

Matteo Guerrini

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Prof. **LYNDELL O'HARA**

Class: Word Civ 2

At the Battle of Beach Head in 1690, Admiral Tourville's French fleet heavily defeated a combined Anglo-Dutch fleet in the English Channel. Control of the Channel fell temporarily to Louis XIV's France. But the Sun King failed to seize the opportunity to invade England, and the chance never reappeared. England remained safely odd and gave birth to the Industrial Revolution within a century.

What if Louis had invaded successfully and put a Catholic absolute monarch on the throne, backed by a French army of occupation? Would parliamentary government be strangled in its crib? Would John Locke be a footnote in history? Would all of North America have come under French rule? Write a brief alternate history of the 100 years after 1690, assuming a successful French invasion. What key concept and patterns of history guide your ideas about this possible path of events?

If the French had successfully invaded England in 1690 and installed a Catholic absolute monarch on the throne, backed by a French army of occupation, the political and cultural landscape of Europe and North America would have been drastically altered.

First, the concept of parliamentary government that had been developing in England would have been strangled in its crib. The French system was based on an absolute monarchy, where the king held all the power and made all the decisions. The idea of limiting the power of the monarch through a system of checks and balances, as in the English Parliament, was foreign to the French.

Second, the impact on English cultural and intellectual life would have been significant. Thinkers like John Locke, who advocated for individual rights and limited government, would likely have been suppressed or ignored under a French-backed absolute monarchy.

Third, North America would likely have come under French rule, given that England's successful colonization of the continent was largely due to its naval and economic power, both of which would have been diminished under French control.

In short, a successful French invasion of England would have altered the course of history in ways that are difficult to predict. The key concepts of absolute monarchy versus parliamentary government, individual rights versus centralized power, and economic and military power versus colonization would all have played out differently. Ultimately, the course of events would have been shaped by the interplay of these and other factors, as well as the decisions of individual leaders and actors.