive personalist dictatorships, and that these kinds of states were disappearing. Robin Wright (2000) and Ghia Nodia (2000) argued that the spread of global prosperity meant that the appeal of radical ideologies was fading away, and Forrest Colburn (1994) argued that with the fall of the Soviet Union, the "vogue" of revolution as inspired by communist heroes such as Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro was over.

Yet these views were mistaken; in 1991 the world was about to embark on one of its most emphatic eras of revolution. In 1991 itself, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front drove the dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam from power, the Kurdish uprising began the Kurds' autonomous rule in northern Iraq, and Somali National Movement rebels established an independent Somaliland. In 1992, the Bosnian War of Independence shattered the Balkans, and 1994 saw the Zapatista Rebellion in Mexico and the first Chechen Rebellion against Russia, as well as the takeover of Rwanda by the Rwandese Patriotic Front. 1997 brought the Kosovo Rebellion that led to the declaration of independence for Kosovo a decade later, and the overthrow of President Mobutu Sese Seko in the Congo, followed by the Indonesian Revolution of 1998. In 2000, Slobodan Milosevic's regime in Yugoslavia was overturned by the Bulldozer Revolution, the first of five "color" revolutions that would unfold in six years. Next was the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003, followed by the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004 and then the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in 2005. Violent revolutionary movements arose as well: the Darfur rebellion broke out in Sudan in 2003, and Nigeria's Boko Haram emerged the same year.

The next decade began with the second Kyrgyz Revolution in 2010, followed by the "Arab Revolutions": beginning in Tunisia in 2010 then spreading to Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen in 2011. In 2012, the long-ruling Central African Republic regime of Francois Bozize was overthrown by rebels, and in 2014 the EuroMaidan Revolution in Ukraine drove Viktor Yanukovych from power. Thus 25 revolutions in the 24 years 1991-2014, not to mention numerous unsuccessful lesser uprisings and nationwide protests.

We are, it seems, living in the midst of a new age of revolutions. To be sure, some of these events have been more non-violent than the great social revolutions, or the guerilla wars of revolutions past. Yet some, such as the Hutu-Tutsi struggle for power in Rwanda, or the Syrian civil war, rival any past conflict for sheer violent horror.

It thus seems an appropriate time to bring out a 25th anniversary edition of a volume that examined past waves of revolutions. It is moreover a book whose thesis—that demographic trends underlie the dynamics of revolutions—seems more relevant than ever. In 1991, when most scholars were dwelling on regime type or on culture and "mentalities" as the drivers of historical revolutions, it was somewhat contrarian to note that revolutions ranging from the Puritan Revolution in seventeenth-century

England and the French Revolution in eighteenth-century France to the Europe-wide revolutions of 1848, as well as major rebellions in Ottoman Turkey and Ming and Qing China, had been propelled in part by demographic changes, including overall population growth, a surge of urbanization and a rising tide of youth. Today, one cannot pick up an analysis of the Arab Revolutions, or of violence in Africa, without hearing how urbanization and youth bulges lay at the heart of recent revolutionary upheavals (Bajoria and Assaad 2011; Schwartz 2011; Ighobor 2013). As is so often the case, after a few decades what once seemed a far-out theory has transitioned into what passes, perhaps often too simply, for common knowledge.

For this edition, I have included a descriptive subtitle: *Population Change and State Breakdown in England, France, Turkey and China,1600-1850,* which had been intended for the original edition of 1991 but which seemed potentially contentious at that time. It is a measure of how far our theories have come, and how much the world has changed, that after several decades of rapid population growth in the developing world and new waves of revolutions, this subtitle seems both useful and reasonable. I am glad to have the chance, in this anniversary edition, to have it restored.

It may be useful for scholars and students to revisit this early expression of the demographic-structural theory of revolutions to see the context, and some of the qualifications, with which it was presented. *Revolution and Rebellion* also may merit another look today for its last chapter, which not only forecast that revolutions would continue to occur, but also that even in the wealthy western nations, especially the United States, the rise of "selfish elites" would sow the seeds of political decay.

How could so many erudite scholars of revolutions have been mistaken in thinking that by 1990 the era of revolutions was over? In fairness, leading economists were equally in error in predicting future stability, with the Noble Laureate Robert E. Lucas, in his January 2003 Presidential address to the American Economic Association, claiming that "the central problem of depression prevention has been solved"— this just a few years before the onset in 2007 of the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression. The belief that revolutions had ended was part of a more general tendency, following what Francis Fukuyama (1992) dubbed the "End of History"—that is, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union—for European and North American scholars to adopt a triumphalist outlook, believing that their generation had resolved some of the greatest problems of social and political

governance. In this view, the great upheavals of history had been spawned by sweeping macrosocial and ideological trends that were now ending: the onset of modernization overturning traditional societies, or the rise of nationalism breaking up older multi-national and multi-ethnic societies, or communist or democratic ideologies mobilizing people against monarchies and military regimes. By the 1990s, it seemed to many observers that modernization had triumphed almost everywhere, that the division of the world into modern nation-states was virtually complete, and that communism had lost its global battle with liberal democracy to be the dominant way to organize a modern nation state. The great struggles brought by grand historical forces and sweeping ideologies seemed to have come to a close, with only slight fluctuations likely to disturb the future of steady economic progress and political liberalization.

Yet *Revolution and Rebellion* had argued that it was not grand historical forces or sweeping ideologies that produced the waves of revolutions in the 17th and late 18th-early 19th centuries. Rather, what lay behind these waves of state breakdown, as they were called in this book, were recurrent problems of state crises, elite divisions, and popular mobilization. State crises were usually brought on by financial strains, rising state debts and corruption; elite divisions by expanding ranks of elite aspirants, increases in up-and-down social mobility, and factional power struggles; and popular mobilization was a response to un-and underemployment and falling real wages, rising land rents and land shortages, rapid urbanization, and expanding cohorts of youth. When all of these trends coincided, as was generally the case after a few generations of sustained population growth creating imbalances in the resource flows among states, elites, and popular groups, revolutionary upheavals were hard to avoid.

Nothing in the progress of history has done away with these processes. Financial strain, rising state debts, and corruption continue to recur, whether in the aftermath of fiscal crises such as the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 which claimed the Indonesian regime; or in the run-up to the Arab Revolutions of 2010-2011. Elite divisions continue to arise from differential social mobility, from regional and ethnic competition, or from friction between factions controlling different sectors of the economy and outright cronyism, as seen in many of the color revolutions. And as globalization brings global wage competition, urbanization shoots forward, and global climate change affects the prices of food and access to land, pressures for popular mobilization mount around the world. Thus it should hardly be a surprise that revolutions have continued, and even increased in frequency, in the last quarter century.

Revolution and Rebellion did predict that while population growth would continue to be a driver of revolutions in agrarian societies, other factors—such as uneven development, international pressures, and corruption—could also drive state crises, elite divisions and popular mobilization in higher income, industrializing societies. Thus the occurrence of color revolutions in societies not experiencing population growth surges, such as Ukraine in 2004, are not a contradiction of the demographic/structural explanation of revolution; demography was always just one major factor leading to the conjunction of state crises, elite divisions and popular mobilization, although an unusually widespread and potent one. However, more recent research has provided an interesting new wrinkle to the role of population dynamics in political change.

Since *Revolution and Rebellion* appeared, it has given impetus to the now fast-growing field of political demography (Goldstone, Kaufmann and Toft, 2011). The idea that population change—including changes in age structure, urbanization, religious affiliation, marital status, gender balance, ethnic composition, and migration patterns—can have major effects on political dynamics has proven remarkably fruitful. Whether looking at how aging in the rich countries might affect global strategic competition (Jackson and Howe 2009; Haas 2011; Sciubba 2011a,b), how youth bulges increase the risks of conflict and violence (Urdal 2006, 2011), or how gender imbalances from sex-selective abortion in Asian countries affect social cohesion (Hudson and den Boer 2005), demography matters in many ways for political developments.

One of the most novel and intriguing results to emerge from recent research in political demography is the powerful relationship between age structure and democracy. Independent work by Hannes Weber (2012) and Richard Cincotta (2008/9, 2009, 2012; also Cincotta and Doces 2011) has shown that democracies with an older median age are far more stable and less likely to relapse into dictatorships, and that the older a society's median age the more likely it is to transition to a stable democracy. These processes have produced a global distribution of societies in which those with median age under 25 are rarely stable democracies, but almost all societies with median age over 35 are. Cincotta used this theory to predict, before 2010, that as Arab countries were increasing in median age, and Tunisia in particular was aging rapidly, that several Arab states were likely to experience a transition to democracy in 2010-2020, with Tunisia most likely to achieve a stable transition (Cincotta 2009). Surely this was one of the most successful predictions in recent social science!

This finding also has powerful implications for the role of demography in revolutions. It suggests that revolutions driven by youth bulges, and thus occurring in young societies, are much less likely to produce a stable transition to democracy; instead such revolutions are most likely to produce violence and then authoritarian regimes to restore order. By contrast, should revolutions occur in older societies, they are more likely to be marked by less violence and produce stable democratic transitions. The difference between the revolutions in the Arab world in 2010-11, which however hopefully viewed in the beginning rapidly degenerated into violent struggles (Syria, Libya, Yemen) or renewed authoritarianism (Egypt, Bahrain), and the revolutions that brought down communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989-1991, which were far less violent and produced relatively stable democratic transitions, perfectly fits this pattern.

This finding also has positive implications for the still-authoritarian but rapidly aging societies of Russia and China. Russia is well past, and China is now just past, the median age of 35 that produces a high likelihood of transition to stable democracy. While this does not tell us if or when these countries might experience future political transitions, the theory does forecast that should a regime crisis occur, the likely outcome is a relatively non-violent transition to stable democracy, not the violent and authoritarian transitions that marked their earlier history.

Unfortunately, the theory bears less welcome tidings for much of sub-Saharan Africa. Although many states in this region have experienced significant economic growth, they have not seen the decline in population growth rates that usually accompany economic development (Bongaarts and Casterline 2013; Korotayev et al. 2016). Sub-Saharan Africa is thus set to experience the biggest population surge, and youth bulges, in history. According to projections of the United Nations (2015), the population of sub-Saharan Africa will grow from 962 million in 2015 to 2.1 billion in 2050, and 3.3 billion in 2080, adding roughly one billion people per generation. Some nations with still high birth rates are forecast to have worrying large population increases: Nigeria is projected to more than double its population from 182 million today to 398 million by 2050; Uganda and Tanzania are both projected to nearly triple their populations in the same period, the former from under 40 million to over 100 million and the latter from 53 million to 137 million; while Niger is forecast to nearly quadruple, from just under 20 million today to over 72 million by 2050. Given that many of these states will also likely be impacted by changes in climate that could bring droughts and

local spikes in food and land prices, immigration and competition for jobs, and financial strains for their governments, it seems increasingly likely that the revolutions that have spread across north Africa and the Middle East are just the "opening act" in waves of revolutions that will appear in the rest of Africa in the next quarter century. Nor are the states of the Middle East and central Asia out of the woods; in recent years it has been the youngest nations in the region—Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen—that have also been the most violent and prone to political turmoil.

In addition, the combination of youthful age structures, political crises, and fast-growing populations in Africa suggests that the current stream of refugees from Syria to Europe will also be just the early stage of a long and large-scale continuing crisis of migration into Europe. It is thus vital that Europe not treat the current crisis as a passing episode that, once overcome, can be safely forgotten. Instead Europe will have to learn lessons and prepare its institutions and societies to manage ever larger pressures and flows of immigrants from the South.

The arguments and findings of *Revolution and Rebellion* thus continue to resonate, and have relevance, for the politics of today.

Most of this volume is a historical study of political crises in Eurasia between 1600 and 1868, and the role played by demography, price inflation, social competition, state fiscal crises, elite factions, and popular grievances and mobilization in those events. Historical studies have advanced greatly in the last quarter century, and much new information has been produced on precisely these factors. However, the arguments of *Revolution and Rebellion* have stood up fairly well even in the light of newer research on population, price history, and social history. I have elsewhere published an updated version of Chapter 3 on the French Revolution, using more recent data (Goldstone 2011a); but the basic conclusions and underlying patterns for that case and the others in this volume remain largely unchanged.

If I were to rewrite this book today, I would make two significant changes to the argument. First, in the original I drew a simple relationship between population growth and price inflation in agrarian societies, arguing that as population growth pressed on available land and resources, and urbanization increased the velocity of monetary exchange, nominal prices would rise and real wages would fall. I now think that while broadly correct, this linear relationship is too simple. Rather, the relationship between population growth and prices tends to go through three stages. First, when population growth picks up after a long period

of decline or stagnation, such growth often has a positive, stimulating effect on the economy. Prices may rise, but this stimulates investment in increasing output; urbanization may grow but this often brings more jobs at reasonable wages. For most people this early phase of population growth thus coincides with increased commerce and opportunities, and rising prosperity. Then comes a second phase in which states worry about rising prices' effects on their incomes, and try to compensate. Often they overcompensate, seeking to wrest profits from debasing the currency. This can bring a burst of very rapid inflation as merchants react to the debased currency by raising nominal prices even faster. If monarchs continue to debase this can lead to an inflationary spiral. Yet this usually does not lead to the downfall of regimes. Rather, monarchs learn that debasement is a limited tool as people catch on and bad currency drives out the good. Under pressure from their commercial elites, they often switch to defending a more stable currency and then seek to increase their revenues by greater taxes or sales of assets that are paid for in now-stable coin.

After this point, however, if population growth continues, there comes a third phase of more pernicious inflation. After the easy gains from increased commerce and production have been made, continued population growth starts pressing against the ability of the land to increase output and cities to create jobs. Rents increase to onerous levels, and peasant families subdivide their land into uneconomic plots or sell to more prosperous neighbors; workers in cities and the countryside find work harder to get and real wages are falling. Elites find themselves competing more intensely to maintain their position and get ahead of their rivals, depending more on royal support or on commercial ventures, and factional divisions mount. Finally, the rulers find it harder to keep up with rising prices, as they can no longer simply resort to debasement, peasants are producing smaller surpluses to tax, and the elites are defending their shares of production more vociferously. States thus rely on selling assets, mounting debts, or seeking to tax the elites, any of which can provoke a fiscal crisis. It is only in the last phase, which may not occur until after population growth has gone on for many decades after a prior stagnation or decline, that the model of state breakdown driven by population growth advanced in this volume takes hold.

Second, in *Rebellion and Revolution* I paid considerable attention to the role of ideology in shaping the outcome of revolutionary struggles, but I now would say that I understated the role that ideology plays in the earlier and causal phases. Work by Eric Selbin (1993, 2010), Elisabeth

Wood(2003), Misagh Parsa (2000) and John Foran (2005) have shown that material or structural conditions alone cannot account for the intensity of sustained revolutionary mobilization. For people to undertake the sacrifices and departures from ordinary life to participate in risky revolutionary actions, it is necessary not only for people to feel materially deprived or threatened, but also for them to feel a sense of injustice, and to be able to relate that sense to a narrative in which the rulers are evil and revolutionary change is necessary, noble, and offers a route to successful change. Without such narratives of injustice and change that have a broad appeal and deep impact on people, distress at material conditions is likely to remain diffuse and fractured among many groups who may protest, grumble, or despair but not unite effectively.

I have, however, left the text of Chapters 1-5 unchanged for this anniversary edition. I think it is important to be able to judge the flaws as well as virtues of a book, and to be able to measure the degree to which it was prescient, or in error, at the time it appeared. I hope that readers who have not read the original will still find this material fresh and worthwhile. And I hope that readers who might have read the original twenty or twenty-five years ago will read these chapters again in light of present events and reflect on how theories of revolution have remained effective, or need to changed, to be relevant to the new revolutionary age.

Chapter 6, "From Past to Present," by contrast demanded an update, as the "Present" in that title is now 25 years old. So I have brought this chapter up to date, bringing it into today's "Present" context, with a look ahead to the future. This chapter now includes analysis of events from the Arab Revolutions to the strains on the European Union, the risks of upheaval in Russia and China, the prospects for American hegemony, the challenges of inequality and even whether a new wave of automation brought by robots and artificial intelligence will make demography irrelevant as people increasingly relinquish varied roles to machines.

These are trying times, both for the generations living through unexpected waves of crises, and for scholars, who should be humbled by their inability to foresee and control these events, seeking to analyze and understand them. Twenty-five years ago, *Revolution and Rebellion* tried to peer forward by standing on an analysis of centuries past. It is a challenge to do so again, but a pleasure to have the opportunity to do so for this anniversary edition.

I owe thanks to Jennifer Knerr, my editor at Routledge (and at Paradigm before that), who has encouraged me and made possible this new edition of *Revolution and Rebellion.* Even more, I thank my incredible

wife Gina, and dedicate this anniversary edition to her. We met the same year the original edition was published, and through the past quarter century she has been a patient and loving partner, and supported me with her intellect and indomitable spirit. Finally, I extend a heartfelt thanks to my students, academic colleagues, and readers of the original volume, whose responses, both critical and supportive, have made it all worthwhile.

Hong Kong, August 2016

ONE

The Central Problem: How To Explain the *Periodic Waves* of State Breakdown in the Early Modern World

I think God Almighty hath a quarrel lately with all Mankind . . . for within these twelve years there have the strangest Revolutions and horridist Things happen'd not only in *Europe*, but all the world over.

—*James Howell*

A. STATES IN CRISIS

For nearly 350 years scholars have wrestled with the "general crisis of the seventeenth century." Certain facts are not in dispute. The first half of the seventeenth century saw a widespread slowing and eventual halt to the steady increases in population and prices that began around 1500. In addition, rebellions and revolutions shook regimes across the Eurasian continent, most notably the English Revolution; the Fronde in France; the anti-Hapsburg revolts in Catalonia, Naples, Sicily, and Bohemia; the Khmelnitsky revolt in the Ukraine; the celali revolts in the Ottoman Empire; and the collapse of Ming rule in China (Parker and Smith 1978; Aston 1967). But there is *no* agreement on how to explain these facts. Historians contest fiercely over the causes, the connections, and the significance of these events.

Some have argued that the seventeenth-century crisis marks a turning point in the history of capitalism. Others have suggested that what occurred was mainly political, a crisis of absolutism. Certain scholars have found a worldwide depression in the seventeenth century and have sought to explain it. Yet others have noted that trade grew rapidly in some markets, and thus claim that a general depression is illusory. These debates have proved inconclusive, despite marshaling some of the keenest minds ever applied to historical studies (most of the key contribu-

tions are presented in the collections edited by Aston 1967; Forster and Greene 1970; and Parker and Smith 1978; other important works are Anderson 1974; de Vries 1976; and Wallerstein 1974, 1980).

A fundamental defect in these debates is that all arguments tend to be strongly Eurocentric. Reflecting the biases of both Marx and Weber, on the one hand they assume that events in the West marked important structural changes, demonstrating the dynamism of Europe; on the other hand, the equally major political rebellions and regime changes in the East are given only minor attention and are often dismissed as mere peasant uprisings or dynastic changes. In fact, the political rebellions in the Ottoman Empire and China involved the same broad spectrum of elite, urban, cultivator, and heterodox ideological struggles against a fiscally weakened state that characterized Western political crises (for China, especially, see Wakeman 1986). Moreover, the Eastern crises resulted in arguably *greater* changes in state power, class structure, and local government than most Western crises of the period. Thus, at the very least, the history of the general crisis in the East should be more closely examined by Western scholars. At most, and I shall argue the point strongly, Eurocentric notions of the seventeenth-century crisis, which posit a crisis of capitalism that led to dynamic structural changes in Europe and extended to, but caused far less change in, peripheral areas in Asia, should be discarded altogether. To grasp the nature of social change in the seventeenth century, we need to recognize a worldwide crisis of agrarian absolutist states that affected both Eastern empires and Western monarchies.

The same is true of the turbulent period from 1770 to 1850, which had its most memorable moments in the French Revolution but also included Pugachev's revolt in Russia; the European rebellions and revolutions of 1820–1821, 1830, and 1848; the Greek, Balkan, and Egyptian revolts within the Ottoman Empire; and the start of the bloodiest revolt in history, the Taiping rebellion in China. Hobsbawm (1962) has quite reasonably christened this period the "Age of Revolution." Viewing all of these events, one might reasonably conclude that the entire early modern period was simply one of successive crises.

Yet in the years from 1660 to 1760, full-scale political breakdown was curiously rare (Rabb 1975). There were isolated peasant revolts, elite rebellions, and dynastic changes, but revolutionary civil wars were absent from Europe and the Ottoman and Chinese empires. This stability occurred even though the two main alleged engines of revolution—war and the growth of capitalism—roared even more strongly than in

the preceding century. This period was one of massive wars, from the "Second Thirty Years' War" (1688–1714), spurred by the ambitions of Louis XIV, to the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), employing the largest and most sophisticated armies that Europe had yet seen. This period was also one of enormous development in capitalist enterprise: in England, the vast majority of enclosures—perhaps two-thirds or more of all enclosures between 1500 and 1850—took place in this century (Wordie 1983); in England, France, and the Netherlands, the rural putting-out industry, which rendered the worker dependent on the suppliers of capital, grew rapidly, displacing the independent artisan in many crafts (de Vries 1976); and throughout the world, the volume of overseas trade grew exponentially, as intra-European trade was joined to vast colonial and imperial trading networks in the Americas, the Levant, and the Far East. I shall further detail, and attempt to measure, these trends later on. Yet it should be evident that the presence of war and the growth of capitalism persisted from 1660 to 1760. State breakdown did not persist. We thus face a problem of historical explanation: why was state breakdown, not merely in Europe but on a worldwide scale, clustered in two marked "waves," the first culminating in the mid-seventeenth century, the second in the mid-nineteenth, and separated by roughly a century, from 1660 to 1760, of stability?

Attempts at comparative study of Asian and European state breakdown in the early modern period have been rare (Mousnier 1970b, 1984). But as we shall see, there are remarkable similarities in the originating patterns of state breakdown in Eastern and Western absolutisms: state fiscal crises linked to inflation; intra-elite divisions over social mobility; and popular uprisings, partly autonomous and partly elite orchestrated, that pressed basic economic demands so fiercely as to lead to changes in political, social, and economic organization. In seventeenth-century China, just as in seventeenth-century England, there was even a faction called the "Levellers," who proclaimed a new age of equality of all men and influenced the popular revolts that accompanied the fall of the Ming. Nonetheless, after the state breakdowns of the mid-sixteenth century, Europe's economic advance accelerated through discoveries and innovations, while Asian economies grew only quantitatively, becoming oddly fixed in their economic and administrative techniques. Thus two more historical questions arise: Why did the near simultaneous state breakdowns in major Asian empires resemble, in their origins, the state breakdowns in Europe? And to the extent that they had similar origins, why were the long-term outcomes so different, lead-

ing to that divergence in development commonly known as the "rise of the West?"

STATES AND STATE BREAKDOWN

No doubt, some readers are already impatient with my juxtaposition of vastly different societies and the ill-defined term "state breakdown." Yet the states of early modern Eurasia—including the European monarchies, Russia, China, the Ottoman Empire, and Japan, in roughly the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries—were not greatly different from each other.[1] The Eurasian states comprised more or less bureaucratic assemblages of officials, under the direction of a single hereditary ruler, and claimed sovereignty over well-defined and usually contiguous territories. Their economies were overwhelmingly agrarian, and the income of states and elites mainly depended, either directly or indirectly, on taxes and rents on land.

By "the state" I mean the institutions of centralized national-level rule-making and rule-enforcing power, including the individuals who controlled those institutions when acting in their official capacities. For early modern states, this included the hereditary ruler and the ministers, legislative assemblies with national powers, royal or imperial tax collectors and judges, and those military forces directly subject to central control. Thus by "the state" I denote only a part, although usually the dominant part, of the total set of political actors and institutions. In early modern societies a variety of other groups and individuals also might have exercised judicial or administrative powers, such as the ability to collect taxes or fees, enact regulations, and administer punishments for violations. Such groups—including regional parliaments or estates; county, municipal, and village authorities; churches and their religious judges; and lay and religious seigneurs—though subordinate, were somewhat independent of the central executive authority and on occasion collided with it. Thus state breakdown generally involved the collapse of the central authority's ability to dominate in a confrontation

1. Throughout this book, I use "Eurasia" to denote only the temperate regions north of a line drawn roughly from the easternmost end of the Mediterranean Sea through the Caspian Sea, the Himalayas, and the southern border of China. I thus exclude most of Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, the Indian subcontinent, and Southeast Asia. These latter regions were often differently administered than the regions north of this line; moreover, their economic and demographic histories are less complete. For these reasons, and to keep this study within manageable bounds, I make no claims about whether the argument developed in this book applies to these southern lands.

with other politically powerful actors, rather than the breakdown of all political institutions.[2]

These societies also exhibited sufficiently separate political and religious authorities that the relationship between the two was problematic. Although specific individuals, above all, rulers, might exercise both political and religious authority, and though the state might seek to determine religious practice and appoint religious leaders, there existed a semiautonomous elite outside of official state office who acted as custodians of a well-articulated moral tradition (Eisenstadt 1980b). In Europe this condition arose because of the presence of the Catholic priesthood; in the Ottoman Empire it arose because of the presence of the Greek Orthodox Church and of the many Islamic religious schools, pious foundations, and their scholars and mullahs; in China it arose because the Chinese literati, although providing the empire's officials, never placed more than a fraction of their members in office and retained an informal role in local education, administration, and ceremonial functions that gave them a partly autonomous role in Chinese society; in Japan it arose because of the separation of the roles of the shogunal administration (which governed) and the imperial court (which remained the sacral center of society).

"Elites" were families of exceptional wealth or status, usually literate, but not necessarily state officials. They were somewhat differentiated by their pursuit of various paths to wealth and status, such as through land, arms, trade, administration, or religion. Such differentiation never constituted a clear-cut division of labor, however, and most elite families showed diversified portfolios of pursuits.

Because of the diversity of elite interests, the relationship between the state and elites was always problematic. Elites expected states to perform certain tasks of government that provided diffuse benefits: orchestration of successful military campaigns; maintenance of internal order; regulation or provision of certain collective goods, such as coinage and transportation networks; and provision of status- and wealth-enhancing opportunities to elites through regulated access to military and

2. M. Weber (1978) and Mann (1988) ascribe to states a monopoly of legitimate force; but this is a false characterization of early modern states, which existed in tension with semiautonomous sources of legitimate authority at the regional level or among groups subject to religious law. My definition follows Weber and Mann in ascribing to states the centralized national rule-making and rule-enforcing authority, but it differs in recognizing that the state shares political space with other actors and authorities. My definition therefore allows for a routine degree of tension and potential conflict that fuels political dynamics.

civil offices (sometimes including regulated access to elite education and training). To perform these tasks, the state required resources gained by taxation, land-ownership, or other sources of revenue. Yet the concentration of resources in the hands of the state posed certain problems. If the level of resource provision was too low, the state could not perform its tasks; if the level of resource provision was too high, the excess might be used to increase the wealth and power of rulers at the expense of broader elites. Elites therefore generally supported state actions that appeared consistent with the performance of expected state tasks, but opposed state actions that threatened an excessive concentration of power in rulers at the expense of broader elite interests. For its part, the state generally sought to perform its expected tasks in a manner sufficient to avoid widespread elite attacks, while seeking to increase its resources to enhance its wealth and power relative to domestic elites and international competitors (Levi 1988). This continuous tension over state resource control was usually managed by negotiation between the state and elites. State crises occurred when these latent conflicts escalated into overt struggles.

Of course, there was also routine tension between the population at large and the state. Rural and urban groups in early modern society looked to the state to ensure maintenance of roads, bridges, and irrigation works; bread at affordable prices and adequate employment; protection from banditry, foreign conquest, and elite exploitation; and administration of local justice. A certain amount of taxation was generally accepted as the price of these collective goods. In fact, these services were usually provided by local or religious authorities rather than by state officials, often for fees collected in addition to state taxation. Nonetheless, common people generally regarded their king or emperor or sultan as the ultimate guarantor of local order. The state was generally blamed when these services deteriorated, or when taxation reached levels that threatened traditional peasant living standards. Under these conditions, popular groups might revolt to demonstrate their grievances against the state; or they might revolt in the name of the king against local elites, decrying the latters' "failure" to comply with the presumed wishes of the king to protect the common folk.

Popular groups also contested with elites for resources, while being dependent on elites for guidance and protection in matters of politics, justice, religion, and material welfare. As with the state, popular groups ordinarily accepted status distinctions and resource extraction by elites as consonant with elite protection and guidance. Yet as with the state,

this relationship should be considered one of "routine tension," for elites generally sought to maximize resource extraction and popular groups to minimize it, and elite definitions of adequate and effective guidance and protection often differed from popular views.

The societies studied in this book differed from most earlier agrarian empires in having widespread internal markets, so that the prices and distribution of goods were widely affected by supply and demand. Prices were meaningful in that they affected the access to goods and services for a wide variety of actors. Thus rulers had to acquire food for armies and many other services at prices set by the market; elites' earnings from rents or productive enterprises depended on the market price of their products; urban workers' incomes depended on a market-influenced wage; and peasants' access to land depended on market-determined rents. Of course, many actors used political power to influence the market and attempted to hedge or evade market restrictions. And peasants who had secure landholdings adequate to provide for their families might have participated in the market only marginally, to acquire occasional tools or luxuries or to earn small amounts of cash to pay taxes. However, in each of these societies the market was so widespread that it substantially influenced the incomes and opportunities of many actors, including all of the politically important ones.

In sum, in all of these societies there was (1) an agrarian economic base; (2) a hereditary ruler and officials who administered a territorial state, but who remained in some tension with semiautonomous local, regional, and religious and cultural authorities; (3) a literate elite extending beyond the circle of officialdom who followed a variety of pursuits, and who remained in some tension with the state over the adequacy of state performance and the level of state resource extraction; (4) urban and rural popular groups who were subject to cross-cutting allegiances and resource extraction from both elites and the state; and (5) reasonably well functioning internal markets wherein prices affected the access to goods for a wide variety of social actors.

This is not to overlook such matters as wide differences in the resources of states, in the autonomy of elites, and in the content of religion, all matters to be addressed in due course. It is only to say that for all of these societies one can reasonably speak of "states," of "elites," of conflict between "secular rulers" and "religious groups," and of "prices" and refer to things not impossibly dissimilar across societies.

I shall refer to the revolutions and rebellions examined in this book as cases of *state breakdown*. By state breakdown I mean a particular

combination of events, but not quite a revolution. The term "revolution" is frequently used with little care; as a result, it has become vague and slippery. Moreover, since the French Revolution, this term has picked up overtones of radical political change that are out of place in referring to many political crises that occurred before 1789. Let me therefore carefully define the subject of this book.

Some authors (e.g., Huntington 1968) define revolution in the extreme sense of a violent and permanent overthrow of government and elites, based on mass participation, that establishes new political and economic institutions, a new status structure with new personnel, and a new set of legitimating symbols and beliefs. This model fits the twentieth-century Russian and Chinese Communist revolutions reasonably well, the French Revolution of 1789 somewhat, and most early modern state crises hardly at all. It is thus not very useful for discussions of the early modern period. The use of the term "revolution" has been further muddled by such phrases as "unsuccessful revolution," "social revolution," "abortive revolution," and "elite revolution," all of which are meant to imply something distinct both from each other and from such events as coups, civil wars, and popular rebellions. Because there have been few events that fit the extreme sense of "revolution," yet many cases of governments being overthrown or temporarily disabled, there have developed almost as many varied definitions of "revolution" as there are analysts and cases of state crises.

Of course, the term "crisis" is equally ambiguous. Scholars often use the term to denote any threat to law and order and thus have found "crises" in a bewildering variety of times and places. As the term is loosely used, a "political crisis" may denote a crisis of confidence in the government, a state bankruptcy, a coup d'état, an elite revolt, a peasant rebellion, an urban riot, or a civil war. I shall use *state crisis* specifically to describe a shift in elite or popular attitudes toward the state. That is, a state crisis is a situation in which politically significant numbers of elites, or popular groups, or both, consider the central state to be operating in a manner that is ineffective, unjust, or obsolete. Such a state crisis may stem from actual failures of governmental performance, such as bankruptcy, defeat in war, or inability to suppress local disorders. Or it may stem from changing economic conditions or reckless governmental actions that cause elites or popular groups to lose confidence in, or withdraw their allegiance from, the state. Either way, elite or popular groups consider the state incapable of performing necessary tasks of governance; the result is that the state loses the allegiance necessary to

govern. But a state crisis is not bankruptcy or military defeat *per se*; states often survive such problems without losing the allegiance or confidence of elites and ordinary subjects. For example, Spain in the late sixteenth century, and France at the end of Louis XIV's reign, suffered military setbacks and state bankruptcies. But elites rallied around the state, and widespread popular disorders did not arise. A state crisis occurs when there has been a standing suspicion that the state is ineffective or unjust; such concrete events as a fiscal crisis or military reversal are then taken as the definitive proof of this suspicion. It is thus the shift in elite or popular attitudes toward the state, not a particular event, that marks the crisis of state authority.

Much of the political science literature describes such a shift in attitudes as a crisis of "legitimacy" (Zimmerman 1979, 1983). I prefer to avoid this term; it does not capture my meaning—in part because legitimacy has legalistic connotations that suggest a "legitimate" government is duly constituted whereas an "illegitimate" government is illegally constituted. These considerations are often irrelevant. Moreover, "legitimacy" is inadequate because this term generally focuses attention only on matters of justice and ignores state effectiveness. Political allegiance depends on the extent to which elite and popular groups view the state as just and *effective* in performing the duties of governance. Even legally constituted governments can become perceived as ineffective or unjust, while even illegally formed governments (such as those produced by revolutions or coups) can be perceived as effective and just in their actions. Moreover, even an unjust state may be perceived as so effective that it maintains the allegiance of key groups; and even a just state may be perceived as so ineffective that it loses that allegiance. In sum, a state crisis exists when politically significant numbers of elites, or popular groups, or both, no longer maintain allegiance to the existing state (as it operates as a set of institutions, not just its incumbents), regardless of how the state was formed and regardless of whether this shift in allegiance is due to the state acting unjustly or merely ineffectively, or to changes in the economy or international environment of which the state is victim.

A state crisis usually indicates a situation of imbalance—in the eyes of influential elites and of large numbers of ordinary people, the state is either failing to perform the expected tasks of governance, demanding too many resources for that task, or both. Thus the routine tension over state performance and state revenue escalates to unusually high levels. What will result from this crisis, whether it will pass lightly or lead to

overt conflict, depends on the flexibility of state authorities, on the unity and organization of elites, on the mobilization potential of popular groups, and on the precise relationships among these actors, including their financial, organizational, military, and ideological resources. A state crisis may lead to revolution; but it may also lead to an unsuccessful attempt at revolution (as in Prussia in 1848) or to a successful reform (as in the English reform crisis of 1830–1832).

This book seeks to explain a particularly severe kind of state crisis, which, as noted above, I call *state breakdown*. State breakdown occurs when a state crisis leads to widespread overt conflict, including a combination of elite revolts, intra-elite struggles, and popular uprisings. A state crisis may be resolved peacefully if elites shore up state power, or if reformers succeed in rectifying state injustices. Or a state crisis may be resolved with a coup d'état if important elites are united and able to achieve desired changes without popular mobilization. But if elites are highly alienated from the state, command substantial resources, and are divided among themselves, a state crisis may lead to elite revolts and sharp intra-elite conflicts. And if popular unrest is waiting in the wings, conflict between the state and elites may open the doors to popular uprisings or to mobilization of the population to support competing factions. Struggles for power among different groups may then lead to civil war.

State breakdown thus refers to a condition of grave disorder, with a collapse of state authority. Such a situation is sometimes called a revolution. However, I shall reserve the term "revolution" for those cases where state breakdown is followed by substantial changes in political and social institutions and in the ideology used to justify those institutions.

To sharpen these definitions, and to clarify the differences between the wide variety of political crises that have occurred in history, it is useful to adopt some simple notation borrowed from vector algebra.[3] Let us divide the notions of state breakdown and revolution mentioned above into several constituent elements. We then have a range of factors that might be present or absent in a political crisis: (1) widespread elite or popular belief that the state is ineffective, unjust, or obsolete, producing widespread loss of confidence in, or allegiance to, the state; (2) an elite revolt against the state; (3) popular revolts—either urban, rural,

3. The application of this technique to holistic comparisons in the social sciences is developed at greater length in Ragin (1987).

or both—against state or elite authority; (4) widespread violence or civil war; (5) a change in political institutions; (6) a change in the status and power of traditional elites, chiefly landlords in agrarian societies; (7) a change in basic forms of economic organization and property ownership; and (8) a change in the symbols and beliefs that justify the distribution of power, status, and wealth.

We can then describe a given historical event by a string of ones and zeros, which designate whether a given element among the eight factors above was or was not present. Thus the Russian and Chinese Communist revolutions (counting the revolt of the Dumas in Russia as an elite revolt) would merit a complete row of ones: (1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1). The French Revolution differs slightly, for even if one counts the loss of seigneurial power of French landlords as a significant change in landlord power, there was no significant change in property ownership or in the forms of economic organization. Thus we would designate the French Revolution (1,1,1,1, 1,1,0,1). Stability would be noted by a complete row of zeros: (0,0,0, 0,0,0,0,0). A peaceful reform of government could be designated (1,0,0, 0,1,0,0,0). This definitional system is extremely versatile. Thus one can describe an ordinary coup (0,1,0,0,0,0,0,0) or an elite revolution (1,1, 0,0,1,1,1,1) without confusion. A dynastic civil war that posed no challenge to the state per se, and was only a contest among elite leaders for succession, as frequently occurred in the Ottoman and Mughal empires, could be specified as (0,1,0,1,0,0,0,0), while a secessionary civil war, such as the American Civil War, could be designated (1,1,0,1,1,0,0,1). More importantly, one can express the differences between such diverse historical events as the English Revolution of 1640 (1,1,1,1,1,0,0,1), the Ming-Qing transition (1,1,1,1,1,1,0,0), and the French Revolution (1,1, 1,1,1,1,0,1) more precisely than by arguing whether or not the first two were "truly" revolutions. In fact neither was exactly like the French Revolution, nor like the other, although all shared many of the same features.

This definitional system is capable of specifying 128 different kinds of events, ranging from stability to extreme revolution. Of course, many of these definitionally possible events have no attested empirical contents. For instance, I know of no popular rebellion that succeeded by itself without associated elite revolts or elite leadership in creating institutional change (1,0,1,1,1,1,1,1). But this notation allows us to speak more precisely of the varieties of political change without being bound by the accumulation of meanings that have surrounded the word "revolution." In particular, we can specify that by *state breakdown* is meant

any event that involves a crisis of central state authority, elite revolts, popular uprisings, and widespread violence or civil war: (1,1,1,1,x,x, x,x). The x's in the last four slots mean that these may be zeros or ones. Thus the object of explanation in this book is a severe crisis involving the first four elements in combination, whether or not this crisis produces the kind of changes we might wish to call a revolution. In particular, my goal is to explain why this severe kind of state crisis periodically erupted all across northern Eurasia in certain decades but was generally absent in others.

In this book I examine, in varying degrees of detail, a number of instances of state breakdown in the early modern world. I consider mainly four cases: the English Revolution in 1639–1642; the French Revolution in 1789–1792; the Anatolian rebellions in the Ottoman Empire (starting roughly in the 1590s, with disorder peaking at the assassination of the sultan in 1648 and ending with the suppression of Abaza Hasan Paşa's revolt in 1658); and the fall of the Ming dynasty in China (c. 1644). In addition, I more briefly examine the Fronde and the revolts in the Spanish Hapsburg Empire in the mid-seventeenth century; the revolutions of 1830 in France and of 1848 in France and Germany; the Taiping rebellion in Qing China, and the Meiji Restoration in Japan. Perhaps only one or two of these events, depending on one's point of view, deserve to be called "revolutions." However, all were instances of state breakdown. I also explore the relative tranquility of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in Europe and Asia. My primary goal is to show how a common causal pattern lay behind all these events. But in chapter 5 I shall return to important differences.

Before laying out the causal framework, it is worth noting some of the problems in current historiography, and some lacunae in the theory of revolutions, that this framework seeks to redress.

PROBLEMS IN HISTORIOGRAPHY

At present, the historiography of early modern political crises is in turmoil. For both the English and French revolutions, "revisionists" have blasted once widely accepted explanations based on long-term social change. For both cases, an influential and learned school of thought now insists that these revolutions in fact had no long-term social causes; instead they were brought on by purely political conflicts and exacerbated by chance conjunctions of unfortunate circumstances.

Until recently, most scholars viewed the English Revolution of 1640

as the culmination of extensive changes in English society. In an influential synthesis, L. Stone (1972) argued that the Stuart state was financially and administratively weak; that social mobility in the preceding century had augmented the importance of the gentry and lessened that of the peerage, creating struggles to broaden access to political power while weakening one of the supports of the throne; and that unresolved religious conflicts left England with a Church that had limited appeal to an increasingly independent gentry, creating a deepening problem of Puritan disaffection. Given the weakness of the state and the growing range of political, social, and religious conflicts, some form of major crisis was inevitable. Although Stone rejected arguments that traced the revolution to the growth of capitalism and the triumph of an English bourgeoisie, able proponents, including Hill (1961), B. Moore (1966), Anderson (1974), and Wallerstein (1980), put forth versions of this Marxist view. Though differing in emphasis, these authors shared Stone's view that the revolutionary crisis could be understood only by tracing its long-term social causes.

In recent years, however, key elements of both these approaches have come under attack. Examinations of parliamentary debates have shown that the political conflicts of the revolution were hardly a long-term running battle over royal versus parliamentary prerogatives; instead Parliament showed little tendency to criticize the Crown or to limit its authority before 1629 (Russell 1979). Similarly, studies of Puritanism show that the Puritan clergy, following their disciplining and co-optation by Elizabeth and James I, were quite cooperative with the Crown until the Arminian assault of the 1630s (Richardson 1973). Work on rural capitalism has uncovered evidence that by the early seventeenth century the Crown was a leader in raising rents, enclosure, and the search for profits (Thirsk 1967a); the image of an anticommercial Crown facing an aggressively entrepreneurial "bourgeois" gentry thus appears false. Moreover, the House of Lords appears to have played a major, even dominating, role in many of the parliamentary maneuvers of 1640–1642, casting doubt on the "rise of the gentry" (C. Roberts 1977a). In short, the old synthesis appears eroded. Still, all that has been accomplished is criticism; no alternative long-term explanation has appeared in its place. Revisionist scholars thus conclude that there were no long-term causes, and that the crisis of the 1640s, far from being inevitable, was a simple product of policy errors of the 1630s in the context of England's unique political institutions, namely, a dependence on the cooperation of Crown and gentry in local and national admin-

istration. This system could not survive a monarch that systematically antagonized the gentry and bungled its political appointments and policies. It was thus simply Charles I's mistakes that produced the revolution (K. Sharpe 1978b).

A strikingly similar trend in scholarship has affected studies of the French Revolution. The dominant synthesis for the last century has been the Marxist view that this was a "bourgeois" revolution in which an emerging capitalist class asserted its rights against a conservative Crown and nobility. This synthesis was and still is vigorously defended by an influential group of French scholars—Mathiez (1928), Lefebvre (1947), Soboul (1975), Mazauric (1970), Godechot (1970, 1971), and Vovelle (1984). Yet a new generation of American and French scholars has largely abandoned this view, for its elements have been undermined by critical scrutiny. Most damaging is the evidence that the capitalist bourgeoisie played a relatively limited, largely provincial, role in the revolution; the revolution's leaders in Paris were drawn from professionals and, to a rather large degree, the nobility (Eisenstein 1968; Egret 1968). G. Taylor (1972b) has shown that both nobles and prosperous nonnobles shared similar economic profiles. Doyle (1972) has presented evidence to question the old notion that eighteenth-century France was marked by a "feudal reaction." C. Lucas (1973) has suggested that conflicts within the nobility were as important, if not more important, than conflicts between nobles and bourgeoisie. Furet and Richet (1970) have argued that the conflicts that fatally weakened the French state were not between distinct classes but rather among the varied elements of the absolutist administration, drawn from different status groups and increasingly divided in their access to power and social prominence.

French absolutism relied on a congeries of separate but overlapping institutions—parlements and provincial estates, aristocratic provincial governors and recently ennobled intendants, court officers and private financiers, an army dominated by gentlemen officers, and a civil administration dominated by judges and lawyers. Keeping this administration in operation required a skillful hand in both economic and political policies. Furet (1981) has argued that a combination of severe weather that weakened the agricultural economy and the inability of Louis XVI to handle the multiple conflicts within the ramshackle but extensive and expensive French state led somewhat fortuitously to state breakdown. Not a crisis of capitalism but rather a crisis of absolutist administration brought down the old order. Thus the French Revolution, like the English, has been reduced from the culmination of long-term underlying

social changes and stresses to the bad luck and misdirection of an unhappy monarch, unable to meet the managerial demands of France's uniquely complex administrative system.

While the sharp criticisms of the revisionists have satisfied the urge to unearth new facts and to uncover false impressions, the total effect has been deeply dissatisfying to many historians, who now see the most momentous events in English and French history construed as mere accidents. Unwilling to abandon the satisfying old syntheses, yet shaken by the revisionist attacks, many scholars find themselves in a quandary. In regard to the English Revolution, Sayer (1985, 3) notes Marxists' troubled response to critiques of the Marxist interpretation: "The 'bourgeois revolution' is extraordinarily difficult to pin down in England. The 'classic ground' obstinately, infuriatingly, refuses to fit the classic models. The usual strategy for dealing with this is to retain the models . . . whilst variously 'ad hoc-ing' away England's 'peculiarities.' " Non-Marxists complain that "at present there seems to be no generally accepted interpretation of the English Civil War, and little has been done in the search for a new synthesis other than to demolish the old" (Carlton 1980, 168). What remains is a "chaotic and centrifugal state of social history today, which is flying off in all directions with no large structure to hold it together . . . . Nothing is left but a ragbag of miscellaneous topics, all fascinating in themselves, but without anything to bind them together" (L. Stone 1984, 47). Regarding the French Revolution, Behrens (1974, 637) similarly has noted that "it has often been pointed out, and is now publicly admitted, that the orthodox explanation of the Revolution in terms of a class struggle will not stand the test of facts. [But] now that the orthodoxy is discredited we do not know what to believe . . . . In the days of Mathiez and Lefebvre's ascendancy we thought we knew. Now there is no coherent explanation."

Old certainties of Asian history have also fallen under a barrage of new research. Traditional Asian history, from Chinese dynastic historians to the Arab historian Ibn Khaldûn, explained recurrent state breakdowns through the dynastic cycle: imperial families eventually produced weak heirs and corrupt followers, and then succumbed to more vigorous challengers. Modern historians, under the influence of Marxist comparative history, have long reiterated this theme, adding that the cyclic history of the dynastic period was due to the "feudal" character of traditional Asian societies and the absence of Western "rationalization" and progress.

However, recent scholarship on the Ming and Qing economy has

undermined many historians' most cherished myths regarding Asia's lack of change and of economic rationalization. Evidence of advanced commercial enterprise in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in China is so great that Chinese historians now speak of this period as containing visible "sprouts of capitalism." Under the Qing, Chinese trade was evidently regulated by local merchant associations whose enforcement of contracts, regulation of weights and measures, and freedom from state interference in commerce equaled or exceeded anything found in the absolutist West (Myers 1982). As early as the sixteenth century, China exhibited regionally specialized agriculture, particularly in rice and cotton, serving vast markets. Moreover, the fall of the Ming dynasty was marked by changes in administration, in land law, and in rural class relations. Specifically, increased centralization, uniformity of taxation, collapse of the power of local landlords and transfer of their authority to the bureaucracy, and abolition of serfdom and its replacement by formally free tenant cultivators (Wakeman 1985) exceeded the changes produced by the English Revolution and paralleled those in France centuries later. Progress in commerce and rationalization may have differed from that of the West, yet the difference can no longer be framed in terms of a complete absence of economic change and rationalization in China. Similar changes have been noted in Ottoman history. These events are described in more detail later. However, it should be evident that the old shibboleths of the "unchanging East" are done for.

In sum, once widely accepted explanations of early modern history are now in tatters. The English and French revolutions, it is argued, were little more than large-scale historical accidents. The evidence for early sophistication and growth in Asian economies leaves it a mystery why the Asian empires experienced simple "dynastic" crises, and why they later fell behind Europe in economic and political development. The basic contrast that once made sense of world history—between an early modern West that progressed by inevitable revolutions and an early modern East mired in traditional stagnation—no longer receives support from historical research.

One might expect that historians searching for better explanations of the seventeenth-century crises would undertake careful comparisons of Eastern and Western political history. Yet at present, such comparisons are almost entirely lacking. A number of modern scholars have endeavored comparative studies of Asia and the West: Braudel, Chirot, Collins, Elvin, Hajnal, G. Hamilton, E. L. Jones, Laslett, McNeill, Mousnier, North, Skocpol, Wallerstein, and Wong. However, all of these studies

have limitations and many deal only tangentially with politics. Braudel (1967), Elvin (1973, 1984), Hajnal (1965, 1982), E. L. Jones (1981b), Laslett (1971), and North (1981) deal chiefly with economic and demographic history; Mousnier (1970b) deals with peasant revolts, and Wong (1983) with administrative capabilities. Chirot (1985), Collins (1980), and McNeill (1982) deal with overall political and economic development but, despite their significant insights, still rest within an essentially Weberian framework of Western rationalization. Skocpol (1979) compares the French Revolution with the modern Chinese Revolution of 1911–1949; she thus pulls these events out of temporal context and fails to shed light on the coincidence of major political upheavals and divergent political and economic developments in the early modern period. G. Hamilton (1984) maps the divergent paths of cultural development in China and Europe and traces their implications for long-range economic change. However, the political upheavals of the Ming and Qing do not figure in his accounts. Wallerstein (1980, 1989) and his colleagues have examined the process of the Ottoman Empire's incorporation into the European trade patterns from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries; however, they have not directly addressed the problem of Ottoman state breakdown. In short, historians have yet to examine the major political breakdowns in imperial China and Turkey, and their connections to long-term economic and political development, through comparison with state breakdowns of early modern Europe.

Another curiosity is also apparent. Historians have long recognized that early modern European history shows a concentration of political crises in the period 1550–1650, followed by a century of stability, then another concentration of crises in the period 1750–1850. And they have drawn freely on theoretical accounts of revolution by sociologists and political scientists in their attempts to explain these events (Forster and Greene 1970; Zagorin 1982). Yet the reverse has not occurred; no theorist of revolutions has begun with the empirical clustering of early modern revolutions and attempted to build a theory of political crises consistent with this fact.

THE LIMITS OF THEORY

Historians of early modern revolutions who turned to social science for explanations (L. Stone 1972; Zagorin 1982) found theories designed chiefly to explain the widespread violence that occurred in the developing world after World War II, violence that was considered symptomatic

of the strains of "modernization." From the 1950s to the early 1970s, most social scientists viewed revolutions as merely the largest events on a scale of political violence that ranged from individual illegal acts, through riots and rebellions, and ultimately to revolutions. They thus focused on generalized models of social "strain" (Smelser 1963). They differed over whether these strains stemmed from individual frustration and discontent (C. Davies 1964; Gurr 1970) or from systemic "disequilibrium" (C. Johnson 1966) or "imbalance" (Huntington 1968) in the development of different social and political institutions. However, analysis of individual-level angst and systemwide disequilibria left little room for an examination of how specific political institutions had worked, or failed to work, in particular historical contexts. Thus social theorists simply plucked elements of complex historical narratives and used them illustratively, often out of context, in building and testing their theories. In turn, historians simply plucked elements of these theories and used the terms to couch their descriptions of particular crises. With a few outstanding exceptions (B. Moore 1966; Wolf 1969), careful comparisons of how political crises had developed in various historical settings, and how they were similar or different, were not undertaken.

This situation changed markedly in the 1970s. The historically grounded work of C. Tilly and his collaborators (Tilly et al. 1975; C. Tilly 1978) challenged the validity of general theories of violence, arguing that more attention needed to be paid to how conflicts developed and how resources for opposition were mobilized in specific historical contexts. Paige (1975), Eisenstadt (1978), Skocpol (1979), and a host of other scholars developed a new "social-structural" perspective on revolutions (see Goldstone 1980, 1982, for a detailed survey). These works generally focused on a few cases and presented extended narratives and analyses. Their goal was not to provide a universally applicable theory of revolutions or of political violence; instead they explicitly sought to understand how different episodes of political violence varied and how historical context mattered to the causes and outcomes of state breakdown. Despite the richness of this work, however, it is not quite applicable to the problem of explaining the "waves" of political crises in the early modern period.

Charles Tilly's (1967, 1978, 1986) work on rebellion and revolution in Europe examines the organizational basis for popular protest and how changes in state-civil society relations affected the form and intensity of collective behavior. Yet Tilly treats these explanatory changes as long-term *continuous* processes—the growth of state power and the spread

of capitalist organization of production. Though his work brims with insights on which I shall draw, it thus does not address the *periodic* "waves" of state breakdown.

Skocpol's (1979) work is among the most influential of recent theories of revolution. Comparing the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions, she noted that each revolution occurred when the state faced pressures from wars with more advanced capitalist states. She also observed that in each of these countries there was some combination of structural weaknesses that created the potential for revolutionary crisis: backward agriculture that could not support a competitive military (Russia); autonomous elites who could block the state's attempts to raise taxes and centralize power (France and China); and strong peasant villages that could readily mobilize for attacks on landlords in the event of a weakening of the central government, under either traditional village leaders (France and Russia) or communist party organizers (China). The conjunction of pressure from abroad, structural constraints on state actions, and peasant organization that abetted effective rural uprisings produced revolutions. Skocpol's theory has not escaped criticism. Gugler (1982) and Dix (1983) have suggested that Skocpol understates the role of urban workers in bringing about revolutions. Eisenstadt (1978) and Sewell (1985b) have argued that cultural differences, which Skocpol neglects, played a large role in shaping revolutionary possibilities. However, Skocpol must be given credit for bringing three observations to the forefront of current studies of revolution: (1) revolutions arise from a conjunction of events—state crises, popular uprisings, and elite actions—each of which may have different causes and therefore must be separately investigated and explained; (2) states are not merely objects of revolutionary struggles but also actors in the social drama whose actions and options are crucial in precipitating revolutionary crises; and (3) revolutions are often the product of international forces that impinge on particular states and interact with their particular institutions.

Unfortunately, this work so far has had little impact on comparative studies of early modern history. The major comparative studies by Anderson and Wallerstein are still wrought in a solidly Marxist framework that subordinates state actions to class struggles. Skocpol's work, which does focus attention on the state and on international military competition, is a valuable corrective. Yet it turns out to be poorly suited to explain the pattern of state breakdowns in the early modern world.

The incidence of war itself provides little guidance to the long-term recurrence of revolution. Much has been made of the impact of particu-

lar wars, such as the Thirty Years' War, which preceded the seventeenth-century state breakdowns in England, France, and Spain, and World War I, which led to the Russian Revolution of 1917. Yet little attention has been paid to the even larger wars that did *not* produce state breakdown. From 1688 to 1714, Louis XIV brought Europe into almost continual armed conflict, leading some historians to label this period the "Second Thirty Years' War." France suffered extensive defeats in these wars, which were fought with larger armies and cost far more than the first Thirty Years' War. Yet despite defeat and bankruptcy, neither France nor any other of the combatants experienced revolutions. Similarly, the immediate outcome of the enormous conflicts of the Napoleonic Wars (1799–1815) was not revolutions in the major European powers but rather increases in the authority of conservative states in England, Prussia, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. Furthermore, insufficient attention has been paid to those revolutions that erupted in times relatively *free* of war, such as the revolutions that erupted in Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Germany, and Austria-Hungary in 1830 and 1848. As these cases make clear, the incidence of war is neither a necessary nor a sufficient answer to the question of the causes of state breakdown.

From 1550 to 1815, there were few decades in which Europe was free from major wars. Moreover, the scale and cost of warfare was constantly growing. Yet in these centuries state breakdown was sharply cyclic, including a peak during the relatively peaceful (in terms of interstate conflict) mid-nineteenth century. How then should we view the connections between war and revolution?

Military pressure, of course, depends on the nature of war, as well as its incidence. The "military revolution" of the sixteenth century has been blamed for increasing the costs of war to a ruinous degree. Yet martial technology was almost unchanged from 1550 to 1850; once earthwork fortifications had countered the invention of the siege cannon, and the musket had replaced the bow, the chief element of war remained the infantryman, equipped with musket or pike. Artillery gradually supplanted cavalry, but the pace of change was slow (van Creveld 1989, 97). What changed most dramatically was the scale and cost of war. These trends, in turn, were related to broader trends in the economy: changes in the size of populations meant changes in the number of men eligible for service, and changes in prices enormously affected the costs of putting those men under arms. And in the periods 1550 to 1650 and 1750 to 1850, European nations experienced unusual bouts

of population growth and price inflation. Thus, for example, the increases in military costs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries occurred largely because of a doubling in major states' populations and a fivefold increase in price levels; these trends combined created a tenfold increase in the costs of larger armies and their provisions (G. Parker 1976, 206).

We can therefore follow Skocpol in noting that the pressure of fighting, or preparing for, international conflicts can undermine state finances. Yet we must insist that it is not the mere incidence of such conflict that is crucial; such incidence does not correspond to the cyclic pattern observed for early modern state breakdown. What does matter is how the cost of meeting military pressures impinges on states. And in the early modern era, as I detail in the following chapters, those costs depended chiefly on cyclic trends in population and prices.

Moreover, in the early modern period the comparatively advanced capitalist states—the Netherlands in 1566–1648 and England in 1640–1688—were as likely to suffer revolutions as their adversaries. Thus a theory that sees state breakdown as primarily owing to military pressure from more advanced capitalist states fares poorly for this period. In addition, as noted above, Skocpol largely neglects urban tumults, which were crucial to state breakdown in these centuries. She also neglects the impact of cultural differences, without which one can hardly comprehend the varying effects of state breakdown in early modern Europe and Asia. Crucial deficiencies, therefore, have limited the impact of Skocpol's work on the comparative history of early modern Europe and Asia.

Problems in the theory of revolutions have also been explored in more narrowly focused studies. Trimberger (1978) extended the structural theory of revolutions to cover cases of "revolution from above." She noted that Japan in 1868 and Turkey in 1921 both experienced state breakdown and new institution-building, yet in each case the struggle for power was relatively brief and confined to elites. She maintained that this kind of elite revolution also was due to states coming under pressures from more advanced states abroad, but each occurred where there existed, instead of the structural weaknesses cited by Skocpol, a highly professional bureaucratic elite, devoted to government service rather than to ownership of land, which had the flexibility to reshape institutions to meet external pressures. Goldfrank (1979) has used a structural approach—emphasizing the place of Mexico in the international system, conflicts among the elites, and regional variations in the organization of peasants—to examine the origins of the Mexican Revo-

lution. Abrahamian (1980) has used a similar approach, albeit emphasizing urban organization rather than the organization of peasants, to analyze the recent revolution in Iran.

Wolf (1969), Paige (1975), Migdal (1974), J. Scott (1976), and Popkin (1979) have waged a debate over the factors that govern peasant participation in revolutions, with Scott stressing cultural factors, Paige stressing the economic relations of cultivators to landlords, Midgal and Wolf stressing the penetration of villages by capitalist organization and the impact of population growth, and Popkin emphasizing peasants' calculations of advantage within the traditional village. All of these factors no doubt play a role, but their primacy in specific situations has not been resolved. One thing does appear clear, however: peasant participation in revolutions is rarely a simple protest against traditional exploitation. Instead, peasants act when they have the opportunity, which involves village mobilization and weaknesses in landlord or state control, and when the terms of traditional exactions are changing, which may be caused by population shifts, changes in marketing or agricultural practices, or changes in the state's and elites' opportunities and needs.

Regarding urban actors, Rudé (1964) has studied police records of revolutionary crowds and found that, far from being irrational mobs, these crowds were made up chiefly of established workers and artisans seeking to defend their economic interests. Further studies of workers' movements by Calhoun (1983b) and Aminzade (1981) demonstrate the manner in which revolutionary movements have drawn power from workers' defense of traditional rights. Rejai and Phillips (1983) have examined revolutionary leaders and found that leaders rarely precipitated revolutionary crises; instead revolutionary situations—state breakdown and conflicts over authority—gave scope for individuals who would likely have followed traditional professions to emerge in revolutionary roles.

Increased attention has also been devoted to the outcomes of revolutions. Skocpol (1979), Eckstein (1982), Walton (1984), and Tardanico (1985), examining mostly twentieth-century revolutions, have identified a number of factors that influence revolutionary outcomes. They suggest that socialist governments are most likely to emerge when economic resources are concentrated in a few capital-intensive centers, when mass mobilization is extensive, and when external pressures from capitalist countries are modest; capitalist governments are favored outcomes when the reverse situation holds.

This volume of work has been impressive in its insights. Current theo-

ries of revolution stress variety. Ranging over a large number of cases and problems, scholars have adopted multicausal, conjunctural explanations. They trace variation in revolutionary conflicts and outcomes to differences in military pressures, differences in the autonomy of elites and of peasants, variations in the resources of states, and changes in the opportunities and pressures imposed on nations by shifts in the international economy. Recent work in the theory of revolutions is also impressive for its willingness to depart from traditional views. For example, Skocpol downplays class conflict, denies that the French Revolution was chiefly a "bourgeois" revolution, and stresses the autonomy of the state. (Indeed, Marxist theories of the modern capitalist state have increasingly conceded an autonomous and critical role to state managers.)

Yet most of this effort is concerned with explaining twentieth-century revolutions, in which the collisions of international colonial and economic forces with traditional regimes played a major role. Where theorists of revolution have looked back as far as 1789, they have, like Skocpol, sought comparisons to more modern events. The theory of revolutions has yet to address early modern political crises in their own right. As a result, recent developments in the theory of revolutions have been of limited relevance to studies of early modern history.

Most historians of early modern revolutions and rebellions have retreated from the Marxist synthesis since it too often has been at odds with the findings of research. Yet recent theories of revolution have considerable flaws of their own, and only limited applicability to early modern Europe. As a result, studies of early modern revolutions and rebellions lack a common framework. To some scholars, this lack of synthesis is unsettling. J. Fletcher (1985, 37–38), whose studies of Mongol history span Eurasia, has recently asked, "Is there an early modern history? Or are there only histories? . . . Without a macrohistory . . . the full significance of the historical peculiarities of a given society cannot be seen." McDougall (1986, 20), contemplating the impressively wide-ranging findings of historians, has asked, "Can the [historical] profession long survive without some overarching structure to house and organize our sprawling warehouse of special knowledge? Or will it collapse under its own weight?" To date, theories of revolution have not provided an adequate framework for examining the state crises of the early modern world. It is no surprise, therefore, that many historians of early modern revolutions and rebellions, feeling far richer in facts than in overall frameworks, criticize social scientists for their misleading or inadequate offerings.

TOWARD A COMMON FRAMEWORK

Large states of the early modern period, whether monarchies or empires, faced certain common constraints. They needed to raise sufficient revenues to support their armies and reward their retainers. They needed sufficient allegiance from the elites to secure loyal officials for government service and, perhaps more importantly, to secure loyal local authorities in an era when centrally appointed officialdom rarely penetrated below the county level. And they needed to provide sufficient stability and sustenance for the working and cultivating population so that the latter could pay their taxes and other obligations and yet not be inclined to support rebellions. Thus any train of events that simultaneously led to fiscal deterioration, elite factionalism and disloyalty, and a major decline in popular living standards or undermining of popular traditional rights, threatened the ability of states to maintain their authority. In the sixteenth century such a train of events did begin, on a worldwide scale.

A DEMOGRAPHIC/STRUCTURAL MODEL OF STATE BREAKDOWN

Put simply, large agrarian states of this period were not equipped to deal with the impact of the steady growth of population that then began throughout northern Eurasia, eventually amounting to population increases in excess of the productivity gains of the land. The implications of this ecological shift went far beyond mere issues of poverty and population dislocation. Pressure on resources led to persistent price inflation. Because the tax systems of most early modern states were based on fixed rates of taxation on people or land, tax revenues lagged behind prices. States thus had no choice but to seek to expand taxation. This was all the more true as population increases led to the expansion of armies and hence to rising real costs. Yet attempts to increase state revenues met resistance from the elites and the populace and thus rarely succeeded in offsetting spiraling expenses. As a result, most major states in the seventeenth century were rapidly raising taxes but were still headed for fiscal crisis. Moreover, elites were seeking to secure their own relative position. Population growth increased the number of aspirants for elite positions, and their demands were difficult to satisfy given the fiscal strains on the state. Elites thus were riven by increasing rivalry and factionalism, as pursuit of positions and resistance to state demands led to the formation of rival patronage networks in competition for state re-