Samuel Huntington & the End of Classical Modernization Theory

In the conceptual fragmentation and conflict that has overtaken development studies, the leading place has often seemed to be held by the ‘dependency’ or ‘underdevelopment’ theorists. This school first became widely known in the West toward the end of the 1960s, particularly through the polemical attack led by Andre Gunder Frank on US-dominated ‘modernization’ theory. Since then the dependencistas have been severely criticized in their turn by Marxists, but there would appear to have been no serious reply from the orthodox right.

This appearance is deceptive, however, especially in the USA and perhaps above all among political scientists in the US sphere of influence — which is still a considerable one. It is true that the ideologists of developmentalism had no answers to the devastating critique of Andre Gunder Frank, Suzanne Bodenheimer and others.\(^1\) However, their ‘paradigm-enforcing’ powers were immense. For a long time the dependencistas’ attack was simply ignored.\(^2\) Instead of a scientific debate, there was a retreat from confrontation with anti-imperialist theory, while efforts were made to consolidate a major transformation in mainstream development theory that was already under way when the onslaught by Frank and others occurred.


\(^2\) As far as I can tell no review of Frank’s first three books (all published in the USA) has ever appeared in the *American Political Science Review, Journal of Politics, World Politics, Comparative Politics* or *Economic Development and Cultural Change* — the last of these being the journal whose school of thought Frank explicitly attacked in his celebrated 1967 critique of the modernization perspective.
This was a shift to a concern with the maintenance of order. The revolution in Cuba, followed by the accumulating humiliation of US policy in Vietnam and the revolutionary instability and increasing reaction in Latin America and South Asia, undermined the original optimistic assumption of orthodox development theory, that the process of development involved drawing the populations of the Third World out of their traditional isolation into a modern social system that would be participative, pluralistic and democratic. A growing number of US social scientists began to recognize that this was not in fact the destiny of Third World countries developing in the framework of US hegemony. Increasingly, their thinking turned from a concern with the processes of ‘modernization’ (the processes of transformation into advanced, capitalist and hence pluralist and democratic societies) to a concern with the maintenance of social control.

Yet a complete break with the theoretical apparatus inherited from the optimistic phase of development ideology was neither practicable nor desirable. The need was to transform that apparatus — whose central animating concept was modernization — in such a way as to incorporate the new concern with maintaining order and, wherever possible, at the same time ‘co-opt’ the more persuasive themes of dependency theory and even Marxism itself. How this task has been carried out, in various branches of theory, lies beyond the scope of this essay. What is attempted here is to bring out the general nature of the ideological reconstruction involved by examining the work of one political scientist who, more than any other, led the way in initiating it.

‘Modernization’

In order to explain Samuel Huntington’s contribution, it is first necessary to sketch the main elements of ‘modernization’ theory itself.

The distinction between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ societies was derived from Max Weber via Talcott Parsons. A society was called ‘traditional’ in which most relationships were ‘particularistic’ rather than ‘universalistic’ (e.g. based on ties to particular people, such as kin, rather than on general criteria designating whole classes of persons); in which birth (‘ascription’) rather than ‘achievement’ was the general ground for holding a job or an office; in which feelings rather than objectivity governed relationships of all sorts (the distinction between ‘affectivity’ and ‘neutrality’); and in which roles were not clearly separated — for instance, the royal household was also the state apparatus (‘role diffuseness’ vs. ‘role specificity’). A society in

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which the opposite of all these was true was ‘modern’. Other features generally seen as characteristic of traditional societies included things like a low level of division of labour, dependence on agriculture, low rates of growth of production, largely local networks of exchange and restricted administrative competence. Again, modern societies displayed the opposite features.

‘Modernization’, then, referred to the process of transition from traditional to modern principles of social organization, and this process was what was currently occurring in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

From today’s vantage point it is easy to see that the traditional/modern distinction was at bottom simply a pair of very arbitrary abstractions from the contemporary situations of the periphery and the centre (respectively) of the world capitalist system; and that the concept of modernization was no more than a proposal to consider the former as a once-universal original state and the latter as a universal end state, with the so-called modernization process serving as a (quite fictitious) surrogate for the historical processes that have actually taken place, or are taking place, at both the periphery and the centre. However, those political scientists who were unaware of the ideological nature of these formulations saw in them the basis for an attempt to conceptualize ‘political development’ as ‘one element of the modernization syndrome’, i.e., the modernization process itself at the level of politics. This gave rise to a multiplicity of proposals: political development, it was suggested, involved democratization, political ‘mobilization’, the ‘building’ of nation states, administrative and legal development, secularization, equality, ‘sub-system autonomy’, etc.

According to Huntington himself, the starting-point for his own theorizing was a rejection of the concept of ‘political development’ because it indeed had no clear meaning. In its place he proposed to discuss merely political change. If this had been true, it would have implied at least an attempt to break with ‘modernization’ theory. But it was not true. In his main book, Political Order in Changing Societies (Yale University Press, 1968), a central place is occupied by the concept of ‘political decay’, a condition signalized by unrest, violence, corruption and coups, and one which retains all the normative and teleological content of the concept of ‘political development’, only expressed as its opposite. And this continuity, this preservation of the essential concepts of modernization theory but in forms

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6 Ibid., p. 301.
7 An earlier statement of the central argument of the book was entitled ‘Political Development and Political Decay’, in World Politics 17, 1965 pp. 386–430. The continued presence of the concept of ‘political development’ in the 1968 book is also marked by the fact that the term itself often recurs (see, for example, pp. 7, 192, 398). Huntington’s later claim to have dropped it was quite spurious.
adapted to the new concern with order, is, as we shall see, a fundamental
Huntington’s thought. However, in three respects Huntington did make a major break.

First, he really did switch attention to a kind of political change — revolution — which was the central issue of contemporary Third World politics. Previous writers had, remarkably, largely failed to do this. The concepts with which they proposed to analyse Third World politics were thinly disguised abstractions from the pluralist interpretation of US politics, according to which politics consists of incremental adjustments to the evolving balance between competing interests, mediated by competing electoral machines which ‘aggregate’ the interests of ‘groups’ drawn from all ‘strata’ of society. In Huntington’s conception of politics, in contrast, the central place was given to potentially revolutionary struggles for state power by radically discontented social forces — workers, students, urban ‘middle classes’, peasants, etc. Huntington’s view of Third World politics seemed above all realistic.

Second, Huntington’s work seemed genuinely theoretical. It was very difficult to extract from the previous literature on ‘political development’ anything that really proposed explanations of large-scale, important political phenomena. There were more or less elaborate classificatory systems or typologies, but very little usable theory. Huntington, in contrast, offered to explain, among other things, why pressures for change assumed a reformist or revolutionary character, why reforms or revolutions succeeded or failed, and why, in the absence of either reform or revolution, Third World countries tended to pass under personal, arbitrary and authoritarian rule (‘praetorianism’).

These two changes have a lot to do with the academic and practical influence of Huntington’s work. Attention has been diverted from them, however, by the third departure that Huntington made from previous orthodoxy: his open and abrasive commitment to the maintenance of order as the supreme political value. As Donal O’Brien has shown, Huntington’s views on this issue were not very different from those of numerous other leading US political scientists of the later 1960s, but they were more ‘stringently and unambiguously expressed’. Throughout his work there runs a strong current of dislike for the confusing, disturbing and contradictory aspirations of the masses, and an admiration for any ‘élite,’ bureaucracy or ‘leadership’ capable of containing, channelling and if necessary suppressing them. We shall return below to the significance of the particular form taken by Huntington’s obsession with authority. For the moment, however, the important point is that it was in spite of this, as much as because of it, that Huntington’s work achieved the influence it did. Refreshing as it might be to many members of the beleaguered US professoriate in 1968, the open fear of and distaste for the masses that

Huntington expressed was hardly a viable posture for most of them.9

Huntington’s argument

Conventional wisdom among both social scientists and policy-makers in the USA, Huntington noted, held that the poorer people are, the more prone they will be to use violence to remedy their situation (the more ‘unstable’ politics will be). Accordingly, US policies toward the Third World had, at least in theory, been directed toward securing economic growth in the belief that this, coupled with reforms made possible by growing output, would lead toward political ‘stability’. But, according to Huntington, the statistical evidence shows that there is more stability in countries with the lowest per capita incomes than in countries somewhat less poor. Huntington’s interpretation of this is that, as ‘modernization’ (defined as ‘social mobilization plus economic development’) occurs, more and more people become politically active, or become active in ways that impinge more and more on the central government (‘political participation’), because increased social mobility leads to raised expectations which at an early stage of economic growth cannot be met. Economic growth also leads at first to heightened inequality, which also prompts greater ‘political participation’. Unless political institutions are capable of handling this expanded ‘participation’, it will assume destabilizing forms (demonstrations, strikes, riots or even armed struggle) and/or lead to corruption (equally liable to give rise to instability in the long run).

What determines whether the increased ‘level of participation’ produces these destabilizing consequences or not is the degree of ‘institutionalization’ of the ‘polity’. Strongly institutionalized polities socialize (i.e. formally and informally induct) the newly participant citizens into the channels and norms of political action that are prescribed by the existing structures. This leads to ‘civic’ politics. ‘Civic’ politics may or may not take a democratic form: ‘constitutional democracies and communist dictatorships are both participant politics’.10 Participation, in other words, need not (and

9 The open advocacy of counter-revolutionary positions by US academics following Huntington’s example in the early 1970s, after the successive defeats for US power in the Third World, deserves to be remembered in the hour of the ‘triumph of liberal democracy’; see, e.g., Nelson Kasfir, ‘Departicipation and Political Development in Black African Politics’, Studies in Comparative International Development 9, 1974, pp. 3–25, and Norman H. Keen, ‘Building Authority: A Return to Fundamentals’, World Politics 26, 1973–74, pp. 331–52. Henry A. Landsberger and Tim McDaniel (‘Hypermobilization in Chile, 1970–1973’, World Politics 28, 1975–76, pp. 502–41) concluded that: ‘Historically, mobilization seems to have been more of a hindrance, i.e., a “bad thing”, than a help to radical governments, at least after the old centres of power have been weakened with its help. The real problem is then whether “the masses” can be controlled. If the government has enough coercive power to do that… it may not need to mobilize the masses in the first place.’

Huntington thinks should not) mean popular control of government, but rather governmental control of the people through their ‘involvement’ in the organs of the ‘polity’ that make this possible. Weakly institutionalized polities, on the other hand, are easily overwhelmed by new ‘groups’, which enter politics (‘participate’) on their own terms, giving rise to ‘praetorianism’, in which ‘the wealthy bribe, students riot, workers strike, mobs demonstrate, and the military coup [sic]’.\(^{11}\)

Praetorianism — of which military rule is the usual form — may easily degenerate into chaos. In such a situation, revolution may become the only possible form of lasting political change — because only a social movement capable of making a revolution will be capable of establishing a new, durable political order. Revolution, then, is for Huntington a form of political change that results from a severe discrepancy between the scale of the forces newly participating in politics and the capacity of political institutions to assimilate or contain them.

Revolutions are not, according to Huntington, primarily about economic issues: ‘A revolution is a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership and government activity and policies.’\(^{12}\) ‘Ascending or aspiring groups and rigid or inflexible institutions are the stuff of which revolutions are made.’\(^{13}\) The conditions leading to revolution are the simultaneous ‘alienation’ from the existing political order of the urban middle class and the peasantry, and their ability to collaborate, usually on a nationalist programme. These conditions are rarely adequately met, however, because of the tendency of the urban middle class to become more conservative as it grows larger, and because of the basic divergence of aims between it and the peasantry. The end-point of revolution is ‘the creation and institutionalization of a new political order’; ‘the measure of how successful a revolution is is the authority and stability of the institutions to which it gives birth’.\(^{14}\) In this respect the communists have proved the most successful revolutionaries, because Leninism equipped them with an effective theory of political organization and so made possible a new political order in which mass participation is combined with ‘a government really able to govern’.\(^{15}\)

The important question about any reform, for Huntington, is not its merits \textit{per se} but simply whether it averts revolution or acts as a catalyst for it. The Alliance for Progress in Latin America was based on the idea that reforms would avert revolution. Huntington, however, thinks that in some circumstances reforms may have the opposite effect. In particular, reforms that respond to the demands of the urban intelligentsia make revolution

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\(^{11}\) Ibid., p. 196.
\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 264.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 275.
\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 266.
\(^{15}\) Ibid., p. 342.
Evidence

Part of the reason for the failure to push home the criticism of Huntington’s work as unscientific may well have been the massive quantity of facts deployed in it. ‘Dazzlingly comprehensive’… ‘his empirical knowledge seems encyclopedic’ — most readers, like these reviewers, are intimidated by a great show of scholarship, and Huntington spared no effort to achieve one. The range of cases referred to and the number of sources cited were indeed impressive, even for a writer amply endowed with research assistance.

But it is obviously not the quantity but the quality of the factual evidence and the use made of it that matter. The reader with some knowledge of any part of the Third World soon finds, for example, that the use made of materials relating to that area leaves a great deal to be desired. Thus, when seeking to illustrate the rule that ‘the longer a nationalist party fought for independence, the longer it was able to enjoy the power that came with independence’, Huntington says that ‘TANU [the Tanganyika African National Union] and its predecessor had a 32-year history when Tanganyika became independent.’ But TANU’s predecessor (the Tanganyika African Association) could hardly be said to have ‘fought for independence’ before it was transformed into TANU. Or, to take a very different example from the same text, when it is a question of illustrating the functional adaptability of political institutions, the British monarchy is cited, but, when it is a question of distinguishing form from content, ‘Britain preserved the form of the old monarchy, but America preserved the substance. Today America still has a king, Britain only a crown.’ The careful reader soon realizes that the great flood of information with which he or she is being presented cannot be taken on trust.

The central thesis — that stability is due to a high ratio of institutionalization to political participation — is supported by citing evidence from a study that compared ‘26 countries with a low ratio of want formation to want satisfaction and hence low “systemic frustration” and 36 countries with a high ratio and hence high “systemic frustration”.’ Remarkably enough, one of the 26 ‘satisfied countries’ was the Union of South Africa. The thought eventually occurs that the quality of the data used may be inferior to the quantity supplied. Formidable as it is, the volume of data too often serves precisely to dazzle, not to illuminate. Furthermore, the observant reader also notices, sooner or later, that the usual relation between the evidence presented and the hypotheses put forward is that of illustration. The effect is to make the hypotheses appear plausible, not to test them. It is difficult to find any point on which the author tries to identify cases that would constitute potentially ‘disconfirming’ instances for the hypothesis in question, as the textbooks on methodology prescribe.

A few attempts have been made to test the empirical validity of

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26 Ibid., p. 115.
27 Ibid., p. 55.
Huntington's argument, using the kind of cross-national statistical comparisons favoured by the behavioural school to which the modernization theorists in general belong. One found a strong correlation between the ratio of social mobilization to institutionalization and political instability and violence, another found no correlation between them and a third 'unhappily reported the difficulties of selecting the correct indicators, partly due to "the thoughtful but ambiguous formulation of key theoretic concepts" by Huntington."

**Scientism**

Of course, many other well-regarded works on politics may be faulted for poor evidential support. What makes this criticism more than usually pertinent is that Huntington's use of evidence so often takes a scientistic form. This is particularly true of the sections of *Political Order* in which the main steps of the argument are put forward. The main form of scientism is pseudo-quantification. The text abounds with propositions about 'the levels of middle class participation', 'the rate of increase of social frustration', 'the degree of corruption', and so on. This way of writing encourages acceptance of an argument by suggesting that appropriate quantitative data have been collected that verify the general statements made.

When relevant data are cited, this sometimes appears to serve to disguise a serious circularity in the argument. For instance, the statement that 'the faster the enlightenment of the population, the more frequent the overthrow of the government' is based on an alleged positive correlation between the rate of change of primary school enrolments and 'instability.'

The fact that there was almost certainly a similar correlation between the rate of growth of police forces and instability in the countries studied reminds us that the evidence cited only serves to support the conclusion drawn if one already accepts — on other grounds — a theory that indicates a causal connection between the rate of increase in school enrolments and revolution. Yet it is to support the plausibility of such a theory that the correlation is adduced ('the relation between social mobility and political instability seems reasonably direct').

At other times, data are cited that in no way justify the lawlike conclusion drawn. For example:

Burma and Ethiopia had equally low per capita incomes in the 1950s: the relative stability of the latter in comparison to the former perhaps reflected the fact that fewer than 5 per cent of Ethiopians were literate but 45 per cent of the

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29 Huntington, *Political Order*, op. cit., p. 47.
Burmese were. Similarly, Cuba had the fourth highest literacy rate in Latin America when it went communist, and the only Indian state to elect a communist government, Kerala, also has the highest literacy rate in India. Clearly, the appeals of communism are usually to literates rather than illiterates.\footnote{Ibid., p. 49 (my emphasis).}

In these examples, the quantitative form of the statement does refer to quantitative data. In other cases, however, there are no such data to refer to: the alleged relation is pure invention. For instance: 'In general, the higher the level of education of the unemployed, alienated, or otherwise dissatisfied person, the more extreme the destabilizing behavior which results.'\footnote{Ibid., p. 48.}

To what kind of audience is reasoning of this sort addressed? The answer is painfully clear: it could only be addressed to the US graduate school victims of a behaviouralist \textit{déformation professionelle} — people who have been taught to regard a statistical correlation as the epitome of proof, and not to be too concerned about the real meaning of the statistics in question, or too clear about the logic connecting any such correlation to an argument.\footnote{As is well known, the highest form of statement in the behaviouralist canon is a probability statement. Huntington's use of the term 'probability' on p. 42 of \textit{Political Order} (op. cit.) is instructive.}

Taken as a whole, Huntington's method is less that of enquiry than of propaganda, and, when the context is borne in mind, it strongly recalls Marx's distinction between the scientific enquiries of the classical economists and their mid-nineteenth-century successors:

In France and England, the bourgeoisie had conquered political power. From that time on, the class struggle took on more and more explicit and threatening forms, both in practice and in theory. It sounded the knell of scientific bourgeois economics. It was thenceforth no longer a question of whether this or that theorem was true, but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient, in accordance with police regulations or contrary to them.\footnote{Postface to the second edition of \textit{Capital}, vol. I (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), p. 97.}

\textit{Huntington's work as ideology}

The problem that remains to be considered is why Huntington's work, with so many serious, not to say fatal, deficiencies of logic, methodology and factual support, should have become as influential as it did.\footnote{A survey of US professors in 1974 found that \textit{Political Order} was the book most often cited as among the 'most important in the field'; see H.C. Kenski and M.C. Kenski, \textit{Teaching Political Development and Modernization at American Universities: A Survey} (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), pp. 9–10.} The essence of the matter is this: Huntington revitalized the ideology of modernization — i.e. that partially adequate, but systematically mystified, view of the ex-colonial world that formed the basis for imperialist strategic action — in a highly significant way. First, as already mentioned, he broke the connection that 'modernization' had previously had with US pluralism. Second,
he appropriated some of the central terms of Marxism, while simultaneously appearing to invert Marxism’s tenets.

The break with pluralism was more than the mere abandonment of the democratic ideal implicit in earlier modernization writing. For Huntington, Third World societies do not consist of groups competing, in fluctuating and shifting combinations, for influence over the ‘outputs’ of government; nor do ‘modern’ systems differ from ‘premodern’ or ‘modernizing’ systems in this respect. In all political systems, the key is domination, or as Huntington says, ‘power’: ‘Power is something which has to be mobilized, developed, and organized. It must be created.’ Huntington therefore wastes no time looking for the functional equivalents in the Third World of ‘interest articulation’ and ‘interest aggregation’, for example, as earlier modernization theorists did. For him, the central reality everywhere is the building of regimes capable of imposing their will on society. The basic problem of most Third World countries is that they lack such regimes. Even those who hesitated to endorse this latter view (especially since Huntington thought this was the USA’s problem too) could see that his conception of politics was much better adapted than the pluralist model to the conflictual realities of the Third World, from General Geisel’s Brazil to Indira Gandhi’s India — or, indeed, Castro’s Cuba.

This brings us to the relation between Huntington and Marxism. In considering this, it must be borne in mind from the outset that Huntington’s theory was not coincidentally, but directly and intimately, connected with the war in Vietnam. From 1966 to 1969 he was chairman of the Council on Vietnamese Studies of the US Agency for International Development’s South-East Asia Advisory Group, and in 1967 he visited Saigon on behalf of the State Department ‘to investigate ways in which political power could be developed in Vietnam’. The following year — the year in which Political Order was published — he wrote an article in which he explicitly interpreted the Vietcong’s success as due not to its ideals but to its ability to impose authority in rural areas where authority was lacking:

There is little evidence to suggest that the appeal of the Viet Cong derives from material poverty or that it can be countered by material benefits... The appeal of revolutionaries depends not on economic deprivation but on political deprivation, that is, on the absence of an effective structure of authority.

According to Huntington, the authority of the Vietcong in the rural areas was unlikely to be overthrown, but, on the other hand, the US entry into the war in 1965 had led in the following three years to about 3 million people fleeing the countryside for the cities, where they came under the authority of Saigon. Huntington considered that, as a result, the possibility

35 Huntington, Political Order, op. cit., p. 144.
are conceived in such a wholly ahistorical, unanchored, empiricist way that virtually anything may be said about them without excessive fear of contradiction. 45

This enables Huntington to appear to accept Marxist concepts while simultaneously ‘disproving’ Marxism. An obvious example is his discussion of the ‘lumpenproletariat’, a term taken directly from Marx, but referring in Huntington merely to the newly immigrant urban ‘poor’ — a concept as distant from Marx’s as it is vague. Huntington’s main point about this ‘lumpenproletariat’ is that it is ‘on the surface, the most promising source of urban revolt’, but that, in fact, in the 1960s it did not prove to be so. 46 Probably most of Huntington’s readers would have been surprised to know that: (i) Marx’s concept of the lumpenproletariat had very little to do with the urban ‘poor’; and (ii) Marx considered the lumpenproletariat to be the natural ally of reaction, and Engels made non-co-operation with the lumpenproletariat a point of political principle for the working class. 47 In other words, Huntington, by appropriating Marx’s term but attaching it to an altogether different concept, was able to give the appearance of sophistication and realism, and to seem to be ‘disproving’ Marxism, while in reality attacking a not very plausible straw man. Huntington’s treatment of ‘industrial workers’ (the proletariat?), the ‘middle classes’ (petty bourgeoisie?), and the ‘peasantry’ proceeds in the same fashion. The reduction of the Marxian concept of ‘classes’ to the concept of mere ‘economic groups’ permits discussion to be divorced from any consideration of the actual historical conditions in which they have been and are developing, the actual course of their struggles, the role of imperialism in those struggles, etc.

In effect, Huntington introduces ‘classes’ into the ideology of modernization simply as forms in which the masses threaten the maintenance of order; and their capacity to do so, in his formulation, is already given by the ‘institutionalization’ of the ‘polity’, i.e. in practice, by the capacity of the ‘regime’ (which never has a class character) to co-opt, deflect or repress this threat. As Henry Bernstein aptly remarks:

The determining model of modernity, from which everything else follows, is itself non-problematic as it is already ‘given’ by the historical development of the West. This mode of conceptualization can only produce answers that are already determined by the way in which questions are posed. 48

Similarly with ‘revolution’. Marx’s concept is historical, and carries a very specific socio-economic content; for him, a revolution is always a specific process of transition through which a particular country or region

45 Huntington’s use of ‘class’ is evidently closer to Weber’s than to Marx’s, but is not rigorously based on Weber’s usage either.
46 Huntington, Political Order, op. cit., pp. 278–83.
passes, from an epoch dominated by one mode of production (such as feudalism or capitalism) to a new epoch dominated by a new mode of production. For Huntington, however, 'revolution' refers (as we have seen) simply to any 'rapid, fundamental, and violent change'. For historical materialism, the question of whether a revolution can or will occur in a given society at a given moment, and what its significance or historical 'content' may be, is always a problem of analysing the development of the contradictions to which the existing mode of production gives rise and their expression in class struggles, whereas, for Huntington, revolutions are merely pathological modes of restoring order. Thus, instead of Marx's concept, embedded in a theory for assessing the prospects for particular class alliances to make particular transformations of particular societies, Huntington's concept makes revolutions mere aberrations in the global march toward the mass consumption society to which the whole of modern history is ultimately reduced by modernization theory.

In conclusion

Huntington thus revitalized the ideology of modernization in several ways at once. He offered a crude but substantive phenomenology of classes/groups, power struggles, revolutions, corruption, militarism and the like, important parts of which seemed to be taken over from a simultaneously disparaged Marxism, and all of which could be — in the form given by Huntington — integrated into the ahistorical and protean schema of tradition-modernity. As scientific theory it was false. As propaganda it was crude, although not necessarily ineffective, especially within the closely patrolled intellectual confines of most US political science departments. But as a model of ideological reconstruction it was path-breaking, a dramatic example of the 'ideological flexibility of which bourgeois thought is capable', and one which was to have a profound influence on bourgeois thinking about development in the 1970s.49

49 Ibid., 'Conclusion': Bernstein's penetrating essay should be read by everyone interested in the process of construction and reconstruction of bourgeois social science.