

講演

Ideas of Civil War in Seventeenth-Century England

DAVID ARMITAGE (Department of History, Harvard University)

Every student of early modern British history is faced with the major question of what to call the crisis of the mid-seventeenth century. The problem is long-standing and goes back almost to the time of the events themselves. As John Adamson has recently noted, 'after 1660, it was difficult to refer to the events of the mid-century crisis without the very choice of words becoming an implicit declaration of Civil-War allegiance'.ⁱ⁾ For example, the title of the Earl of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (1702-04) clearly signalled his rejection of the rebels' legitimacy, but not even the most die-hard supporter of the British monarchy would now write about 'the Rebellion' or even 'the Great Rebellion'. It would take the shock of the French Revolution for the term 'English Revolution' to be used to describe the mid-century upheavals. Indeed, it was a Frenchman, François Guizot, who in 1826 became the first historian to write about the 'English Revolution'. As he explained, 'the analogy of the two revolutions is such that the first [the English] would never have been understood had not the second [the French] taken place'.ⁱⁱ⁾ Different battle-lines opened up in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries between the heirs of the Parliamentarians on the left of the political spectrum and of the Royalists on the right. The greatest English historian of the seventeenth century, Samuel Rawson Gardiner, and later R. H. Tawney, distinguished the world-shaping achievement of the period as 'the Puritan Revolution'.ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Though Gardiner did not use that designation in the title of his *History of the Great Civil War* (1886-91), it did catch on among American historians and literary scholars in the 1930s but 'had a limited shelf life' before being generally abandoned in the 1970s.^{iv)}

The ascendancy of Marxist historiography in the period between the 1930s and the 1980s ensured that 'the English Revolution' would stand at the head of the sequence of revolutions which had shaped world history since 1649. However, in the last twenty-five years, the word 'revolution' has mostly disappeared as a term of art among seventeenth-century historians in Britain and the United States, at least among those who study the 1640s and 1650s and their antecedents. (The Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 has not lost its lustre, though debate continues about the significance of those events in British history and even in world history.)^{v)} More specifically, the term 'Puritan Revolution' has not been used in anglophone historiography for at least thirty years. It was latterly rejected even by Christopher Hill – one-time author of the classic collection, *Puritanism and Revolution* (1958) – on the grounds that stressing the religious roots of the English Revolution distinguished it too sharply from other modern revolutions like the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution.^{vi)}

Without a single term to cover the conflicts and consequences of the years between 1640 and 1660, historians have reached for a variety of names – and an equally varied range of explanatory frameworks – for the period. For John Morrill in the 1980s, it was 'the last war of religion'.^{vii)} For many others influenced by calls for a 'New British History', encompassing Scotland and Ireland, as well as

England, the dissensions beginning in 1639 with the Bishops' War in Scotland comprised a 'War of the Three Kingdoms' or, more often, 'the Wars of the Three Kingdoms'.^{viii)} For Jonathan Scott, taking a still wider, European, perspective, they were part of a decades-long sequence of 'England's Troubles'.^{ix)} But the term now most often used by anglophone historians is either 'the British Civil Wars', 'the English Civil War' (for 1642-46) or, more often, 'the English Civil Wars' (for the whole period 1640-60). In this vein, Michael Braddick's *God's Fury, England's Fire* (2008) is subtitled 'A New History of England's Civil Wars' and Blair Worden has called his recent survey *The English Civil Wars: 1640-1660* (2009), because '[p]erhaps ... having neither a derogatory nor a commendatory flavour, it is as near to neutrality as we can get'.^{x)} Yet is the term really so neutral? As Adamson has noted, 'as late as the 1930s, even the seemingly even-handed term "Civil War", when used as an alternative to "the Great Rebellion" had partisan implications'.^{xi)}

Even today, when 'civil war' is used to describe current conflicts it can be deeply contentious. Just how contested the term can be in public debate became clear in the closing months of 2006. In November of that year, both some US television stations and newspapers decided to call the internal conflict in Iraq a 'civil war'. In the following months, that characterisation drew much criticism from a range of journalists, military strategists and members of the Bush Administration. The critics agreed that what was taking place in Iraq was not a civil war. Terrorism, an insurgency, 'a politico-military struggle for power'? Maybe. But a civil war?^{xii)} Certainly not.

What they could not agree on was an acceptable definition of civil war. According to the British journalists John Keegan and Bartle Bull, 'the violence must be 'civil', it must be 'war', and its aim must be either the exercise or the acquisition of national authority': that is, it must be conducted 'within a national territory, and ... be carried on largely by the people of that territory', it must have 'a minimum degree of organisation, formality and identifiability of the combatants' and those 'combatants must be trying to seize national power or to maintain it'. By these criteria, Keegan and Bull argued, civil wars have been surprisingly rare in world history: in England (1642-49), the United States (1861-65), Russia (1918-21), Spain (1936-39) and Lebanon (1975-90). Because the warring parties in Iraq were fragmented, partly made up of non-Iraqi insurgents, and fighting for ends more contradictory or simply opaque than seizing power, they concluded that Iraq's troubles did not qualify as the modern world's sixth civil war.

This debate, like that over naming the crisis in mid-seventeenth-century England, confirms the recent judgment of a leading political scientist who studies civil war that it is 'a phenomenon prone to serious semantic confusion, even contestation. The description of a conflict as a civil war carries symbolic and political weight since the term can confer or deny legitimacy to a warring party'.^{xiii)} Its application can depend on whether you are a ruler or a rebel, the victor or the vanquished, an established government or an interested third party. Thucydides recognised 2500 years ago that one of the first casualties of civil war is language. As his first English translator, Thomas Hobbes, rendered his words: 'The received value of names imposed for signification of things, was changed to arbitrary'.^{xiv)} What to a ruler looks like a rebellion against their authority may be a civil war to the insurgents who aim to overturn that authority. And if the rebels succeed, one way to mark the triumph of their cause is to rebrand a civil war as a revolution.^{xv)} There is a great deal at stake, then, in the definition of civil war, whether in the twenty-first century or the seventeenth century.

Historians, even those who study the seventeenth century, should have a share in that debate. Perhaps the most obvious way in which they can contribute to this discussion is to ask what contemporaries themselves understood by 'civil war' and similar, cognate terms.^{xxvi)} And a further way is to see how the memory of civil war shaped later conflicts. Civil war was both a historical and a cumulative concept: that is, that whenever the spectre of civil war arose, it did so in forms that recalled previous conflicts and that placed those conflicts into an unfolding, and seemingly unending, sequence. It could reassure as well as terrify, and inspire as well as intimidate. And even if civil war was terrible to contemplate it was always good to think with, in seventeenth-century England and well beyond. But we must first go back to republican Rome because, for almost two thousand years, civil war would be seen through Rome-tinted spectacles.

* * *

The Romans had a name for it. *Bellum civile* was in fact one of three major conceptions of war bequeathed by the Romans to their heirs in the Latin West and feared by their successors ever after. Each type of war was defined, as Roman wars always were, by the nature of the enemy being fought. The first was *bellum sociale*, or social war: a war fought the Romans and their allies (*socii*) in Italy.^{xxvii)} Next on the scale of anticipated horror was *bellum servile*, servile war: a slave uprising, or war against slaves (*servi*), usually outside the bounds of Rome itself in places like Sicily.^{xxviii)} Civil war was both the most dreaded of all and the most frequently expected: a war against, and hence between, citizens (*cives*), taking place within the community, the *civitas* itself, and directed at control of the Roman state. St Augustine summarised this Roman litany of horrors in *The City of God*: 'How much Roman blood was shed, and how much of Italy was destroyed and devastated, by the Social War, Servile War and Civil Wars!^{xix)}

The Roman legacy of civil war was not solely definitional: it was also literary and historical. A sequence of conflicts in Roman history had fallen under the name 'civil war(s)'. That sequence concluded with the victory of Octavian at the battle of Actium in 31 BCE in the most destructive struggle of all, the one that definitively marked the transition from the Roman Republic to the Empire. Most of Rome's greatest historians – Tacitus, Livy, Plutarch, Appian, Julius Caesar himself – took its civil wars as their subject.^{xx)}

Even before Caesar had crossed the Rubicon in 49 BCE – an act that would be one of Rome's greatest metaphorical bequests to the future of civil war^{xxi)} – civil war had a recognised array of connotations. Accounts of the wars between Marius and Sulla over thirty years earlier had established a conception of civil war as a battle for control of the commonwealth, undertaken by generals at the head of citizen-armies. It was as an offence against the commonality of citizenship itself, an internalisation of the warfare Rome's strict legal distinction between domestic political authority and external military command had been created to prevent. For this reason, civil wars would be called 'unnatural' or 'intestine' an appalling importation of violence and uncertainty, even bestiality, within the pale of peace and civility.

The *locus classicus* for this conception of civil war was Lucan's chilling and witty anti-epic, the *Bellum*

civile, also known as the *Pharsalia* after the site of the climactic battle it narrates.^{xxii)} Lucan was, in the words of the literary historian David Norbrook, 'the central poet of the republican imagination' in early modern England.^{xxiii)} he was one of the most frequently translated and influential poets of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England. In the fifty years before the outbreak of the English Civil War, Christopher Marlowe, Arthur Gorges and Thomas May all made versions of at least parts of the poem.^{xxiv)} May extended it beyond the truncated, ten-book, version Lucan had left, to include the rest of Caesar's life, shortly before he wrote the first history of England's troubles amid what he called in Lucanic tones 'a War indeed ... much more then civill'^{xxv)}. Lucan's influence did not end there. It has been plausibly argued that at least one reason that Milton originally cast *Paradise Lost* in ten books (rather than the Virgilian twelve) was to allude to Lucan.^{xxvi)} And the epigraph on the title-page of Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* (1680), warning of the dangers of unfettered liberty, came from the third book of the *Pharsalia*.^{xxvii)}

The *Pharsalia* narrated the course of the wars between Caesar and Pompey in a series of set-pieces that, in their gripping natural imagery and often appalling violence, would haunt the dreams and nightmares of generations of Europeans facing civil conflict. I quote the opening lines in Marlowe's Elizabethan translation:

Wars worse then civill on *Thessalian* playnes,
And outrage strangling law and people strong,
We sing, whose conquering swords their own breasts launcht,
Armies alied, the kingdoms league uprooted,
Th'affrighted worlds force bent on publique spoile,
Trumpets and drums, like deadly threatening other,
Eagles alike displaide, darts answering darts.

'Wars worse then civill', *Bella ... plus quam civilia* (*Bellum civile*, I. 1): these were wars fought not just among fellow-citizens but, in this case, 'worse' than civil because the protagonists, Caesar and Pompey, were cousins; yet worse even than that, because they were unconstrained by law and civility itself, as well as a diversion from the wars of conquest that had rendered Rome so great. How, asked Lucan, could 'Roome ... /First conquer all the earth, then turne thy force,/ Against thy self' (*Bellum civile*, I. 21-22) ?^{xxviii)} The result, in a phrase that would echo in British history, was a *bellum ... sine hoste* (*Bellum civile*, I. 682), or what Sir William Waller called in 1643, 'this warr without an Enemie': a conflict among kin and compatriots, fought for political authority, and with it the right to define the composition of the commonwealth itself.^{xxiv)}

Lucan's poem provided the template for others to reimagine England's history as a sequence of civil wars. Thus, when Samuel Daniel versified the history of the Wars of the Roses in the 1590s, Lucan shaped both the overarching narrative and his detailed account of 'our last Civile Warres of England':

I sing the civill Warres, tumultuous Broyles,
And bloody factions of a mightie Land:

Whose people hautie, proud with forraine spoyles,
 Upon themselves turn-backe their conquering hand;
 Whil'st Kin their Kin, Brother the Brother foyles;
 Like Ensignes all against like Ensignes band;
 Bowes against Bowes, the Crowne against the Crowne;
 Whil'st all pretending right, all right throwne downe.^{xxx)}

Darts become bows, and eagles turn into crowns, but the form of the conflict remains the same. Shakespeare would draw on Daniel's account of the Wars of the Roses for his treatment in *Richard II*, the concluding play of a tetralogy one scholar has recently termed 'Shakespeare's *Pharsalia*'.^{xxxii)} When English writers thought of civil war, they did so in terms that were inescapably Lucanic and, hence, fundamentally Roman in character.

The conceptions of history found in the works of Lucan and his early modern imitators viewed the present as the product of past struggles and the future itself as likely to emerge from a similar progression of 'bloody factions' and 'tumultuous Broyles'. This tendency to look back to earlier civil wars and to project their consequences forwards would become more pronounced during the course of the seventeenth century in Britain. By the 1630s, the history of Europe in general, and England in particular, appeared to be founded in the primal contentions of the Romans and to be distinguished by an accelerating and compounding series of civil wars. Rome's historians and poets kept alive the memory of the wars of Sulla and Marius, Pompey and Caesar, but more recent history, across northern Europe especially, revived the memory of those earlier moments. The European inheritors of Rome's traditions would see their own internal troubles as the culmination, or repetition, of a cycle of similar wars that followed the pattern of the Roman civil wars and that had played out across Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire. England alone had been through the Barons' Wars of the thirteenth century, the Wars of the Roses in the fifteenth century and then the civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century. Italy had had its civil wars in the fifteenth century, followed by the French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt – a series of interlocking local conflicts – in the late sixteenth century.

After the constitutional crisis of 1640–41 broke out into armed conflict across England, contemporaries viewed England's troubles in light of the Dutch and French civil wars and as the continuation of England's earlier troubles in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. In this vein, to take just one salient example, the historian of Civil War Gloucester, John Corbet, pointed up the continuity with the earlier civil wars but defined the stakes in 1645 as even higher than they had been in those prior disputes:

The Action of these times transcends the Barons Warres, and those tedious discords betweene the Houses of York and Lancaster, in as much as it is undertaken upon higher Principles and carried on to a nobler end, and effects more universall.^{xxxiii)}

During the course of the three English civil wars and their British counterparts, there was a flood of translations and publications relating to past civil wars, in Rome, France, the Low Countries and England, among others. The Earl of Monmouth translated the Italian Giovanni Francesco Biondi's *History of*

the Civill Warres of England (1641), on the Wars of the Roses. Enrico Davila's *Historie of the Civill Warres of France* appeared for the first time in English in 1647. Histories of the Dutch Revolt by Famiano Strada and Guido Bentivoglio appeared in English versions in 1650 and 1654. In 1652, an English translation appeared of Prudencio de Sandoval's history of the Spanish civil wars of the early sixteenth century. And the Royalist poet Richard Fanshawe accompanied his 1647 translation of Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* with 'a short Discourse Of the Long Civill Warres of Rome' dedicated to the Prince of Wales, in which he affirmed the Roman distinctions between *bellum sociale*, the servile war ('a *Mutiny*') and conspiracies, like that of Catiline, in favour of those conflicts that were 'properly *Civill warres*'.^{xxxiii)} All these publications affirmed the place of England's 'civill uncivill warres' within longer historical patterns.^{xxxiv)} Their very variety – classical and modern; English and continental European – showed that the range of historical precedents available for contemporary actors was wider than just those drawn from Republican Rome or the Barons' Wars of medieval England.^{xxxv)}

* * *

Discussions of civil war in early modern Britain may have begun with poetry and history, as the humanist training of most participants in the mid-century crisis would lead one to expect, but the subject fell increasingly under the domain of law and civil science – or what we would now call political philosophy – across the course of the seventeenth century. Here, too, Roman conceptions set the terms of debate. For example, in his treatment of *The Rights of War and Peace* (1625), the Dutch humanist and legal theorist Hugo Grotius had distinguished three kinds of war:

The most general and most necessary Division of War is this, that one War is private, another publick, and another mixed; that is, a publick War, which is made on each Side by the Authority of the Civil Power. Private War is that which is made between private Persons, without Public Authority. Mixed War is that which is made on one Side by publick Authority, and on the other by mere private Persons.^{xxxvi)}

Grotius firmly opposed private war even against a usurper at the cost of engaging a 'Country in dangerous Troubles and bloody Wars' and quoted Plutarch and Cicero in support of his position: 'A Civil War is worse than the necessity of submitting to an unlawful Government. ... Any Peace is preferable to a Civil War'.^{xxxvii)} He believed war could be just – indeed, his whole book was dedicated to arguing that proposition – but not that a *civil* war, whether private or mixed, could be just on both sides. The question for those who came after Grotius was, which party could legitimately be held to be the legally constituted authority.

That problem would be the central judicial matter at stake in 1649 when the Rump Parliament laid the legal foundations for the trial of Charles I.^{xxxviii)} Charles's capital crime would be treason. However, as Barbara Donagan has recently noted, 'What constituted treason and therefore merited punishment was a matter of partisan judgement' when both Charles and Parliament claimed to represent the sovereign authority.^{xxxix)} In putting an anointed monarch on trial, it was necessary to redefine the location of sovereignty, and hence the object of treason as Parliament rather than the

Crown.^{x1)} With that reversal of perspective, it became possible to conceive of the King as waging war against the English people, a war which was, by definition, civil because directed within the commonwealth and against its citizens.

When Parliament passed its Ordinance Erecting a High Court of Justice for the King's Trial on 6 January 1649, the two major 'high and treasonable Offences' with which Charles was charged were, first, that he 'had a wicked Design totally to subvert the Ancient and Fundamental Laws and Liberties of this Nation, and ... to introduce an Arbitrary and Tyrannical Government' and, second, 'that besides all evil ways and means to bring this Design to pass, he hath prosecuted it with Fire and Sword, Levied and maintained a cruel War in the Land, against the Parliament and Kingdom, whereby the Country hath been miserably wasted, the Publick Treasure Exhausted, Trade decayed, thousands of People murdered, and infinite other mischiefs committed'.^{x1i)} Arbitrary government was the end, 'cruel war' the means. But against what law would this have been an offence worthy of trial and even execution?

Before January 1649, it had been a legal impossibility for the Crown to declare war on its own subjects; it could act defensively against rebels, for instance, but to engage in war against its own people was legally inconceivable. The House of Commons had to rewrite the law of treason even before it had declared itself to be the locus of sovereignty. The Rump Parliament announced itself to be 'the supreme power in this nation' on 4 January 1649, but in 1 January they had asserted '[t]hat by the fundamental Laws of this Kingdom, it is treason in the King of *England*, for the Time being, to levy War against the Parliament and Kingdom of *England*'.^{x1ii)} In so doing, they crucially altered the English law of treason (25 Edward III, st. 5, c. 3) which had included among its list of offences the crime of 'levying war' against the king. That definition of treason was Roman in origin and derived from the *crimen maiestatis* of Digest 48. 4. 3, where it was described in part as waging war without the command of the emperor (*iniussu principis*).^{x1iii)} Whichever body had the legitimate authority to levy war was, by definition, the sovereign.

It was in the aftermath of this debate on the locus of sovereignty in England that Thomas Hobbes elaborated his theory of sovereignty in *Leviathan* (1651). Though Hobbes was agnostic on the question of whether the sovereign should be 'a Man, or Assembly of Men', he left no room for the possibility of resistance against that sovereign, however it might be constituted. For Hobbes, the constitution of sovereignty was not the alternative to civil war but to the condition of war *outside* civil society:

... it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as if of every man, against every other man. For WARRE, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known ... So the nature of War, consisteth not in actuall fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is PEACE.^{x1iv)}

The sovereign power is instituted precisely to secure peace and prevent war. Any division of sovereignty would lead to confusion and contention about what constituted the 'common Power'; it was therefore essential to maintain the indivisibility of the sovereign's rights, including 'the Right of making Warre, and Peace with other Nations, and Common-wealths'. 'For', he argued, 'unlesse this division

precede, division into opposite Armies can never happen. If there had not first been an opinion received of the greatest part of England, that these Powers were divided between the King, and the Lords, and the House of Commons, the people had never been divided, and fallen into this Civill Warre'. He argued in chapter 18 of *Leviathan* that it was vain for anyone to object that they might suffer under a tyrant or a popular government, because 'the estate of Man can never be without some incommodity or other; and that the greatest, than in any forme of Government can possibly happen to the people in generall, is scarce sensible, in respect of the miseries, and horrible calamities, that accompany a Civill Warre'.^{x1v)} Such a condition marked the dissolution of sovereignty and the return to the pre-civil state of nature: in this sense, for Hobbes, civil war was strictly an oxymoron, even though he was bound by the available vocabulary of his time to use the term for that time when there was no consensus about who, or what, constituted the 'common Power' over the people.

Hobbes lived through the whole span of 'England's troubles' long enough to contribute to the Exclusion Controversy just before his death in 1679.^{x1vi)} However, he would have had to have lived a full century to have witnessed the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and a little longer to have read John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* (1689/90), written in the wake of the Exclusion Controversy but subsequently revised and then published in 1689 'to establish the Throne of our Great Restorer, Our present King *William* ... And to justifie to the World, the People of *England*'.^{x1vii)} In it, Locke denied that the state of nature was a state of war, and defined a state of war as 'not a passionate and hasty, but a sedate settled Design upon another Mans life' (§ 16), and hence quite different, in conscious intent and precise direction, from Hobbes's state of war as a permanent condition of insecurity amid the passions of others.

There is no reason to believe that Locke was specifically responding to Hobbes but his sole reference to 'Civil Wars' also shows the distance between his political theory and those of both Hobbes and Grotius. As if replying to the passage from Grotius quoted earlier, Locke argued: 'But if they, who say it [the right of resistance to a tyrant] *lays a foundation for Rebellion*, mean that it may occasion Civil Wars or Intestine Broils to tell the People they are absolved from Obedience ... and that therefore this Doctrine is not to be allow'd, being so destructive to the Peace of the World. They may as well say upon the same ground, that honest Men may not oppose Robbers or Pirates, because this may occasion disorder or bloodshed' (§ 228).

Locke was a pupil at Westminster School when Charles I was executed nearby in Whitehall.^{x1viii)} His account of tyranny in the *Two Treatises*, and of the legitimate response to it, echoed the charges made against the allegedly malevolent monarch at his trial. Humans enter civil society in order to escape the state of nature; the greatest threat to their security in the commonwealth comes not from their own passions, or even foreign enemies, but from the illegitimate deployment of force by their rulers, 'so destroying the Authority, which the People did, and no Body else can set up, and introducing a Power, which the People hath not authoriz'd, they actually *introduce a state of War*, which is that of Force without Authority ... and so they putting themselves into a state of War with those, who made them the Protectors and Guardians of their peace, are properly, and with the greatest aggravation, *Rebellantes Rebels*' (§ 227).

Civil war was thus for Locke what Grotius might have called a 'mixed' war, but with the public right on the side of the people, not the ruler. It was a species of war which could never be just on both

sides and hence it introduces a dissolution of society and a return to the state of nature. In this sense, even more radically than Hobbes, Locke repudiated the Roman tradition of civil war as taking place within the *civitas*, between armed groups of fellow-citizens. For Locke, civil war entailed the end of the commonwealth, the collapse of civil society, and an exit from civility itself until just authority can be restored. Locke clearly thought such a restoration had taken place in 1688 with what he called 'our delivery from popery and slavery from the arrival of the Prince of Orange'.^{xlix)}

The Glorious Revolution was the English, or British, Civil War that never was. As J. G. A. Pocock has remarked: 'there was indeed no civil war in 1688; no battle, that is to say, very little bloodshed, and no general relapse into a condition of epidemic armed violence such as had obtained in England between 1642 and 1646'. If the events constituted a 'Fourth' English Civil War, then it was 'over before it started' in the closing months of 1688.^{l)} The Glorious Revolution might then have been the (English) civil war to end all civil wars: a factional struggle in which both sides had armies but claimed no territory and engaged in no military conflicts (at least, on English soil); instead, they bloodlessly arranged for the transmission of authority from one faction to another: a 'civil' process, perhaps, but hardly a war.

It is all the more remarkable, then, that the Glorious Revolution came to be absorbed within a sequence of civil wars viewed retrospectively from the late eighteenth century. Writing six months before the American Declaration of Independence of July 1776 transformed a civil war within the British Empire into a war between the United Kingdom and the United States, Thomas Paine had an early version of what would now be called the democratic peace argument, that democracies do not go to war against each other, in his pamphlet *Common Sense*. He contrasted this with the 'most plausible plea ... in favour of hereditary succession':

that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas, it is the most barefaced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there have been (including the Revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. Wherefore instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand on.^{li)}

'Eight civil wars' since 1066? Paine's republican mathematics are worth pausing over here. It is not clear how many civil wars Paine would have discerned amid the Wars of the Roses, or even amid the mid-seventeenth-century troubles, nor does he suggest how to distinguish 'rebellions' from 'civil wars'. However, what is striking is that he seems to include the Glorious Revolution among the roster of civil wars, a position he shared – as in so many other matters – with Edmund Burke, for whom '[t]he Revolution of 1688 was obtained by a just war, in the only case in which any war, *and much more a civil war*, can be just'.^{lii)}

Paine and Burke were writing a century after the Glorious Revolution. Paine had sought to shock American colonists out of their complacent monarchism by his unsettling inclusion of the Glorious Revolution into a sequence of English civil wars since 1066. Burke, by contrast, wrote in the setting of the debate on the French Revolution and may have been preparing the ground for later

British intervention into a French civil war he believed had begun in 1789. According to the most widely influential summation of the law of nations in the late eighteenth century, the Swiss jurist Emer de Vattel's *Droit des gens* (1758), any oppressed people could legitimately seek foreign support for rebellion against insupportable tyranny, as '[t]he English justly complained of James II' in 1688. 'Whenever ... matters are carried so far as to produce a civil war', Vattel judged, 'foreign powers may assist that party which appears to them to have justice on its side'. On these grounds, William of Orange had justly intervened on the side of the injured party, the people of England.^{liii)} Burke would later use just this argument in relation to France in 1791: 'In this state of things (that is in the case of a divided kingdom) by the law of nations, Great Britain, like every other Power, is free to take any part she pleases'. 'For this' he advised his son, 'consult a very republican writer Vattel'.^{liv)} This new understanding of the law of nations offered the possibility that outside powers could engage in what we might now call humanitarian intervention on behalf of those they believed to be suffering injustice during a civil war.

* * *

As these various examples show, at least until the late eighteenth-century 'Age of Revolutions', the history of political transformation was seen not as a sequence of revolutions but as a series of civil wars. Only in the nineteenth century, in the aftermath of the American and French Revolutions, and with the later emergence of Marxist historiography, did historians begin to study revolutions as a similarly cumulative series of historical events. The comparative study of revolutions then generated some of the major works of twentieth-century historical debate. For example, Roger B. Merriman's study of *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions* (1938) of the 1640s – the revolt of the Catalans, the Portuguese revolt, the uprising in Naples, 'the Puritan Revolution', the Fronde, and the republican coup in the Netherlands – gave rise to the debate on the 'General Crisis' of the seventeenth century.^{lv)} Twenty years later, R. R. Palmer's *The Age of the Democratic Revolution* (1959–64) set off half a century of discussion over whether the American and French Revolutions, along with a host of other upheavals around the Atlantic world, in central Europe and Russia, and beyond, deserved to be seen as parts of a single cycle of liberation, 'a world revolution of the West'.^{lvi)} This fed into grand comparative studies of revolution by Crane Brinton, Theda Skocpol, Jack Goldstone and others, and confirmation that the sequence of great revolutions – American and French, Russian and Chinese – was the scarlet thread in a narrative of the progressive liberation of humanity.^{lvii)} At least since 1989, it has been much harder to view these revolutions without an awareness of the appalling violence and human devastation that accompanied them and the comparative study of revolution has declined precipitately, among both historians and other social scientists.

The study of civil war has more recently absorbed the energy and creativity that once went into the examination of revolution. There are many reasons for this turn, apart from the shattering of the utopian promises of the revolutionary tradition itself. Students of contemporary economic development have examined civil wars as one of the major obstacles to growth, especially in Africa. International relations theorists have found their subject disappearing around them during the course of the so-called 'Long Peace' since 1945, in which levels of interstate conflict have reached historic lows, even

as the incidence of intra-state conflict boomed to unprecedented highs in the half-century before 1999. And an upsurge of ethnic violence since the Balkan wars of the 1990s led to much discussion of the factors that contribute to civil conflict around the world.

For most of recorded human history, civil war was the most frequent and the most ferocious form of collective human conflict. At the height of Rome's civil wars, in the first century BCE, perhaps one-quarter of all male citizens aged between 17 and 46 were in arms. Almost two thousand years later, the combined death-toll for both sides in the US Civil War was six times larger, relative to population, than the rate of American casualties in the Second World War. And the civil wars of the 1640s claimed the lives of a greater proportion of the English population than the First World War (and that figure does not even include the deaths incurred in the coincident civil wars in Scotland and Ireland during the 1640s and 1650s).^{lviii} Slaughter on such a scale shattered communities, shaped nations, and scarred imaginations for centuries to come.

Since the Second World War, civil war has once again become the defining form of large-scale human conflict, as wars within states – rather than wars between states – became the norm, especially in the developing world. Between 1989 and 2006, 122 wars – defined as conflicts in which more than 1,000 people died – were fought around the globe. 115 of those wars took place inside states, generally among the world's poorest people in Africa and parts of Asia.^{lix} The incidence of civil war has been declining in recent years but it remains extremely costly, in human life and economic damage. The global impact of civil war has been estimated at US\$120 billion a year: that is more than the developed world's annual aid budget for the developing world.^{lx} This is a human tragedy but one that also brings with it an opportunity to link the great political transformations of the past to some of the most costly and widespread disruptions in the present. It is an opportunity scholars of seventeenth-century Britain should be particularly well-placed to seize, to give fresh relevance to their studies and to bring their much-needed perspective on the meanings of civil war to bear on the contemporary world.

[Notes]

- i) John Adamson, 'Introduction: High Roads and Blind Alleys: The English Civil War and its Historiography', in Adamson, ed., *The English Civil War: Conflict and Contexts, 1640-49* (Basingstoke, 2009), 3.
- ii) François Guizot, *Histoire de la révolution d'Angleterre* (1826), quoted in J. C. D. Clark, *Rebellion and Revolution: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 37.
- iii) Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *The First Two Stuarts and the Puritan Revolution, 1603-1660* (London, 1876); R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism: A Historical Study* (London, 1926).
- iv) John Morrill, 'The Puritan Revolution', in John Coffey and P. C. Lim, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge, 2008), 67.
- v) G. M. Trevelyan, *The English Revolution, 1688-1689* (London, 1938); Steve Pincus, John Callow and W. A. Speck, 'Forum on 1688', *Socialist History*, 33 (2008), 68-101; Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, 2009).
- vi) John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution: Religion and Intellectual Change in Seventeenth-Century England* (Woodbridge, 2006), 10; Christopher Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the*

English Revolution of the 17th Century (London, 1958); Hill, 'Irreligion in the "Puritan" Revolution', in J. F. MacGregor and Barry Reay, eds., *Radical Religion in the English Revolution* (London, 1984), 191-211. The last major work in English to use the term 'Puritan Revolution' in its title was David Underdown, *Pride's Purge: Politics in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1971).

- vii) J. S. Morrill, 'The Religious Context of the English Civil Wars', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 34 (1984), 155-78.
- viii) J. G. A. Pocock, *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History* (Cambridge, 2005); John Kenyon and Jane Ohlmeyer, eds., *The Civil Wars: A Military History of England, Scotland, and Ireland 1638-1660* (Oxford, 1998); Trevor Royle, *Civil War: The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1660* (London, 2004).
- ix) Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000).
- x) Michael J. Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (London, 2008); Blair Worden, *The English Civil Wars: 1640-1660* (London, 2009), 2.
- xi) Adamson, 'Introduction', 3. More generally, see Blair Worden, *Roundhead Reputations: The English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity* (London, 2001).
- xii) John Keegan and Bartle Bull, 'What is a Civil War? Are We Witnessing One in Iraq?', *World Politics Review*; David A. Patten, 'Is Iraq in a Civil War?', *Middle East Quarterly*, Summer 2007
- xiii) Stathis N. Kalyvas, 'Civil Wars', in Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford, 2007), 416.
- xiv) Jonathan J. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War* (Cambridge, 2001), 81-126; Thucydides, *Eight Books of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Thomas Hobbes (London, 1629), 198. On Thucydides in mid-seventeenth-century England, see Jonathan Scott, 'The Peace of Silence: Thucydides and the English Civil War', in G. A. J. Rogers and Tom Sorell, eds., *Hobbes and History* (London, 2000), 112-36.
- xv) David Armitage, 'Civil War and Revolution', *Agora* (Melbourne), 44, 2 (April 2009), 18-22.
- xvi) I will treat this question at greater length in David Armitage, *Civil War: A History in Ideas* (New York, forthcoming).
- xvii) Robert Brown, 'The Terms *Bellum Sociale* and *Bellum Ciuile* in the Late Republic', in Carl Deroux, ed., *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, 11 (Brussels, 2003), 98-102.
- xviii) Theresa Urbainczyk, *Slave Revolts in Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2008), 100-15.
- xix) Paul Jal, *La guerre civile à Rome. Étude littéraire et morale* (Paris, 1963), 19-21; Brown, 'The Terms *Bellum Sociale* and *Bellum Ciuile* in the Late Republic', 102-20; Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge, 1998), 132 : 'bella socialia, bella seruilia, bella ciuilia quantum Romanum cruorem fuderunt, quantam Italiae uastationem desertionemque fecerunt!' (3. 23).
- xx) John Henderson, *Fighting for Rome: Poets and Caesars, History and Civil War* (Cambridge, 1998), pts. I, IV.
- xxi) Maria Wyke, *Caesar: A Life in Western Culture* (London, 2007), 66-89, 263-66.
- xxii) On which see especially John Henderson, 'Lucan: The Word at War', in Henderson, *Fighting for Rome*, 165-211; Jamie Masters, *Poetry and Civil War in Lucan's 'Bellum Civile'* (Cambridge, 1992).
- xxiii) David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge, 1999), 24.
- xxiv) James Shapiro, "'Metre meete to furnish Lucans style" : Reconsidering Marlowe's Lucan', in Kenneth Friedenreich, Roma Gill and Constance B. Kuriyama, eds., 'A Poet and a Filthy Playmaker': *New Essays on*

- Christopher Marlowe* (New York, 1988), 315–26; Jonathan Gibson, 'Civil War in 1614: Lucan, Gorges and Prince Henry', in Stephen Clucas and Rosalind Davies, eds., *The Crisis of 1614 and the Addled Parliament: Literary and Historical Perspectives* (Aldershot, 2002), 161–76; David Norbrook, 'Lucan, Thomas May, and the Creation of a Republican Literary Culture', in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), 45–66; Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 43–50.
- xxv) Thomas May, *The History of the Parliament of England which Began November the Third, MDCXL* (London, 1647), sig. A3v; J. G. A. Pocock, 'Thomas May and the Narrative of Civil War', in Derek Hirst and Richard Strier, eds., *Writing and Political Engagement in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1999), 112–44.
- xxvi) John Milton, *Paradise Lost - A Poem Written in Ten Books*, eds. John T. Shawcross and Michael Lieb, 2 vols. (Pittsburgh, 2007); John K. Hale, 'Paradise Lost: A Poem in Twelve Books, or Ten?', *Philological Quarterly*, 74 (1995), 131–49; Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 438–67, esp. 443.
- xxvii) Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha; or The Natural Power of Kings* (London, 1680), title-page, quoting Lucan, *Pharsalia*, III, 145–46 ('Libertas ... Populi, quem regna coercent/Libertate perit').
- xxviii) Christopher Marlowe, 'The First Booke of Lucan Translated into English' (1593), in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 2nd edn, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1981), II, 280.
- xxix) Sir William Waller to Sir Ralph Hopton, 16 June 1643 (O.S.), in Mary Coate, *Cornwall in the Great Civil War and Interregnum, 1642–1660* (Oxford, 1933), 77.
- xxx) Samuel Daniel, *The First Fowre Bookes of the Civile Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and Yorke* (1595), in *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Samuel Daniel*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 5 vols. (London, 1885), II, 5, 9–10; George M. Logan, 'Daniel's *Civil Wars* and Lucan's *Pharsalia*', *Studies in English Literature*, 11 (1971), 53–68.
- xxxi) George M. Logan, 'Lucan-Daniel-Shakespeare: New Light on the Relation Between *The Civil Wars and Richard II*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 9 (1976), 121–40; Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge, 2005), 103–29.
- xxxii) John Corbet, *An Historicall Relation of the Military Government of Gloucester, from the Beginning of the Civill Warre* (London, 1645), sig. A2v.
- xxxiii) Giovanni Francesco Biondi, 'Civill warrs of England: in the life of Henry the Sixth', trans. Henry, Earl of Monmouth (before 1641), f MS Eng 1055, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Biondi, *An History Of the Civill Warres of England, Betweene the Two Houses of Lancaster and Yorke*, trans. Henry, Earl of Monmouth (London, 1641); Arrigo Caterino Davila, *Historie of the Civill Warres of France*, trans. Charles Cotterell and William Aylesbury (London, 1648); Famiano Strada, *De Bello Belgico. The History of the Low-Country Warres*, trans. Robert Stapylton (London, 1650); Guido Bentivoglio, *The Compleat History of the Warres of Flanders*, trans. Henry, Earl of Monmouth (London, 1654); Prudencio de Sandoval, *The Civil Wars of Spain in the Beginning of the Reign of Charls the 5t, Emperor of Germanie and King*, trans. James Wadsworth (London, 1652); Battista Guarini, *Il Pastor Fido, The Faithfull Shepherd*, trans. Richard Fanshawe (London, 1647), 303–12.
- xxxiv) Samuel Kem, *The Messengers Preparation for an Adresse to the King* (London, 1644), 30, quoted in Barbara Donagan, *War in England, 1642–1649* (Oxford, 2008), 132.
- xxxv) Compare Paul Seaward, 'Clarendon, Tacitism, and the Civil Wars of Europe', in Paulina Kewes, ed., *The Uses of History in Early Modern England* (San Marino, CA, 2006), 285–306; William Dugdale, *A Short View of the Late Troubles in England; Briefly Setting Forth their Rise, Growth, and Tragical Conclusion. As also, Some Parallel thereof with the Barons Wars ... But Chiefly with that in France, Called the Holy League* (Oxford, 1681).
- xxxvi) Hugo Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace* (1625), ed. Richard Tuck, 3 vols. (Indianapolis, 2005), I, 240 (l. iii. 1).
- xxxvii) Grotius, *Rights of War and Peace*, ed. Tuck, I, 381 (l. iv. 19. 1), quoting Plutarch's *Life of Brutus* and Cicero's *Second Philippic*.
- xxxviii) On the background see especially Sean Kelsey, 'The Ordinance for the Trial of Charles I', *Historical Research*, 76 (2003), 310–31; Kelsey, 'The Trial of Charles I', *English Historical Review*, 118 (2003), 583–617.
- xxxix) Donagan, *War in England, 1642–1649*, 130.
- xl) D. Alan Orr, 'The Juristic Foundation of Regicide', in Jason Peacey, ed., *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* (Basingstoke, 2001), 117–37.
- xli) 'An Act of the Commons of England Assembled in Parliament for Erecting a High Court of Justice, for the Trying and Judging of Charles Stuart, King of England' (6 January 1649), in C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, eds., *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660*, 3 vols. (London, 1911), I, 1253–54 (my emphasis). 'The Act Erecting a High Court of Justice for the King's Trial' (6 January 1649), in *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625–1660*, ed. Samuel Rawson Gardiner, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1906), 357, has 'civil war' in place of 'cruel War', but this is not attested in e.g. 'An Ordinance of the Commons in England in Parliament assembled with a List of the Commissioners & officers of the said Court by them elected' (3 January 1649), British Library E.536(35), fol. 1r, or in John Nalson, *A True Copy of the Journal of the High Court of Justice, for the Tryal of K. Charles I* (London, 1684), 2.
- xlii) *Journals of the House of Commons*, VI, 107, 111, cit. D. Alan Orr, *Treason and the State: Law, Politics and Ideology in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2002), 173.
- xliii) Richard A. Bauman, *The Crimen Maiestatis in the Roman Republic and Augustan Principate* (Johannesburg, 1967), 271–77; D. Alan Orr, *Treason and the State: Law, Politics and Ideology in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2002), 12, 44–45.
- xliv) Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge, 1991), 127, 88–89.
- xlvi) Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 126, 127, 128.
- xlvii) Thomas Hobbes, 'Questions Relative to Hereditary Right' (1679), in Hobbes, *Writings on Common Law and Hereditary Right*, eds. Alan Cromartie and Quentin Skinner (Oxford, 2005), 177–78.
- xlviii) John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett, rev. edn. (Cambridge, 1988), 137 ('The Preface'). All subsequent quotations are from the *Second Treatise*, listed by paragraph number only.
- xlvi) Roger Woolhouse, *Locke: A Biography* (Cambridge, 2007), 11.
- xlix) John Locke, 'On Allegiance and the Revolution' (c. April 1690), in *Locke: Political Essays*, ed. Mark Goldie (Cambridge, 1997), 307.
- l) J. G. A. Pocock, 'The Fourth English Civil War: Dissolution, Desertion and Alternative Histories in the Glorious Revolution', *Government and Opposition*, 23 (1988), 153, 159.
- li) Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), in Paine, *Collected Writings*, ed. Eric Foner (New York, 1995), 19.
- lii) Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*,

- VIII, *The French Revolution 1790-1794*, ed. L. G. Mitchell (Oxford, 1989), 80 (my emphasis).
- liii) Emer de Vattel, *Le Droit des Gens* (Neuchâtel, 1758), II. 4. 56; III. 18. 296.
- liv) Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on French Affairs* (1791), in Burke, *Further Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Daniel E. Ritchie (Indianapolis, 1992), 207; Burke to Richard Burke, Jr., August 5 1791, in Alfred Cobban and Robert A. Smith, eds., *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke: VI, July 1789-December 1791* (Cambridge, 1967), 317.
- lv) Roger B. Merriman, *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions* (Oxford, 1936); Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, eds., *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd edn. (London, 1997).
- lvi) R. R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1959-64); David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840* (Basingstoke, 2009).
- lvii) Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, expanded edn. (New York, 1965); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge, 1979); Jack A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, CA, 1991).
- lviii) Josiah Osgood, *Caesar's Legacy: Civil War and the Emergence of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2006), 3, citing P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower, 225 B.C.-A.D. 14* (Oxford, 1971), 509-12; Drew Gilpin Faust, "Numbers on Top of Numbers" : Counting the Civil War Dead', *Journal of Military History*, 70 (2006), 997; Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York, 2007), xi; Mark A. Neely, Jr., *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007), 208-16; Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire*, xii.
- lix) Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflict, 1989-2006', *Journal of Peace Research*, 44 (2007), 624, Table II.
- lx) Paul Collier, Lisa Chauvet and Håvard Hage, *The Security Challenge in Conflict-Prone Countries, Copenhagen Consensus 2008 Challenge Paper* (April 2008), 22.