

provoking. His call for a broader understanding of genocide makes sense from a moral point of view; mass killing of innocent persons chosen on any basis is wrong. This approach also makes sense for historical analysis, especially if one understands concepts such as nationality and race as constructs rather than permanent categories. Just who is thought to belong to an ethnic or racial group may be just as arbitrary as who is seen as belonging to a social class or political group, and arbitrary attributions seem especially common when groups are treated as alien or deviant. At least this was the case with Stalin and Soviet history.

**Peter H. Solomon**  
University of Toronto

---

Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. Pp. 664. \$25.00 paper (ISBN 978-0-300-17143-3). doi:10.1017/S0738248012000090

This is a book of big arguments repeated often: 1688 marked the first modern revolution; it was violent, divisive, and popular. Most previous scholars have missed this because so few have wanted 1688 to be revolutionary. Steve Pincus strives to repair their error in a lively book built on a massive foundation of manuscript and printed sources. The result will renew interest in a moment long lost between the excitement of Britain's mid-seventeenth-century civil wars and the apparent promise of the later eighteenth century.

After surveying theoretical literature on revolutions, Pincus centers much of his analysis on the notion that "revolutions occur only when states have embarked on ambitious state modernization programs" (33). Conflict arose between two approaches to modernization; revolution resulted as one conquered the other. Thus Pincus makes one of his most intriguing claims: that the original proponent of modernization was James II. His modernization program was not just Catholic, but Gallican: imitative of Louis XIV's independence from the Pope and of France's large army and navy. New military and administrative means enhanced James's authority, the chief end of which was Catholic emancipation.

In pursuing this end by these means, however, James misread his countrymen, who had "gone Dutch" by the time of his accession in 1685. As in the Netherlands, England's growing colonial trade financed new industries and cultural practices. Turnpikes, improved urban spaces, and deposit banking were "recognizably modern" (74). The coffeehouse, providing a place for new modes of political exchange, exemplified England's vitality. The people's

initial acceptance of James was conditional on his recognizing these modernizing developments. However, the new Catholic king's effort to repeal the Test Acts—which required office holders to receive the Eucharist by Anglican rites—indicated the opposite impulse. James's plan to pack the House of Commons with supporters of his tolerationist effort ultimately provided cover for William of Orange's decision to invade England in 1688.

Brilliant and potentially important insights appear throughout the book, but many suffer from overstatement. For example, the events of 1688–1689 comprised “neither a coup d'état nor a foreign invasion but a popular revolution” (224). If not a coup, there was certainly a conspiracy among some of James's most significant subjects to invite William to England. And if not an invasion, then William's visit, conducted in the company of thousands of Dutch soldiers, surely transformed political possibilities. There was indeed a “popular revolution.” But that had been promoted by plotting and by the support of foreign troops. Coup, invasion, and popular revolution were not mutually exclusive developments.

Pincus rightly suggests that what made the revolution largely popular was the widespread rejection of James's political aims and the extralegal character of some of his methods. However, readers may find less helpful the contention that it is “nonsense” (142) to see James's ouster as arising, at least in part, from a Protestant contest with Catholicism. We might conclude that this is not nonsense from—among other signs of what is anachronistically dubbed “identity politics” (94, 99, and *passim*)—the extensive anti-Catholic violence unleashed in late 1688. Calling this political as opposed to religious violence, or just calling it “bigotry” (261), does little to help us understand the religious mind that identified Jesuits and Catholic chapels as targets of mob anger and official action. What to us may be the otherness of intense sectarian identity—and what therefore may not fit our expectations of “modernity”—remain problems for historians to explain, not dismiss.

Pincus, however, is definitely correct to suggest that one result of putting James's daughter Mary and her husband William on the throne was to promote a modernization program that built upon the economic and political changes underway before 1685. Modernization in the 1690s manifested itself in three ways: in a foreign policy by which England became France's mortal foe; by new ideas and practices in political economy, best indicated by the creation of the Bank of England; and by a “revolution in the Church,” as low church bishops promoted comprehension and toleration. Of course, many parish clergy, and many of the laity, would have something to say about that in the decades following, and thousands of non-Anglicans would remain formally barred from public life—office-holding, receipt of university degrees—for over a century longer.

Law appears to have played little part in making this modernity. Like previous scholars, Pincus reminds us of James's remarkable purge of the

judiciary. He considers the usual courtroom set pieces: *Godden v. Hales*, a case contrived to establish the king's authority to dispense with anti-Catholic legislation; and the Seven Bishops' case, in which church leaders were excused for their defiance of James's tolerationist policy. But there is nothing here about the impact on law of the politically active judges that William III appointed, for example, Sir Henry Pollexfen and Sir George Treby, successive chief justices of Common Pleas. A more significant omission is Sir John Holt, whose judgments in King's Bench helped make possible the modern financial practices that Pincus rightly emphasizes. Nor is there much consideration of the transformed role of Parliament and therefore of the new primacy of statute as a mode of lawmaking after 1688.

This book will be a must read for many, although it will not be an easy read for all. Those with little background should not begin their study of 1688 here. Readers with some sense of the events and historiography will want to keep the works of other historians handy so that they can test Pincus's arguments. The smaller community of scholars familiar with the archives will want to explore the sources Pincus studied to consider the many interesting things he has found in them. Not everyone will reach the same conclusions, but what we come to understand about this critical moment will only be improved as others engage with this provocative book.

**Paul D. Halliday**  
University of Virginia

---

Steven A. Barnes, *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. Pp. 368. \$80.00 cloth (ISBN 978-0-691-15108-3); \$35.00 paper (ISBN 978-0-691-15112-0).

doi:10.1017/S0738248012000107

Steven Barnes has written a welcome case study of Karlag, a gigantic complex of correctional-labor camps, colonies, and special settlements located in the Karaganda region of Kazakhstan. Karlag covered a land mass larger than many European states. It was supposed to introduce mechanized agriculture to a semi-arid steppe plagued by hostile winters. Karlag hosted infamous camps within its vast boundaries, such as Steplag and the notorious Alzhir camp for wives of "traitors" of the fatherland.

We now have excellent overviews of the Gulag by Anne Applebaum and Oleg Khlevnyuk. Barnes's Karlag closes the gap in case studies, of which there are few.