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Frame it Yourself: What if...?

To answer what would have happened if Louis XIV had taken England successfully, we have to think first about what actually happened.

The greatest feat after England was safely odd was the Industrial Revolution. It brought about a radical change in the society and economy of the time in which it took place and in the whole subsequent course of history. The industrial revolution basically marked the beginning of an economic system, capitalism; the economic system by which we are governed today, and at the same time, it meant a transformation in the organization of society, the class society.

I personally believe that therein lies the answer to what would have happened if Louis XIV had not let slip his only opportunity to defeat England. The Industrial Revolution would not have occurred.

Without the industrial revolution, today would be defined by artisanal production, where the economic system could have a mercantilist approach. Without the industrial revolution, the world would be different in every way since this revolution not only brought technological change but also implied changes in various areas such as culture and even demographics.

One possible scenario in the absence of the revolution would be that there would be more people living in the fields since agricultural production would play a leading role in the economy. At the same time, people would be living with considerable technological backwardness if we compare it with today, without things like cars or the Internet.

Also, at the political level, there might have been more monarchies since industrialization helped the bourgeois to conquer their societies. So, these classes would exist but would not have the same success.

Perhaps, a positive aspect of this happening would be the environmental one, since without the big industries there would be less pollution.

In conclusion, if the industrial revolution had not happened, we would be in a totally different world, which would be alien and incomprehensible to us. Therefore, this process of industrialization, for better or for worse, helped greatly in creating our present day.