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Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein, ed., *Scripting Revolution. A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions*. Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2015, 448 pp. \$29.95 U.S. (pb). ISBN 9780804796163.

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An important and exciting book in several respects, this volume provides a rare opportunity for today's historians to engage in some hard-nosed, systematic comparative history in a highly constructive manner while greatly widening their own personal perspective on the spectrum of modern revolutions. It also makes a splendid teaching tool.

Baker and Edelstein begin with the compelling insight that a regrettable division of labor has, in general, led historians to study revolutions "as distinct and separate events" while leaving the comparative study of revolutions, with rare exceptions, to political scientists and sociologists. This has driven a cleft between the particular and the overall picture accentuated by the decidedly unhistorical way social scientists approach the phenomenon of revolution in their quest for comparable institutional and social structural phenomena. The need for close familiarity with the particular couched in widely different historical periods, cultures, and languages poses an obvious and formidable obstacle for those eager to pursue the comparative study of revolutions in a more historical manner (p. 2). The solution Baker and Edelstein hit on for advancing our comparative grasp was an international conference featuring leading experts on a wide range of revolutions extending from the English Revolution of the 1640s to the Cuban revolution of the 1960s, Mao's "Cultural Revolution," and the revolutionary upsurge of 1968, all focusing on what the editors call the "revolutionary 'script'." The aim was to explore the way revolutions conceived of themselves in relation to other revolutions and envisaged revolutionary action, how they understood and projected their objectives and agendas. This approach permits the scholar to compare revolutions and revolutionary outcomes concisely and in a more convincing and nuanced way than can be done by sociological methods.

Keith Michael Baker's essay "Revolutionizing Revolution" presents a robust thesis that takes us significantly further and deserves careful consideration. "Revolution was revolutionized in 1789," (p.71) he argues, when the notion of revolution as fact gave way to a conceptualization of revolution as ongoing act. It is certainly useful to group the pre- 1789 European revolutions as a category distinct from those of 1789-1848 much as it is also to group together those dominated by socialist totalitarian ideologies, since October 1917, separately from those in the middle period. According to Baker, it was in 1789 that the term "revolution" secured its modern meaning, and the French Revolution became the template on which subsequent revolutionaries based their plans, ambitions, and assumptions. His essay makes extensive use of digital searches to analyze shifts of meaning in the way the term "revolution" was deployed during the century between the Glorious Revolution of 1688-91 and 1789. But it is less the detail accruing from this quest than the conclusion he draws from such diverse and sometimes inconclusive evidence that is significant for future debate about the history of modern revolutionary thought, culture, and practice. Several contemporary English texts supporting the Revolution, he notes,

stress the providential character of William III's intervention in Britain, the idea that "God was with him" as one commentator expressed it, and that it was God "that made it to prosper" (pp. 74-5). Broadly speaking, in 1688 "revolution" meant "not violent overthrow," as another scholar affirms, but a great change or shift in the general context.[1] This was indeed a profound difference from post-1789 revolution.

English Tories who *de facto* embraced the Glorious Revolution were especially prone to claim that "revolution" meant restoration of former rectitude and correct governance engineered by divine providence, but their Whig rivals too were conspicuously unwilling to suggest that violent deposition and overthrow had occurred or was justified.[2] Baker rightly argues, then, that usages characteristic of the Glorious Revolution era mostly conceptualize revolution as a corrective process with a set course directed from outside. This leads logically to his further conclusion that the characteristic seventeenth-century notion of a providential revolution averted any need to conceive of revolution as a prolonged act of rebellion and collective struggle requiring violent resistance to the existing political order of a kind that forged self-conscious "revolutionaries."

Pre-1789 early modern revolutions were hence typically envisaged as occurring "rather than being made," as the result of acts of collective will only in a rather restricted and passive sense. Contemporary usage of the term shows that pre-1789 revolutions could be "happy," "extraordinary," or 'glorious,' and were part of the ordained order of things. Revolution was "a fact but not yet a collective act; there were certainly revolutions but no revolutionaries" (p. 76). These were "God's Revolutions," in David R. Como's telling phrase, part of a divine plan characterized by "a reluctance to claim agency" beyond the divine" (p. 51). As David Armitage aptly sums up the thesis, from 1789 revolution became "voluntary, transformative and repeatable: revolution as fact gave way to revolution as act" (p. 57).

In terms of mainstream traditional Tory and Whig political and religious culture, Baker's thesis is impeccable except that he seems too preoccupied with the actual term and its usage, and not enough with historical reality. Tim Harris' excellent contribution on the 1688 Revolution in Britain comes to a conclusion that differs only slightly from Baker's but is arguably a valuable refinement. According to Harris, not only must we distinguish revolutionary change that occurs due to outside circumstances and direction from actively resisting tyranny, but also between two varieties of the latter: we must separate revolution actively resisting "tyranny" deemed to be dragging a society out of its supposed previously right, proper and accustomed path, as conscious reversion to what supposedly was, from actively "seeking to replace an existing regime with another deemed more desirable." (p. 38) Diverging somewhat from Baker and Edelstein, Harris and also David R. Como in his contribution, argue that the seventeenth-century English did haltingly edge toward a clear concept of revolution engineered by conscious, planned active resistance to tyranny. They also had revolutionaries seeking to replace a regime they disliked with a model they liked better. By the 1650s and 1660s we do in fact find attempts "actively to bring about regime change."(p.38 ) What was lacking was not so much an active, dynamic concept of revolution but rather scope for providing a revolutionary script without a theological base, ways to justify such a conscious revolutionary effort in purely political and worldly terms: "only a handful of the most radical Whigs were prepared to argue that Parliament, or the people, had the right to unking James because he had ruled unconstitutionally" (p. 42).

The real barrier for revolutionaries in 1688, then, was that the available scripts were mostly tentative and extremely narrow in scope and philosophical rationale. Few went beyond Locke by way of providing a revolutionary script for 1688, or a script useful to American resistance prior to Tom Paine's *Common Sense* of early 1776. Very few English revolutionary pamphleteers in and after 1688 deployed the revolutionary theory that sovereign right is created by "virtue of the power to protect" collective natural rights and freedom. However, a tiny fringe did, and if some employed such doctrines in a Hobbesian conservative manner, there were others, like Gilbert Burnet who brought this dynamically revolutionary doctrine over from Holland in a strengthened, more expansive form with the Dutch army, in 1688.[3] By 1688, Dutch, German and Huguenot as well as English clandestine republican

philosophical culture, philosophical and theological, had already for several decades been rejecting the idea that social and moral order were divinely ordained and the political order is governed by a benevolent managing force.

Surveys of the pamphlet literature of the Glorious Revolution confirm that texts arguing that James II had been rightfully deposed by his subjects because he had broken the basic natural law contract were indeed decidedly rare, but they did exist, and it is this fringe radicalism that needs investigating if we are to uncover the first germs of a Western revolutionary consciousness.[4] Baker is doubtless right to discern considerable ambiguity in Locke's assurance, in his *Second Discourse*, that "if a long train of abuses, prevarications, and artifices, all tending the same way, make the design [of tyranny] visible to the people, and they cannot but feel, what they lie under, and see, whither they are going; 'tis not to be wonder'd, that that they should rouze themselves, and endeavor to put the rule into such hands, which may secure to them the ends for which government was at first erected." These famous lines hardly make Locke a theorist of active revolution. Rather, he adhered to a basically 'cyclical sense of revolution, to the idea of restoring what had been usurped' placing this process under the supervision of the established elites.[5] While Locke provided justification for resistance up to a point, agrees Jack Rakove, in his contribution on the American Revolution, there were limits to his radicalism; "beyond hoping that the [1689] Convention Parliament might do more than it chose to do," he hardly concerned himself with "fundamental constitutional renewal and transformation" of the kind that became the prime preoccupation of the American revolutionary leadership (p. 113).

Locke's moderation tinged with radicalism does, however, help clarify the restrictive quandary hardened opponents of Stuart, Bourbon, and other forms of absolutism faced when endeavoring to inspire and organize revolutions and find justification for them. Locke's employer, the First Earl of Shaftesbury, vehemently insisted on the need to organize a revolution so as to overthrow Stuart absolutism in the England in the early 1680s. Whatever Locke's connection with Shaftesbury's revolutionary activities, Shaftesbury and the radical Whigs in 1681 confronted a thorny dilemma not unlike that facing 'The True Freedom' in Holland during the 1650s and 1660s: they had the prince and the public church ranged against them, a church vigorously preaching support for the regime and the doctrine of "passive obedience and non-resistance." They needed a formula that would robustly justify and morally legitimate their efforts to overthrow the existing order (p. 113). As in the Dutch Revolt, dissenting theology was of little help to those whose focus was chiefly constitutional and political.

A more convincing example than Locke of a pre-1688 revolutionary armed with a revolutionary script, and one who had meditated hard and long on the history of revolutions including those of the Roman Republic and the Dutch Revolt, was Algernon Sidney, who was beheaded in London for sedition in December 1683 and whose lingering influence in both England and eighteenth-century America is not to be underestimated (pp. 64-66). Sidney was a republican political theorist who believed that monarchies breed war and that republics foster peace, contending that the "rights and liberties of a nation must be utterly subverted and abolished, if the power of the whole may not be employed to assert them, or punish the violation of them." (p. )Vindicating men's rights, in Sidney's thought, involved tirelessly combatting "ill men never willingly submitting to any decision that is contrary to their passions and interests." [6] Freedom must be vigorously and collectively fought for and tyranny actively resisted; and only republican radicals of a certain sort were equipped to understand and legitimate this reality.

Accordingly, the "Baker thesis" requires some amending: the predicament of radical Whigs in 1680s England was not so much that of a revolution in the making without "revolutionaries," but rather revolutionaries conceiving of and planning active revolution but only incipiently beginning to outline explanatory scripts for justifying revolution, which is something substantially different. It is the latter state of affairs that characterizes pre-1789 Europe. It would have helped had the volume's approach to pre-1789 Europe been less Anglocentric. Edelstein's cursorily affirming the Dutch Revolt of the 1570s

“did not bring about significant constitutional changes in the Dutch States” (pp.122, 380 n17) is particularly unfortunate. For on the contrary, it was the principal European revolution before 1688 and the one that for the first time involved a popular rising against royal authority leading to the establishment of an unsteady and precarious new republic. It led to profound changes in the constitution and the country’s institutional structure. Just to mention a few of these, short assemblies were replaced by near permanent legislatures, the number of towns represented in States of Holland greatly increased, relations between the provinces were greatly altered under a loosely federal new constitution, the States now took charge of matters of war and peace, diplomacy and military finance from which they had previously been excluded, and the public Church was replaced by another and eliminated from direct participation in government.[7]

This was a great revolution of immense long-term significance for the wider world, as well as the Low Countries, and it produced a revolutionary script, subsequently bathed in seventeenth-century myth,[8] in the shape of heroic Patriots and defenders of the constitution justly deposing an allegedly tyrannical and fanatical king of Spain for infringing the constitution, liberties and rights of the Dutch provinces.[9] Admittedly, the Dutch republic did not establish a modern notion of personal liberty, but it certainly did entrench the idea of a collective freedom built on constitutional “liberties” being fought for, long and hard, culminating in formal abjuration, with the *Plakkaat van Verlatinge* [Act of Abjuration] of King Philip II of 25 July 1576, of a dynastically legitimate sovereign. Moreover the struggle was not entrusted to the baronage as in the fight for the Magna Carta during King John’s reign in medieval England, but to the representatives of the cities and provinces.[10]

It should cause little surprise, then, that finding a rationale for full-scale revolution, a genuinely revolutionary script had little to do with 1688 in particular and could in fact only arise from the refining of sixteenth-century notions of safeguarding collective freedom via the Radical Enlightenment’s stripping away of theology. The pre-1660 tradition of clandestine oppositional philosophical literature which we shall term “Radical Renaissance” for short certainly opposed the existing political, moral, legal, and religious order comprehensively, but in a manner that exalted withdrawal from the public sphere and was basically non-revolutionary. Mostly, such clandestine literature blended philosophical strands originating much further back, in the tradition of *libertinage érudit*, late medieval Averroism, the rediscovery of Lucretius (in fifteenth-century Florence), and “Radical Reformation.”[11] These trends characterized the clandestine philosophical literature until the mid-seventeenth century, but rapidly receded during the late seventeenth as the philosophies of Hobbes and Spinoza emerged as potent subversive devices. It was the Dutch *cercle spinoziste* of the 1660s and 1670s in particular, though, which first welded elimination of religious authority to democratic republicanism with a metaphysics that seemingly undermined all teleology, divine providence and the miraculous. Franciscus van den Enden, Johan and Pieter de La Court, Adriaan Koerbagh, Lodewijk Meyer and the others, together with Spinoza, adopting Galileo’s mathematical science as their overriding verifying principle, stepped beyond Epicureanism by combining its millennia-old demolition of theological justifications with their distinctive new republican and democratic political agenda, thereby creating a much broader, more active and powerful blend than existed in Western thought previously.[12]

Once one has publicists claiming men possess natural rights and freedoms, collective and individual liberty which government is there to protect, and the more buttressed and protected the more government is legitimate while government is illegitimate where these are not conserved, one has a dynamic conception of revolution in place. To this Locke was only partially and tentatively an heir. Sidney more clearly reflected this new perspective but advocated aristocratic republicanism as much, or more, than a democratizing republicanism. If Franciscus van den Enden (1602-74) is a good example of a Dutch proto-revolutionary advocating democratic republicanism and striving to combat the tyranny of Louis XIV (and paid for it by being executed in Paris in 1674), and if Sidney and Shaftesbury of English aristocratic proto-revolutionaries, a notable instance of a French revolutionary *avant la lettre* dedicating his life to opposing Louis XIV, exalting the Dutch Republic, and fighting for a better regime

in France was Nicolas Guedeville (1652-c1721). Guedeville agreed with Bayle (who opposed his friend's revolutionary attitude) that it is not worth fighting tyranny if men continue in their usual state of ignorance, and the result is merely slaughter and rivers of blood; but if brought to "ouvrir les yeux sur leur aveuglement et faire revivre parmi eux l'esprit de liberté" as he expressed it in his opposition journal, *L'Esprit des cours de l'Europe*, if they become enlightened about their situation, then they can fight for and achieve a better form of regime.[13]

Exploring the issue of revolutionary justification and the search for enlightened grounds prior to 1789 inevitably involves the related problem that highly self-conscious revolutionary vanguards fired by a comprehensively subversive ideology inevitably differ widely in outlook and motivation from the mainstream of their societies. There invariably exists a vast gap in all revolutionary situations between populations that find themselves pulled in largely by external factors and vanguards striving to diffuse a culture and rhetoric of liberation and emancipation and by this means capture the public consciousness. During the early stages of the American Revolution, the leaders of colonial resistance to the British crown "did not actively believe that their protests were conceived to produce a radical transformation of a political regime or a historically unprecedented movement for national liberation" (p. 106). As Jack Rakove explains in his contribution, most Americans in 1774-76 knew nothing about revolutions (except for that of 1688) and were not particularly interested in the topic. Database evidence suggests, adds Baker, that the term 'revolutionaries' itself was absent during the American Revolution and that in effect there were no 'revolutionaries' before the 1790s. Even in late 1775, ordinary Americans hoped their vigorous and highly vocal opposition would suffice to persuade Lord North and his ministry to reverse their highhanded imperial policy and allow things to settle back to where they had been before the Stamp Act. The motive force, the real engine behind the political crisis in the American colonies, derived—even in the minds of the active revolutionary leadership—not from American aspirations or the people but principally from Parliament and the court in London which sought to impose unacceptable fiscal, mercantilist and administrative changes.

In the American Revolution, as in all revolutions, the crucial factor was the revolutionary vanguard that conceived, constructed, and steered the Revolution. Forging an American revolutionary agenda was the work of a relatively small number of Founders and members of the local intellectual elite, most dramatically Thomas Paine and the ideas presented in *Common Sense* (1776). His ideas created a "sensation," as Rakove puts it, by forcefully injecting a clear-cut revolutionary script powerfully rejecting the existing status quo. Paine's *Common Sense*, in Armitage's words, shook "his colonial readers out of their complacent British monarchism by linking a plea for republican government with his larger argument in favor of independence from Great Britain" (p. 65). A select intellectual elite ushered in the American Revolution's revolutionary consciousness but not without creating a vast complication. In the wake of Paine's intervention, two very different American revolutionary scripts emerged that immediately fell into outright conflict with each other, with Paine chief spokesman of the radical democratizing republican tendency and most (but not all) leading minds of the traditional social elite—Jefferson being the key exception—promoting a well-honed aristocratic republicanism rejecting Paineite radicalism. Sidney's legacy had become an ideological civil war.

Rakove opens his chapter with a discussion of Benjamin Rush (1746-1813), one of the principal American enlighteners of the age and, in Pennsylvania, a prominent member of the intelligentsia that forged the American Revolution's two competing revolutionary scripts. A leading medical man and reformer, Rush is notable especially for switching from one rival revolutionary agenda to the other in rapid succession. Originally, in 1775-6, an ally of Paine, Franklin, Timothy Matlack, the Scots radical James Cannon and Thomas Young, all inveterate foes of British "mixed government" and aristocratic republicanism, by early 1777, Rush—though Rakove fails to bring this out—was converted by John Adams, a vigorous proponent of "mixed government," division of powers, and aristocratic bicameralism on the post-1688 British model. Rush then took to blaming the radicals leading the Revolution in Pennsylvania, "Cannon, Matlack and Young," for sapping the "strength of the state by urging the

execution of their rascally [democratic] government in preference to supporting measures for repelling the common enemy.” Rush warned correspondents in other states that in Pennsylvania “our people (intoxicated with the *must* or first flowing of liberty) have formed a government that is absurd in its principles and incapable of execution without the most alarming influence upon liberty.”[14] The democratic tendency of Paine, Matlack, and Charles Wilson Peale (1741-1823), America’s leading artist and revolutionary spokesman in the arts, Rush assured General Lee, had become a “Mobocracy.”[15]

Rakove’s contribution clearly demonstrates the wide gap between the motive power provided by the people (in the American case stirred by a foreign sovereign), and the shaping of agendas and ordering of the specifics by revolutionary vanguards. It fails, though, to bring out equally clearly the essential duality of the American leadership’s revolutionary consciousness, the fight between the two clashing scripts, radical democratizing and aristocratic conservative. Major revolutions involve multiple scripts that invariably greatly complicate the interplay between the two basic levels of revolutionary agency outlined by Rakove who allows this latter dichotomy—the prolonged and fundamental antagonism infusing the American Revolution, radical versus moderate—to remain implicit instead of underlining it as he should have in the manner of historians like Garry Nash, Seth Cotlar and Matthew Stuart.[16] By contrast, the bitter clashes of basic revolutionary scripts within the 1917 Russian Revolution are vividly brought out by Ian Thatcher.

The key word in the general script of the Russian February Revolution was *svoboda* [freedom] in a humanitarian, morally uplifting context. “Free Russia” needed dramatically to depart from the “shameful” oppression typical of Tsarist Russia, held Kerensky, foremost figure of the “liberal” Russian revolution of 1917, and veer toward democracy and free expression. His script was partially undermined by a “moderate socialist” script that agreed that Russia needed democracy and free expression but also demanded a “drastic reallocation of Russian national resources away from the propertied elite toward the toilers and underprivileged” (p. 220). These two scripts clashed and both were opposed by an “extreme Left script” that set out to organize the masses to wage a “relentless struggle” against both the liberal bourgeoisie and the “moderate Left” as well as fight counter-revolutionary forces.

Although recent historiography has somewhat modified previous heavy insistence on the “extent to which a hegemony of intellectuals led and determined the political choices available to ordinary citizens in the Russian Revolution” (p. 225), even with all due allowance for the man in the street, it remains clear that the Russian Revolution was a classic example of Rakove’s revolutionary mechanism operating on two sharply distinct and to an extent opposed levels: sporadic but inchoate and uncommitted motive force from the people, with the specifics and shaping force from revolutionary vanguards. Adoption of the rhetoric of revolutionary scripts frequently served, in the midst of revolutionary turmoil, as a “public sign of personal loyalty” and could be an effective way, as Lillian Guerra expresses it, “to generate the appearance of political homogeneity and conformity,” but they were practically never anything of the kind in reality (p. 286).

Bringing out the essential duality of revolutionary scripts in the American Revolution, the clash of radical Enlightenment versus moderate Enlightenment, is of course fundamental to grasping the basic parallelism between the American and French revolutions, the duality of competing scripts, radical versus moderate, infusing and dividing the great French Revolution between 1789 and 1793. This basic parallelism gets rather lost in the contribution of Guillaume Mazeau which is mainly a discussion of the symbolic significance of the assassination of Marat by Charlotte Corday, a topic interesting in itself but that tells us next to nothing about the three basic scripts inspiring the three competing revolutionary vanguards wrestling for control of the Revolution. Edelstein explains the emergence of an open-ended, dynamic conception of revolution, the maturing of revolutionary consciousness and authority, as a post-1791 phenomenon “largely driven by events” but puzzlingly tells us practically nothing about the three conflicting scripts—the moderate Enlightenment bloc venerating English “mixed government,” the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and Montesquieu, seeking a constitutional monarchy serviced by a privileged elite—in fierce competition with the democratic republican (radical Enlightenment) tendency

and both locked in conflict with the authoritarian populism of the Montagne (p. 126). During 1789, the faction including Mirabeau, Sieyès, Brissot, Condorcet, Volney, Desmoulins, Bonneville, Cérutti, Robert, Carra, Lanthenas, Gorsas and also Lafayette, possessing the smallest representation in the National Assembly, also exerted the greatest outside resonance and had the most popular backing, as well as having the most press and international links. Jefferson, then American ambassador in Paris, correctly designated this grouping the “republicans, who are willing to let their first magistracy be hereditary” but who designed to render the French monarchy “very subordinate to the legislature, and to have that legislature consist of a single chamber.”[17]

Much like Rush earlier, Lafayette by 1791 was a classic instance of “cross over” from one revolutionary script to the rival camp. In 1789-90 Lafayette too called himself a “republican.” He justified his tortuous political manoeuvres (which ended up locating him among the constitutional monarchist moderates), as efforts to bridge the gulf between the two (then dominant) incompatible *Patriote* streams by calling on Mounier and the *monarchiens* to compromise with “the republicans.” He strove to accommodate Condorcet, Brissot, Pétion, Bonneville, and Paine with the argument that the Revolution could succeed only by reconciling moderates and radicals and getting the two rival scripts to join forces against both the *ancien régime* and the authoritarian populists. Lafayette’s tactic in the National Assembly and Paris city government, he explained, on 25 August 1789, was to unite the leading figures of the Left and center, especially “eight of us whom I want to coalize, as being the only means to prevent a total dissolution and civil war.”[18] After August 1792, the picture changed dramatically. The main struggle now was between the democratic republicans including some elements among the Danton faction, and the highly intolerant populist authoritarian tendency within the Montagne, including the coalition of factions that established the group dictatorship of 1793-4 and introduced the Terror.

Carefully differentiating the three divergent scripts plied by the great French Revolution’s competing revolutionary vanguards is, of course, vital not just for explicating that revolution itself, but also the later interaction of revolutionary scripts on the level of recollection, imagination, and historiography during the nineteenth century. In the Western world, it was especially during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century that the narrative of revolution as memory, promise, and threat permeated the political stage at all points, along with excited talk of renewing, adjusting, or quashing the Revolution. The French Revolution’s three divergent and incompatible scripts were pervasive themes of thought, literature, and debate. Although very few of those who had lived through the Great Revolution were still alive in the 1840s, there were numerous budding revolutionaries in France whose romanticizing vision of the past and of future revolutionary upheaval was shot through with collective memory and myth, mediated through surviving oral culture and a vast mass of printed material: histories, *mémoires*, journalists’ articles, novels, and plays. The brief success, followed by the disappointing outcome of the 1830 revolution in France, an outcome leaving a conservative monarchy and small financial elite in charge of the country, only further compounded and embittered revolutionary emotions, memories, imaginings, and hopes.

“By the mid to 1840s,” comments Dominica Chang in her essay on nineteenth-century France, “the notion of “revolution” had become imbued with messianic promise.” (p.183) It was not long, however, before the image of peoples united in their revolutionary quest of revolutionary solidarity, invoked by Delacroix’s great painting “La Liberté guidant le peuple” (1830), today in the Louvre, proved once again just an impossible utopian dream. After 1848, the positive aura surrounding the notion of revolution modelled on the Great Revolution rapidly and markedly receded. Conservative reaction gained ground in France, Germany, and America alike, but so did a forward-looking revolutionary socialism impatient with democratic radicals, like Michelet, Ledru-Rollin, and Lamartine, prone to look back fondly on the upheavals of 1789-94. Marx styled the French 1848 revolution a derisory parody: “from 1848 to 1851 only the ghost of the old revolution walked about.” (p.184) Chang views Gustave Flaubert’s *L’Éducation sentimentale* (1869) as similarly “depicting the 1848 Revolution as a degraded copy of 1789, one badly played out by naïve readers who could do nothing better than mindlessly repeat actions and

words from hackneyed scripts” (p. 185). The Communard insurrection of 1871 certainly looked back with ardent nostalgia on the Great Revolution, but increasingly, during the spring of 1871, new voices and new concerns challenged the “paradigm of historical repetition” (p. 192).

Yet, all mid-nineteenth century revolutionary scripts were in one way or another vivid reminders that, ideologically, the Great Revolution’s three distinct and incompatible revolutionary scripts—moderates, democratic republicans and populist authoritarians mobilizing the *sans-culottes*—were locked in continual conflict with each other. Where Lamartine cast scorn on Marat, Robespierre, and the Montagne, and lionized the Condorcet-Brissotin script of the Great Revolution, Louis Blanc and other socialists of the middle and third quarter of the century, eager to fuse the old and new revolutionary scripts, championed Robespierre, seeking to refurbish, even whitewash, his reputation. The Communards, Chang reminds us, were only really interested in the Montagnard script. “What we need is a new ‘93’, as one vigorous adherent put it: ‘well, we will have it and you can be sure that we’ll find our own Robespierres and Marats” (p. 191).

What is lacking, though, from Chang’s account of nineteenth-century reminiscing about the Great Revolution, as well as from Mazeau and Edelstein, is sufficient emphasis on ending the people’s “aveuglement” as Gueudeville put it, and on the role of “la philosophie” in opening the door to revolution. “La révolution est due au progrès des Lumières,” as the editor of the (moderate) pro-Revolution journal, *L’Ami des Patriotes ou Le Défenseur de la Révolution* expressed it in October 1791, “elle est l’ouvrage des gens de lettres qui ont fait parler la raison dans un temps où les intérêts les plus opposés se réunissoient pour étouffer sa voix.”[19] Only the voice of reason could, in the end, override tradition, religion, and the existing order, and then only in an Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment context. There can be no viable discussion of revolutionary scripts without insistence on the image of *la raison* armed and ready at the forefront of the picture. For it is here that we find the vital thread connecting the pre-1789 and the post-1789 revolutionary eras. The essential connection between the seventeenth-century seeds of modern revolutionary culture and post-1789 developments lies precisely in the exalting of philosophical reason over all other forms of legitimation. At first this meant the advance of a Radical Enlightenment proclaiming secularism, public education, and democratic republicanism. But as Gareth Stedman Jones adroitly shows in his chapter on “Scripting the German Revolution,” by the early 1840s socialism was rapidly replacing democratic radicalism. As part of this transformation, the “sectarianism and disproportionate ferocity with which supposed allies on the democratic left were denounced’ had become a prime feature in particular of the budding Marxist script” (p. 179).

The change, starting in the 1830s was profound. But it did not of itself remove the primacy of ‘philosophy’ from shaping the world’s revolutionary scripts. Rather, both Romantic historiography, and not least Michelet, prolonging the polemics of the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, and early socialism, reaffirmed the Revolution’s rootedness in “la philosophie.” Louis Blanc, the socialist leader and historian, certainly diverged markedly in his account of the great Revolution from Michelet, and from earlier historians of the Revolution in seeking to exalt the Montagne. Blanc much preferred Marat and Robespierre to the *philosophes*. But with regard to the centrality of *la philosophie* in creating the revolutionary scripts of 1789, his analysis scarcely differs from that of Desmoulins, Prudhomme, La Harpe, Portalis, or Michelet: “philosophy” was always the primary agent. The originality of the French Revolution, averred Blanc, lay in its vehemence and drive, emanating from a set of principles: it was intellect turned into passion. In 1789, ideas turned into acts, books into scenes of combat, and the *philosophes* into “gladiators.”[20] However true it may be that the French Revolution stemmed from a structural crisis in French society and politics with large sections of society providing the motive force, with regard to revolutionary scripts, what mattered, much as in the Russian Revolution of 1917, were the competing ideologies of the vying intelligentsias that forged the agendas and changes of course.

In her evaluative essay on Louis Blanc’s great history of the Revolution, George Sand, looking back from the vantage point of 1865, correctly viewed the elimination of pre- Enlightenment notions of



divine Providence, divine Right, and the notion that divine power intervenes and directly acts on men, steering the course of affairs, as the most essential legacy of the Enlightenment to humanity and, also, the most enduring political accomplishment of the great French Revolution. Not wishing to sound openly irreligious, Sand even spoke of the impulse to overthrow the status quo as “le progrès providential.” But whether one understood such progress from a Catholic radical, deistic, or atheistic viewpoint, discarding traditional notions of divine governance of history remained in her eyes an irreversible shift. The demolition of the idea that the existing order conformed to God’s will, she believed, much like Desmoulins in his great pamphlet *La France Libre* (1789), was the most crucial step on the path to democratic republican modernity. For only when men understand that there is no divine right or divine power legitimating the forces of oppression, can they learn what society is, what society’s goals are, why and how these change, and why grand projects succeed or fail. The entire prism of human possibilities, the struggle to achieve improvements, the vast mistakes and deplorable wrong turns, she maintained, could all be understood only through meticulous study of the great Revolution.[21]

It is regrettable that this valuable volume includes no essay on the long drawn-out Spanish American revolutions of 1808 to the late 1820s and beyond. It is quite wrong to assume that these “reverted back to the earlier constitutional model” in the sense of seeking constitutional stability rather than endeavoring to refashion state and society through a prolonged process of self-conscious revolutionary effort requiring new and more complex scripts (p. 119). In fact, Spanish America illustrates the central theme of the collection especially well by presenting a particularly sharp divide between largely anarchic and inchoate mass movements and sophisticated warring revolutionary scripts. In July 1809, the proprietors of Lima’s cafés were summoned by royal officials and warned not to permit “subversive conversations” discussing the revolutionary Chuquisaca insurrection (of May 1809) in their establishments on pain of being held responsible and severely punished.[22] Although the Viceroy of Peru succeeded in keeping Lower Peru a bastion of Counter-Enlightenment royalism for some years, awareness of the insurgency convulsing Upper Peru (Bolivia), Quito, and northern Chile, and soon the insurrections in Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile, gripped Lima too.[23] Edited by a young, Madrid-trained lawyer from Bogotá, Fernando López Aldana (1784-1841), the *Diario Secreto de Lima* preached solidarity among the revolutionary movements, supported the rising in Quito, and broadcast secret reports and copies of the revolutionary *Gazeta de Buenos-Ayres* received from the circle of Manuel Belgrano (1770-1820) and Juan José Castelli (1764-1812), leaders of the May 1810 uprising that overthrew royal control on the River Plate. Everywhere, insurgent leaders proclaimed the old institutions and ways of thinking obsolete and the need to replace these with the new doctrine of the “rights of mankind.” Belgrano had acquired his revolutionary culture while in Spain and through studying the French Revolution. Castelli, son of a Venetian doctor, had studied at several universities, including Chuquisaca (earlier called Charcas and today Sucre), and had ties with intellectual networks across Hispanic America. He admired Rousseau, Voltaire and Diderot and was similarly powerfully impressed by the French Revolution, but also by the great Andean risings of the 1780s.[24]

One of the foremost of the competing revolutionary scripts in South America promoted especially by Manuel García de Sena (1780-1816), a Venezuelan living in Philadelphia since 1803, was the democratic, “rights”-based radicalism of Thomas Paine rendered into Spanish. García de Sena translated numerous extracts of Thomas Paine together with the American *Declaration of Independence*, the United States Constitution, and the state constitutions of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia, while a separate Spanish rendering of Paine’s *Common Sense* appeared in 1811, the work of the Peruvian Manuel José de Arrunátegui. These revolutionary publicists hoped to bring the entire New World, North and South America, to converge in terms of democratic republican scripts and practice and to align with the revolutionary France of the Radical Enlightenment faction there, that is, Jefferson’s French “republicans.”[25]

García de Sena fully embraced Paine's and Jefferson's idea that the American Revolution represented a giant step forward in man's understanding of government and politics but also that it was the veritable French Revolution (i.e. that of the Brissotins and other democratic radicals of 1789-93) that extended the American Revolution's essential principles further.[26] The "Tom Paine" radiating in Spanish helped bolster and shape Spanish America's incipient radical tendency and assisted Spanish American revolutionary scripts to align with both American and French democratic republicanism. *La Independencia de Costa Firme justificado por Thomas Paine treinta años ha* [The Independence of the Mainland justified by Thomas Paine Thirty Years Ago](Philadelphia, 1811) was followed by García de Sena's rendering of John McCulloch, *A Concise History of the United States until 1807* (Philadelphia, 1812). Both attracted attention in key Spanish American papers such as the *Gazeta de Caracas* (January 1812),[27] further entrenching Paine's ideas in the Ibero-American consciousness rendering him before long the leading publicist evoking American solidarity with the Spanish American revolutions and what he called Europe's "General Revolution."

Modern revolutionary consciousness, then, had a clear beginning, prior to 1789, and a clear logic of competing scripts between 1789 and the early twentieth century. But does it have a definite ending? Julian Bourg makes a compelling case, in part following Immanuel Wallerstein, for 1968 as a symbolic year that initiated "a revolution within the revolution" whereby the social and political scripts of revolution were fundamentally transformed into something different. Where "Old Left" revolutionary movements sought to capture state power and transform social structure, the New Left impetus voiced the resentment and frustration of disparate minority groups and aggrieved fringe elements trapped between organizing effective protest and "unresolved strategic questions of what to do and how to do it" (p. 287). Successive waves of upheaval infused with revolutionary exaltation swept Europe and North America including Mexico where the National Autonomous University (UNAM) was occupied by demonstrators, and the army was used on 2 October 1968 to effect a particularly brutal repression of the revolutionaries, the so-called "Tlateloloco Massacre" when possibly as many as 300 were killed.

In 1968, many people around the world believed global revolution was occurring on an unprecedented scale. Loudly affirming distinctiveness instead of calling for basic reform, however, was bound to have a fragmenting and ultimately rebounding effect and tended to abort the revolutionary scripts typical of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. The French *événements* of May and June 1968 began in the Paris university world with student activists constructing street barricades much as in the past and organizing mass actions in the Latin Quarter. The *événements* extended to student occupation of the Sorbonne, and the late-evening Trotskyist attack on the Bourse (at which I was present). Emotionally, there were marked continuities with the past. The Paris street battles did indeed, as I saw myself, develop "according to theatrically performative codes familiar to demonstrators and police alike" with exchanges of hurled stones and tear-gas, punctuated by alternating charges toward opposing lines (p. 289). Self-conscious invoking of 1830, 1848 and 1871 was widespread. But the scripting of the 1968 Paris revolution on thousands of posters and ephemeral graffiti showed all too clearly the disintegration of the old competing revolutionary scripts. There were Trotskyists and Maoists in evidence, to be sure, but the predominant tone was one of post-Modernist rejection of grand narrative, basic reform, and the march of reason. Graffiti such as "it is forbidden to forbid"; "Be realistic, demand the impossible"; "underneath the paving stones, the beach," well express the modish anarchism, defiance of reason, and rejection of revolutionary tradition pervading the new revolutionary script (p. 289).

Yet, the break was incomplete. In part, the Paris revolution of 1968 professed not to have a script, to be "antiscryptural," as Bourg neatly expresses it, to be anti-structural and as opposed to Marxist authority as to Gaullist values. Nevertheless, it reaffirmed the essential continuity of organized, scripted revolutionary consciousness within the Revolution in two notable ways: it became a contest between anti-structuralists and Trotskyists (and Maoists) on the level of scripts, and still more striking, on the level of "people" versus leaders. Although in 1968 "the people" had become the *soixante-huitards*, young, Bohemian, and given over to a counter-culture of unconventional behavior, dress, sexuality and drugs, a

highly intricate interplay not unlike that of earlier revolutions reappeared.[28] This was between supposedly spontaneous masses devoid of leaders inspired by the notion that no-one should be in charge, the quest for pure rupture, interacting with a revolutionary intelligentsia headed by Cohn-Bendit, the Trotskyist Alain Krivine, and diverse other theorists of the Revolution's meaning, a revolutionary vanguard that was supposed not to exist but was actually heavily engaged in invoking the past and directing the actions of the masses, that is in concocting revolutionary scripts.

Eric Hobsbawm always regarded the dominant role of intellectuals and students in scripting modern revolutions as the "spark" that set wider movements in motion. Here I believe he was profoundly mistaken. There was never much genuine conjunction between the revolutionary scripts of the intellectuals and the movements of the masses, in 1572, 1688, 1776, 1789, 1917, or 1968.

The common feature linking modern revolutions that most powerfully emerges from studying the essays in this volume is emphatically not the role of revolutionary "emotion," as the volume's inadequate afterword vacuously concludes, but rather the basic duality of revolutionary experience between motive force from below and the shaping initiative from elaborate scripts. The point of all these scripts was that they should, like Mao's Little Red Book be "grasped by the broad masses," as Alexander Cook puts it, but it is questionable if they ever were (p. 252). The universal tendency in any case was for the scripts to fragment into two, three, or four conflicting scripts rendered the culminating phases of the major revolutions highly divisive and ideological in character.

#### NOTES

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