London School of Economics and Political Science

Internecine Discord: Party, Religion, and History in Hanoverian Britain, c. *1714-65*

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

I warrant that this authorisation does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party.

I declare that my thesis consists of 99,997 words.

Abstract

This thesis is a study of the place of 'party' and different ways of understanding this phenomenon in eighteenth-century British political discourse, especially between 1714 and 1765. Party is one of the most basic concepts of politics. If we are looking for party in any form, the idea of partisan division may be at least as old as the earliest societies where there was competition for office. But what did 'party' mean in the eighteenth century? While ancient factions usually denoted interest groups representing different orders in the state, party in the eighteenth century had a range of meanings, some general and others more specific. Broadly speaking, it could either mean a parliamentary constellation vying for power, or carry the more sinister connotation of civil war-like division, with roots in the Reformation and its aftermath. In spite of the fact that the emphasis was on principles and beliefs rather than organisation in both cases, modern historians have tended to focus on the latter. The party debate was considered by political writers at the time to be profoundly important, and political life in the period simply cannot be understood without reference to party. Although 'party spirit' waxed and waned, 'party' was consistently a key word in political debate. By concentrating on the writings of Rapin, Bolingbroke, David Hume, John Brown, and Edmund Burke, in the context of political developments, this thesis presents the first sustained examination of the idea of party in eighteenth-century Britain. It demonstrates that attitudes towards party were more diverse, penetrating and balanced than previous research has managed to capture.

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Abbreviations

Add:	Additional.
Anecdotes:	William King, *Political and Literary Anecdotes of His Own Times* (London, 1818).
BL:	British Library, London.
Bodleian:	Bodleian Library, Oxford.
Commons, 1690-1715:	*The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1690-1715*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks, Stuart Handley, David Hayton (5 vols., Cambridge, 2002).
Commons, 1715-54:	*History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1715-54*, ed. Romney Sedgwick (2 vols., London, 1970).
Contributions:	Bolingbroke, *Contributions to the Craftsman*, ed. Simon Varey (Oxford, 1982).
Dissertation:	Rapin, *Dissertation sur l'orgine du government d'Angleterre, et sur la naissance, les progress, les vues, les forces, les interets, et les caracteres des deux partis des Whigs et des Torys* (1716), printed in Bernard Cottret and Marie-Madeleine Martinet, *Partis et factions dans l'Angleterre du premier XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1987).
Egmont Papers:	Aubrey N. Newman (ed.), 'Leicester House Politics, 1750-60, from the Papers of John, Second Earl of Egmont', *Camden Fourth Series*, 7 (1969), pp. 85-228.
Enquiry I:	David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), in *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford, 1975). (Originally entitled *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding.*)

Enquiry II:	David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751), in *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford, 1975).
ESRO:	East Sussex Record Office, The Keep.
Essays:	David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary,* ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis, IN, 1987).
Estimate:	John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (2 vols., London, 1757-8).
Further Letters:	*Further Letters of David Hume,* ed. Felix Waldmann (Edinburgh, 2014).
Hearne's Recollections:	*Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne,* ed. C. E. Doble et al (11 vols., Oxford, 1885-1921),
Hervey's Memoirs:	Lord Hervey, *Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick (3 vols., London, 1931).
Histoire:	Rapin, *Histoire d'Angleterre* (10 vols., The Hague, 1724-7).
History:	David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688* (1754-61), (6 vols., Indianapolis, IN, 1983, based on the last edition of 1778).
HJ:	The *Historical Journal.*
H.M.C.:	Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts.
Letters:	*The Letters of David Hume,* ed. J. Y. T. Greig (1932), (2 vols., Oxford, 2011).
Marchmont Papers:	*A Selection from the Papers of the Earls of Marchmont, in the Possession of the Right Honourable Sir George Henry*

	Rose: illustrative of events from 1685 to 1750 (3 vols., London, 1831).
MS:	Manuscript(s).
New Letters:	*New Letters of David Hume,* ed. Raymond Klibansky and Ernest C. Mossner (1954), (Oxford, 2011).
NLS:	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.
Parl. Hist.:	*The Parliamentary History of England from the earliest period to the year 1803,* ed. William Cobbett (36 vols., London, 1802-60).
Political Writings:	Bolingbroke, *Political Writings,* ed. David Armitage (Cambridge, 1997).
Present Discontents:	Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770), in *Pre-Revolutionary Writings*, ed. Ian Harris (Cambridge, 1993).
RA:	Royal Archives, Windsor Castle.
TCD:	Trinity College Dublin.
Treatise:	Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature (*1739-40), ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Niddich (Oxford, second ed., 1978).
Unpublished Letters:	*The Unpublished Letters of Henry St John, First Viscount Bolingbroke,* ed. Adrian Lashmore-Davies (5 vols., London, 2013).
Waldegrave Memoirs:	*The Memoirs and Speeches of James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave, 1742-63,* ed. J. C. D. Clark (Cambridge, 1988).
Works:	*The Works of the Late Right Honourable Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke,* ed. David Mallet (5 vols., London, 1754).

Notes on the text

Eighteenth-century spelling has been kept in citations, in English and in French. I have not made any attempts to ‘correct’ the grammar in eighteenth-century citations. ‘[Sic]’ has sometimes been inserted for clarity. ‘C.f.’ has been used in the footnotes to signpost contrasting views.

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Introduction

On 10 February 1780, more than six hundred men and women from all walks of life gathered for a meeting of a debating society, the School of Eloquence, in Soho Square, London, to discuss 'whether parties were beneficial in a free state'. After a 'curious' two-hour debate, a majority decided that parties were indeed beneficial.[1] Such an outcome would have been unlikely one hundred years earlier, when the party names of Whig and Tory emerged in Britain during the Exclusion Crisis, initially as terms of abuse. This is a study about the concept of political party and different ways of understanding this phenomenon in eighteenth-century Britain, with particular focus on the early Hanoverian period between the accession of George I in 1714 and that of his great-grandson George III in 1760, also known as the age of Whig Supremacy.[2] This period falls between the 'Rage of Party' (*c.* 1680-1714), and the 1760s, often seen as a crucial time for the development of party politics thanks to the Rockingham Whigs.[3] It has been noted that the intermediate epoch between 1714 and 1760 'has proven singularly impermeable to analysis of political structure' and there is still no scholarly consensus about what party meant in the period.[4] What follows is an attempt to understand and shed light on the

[1] *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, ed. Garland Cannon (2 vols., Oxford, 1970), I, p. 346. With the American War going badly for Britain, and the North ministry facing fierce opposition in parliament, several debates on similar topics were held in London in 1779-80, e.g. 4 February 1779, Coachmaker's Hall: 'Has a British King more to fear from the flattery of his courtiers, or the opposition of parties?'; 20 January 1780, Coachmakers Hall, 'Is it not a criminal indifference to be of no party in the present alarming and divided state of the nation?'; 22 February 1780, Old Theatre, Portugal Street, Lincolns Inn Fields: 'Which has been the more prejudicial to Great Britain, the influence of the crown or the spirit of party?'; 23 March 1780, Coachmakers Hall Society: 'Which is the most to be dreaded in this country, the influence of the Crown, or the spirit of party?'. For these debates, see *London Debating Societies, 1776-1799*, ed. Donna T. London (London, 1994).

[2] This is a seriously understudied topic among intellectual historians. The handful of works on the subject include Pasi Ihalainen, *The Discourse on Political Pluralism in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Helsinki, 1999); Terence Ball, 'Party', in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, ed. Ball et al., (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 155-176; Klaus von Beyme, "Partei, Fraktion", in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (7 vols., Stuttgart, 1972-1992), IV (1978), pp. 689-90; J. A. W. Gunn, 'Introduction', in *Factions No More: Attitudes to Party in Government and Opposition in Eighteenth-Century England: Extracts from Contemporary Sources* (London, 1971); idem, 'Party before Burke: Shute Barrington', *Government and Opposition*, 3 (1968), pp. 223-242; Harvey C. Mansfield Jr., *Statesmanship and Party Government: A Study of Burke and Bolingbroke* (Chicago, IL, 1965); Caroline Robbins, '"Discordant Parties": A Study of the Acceptance of Party by Englishmen', *Political Science Quarterly*, 73 (1958), pp. 505-29; David Thomson, *The Conception of Party in England, in the Period 1740 to 1783* (D. Phil. thesis, Cambridge, 1938).

[3] Frank O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two-Party System, 1760-1832* (London, 1982); Ian Christie, *Myth and Reality in Late-Eighteenth-Century British Politics* (London, 1970), esp. introduction and ch. 1.

[4] Norma Landau, *The Justices of the Peace, 1679-1760* (Berkeley, CA, 1984), p. 13.

debate about party in British intellectual and public life in the early to mid-Hanoverian era. Any idea as complex as party has more than one past and this thesis deals with one specific period, but, it will be shown, a particularly interesting one.[5] While Sir Lewis Namier's characterisation of eighteenth-century politics as being devoid of principles has long been refuted for the 1760s,[6] the 1714-60-period has remained relatively neglected by historians.

This study tells a story of debates, conversations and arguments,[7] not about how political parties themselves emerged, even if it will discuss eighteenth-century interpretations of this process at some length.[8] It will also focus closely on the immediate political context of these discussions. If we are looking for the concept of party or partisanship in any form, the concept may be as old as the earliest societies where there was competition for office, if not, indeed, civilisation itself. But what did 'party' mean in the eighteenth century? Some historians have applied lists of criteria to identify specific parties at particular moments, but such an approach risks saying more about how we understand the concept than about our period of enquiry. Having said that, it would not be difficult for the Whig and Tory parties for most of the period to live up to the preconditions proposed by J. R. Jones for the 'First Whigs': recognised leader(s), organisation, political platform, propaganda organs, and political philosophy.[9] Yet we need to stress that people in the eighteenth century tended to think in more flexible terms. A recent historian, borrowing Benedict Anderson's vocabulary, has defined eighteenth-century party as an 'imagined community of shared but not rigid national priorities'.[10]

When people in the eighteenth century themselves sought to define party they were inclined to be slightly more specific, even though they were never as rigid as Jones.

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[5] To paraphrase Quentin Skinner, there is no single history of an idea to be written, only a history of various usages; see 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', *History and Theory*, 8 (1969), pp. 3-53, at 38.

[6] John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976).

[7] The main ambition is not to detect 'influence', but rather to construct a context and demonstrate how various authors may have 'used' certain arguments and narratives. See Richard Bourke, *Empire and Revolution: The Political Life of Edmund Burke* (Princeton, NJ, 2015), p. 18; John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples 1680–1760* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 260; Tim Hochstrasser, *Natural Law Theories in the Early Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 1.

[8] Needless to say, modern scholarship will often be at odds with eighteenth-century theories and historiography; see, e.g., Paul D. Halliday, *Dismembering the Body Politic: Partisan Politics in England's Towns, 1650–1730* (Cambridge, 1998).

[9] J. R. Jones, *The First Whigs: The Politics of the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-1683* (Oxford, revised ed. 1970), esp. introduction.

[10] Aaron Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government in Britain, 1702-13* (Oxford, 2015), p. 26.

Out of the eight definitions of party in Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*, only one, the first, relates directly to political party: '[a] number of persons confederated by similarity of designs or opinions in opposition to others; a faction'.[11] This ostensibly simple definition hints that political party in the eighteenth century carried more than one meaning in British discourse, although there was a great deal of overlap. (1) Party could simply mean internal division in general terms. (2) It could more specifically refer to the Whig and Tory parties. (3) It frequently related to religious divisions, such as Anglicans and Dissenters – a crucial division since the 'Clarendon Code' in the 1660s – or high churchmen and latitudinarians, as well as countless theological subcategories.[12] (4) It could refer to the Court and Country 'parties', in other words those of government and opposition. (5) It could refer to the Jacobite threat. (6) It could mean political or parliamentary connection, that is a smaller political constellation led by an identifiable leader, for example the Rockinghamite party connection. (7) It more rarely denoted different parts of the constitution, as in Commons and Lords.[13] (8) Lastly, it could be synonymous with faction.

Historians of the eighteenth century have often stressed the importance of separating party in the 'real sense' from connections and factions,[14] but this is a distinction many in the period would not have recognised, although some would have, including Bolingbroke and Burke. 'Faction' in turn did not strictly correspond to our contemporary usage, when it denotes a splinter group or a party within a party. In the eighteenth century, it could broadly mean four things. Firstly, it could denote the Whig and Tory *factions*, in other words be interchangeable with party. Secondly, it could mean something akin to 'interest-group', or even an economic interest.[15] Thirdly, it could refer to a party connection purely motivated by ambition and self-interest, with little or no interest in principles or opinions. This was sometimes described as a degenerated *party*,

[11] Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language in which Words are Deduced from their Originals and Illustrated in their Different Significations by Examples from the Best writers* (2 vols., London, 1755), II n.p. Other definitions included persons engaged against each other, e.g. in legal cases or war, and a detachment of soldiers.

[12] John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution* (Cambridge, revised ed. 2002); Brian Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England: Theological Debate from Locke to Burke* (Oxford, 1998); J.C.D. Clark, 'Church, Parties, and Politics', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume II* (Oxford, 2017).

[13] This is how the term was frequently used by theoretical writers such as Adam Ferguson.

[14] Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government*, p. 30; John Cannon (ed.), *The Whig Ascendancy: Colloquies on Hanoverian England* (London, 1981), ch. 8.

[15] This is particularly striking in James Madison's *Federalist No. 10.*

underlining the loose terminology. Lastly, it could imply the even more negative connotation of a conspiracy within the state to destroy the constitution.

Party conflict and partisanship remain the stuff of political theory today. Parties are seen as a fundamental part of representative governments, and they feature in any government that calls itself democratic. Besides, what is politics about if not party? Despite this, political philosophers – past and contemporary – have generally been reluctant to embrace parties.[16] This is a work of history, however, and we have to remember that eighteenth-century parties were different from the parties of today. In terms of leadership and organisation, they were much looser than present-day political parties, without parliamentary whips, mass membership and official manifestos. From a historical perspective, the main reason why we should study eighteenth-century attitudes towards party is because the topic was considered by political writers at the time to be profoundly important. Political life in the period simply cannot be understood without reference to party, at least not in a way that eighteenth-century men and women would have recognised.

Although 'party spirit' waxed and waned, and the British press was often quick to celebrate when it diminished,[17] 'party' was constantly a key word in political debate.[18] The period between 1714 and 1760 cannot be described as a time of political tranquillity, which used to be a dominant framework.[19] In the wake of the fall of Sir Robert Walpole in 1742, Johnson commented that '[i]t has been for many Years lamented, by those who are the most eminent among us for their Understanding and Politeness, that the Struggles of opposite Parties have engrossed the Attention of the Public, and that all Subjects of Conversation, and all kinds of Learning have given way to Politicks.'[20] As late as 1758, James Ralph spoke of party as the defining concept in the world of letters: 'we have a many-headed Intruder amongst us, call'd P[art]y In[terest]t, which, by the irresistible Power of two magical Monosyllables [Whig and Tory], has subdued all Things to

[16] Nancy Rosenblum, *On the Side of the Angels: An Appreciation of Parties and Partisanship* (Princeton, NJ, 2008). For a recent case for the importance of parties and partisanship in politics, see Jonathan White and Lea Ypi, *The Meaning of Partisanship* (Oxford, 2016).

[17] Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* (London and Toronto, ON, 1987), p. 124.

[18] But for a portrayal of a more steady decline in the spirit of party, see Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 118-38. Most of Langford's exemplars are post-1760, however.

[19] Following J.H. Plumb, *The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725* (London, 1967). C.f. Robert Harris, *Politics and the Nation; Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2002).

[20] Preface to *Gentleman's Magazine,* XIII (1743).

himself.'[21] While a leading revisionist historian has pointed out that most people in the eighteenth century defined themselves by church rather than party membership,[22] and that court politics was an important alternative to parliamentary party politics,[23] it is clear that the political nation viewed politics from a Whig-Tory perspective, with a remarkable degree of continuity, even beyond the disintegration of the Tory party as a coherent unit around 1760. What is more, the same historian has also pointed out that party played a key role, much more important than the electorate, in the formulation of policy and in setting the terms for debate in the eighteenth century.[24]

While the British parties were aristocratic and elitist in terms of their leadership, they had supporters from across society. Voters and writers identified themselves and their opponents along these lines.[25] For this reason, it has been argued that the parties were imperative in the creation of a 'public sphere' in Britain, as they drew 'a broader public into debates over national issues, politicizing and at the same time educating it.'[26] Moreover, party was not an exclusive domain for men. Indeed, it can be said to have been a significant component of what Elaine Chalus has dubbed 'social politics', a sphere in which women as well as men played a prominent role.[27] For example, Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough continued to meet and correspond with members of parliament long after her husband, the great general and statesman, passed away. She was seen as a Whig heroine, and the hack John Oldmixon dedicated to her his posthumous political testament, where he described her as the most glorious asserter of the 'Whig cause'.[28] On the opposite side of the political spectrum, the Duchess of Buckingham, the illegitimate

[21] [Ralph], *The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade, Stated* (London, 1758), p. 65.

[22] J.C.D. Clark, *English society, 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology, and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (1985), (Cambridge, revised ed., 2000), p. 482.

[23] J.C.D. Clark, 'Introduction', in *Waldegrave Memoirs*, esp. pp. 1-21.

[24] J.C.D. Clark, 'A General Theory of Party, Opposition and Government, 1688–1832', *HJ*, 23 (1980), pp. 295-325. We must add that the parties did not operate independently of the electorate, the importance of which should not be underestimated. Although only about twenty to twenty-five per cent of adult males had the vote, the early eighteenth-century electorate in England and Wales was larger and more diverse than at any time before 1868 (1832 brought it back to the level at the beginning of the eighteenth century). Floating voters numbered between ten and twenty per cent of voters in an average county, as has been shown in Geoffrey Holmes, *Making a Great Power: Late Stuart and early Georgian Britain, 1660-1722* (London, 1993), pp. 329-333.

[25] For the 'crowd' and party politics in various contexts in the period, see Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1995); Nicholas Rogers, *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, 1989).

[26] James van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 21.

[27] Elaine Chalus, 'Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England', *HJ*, 43 (2000), pp. 669-97.

[28] Oldmixon, *Memories of the Press, Historical and Political, for Thirty Years Past, from 1710 to 1740* (London, 1742).

daughter of James II, was *la grande dame* of the opposition to Walpole in the 1720s and 30s.

The British parties continuously confounded foreign visitors and commentators in the early Hanoverian period. Voltaire observed that the prevalence of party spirit in the country meant that '[o]ne half of the nation [was] always the enemy of the other'.[29] In a similar vein, the Swiss travel writer César de Saussure remarked in 1729 that the 'two parties [we]re so opposed to each other that nothing but a real miracle could cause them to become united'.[30] In British discourse, parties were often condemned. To give an example from a genre that will be important in the present study, the scribbler-historian Oldmixon wrote that 'I am sensible that *Party-Names* are below the Dignity of History, and I have affected to avoid them, but in some Cases they are unavoidable'.[31] Just as the parties themselves evolved throughout the period, so did attitudes towards parties, albeit in a highly non-lineal way, and that is the subject of this project. The ambition in the rest of this introduction is to set the scene for what follows by dealing with some of the key contexts and background, starting with the paradigm of ancient factions.

I: Greece and Rome

'Party' could be said to be between the first and second categories of political concept discussed by Reinhardt Koselleck: it is neither unchanged, nor radically changed (at least not in every aspect), nor entirely new.[32] While organised parliamentary parties can hardly be said to have existed before the late seventeenth century, the question of internal division has a long-standing tradition in the history of political thought. Internal conflict was theorised as *stasis* in Ancient Greece, notably in book three of Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War, written in the fifth century BC.[33] The Greek context was

[29] Voltaire, *Philosophical Letters, Or, Letters Regarding the English Nation* (Indianapolis IN and Cambridge, 2007), p. 92. The work was first published in English in 1733 and then in French the following year.

[30] César de Saussure, *A Foreign View of England in the Reigns of George I and George II,* ed. Madame Van Muyden (London, 1902), p. 348.

[31] Oldmixon, *The History of England during the Reigns of William and Mary, Anne and George I* (1735), p. 15.

[32] Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (1979), (New York, NY, 2005), p. 88.

[33] *Stasis,* literally 'standing', has often been translated as 'civil war' and sometimes as 'faction'. The authoritative edition by Jeremy Mynott (Cambridge, 2013, p. 212 n1) translates it as 'civil strife' and questions 'civil war' as an appropriate term because of scale. See also David Armitage, *Civil Wars: A History in Ideas* (Padstow, 2017), ch. 1.

sometimes used in the eighteenth century to point to the danger of party strife.[34] The Roman context was arguably more important, however, and the terms 'party' and 'faction' are derived from Latin. The best-known ancient account of factional strife in the early Roman Republic is to be found in book two of Livy's *History of Rome.* Livy spoke of a division of fathers (*patres*),[35] or senators, and plebs in 494 BC, springing from disagreement about the burden of debt held by the plebeians, leading to their secession and, eventually, the creation of the tribunes of the plebs.[36] Livy condemned 'factionalism' along with private interestedness as things always hurtful to the public.[37] The Roman historian also spoke of 'intestine discord' (*discordiae intestinae*), which would come to be one of the key phrases in later debates about party strife.[38] According to Livy, such discord in the city equalled disagreement among various body parts, which would lead to starvation.[39] By contrast, in his well-known commentary on the first ten books of Livy, Machiavelli praised such discord for leading to the creation of the tribunes of the plebs which made Rome a perfect commonwealth.[40]

In the second century BC, long-term political groupings in Rome developed, which were being described as *factio* and *pars* or *partes* (from *partire*, meaning to divide). As with the eighteenth century, *factio* did not correspond directly to the way we use 'faction'. *Partes* was the term Cicero commonly utilised when describing the 'personal parties' of Marius, Sulla, Sertorius, and, most importantly, Caesar. Sallust, on the other hand, preferred to talk of *partes* in the sense of the dichotomy of senate and people, corresponding roughly to Cicero's *optimates* and *populares*. Originally, *factio* appears to have had a neutral meaning, but it gradually acquired a negative connotation, which it kept in the early-modern period.[41] Another key Roman substitute for 'party' was *amicitia*

[34] John Brown, *Estimate*, I, p. 124; Burke, *Thoughts on French Affairs* (1791), in *Further Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Indianapolis, IN, 1992), pp. 209-10.

[35] Usually translated as 'patricians'.

[36] Livy, *History of Rome: Volume I* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), bk 2, ch. 23-33.

[37] 'sed factione respectuque rerum privatarum, quae semper offecere officientque publicis consiliis'. Ibid, ch. 30.2.

[38] Ibid, ch. 31.10.

[39] Ibid, ch. 32.9-12. Shakespeare would later employ this bodily metaphor in the first scene of *Coriolanus.*

[40] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy* (Chicago, IL, 1998), Bk. I, ch. IV-VI, pp. 16-23. Although Machiavelli was primarily known as a defender of civic discord, he differentiated between beneficial and harmful divisions in *Istorie Fiorentine* (1525), as Jean-Louis de Lolme picked up in the eighteenth century; see Richard Whatmore, *Against War and Empire: Geneva, Britain and France in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven, CT, 2012), p. 117.

[41] Lily Ross Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Los Angeles, CA, second ed. 1968), pp. 8-9.

(friendship), an ideal depicted in Cicero's *De amicitia.*[42] The vocabulary of friendship was also frequently used as a euphemism for political constellation in the eighteenth century.[43] This did not necessarily have a positive connotation, however; note Burke's use of the phrase the 'king's friends' for the king's faction.[44] According to Sallust, unanimity of purpose was *amicitia* among good people and *factio* among the bad. Sallust, a partisan of Caesar, frequently used *factio* to refer to self-proclaimed good men with oligarchical tendencies, so-called *optimates.* This usage was also common among 'optimate' partisans, for example when Cicero defined *factio* as representing a monopoly of power on the part of a clique of *optimates* in *De re publica.*[45]

At least as often read in the eighteenth century as Machiavelli's *Discorsi* was Montesquieu's short history of Rome, which repeated the Florentine's praise of internal discord. Montesquieu described how a secret war had been going on within the walls of Rome when it conquered the universe.[46] Paraphrasing Machiavelli, the Frenchman said that '[o]n n'entend parler dans les auteurs que des divisions qui perdirent Rome; mais on ne voit pas que ces divisions y étaient nécessaires, qu'elles y avaient toujours été, et qu'elles y devaient toujours être.'[47] Montesquieu stressed that these divisions had been necessary to the martial spirit of Rome. Moreover, he contended that 'pour règle générale, toute les fois qu'on verra tout le monde tranquille dans un État qui se donne le nom de république, on peut être assuré que la liberté n'y est pas.'[48] It appears as if Montesquieu wanted to signal some kind of agreement with Machiavelli on this topic. It is important to note, however, that while these 'Machiavellian' passages may sound straightforward, they are found in a chapter entitled 'Deux causes de la perte de Rome'. For a while, this dissension could produce harmony (*harmonie*), 'comme des dissonances dans la musique concourent à l'accord total.'[49] In the longer run, however, the expansion of Rome changed the nature of the republic; 'bonnes lois qui ont fait qu'une petite république devient grande lui deviennent á charge lorsqu'elle s'est agrandie, parce qu'elles étaient telles que leur

[42] Ibid, p. 7.
[43] Bourke, *Empire and Revolution,* p. 270.
[44] Burke, *Present Discontents,* pp. 141, 163.
[45] Ross Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar,* ch. 1.
[46] Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (1734), (Paris, 2008), p. 118.
[47] Ibid, p. 129.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid. The musical imagery suggests a commentary on Cicero's *De re publica* (2.69a), preserved and transmitted to us (and Montesquieu) via Augustine's *De civitate Dei contra paganos* (2.21).

effet naturel était de faire un grand peuple, et non pas de le gouverner.'[50] In other words, Rome was made for expansion, not for maintaining peace and stability: '[Rome] perdit sa liberté, parce qu'elle acheva trop tôt son ouvrage.'[51] For Montesquieu, Rome was an anachronistic model of government, whereas for Machiavelli she presented a blueprint for success.

Although Montesquieu's alleged agreement with Machiavelli is often highlighted, the Frenchman's account shares some of the complexity found in the writings of his compatriot Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, the seventeenth-century exponent of royal absolutism. Bossuet had argued that Rome 'portait en son sein la cause de sa ruine, dans la jalousie perpétuelle du peuple contre le sénat, ou plutôt des plébéiens contre les patriciens.'[52] The extreme positions espoused by each side, and the embracing of particular interests, led directly to the rise of Caesar and the fall of the Republic, according to Bossuet.[53] The same Janus-faced portrayal of internal discord in Rome was repeated in Adam Ferguson's history of the Roman Republic, another historian who viewed his work as an elaboration of Montesquieu's enterprise.[54] In short, eighteenth-century supporters of civilised monarchy such as Montesquieu and Ferguson were rarely straightforward Machiavellians, even if their language sometimes gave that impression.

Many eighteenth-century writers approached internal conflict between political parties from the prism of factional strife in the Roman Republic, and the list of commentators contributing to this tradition included Jonathan Swift and Thomas Gordon. Most discussions of party strife had at least some references to the tumults of Rome, although this may in hindsight be viewed as a partially misleading comparison, since the Roman divisions were so different from the parliamentary parties in eighteenth-century Britain. Roman tumults, at least of the kind Machiavelli condoned, were first and foremost social forces representing different parts of the constitution, and British parties were inter-parliamentary and cut from broadly the same aristocratic cloth. Some, though not all, were acutely aware of this. As David Hume put it, the contest in Rome 'was founded more on form than party.'[55] As we shall see, the British parties were not entirely

[50] Montesquieu, *Considérations*, p. 130.
[51] Ibid, p. 131.
[52] Bossuet, *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681), (Paris, 1966), p. 413.
[53] Ibid, p. 415.
[54] Ferguson, *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (1783), (5 vols., Edinburgh, 1825), I, p. xxv.
[55] Hume, 'Of Some Remarkable Customs' (1752), *Essays*, p. 373.

unrelated to the form of government, but they were nevertheless something more. For this reason, ancient political groupings were often translated as 'factions'.

II: Faction and Party

Many eighteenth-century writers used the terms party and faction interchangeably, although 'faction' generally had a more negative connotation than 'party'. The practice of treating them as synonyms had a longer history in the English language, however. In the 1640s, the Levellers would in passing refer to 'parties' and 'factions' as synonyms for parliamentary groups pursuing interests distinct from those of the people they were supposed to represent.[56] Much of the Levellers' programme, including annual elections and a ban on serving in parliament for two consecutive terms, was indeed intended to counteract the formation of such groups.[57] In the same period, Thomas Hobbes had taken time to criticise factions, and what he meant by this was clearly related to the later concept of political party, as he referred to formations in assemblies based on policy difference. Interestingly, he also seems to have conceived of a more modern idea of faction, since he argued that such constellations were always controlled by a minority, referred to as 'a faction within the faction'. Faction was anathema for Hobbes, who defined it as a commonwealth within a commonwealth, because it required citizens to form a new union and an alliance separate from the commonwealth.[58] This was entirely at odds with Hobbes's absolutist political theory. 'Princes who permit faction are as good as admitting an enemy within the walls', warned Hobbes.[59] It was also the major disadvantage of democracy, according to Hobbes. Deliberation in a large assembly was a source of factions, which in turn would lead to sedition and civil war. In a somewhat similar vein, Sir William Temple (1628-99), Swift's one-time patron, condemned 'faction' in the same breath as 'popular discontents'.[60] 'Divisions of Opinion, though upon Points of common Interest or Safety, yet if pursued to the Height, and with Heat of Obstinacy on both Sides, must end in Blows and Civil Arms,' he concluded.[61]

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[56] *The English Levellers* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 29, 99, 176.
[57] Ibid, pp. 170-1.
[58] Hobbes, *On the Citizen* (1642), (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 149, 140.
[59] Ibid, p. 149.
[60] 'Of Popular Discontents', *The Works of Sir William Temple* (2 vols., London, 1720), I, pp. 255-71. Temple used 'party' to denote a political constellation, and occasionally synonymously with faction (pp. 261, 263, 266, 270).
[61] Ibid, p. 270.

One of the first writers to have written about 'party' rather than 'faction' is likely to have been George Savile, 1st Marquess of Halifax (1644-95), known as the Great Trimmer for his bi-partisanship. Halifax's language was in many ways similar to that of Hobbes's, as he believed that '[t]he best Party is but a kind of Conspiracy against the rest of the Nation.'[62] Be that as it may, he held that citizens sometimes had to side with the party they disliked the least.[63] The extreme aversion to the term 'faction' survived into the eighteenth century, even among Whig thinkers wedded to the mixed constitution.[64] For E. W. Montagu, writing at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, factions originated in the 'lust of dominion', since 'the man, who is actuated by that destructive passion, must, of necessity, strive to attach to himself a set of men of similar principles, for the subordinate instruments.' For Montagu, faction was synonymous with iniquitous combination and he described the typical factious leader as someone who 'will court the friendship of every man, who is capable of promoting, and endeavour to crush every man, who is capable of defeating his ambitious views.'[65]

Despite what he had said just a few sentences earlier about 'similar principles', Montagu contended that 'private interest is the only tye which can ever connect a faction', particularly 'the lust of wealth'.[66] Montagu further argued that even in a state immersed in luxury and corruption, such as Great Britain, 'the man who aims at being the head of a faction for the end of dominion, will at first cloak his real designs under an affected zeal for the service of the Government.'[67] Once in power, such a factious leader would not be esteemed by his faction for the good he would do to his country, but rather for the extent of which he could gratify his friends.[68] Montagu's views were not particularly purist but fairly mainstream. On the other side of the Whig spectrum, a Walpole-sponsored journal had earlier defined faction as 'the Struggle of a *private Interest* against a *Publick* Good.'[69] The major disagreement was not about the nature of faction, but rather *who* was factious:

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[62] Halifax, *Complete Works* (London, 1969), p. 209.

[63] Ibid, p. 210.

[64] The holistic ideal within the idiom of the mixed constitution was classically expressed by Viscount Falkland and Sir John Culpepper in *His Majesties Answer to the XIX Propositions of Both Houses of Parliament* (1642), cited in Eric Nelson, *The Royalist Revolution: Monarchy and the American Founding* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), p. 11.

[65] Montagu, *Reflections on the Rise and Fall of the Ancient Republicks: Adapted to the Present State of Great Britain* (1759), (Indianapolis, IN, 2015), p. 177.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid, p. 178.

[68] Ibid, pp. 178-9.

[69] [William Arnall?], *Free Briton*, No. 125, 20 April 1732.

for Montagu it was Walpole-like leaders, for the Walpole press it was naturally the opposition. This will be discussed at greater length later, especially in chapter two.

The same attitude is present in the Tory-Jacobite Roger North's apologia of Charles II. According to North, 'the ordinary Policy of Faction is to bring ruin to a Nation'.[70] The common usage of faction was to refer to a party that was 'unquiet, malecontent, ravenous, incroaching, querulous' in opposition and 'cruel' in power.[71] North was clear, however, that some 'Party-Men' were 'excusable', since it could also refer to such men who are 'desirous of Justice, Peace and good order'.[72] In his account of the Exclusion Crisis, he described the Whigs as enemies of the government and a 'factious *Trojan*-Horse', and the Tories as engaged in 'just Cause, and in good Company, [and consisting of] the Majority of the best Persons in the Nation'.[73] In other words, the Tories were justified to glory in that name, and there was nothing wrong with taking sides if it meant taking the side of what he understood as 'the Side of the established Religion and Government, and for the Continuance of it in Peace'.[74]

While this anti-factional and holistic idiom survived into the eighteenth century, as is clearly demonstrated by the example of such disparate writers as North and Montagu, there was a different strand of thought, fairly common among so-called Commonwealth thinkers, which associated internal conflict with liberty. Such ideas originated with Machiavelli's *Discorsi*, although Montesquieu became an important reference after his *Considerations* (1734). As has been made familiar by J. G. A. Pocock, Machiavelli's arguments were introduced into English discourse in the seventeenth century.[75] The exponents of this tradition appear to have disagreed about the role of internecine conflict, however, with James Harrington preferring internal tranquillity and Algernon Sidney believing that it could be harmless and even beneficial.[76] The best example of a

[70] Roger North, *Examen: Or, An Enquiry into the Credit and Veracity of a Pretended Complete History; shewing the Perverse and Wicked Design of it…All tending to Vindicate the Honour of the late King Charles II, and his Happy Reign…*(completed in 1713, but published in London, 1740), p. 51.

[71] Ibid, p. iii.

[72] Ibid, pp. iii-iv.

[73] Ibid, pp. 323-25.

[74] Ibid, pp. 323, iv.

[75] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ, 1975), part three.

[76] James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656), (Cambridge, 2001), 29, 155, 158; Algernon Sidney, *Discourses concerning Government* (*c.* 1698), (Indianapolis, IN, 1996), 159-61.

straightforward 'Machiavellian' argument in favour of civic discord is to be found in Walter Moyle's *Essay upon the Constitution of the Roman Government.*[77]

A parliament with real power is widely believed to be a precondition for the emergence of stable political parties and what above all made Britain different from other European powers in the eighteenth century.[78] Although absolutist France represented the 'other' for most Britons, the uniqueness of Britain in this regard can be oversold. While France and Spain famously dispensed with national assemblies, the Dutch Republic, the Holy Roman Empire, Switzerland, Poland-Lithuania, Hungary, Sweden, Sicily and Ireland retained representative assemblies in the eighteenth century.[79] Some of these assemblies were more active and powerful than others, but political parties did have as much weight as in Britain in at least one other country.

III: Comparative perspective: Sweden

Sweden's politics was dominated by the Hat and Cap parties (*Hatt och Mösspartierna*) during a great proportion of the so-called Age of Liberty (*Frihetstiden*) between 1718 and 1772.[80] The reasons why Sweden temporarily diverted from absolute monarchy were highly contingent. In 1718, the unexpected death of the heirless Charles XII, the warrior king who was immortalised by Voltaire in his *Histoire de Charles XII*, instigated, in the words of a prominent historian of Sweden, 'an experiment in parliamentary sovereignty destined to last for just over half a century'.[81] The death of Charles XII led to a succession crisis, with both his sister, Ulrika Elenora, married to Frederick, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel in the Holy Roman Empire, and his nephew, Charles Frederick, Duke of Holstein-

[77] Vickie B. Sullivan, 'Walter Moyle's Machiavellianism, declared and otherwise, in An Essay upon the Constitution of the Roman Government', *History of European Ideas,* 37 (2011), pp. 120-7.

[78] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Avon, 1992), p. 50; Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society* (1962), (Cambridge, 1989), ch. 3. Needless to say, this also separated Britain from countries beyond Europe; see Daniel Levine, 'Public Good and Partisan Gain: Political Languages of Faction in Late Imperial China and Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of World History,* 23 (2012), pp. 841-82.

[79] France kept a degree of representative institutions at the local level; see David Hayton, James Kelly, and John Bergin (eds.), *The Eighteenth-Century Composite State: Representative Institutions in Ireland and Europe, 1689-1800* (New York, NY, 2010).

[80] Michael F. Metcalf, 'The First "Modern" Party System? Political Parties, Sweden's Age of Liberty and the Historians', *Scandinavian Journal of History,* 2 (1977), pp. 265-287. For a recent study which plays down the 'modernity' of the Swedish eighteenth-century parties, see Patrik Winton, *Frihetstidens politiska praktik. Nätverk och offentlighet* (Uppsala, 2006). For a general survey of the period, see Jonas Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk* (Stockholm, 2000).

[81] Metcalf, 'The First "Modern" Party System?', p. 265.

Gottorp, also in the Empire, claiming a right to the throne. Ulrika Elenora struck a deal with the Swedish *Riksdag* of the Estates to succeed her brother, the outcome of which was a written constitution (1719 *års regeringsform*) setting out a power-sharing agreement between the monarch and the assembly. By contrast to the British experience, the power of the Swedish monarch was severely limited, both in theory and in practice.[82] This experiment involved a gradual development of party politics. Sweden's *Riksdag* was a legislative assembly of four estates: nobility, clergy, burghers, and peasants. It was generally dominated by the nobility – and criticised on these grounds by Jean-Louis de Lolme[83] – and so were the parties. Besides mechanisms in favour of the nobility, they were also numerically superior to all other estates put together by virtue of the fact that all noble families of Sweden had a right to a seat in the *Riksdag.*

Unsurprisingly, the first political parties that emerged after 1719 were dynastic parties: a Court party (*Hovparti*) attached to Ulrika Elenora and her husband who became Frederick I of Sweden in 1720, and the Holstein party, which championed Charles Frederick as heir to the throne. Meanwhile, the 1720-38 period was dominated by Arvid Horn, often compared to Walpole, and his personal following, known as 'Horn's friends'. Historians have questioned whether these early dynastic constellations and personal followings could be thought of as political parties in any meaningful way.[84] The twilight years of Horn's political career, however, saw the rise of the more concrete Hat and Cap parties.[85] The Hat party consisted of a coalition of former members of the Holstein party, which had been dissolved in 1727, and other opposition groups, united in their hostility to Horn's peace politics, particularly vis-à-vis Russia. They called their opponents 'nightcaps' (*nattmössor*), insinuating that they were asleep when the enemy advanced, and by way of contrast styled themselves as 'hats', referring to military headgear.[86] The

[82] For comparisons between the British and Swedish systems of government in the eighteenth century, see Pasi Ihalainen, *Agents of the People: Democracy and Popular Sovereignty in British and Swedish Parliamentary and Public Debates, 1734-1800* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2010); Michael Roberts, *Swedish and English Parliamentarism in the Eighteenth Century* (Belfast, 1973); Per-Erik Brolin, 'Svenskt och engelskt sjuttonhundratal: en jämförelse', *Historielärarnas föreningsårsskrift* (1971), pp. 77-97.

[83] De Lolme, *A Parallel between the English Constitution and the Former Government of Sweden* (London, 1972).

[84] Bo Hammarlund, *Politik utan partier: Studier i Sveriges politiska liv, 1726-1727* (Stockholm, 1985).

[85] Ingemar Carlsson, *Parti – partiväsen – partipolitiker, 1731-43: Kring uppkomsten om våra första politiska partier* (Stockholm, 1981).

[86] This straightforward division is undoubtedly a simplification, as has been emphasised by Göran Nilzén, *Studier i 1730-talets partiväsen* (Stockholm, 1971).

'Hats' supplanted the 'Caps' in 1738-9 in power and managed to monopolise rule until the mid-1760s, when the Cap party capitalised on Sweden's costly involvement in the Seven Year's War, known in Sweden as the *Pommerska kriget* against Prussia, a war which had led to splits within the Hat party.[87] The 'Caps' won the 1771 election decisively, but only a year later the Age of Liberty, and the first age of party, came to an end in Sweden after Gustavus III's *coup d'état* .[88]

Unlike Britain, Swedish print operated under strict censorship until 1766, but there was a great deal of privately circulated and 'unprinted' literature.[89] The debate about party in Sweden appears to have shared some common ground with the equivalent debate in Britain, although it has recently been argued that attitudes in Sweden were far more positive.[90] While a larger scale and more systematic comparative study would be needed to corroborate this argument, it is certainly true that there was plenty of anti-party rhetoric in eighteenth-century Britain.

IV: Why were parties detested?

Denouncing party division was a commonplace in eighteenth-century political discourse, and suspicion of party would remain strong at the end of the century, among 'moderates' such as the Federalists, as well as more 'radical' thinkers such as Thomas Paine and Condorcet.[91] Partisans from the Whig John Tutchin to the Tory-Jacobite Nathaniel Mist would pay lip service to the ideal of consensus.[92] The most fundamental reason why parties were so widely disliked was that division was seen as posing an existential threat to the political community. Machiavelli may have been a popular author, especially in the

[87] It has been argued that it was in the 1760s when the Swedish parties became organised for the first time, Per-Erik Brolin, *Hattar och mössor i borgarståndet, 1760-66* (Uppsala, 1953).

[88] A Swedish historian has made a speculative but not entirely implausible claim that Gustav III studied Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*; see Gunnar Kjellin, 'Gustaf III, den patriotiske konungen', in *Gottfried Carlsson* (Lund, Sweden, 1952), pp. 323-38

[89] Ingemar Carlsson, *Frihetstidens handskrivna politiska litteratur: En bibliografi* (Göteborg, International, 1967).

[90] Michael F. Metcalf., "Hattar och Mössor 1766-72: Den sena frihetstidens partisystem i komparativ belysning", in *Riksdag, Kaffehus och Predikstol: Frihetstidens politiska kultur, 1766-72*, ed. Christine Marie Skuncke and Henrika Tandefelt (Stockholm, 2003), pp. 39-54.

[91] Nadia Urbinati, *Representative Democracy: Principles and Genealogy* (Chicago, IL, 2006), pp. 139-40, 159-60. It should be noted, however, that after the French Revolution and the advent of a representative system of government, Sieyès realised that parties had become a necessity in the French context; see *Political Writings*, ed. Michael Sonenscher (Indianapolis, 2003), introduction, p. xxxiiii.

[92] Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London and Sydney, 1987), p. 305.

commonwealth tradition, but he was controversial and could not rival the influence of classical historians and philosophers such as Livy and Cicero, or the Bible. It was common to quote or paraphrase Mark 3:24 and Matthew 12:25: 'If a Kingdom is divided against itself, it cannot stand.'[93] Like Hobbes and Temple in the seventeenth century, many in the eighteenth century associated party conflict with civil war, and, as we shall see, Rapin and David Hume traced the beginning of the British parties to the Cavalier-Roundhead division in the War of the Three Kingdoms. Britain's mixed and limited monarchy was celebrated, but the civil war and religious conflicts of the seventeenth century – spawned by the Reformation – had left a lasting legacy. In the wake of increased 'party spirit' in the context of the peace negotiations which concluded the Seven Years' War, a Butite pamphlet complained that 'Everything was attempted, to throw us back into the barbarity of the last century.'[94]

Another menace was the enduring challenge posed by Jacobitism, the movement that sought to restore the Stuart royal family after the Glorious Revolution.[95] The strength of Jacobitism meant that it took a long time before the Protestant settlement was on a sure footing, and Britain suffered two major Jacobite risings and several plots and near-invasions in the eighteenth century. The precise end of the Jacobite cause as a real threat to the Hanoverian regime, at least in England, was neither the defeat at Culloden in 1746 nor the accession of George III in 1760, but the abandoned Elibank Plot in the early 1750s, thus called after Hume's long-standing friend Lord Elibank, even if his brother Alexander Murray was more deeply involved in the plotting.[96] Jacobitism was undoubtedly the defining political question in Britain in the 1714-60 period and no context is more important when thinking about party strife in the eighteenth century, especially since many Tories were periodically involved in Jacobite plotting, and often associated with the movement.[97] Few Tories took an active part in rebellious acts, however; on the

[93] Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), (Cambridge, 2011), p. 127; Gordon, *Political Discourses on Tacitus and Sallust: Tyranny, Empire, War, and Corruption* (1728-1744), (Indianapolis, IN, 2013), p. 243; Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), (Boston, MA, 1856), p. 23; Ferguson, *The Roman Republic*, II, p. 221.

[94] *A Full and Free Enquiry into the Merits of the Peace; With Some Strictures on the Spirit of Party* (London, 1765), p. 54.

[95] For the importance of dynastic politics at the start of the eighteenth century, see Joseph Hone, *Literature and Party Politics at the Accession of Queen Anne* (Oxford, 2017).

[96] E.C. Mossner, 'New Hume Letters to Lord Elibank, 1748-76', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 4 (1962), pp. 431-60. Little is known about the plot itself, but see Charles Petrie, 'The Elibank Plot, 1752-3', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 14 (1931), pp. 175-96.

[97] We should note, however, that this connection was often opportunistic rather than principled on the part of many Tories, and frequently stemmed from the fact that the death or replacement of a monarch was seen as the most straightforward way to effect a change in ministry and policy at this time,

contrary, many appear to have wavered when it really mattered. For example, Egmont wrote of Thomas Rowney, MP for the City of Oxford in 1722-59 that 'It is remarkable of this man…allways reputed a rank Jacobite, who has drunk the Pretenders health 500 times, that when the Pretenders son came into England [i.e. the 'Forty-five'], he was frightened out of his wits – and ordered his chaplain to pray for King George which he had never suffered him to do in his life before.'[98] Nevertheless, the Jacobite court sometimes formulated its cause in party terms, as in the 1714 declaration of James 'III', which 'with satisfaction…observed the disposition and resolution of our people for sometime to stand in opposition to a Party [i.e. the Whigs], who, to aggrandize themselves aimed at nothing less than a total Subversion of the Fundamental Laws of their Country.'[99]

From an Anglican perspective, viewing the state as a single, religious body, personified by the monarch, the connotation and indeed association of party division with sectarianism and religious schism was anathema and a threat to the unified church-state.[100] What is more, 'party-spirit' was deemed to be fundamentally at odds with the Christian message of benevolence and brotherly love. Some divines dedicated entire sermons to the subject and preached the expulsion of parties.[101] It was therein preached that party spirit 'lessens our Concern for Things of Great Moment, and increases it for Matters of no Consequence…inclines to Bigotry and Superstition…tends to confound the very Distinctions of Good and Evil…undermines Justice and Mercy…roots up our kind Affections, and good Dispositions; and instead of them fills our Hearts with Rage and Rancour.'[102] It was further argued that party spirit corrupted the mind and vitiated judgement.[103] On a societal level, 'nothing can have a greater Tendency to embroil a State, and throw it into the utmost Disorder.'[104] Even the best constitution in the world could be destroyed by parties, the sermon warned. The only strife that should be permitted was

especially after 1714. This explains why many Tories went to court on the death of George I in 1727, and why opposition leaders and parties so often in the eighteenth century associated with the Hanoverian successor to the throne (the 'reversionary interest').

[98] *Egmont Papers*, pp. 149-50.

[99] Cited in *Hearne's Recollections,* V, p. 37.

[100] J.C.D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty: Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World* (Cambridge, 1994), ch. 2.

[101] *The Duty of Benevolence and Brotherly Love, and the ill Effects of a Party Spirit. Considered in a Sermon Preached at the Assizes held at Newcastle upon Tyne, on Tuesday the 8th of August, 1727* (N.p., 1727), pp. 104-5. See also Thomas Secker, *A Sermon preach'd before the University of Oxford, at St Mary's, on Act Sunday in the afternoon, July 8. 1733* (1733), p. 20, warning about the 'rage of party zeal' with particular reference to the Jacobites in Oxford.

[102] *The Duty of Benevolence*, p. 106.

[103] Ibid, p. 105.

[104] Ibid, p. 106.

among those 'who shall be most zealous and active in the Service of the Public', a type of strife that was believed could take place without parties.[105] The need to distinguish public spirit from party was a commonplace argument in the period.[106] In general, party strife was seen as especially illegitimate in times of national crisis, as was stressed from Joseph Addison to William Eden (later Baron of Auckland).[107]

Parties were also disliked for what we can call lesser reasons. One of the most common criticisms of party was that it impeded independence as it encouraged a form of herd mentality. Halifax had likened parties to 'an Inquisition, where Men are under such a Discipline in carrying on the common Cause, as leaves no Liberty of private Opinion.'[108] Swift argued similarly in his first political pamphlet, in which the future Tory sought to defend the Whig Junto from impeachment. To blindly follow a party was 'below the Dignity both of Human Nature, and Human Reason', according to Swift.[109] Later in the century, Samuel Johnson, via James Boswell, voiced a comparable complaint when discussing the Rockinghamite Whig Burke, who was a member of Johnson's club: 'Dr Johnson now said a certain eminent political friend of ours was wrong in his maxim of sticking to a certain set of men on all occasions.'[110]

To some observers, attachment to party seemed inexplicable and random. 'There is a sort of Witchcraft in Party, and in Party Cries, strangely wild and irresistible', wrote Thomas Gordon. 'One Name charms and composes; another Name, not better nor worse, fires and alarms.'[111] Gordon's 'First Discourse: on Party and Faction', prefixed to his translation of Sallust, presented one of the most vehement criticisms of party in the century, but it was by no means atypical. To him, parties were pernicious for two broad reasons. In the first instance, they led to zealous disputes among enthusiastic followers. Party thus meant the triumph of passion over reason. These passions could be used by ambitious leaders to further their own interest at the expense of the public. According to Gordon, Caesar was a 'great Party-Man…who, by the Force and Improvement of Party,

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[105] Ibid, p. 110

[106] See, e.g., *The Present Necessity of Distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party* (London, 1736).

[107] See the first letter in Eden's *Four Letters to the Earl of Carlisle* (London, 1779), entitled 'On certain perversions of political reasoning; and on the nature, progress, and effect of party spirit and of parties.' For Addison, see Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 94.

[108] Halifax, *Complete Works*, p. 211.

[109] Swift, *A Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions ... in Athens and Rome* (London, 1701), p. 56.

[110] *To the Hebrides: Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Western Iceland of Scotland and James Boswell's Journal of a Tour of the Hebrides* (1775 and 1785), (Edinburgh, 2007), p. 30.

[111] Gordon, *Political Discourses*, p. 237.

put an End to Liberty.'[112] Parties thus presented a double menace: they could either represent extreme convictions and over-confidence in one's beliefs, or no beliefs at all but simply naked self-interest and ambition. Both types were believed to endanger *salus populi.*

Both Swift and Gordon were highly suspicious and critical of party leaders. This remained a prominent theme in anti-party rhetoric throughout the century.[113] Indeed, William Cleghorn defined the spirit of party as 'Attachment to certain particular Men or Leaders', as opposed to principles.[114] The absence of independence that came with party membership was a constant fear. William Jones, who reported the 'curious' party debate referred to at the beginning of this introduction, said that he would not 'enlist under the banners of a party…because no party would receive a man determined, as I am, to think for himself.'[115] At the same time, Jones relished in hearing his friend Burke give speeches in parliament, and even if he was critical of Burke's idea of party, he 'envied [the Irishman's] access to political power', according to his biographer.[116]

We should not exaggerate the dislike of party, since it could also be a powerful principle for the rallying of support, long before the time of Burke and the Rockingham Whigs. Walpole's speech to supporters and, more importantly, potential supporters, at the height of the Excise Crisis of 1733, ahead of a crucial vote in the Commons, is a case in point. Walpole professed that he was 'not pleading [his] own cause, but the cause of the Whig party', adding that 'it is in Whig principles I have lived, and in Whig principles I will die.'[117] Hervey commented that the speech reignited 'party spirit' and helped secure a favourable outcome. Burke was not being anachronistic when he said that Walpole had governed by 'party connection'.[118] The example also shows that it would be too simplistic to conclude that 'party' was simply an 'accusatory term' at the time.[119] Perhaps it can even be said to have been part of the glue which helped to maintain what Joanna Innes

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[112] Ibid, p. 318.

[113] *The True Whig Displayed. Comprehending Cursory REMARKS on the Address to the Cocoa-Tree. By a TORY* (London, 1762), p. 8.

[114] William Cleghorn, *The Spirit and Principles of the Whigs and Jacobites Compared* (London, 1746), pp. 16-17.

[115] *The Letters of William Jones,* I. p. 344.

[116] Michael J. Franklin, *'Orientalist Jones': Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794* (Oxford, 2011), p. 164.

[117] *Hervey's Memoirs,* I, pp. 182-3.

[118] Burke, *An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (1791), in *Further Reflections,* p. 129.

[119] Rosenblum, *On the Side of the Angels,* p. 21.

has called the 'more or less informal co-operation between leading statesmen' on which the distribution of political power was dependent in the eighteenth century.[120]

This introduction has referred to multiple eighteenth-century writers, Whig and Tory, famous and lesser known, to show that the debate about party was a prominent discussion in Britain at this time, perhaps the most important one because it was so fundamental in England after 1688-9 (and Britain after 1707), for reasons that will be treated in the remainder of the thesis. The final theme we will look at briefly in this introduction is the question of human sociability – one of the most prominent subjects of recent historiography of political thought.[121]

V: Sociability and Partisanship

One important underlying dimension of the debate about parties in the eighteenth century was the belief that partisanship was a key component of man's social nature. Adam Ferguson is often credited with what has been described as 'antagonistic sociability',[122] but he was drawing on a long-standing tradition in English and Scottish enlightenment debates. Notably, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury had argued that everyone was imbued with a '*combining* Principle' since neither the interests of the world in general nor those of the nation were easily apprehended by the individual.[123] This combining principle gave rise to 'the most generous Spirits', but also 'that *Love of Party*, and Subdivision by *Cabal',* or '*Wheels within Wheels',* according to Shaftesbury.[124] In other words, party was a sign of sociability rather than selfishness, and the 'true *Men of Moderation'* and 'the least forward in *taking Party*' were also the most selfish.[125] In the Scottish context, Francis Hutcheson took issue with Shaftesbury on this score. While Hutcheson conceded that association was often 'amiable and good', including 'Cabals for Defence of Liberty

[120] Joanna Innes, *Inferior Politics: Social Problems and Social Policies in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2009), p. 50.

[121] Following Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), esp. introduction.

[122] Andreas Kalyvas and Ira Katznelson, *Liberal Beginnings: Making a Republic for the Moderns* (Cambridge, 2008), esp. 71-6; Lisa Hill, 'Anticipations of Nineteenth and Twentieth-century Social Thought in the Work of Adam Ferguson', *European Journal of Sociology*, 37 (1), 1996, pp. 203-228, at 216.

[123] Shaftesbury, '*Sensus Communis:* An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour' (1709), in *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), (3 vols., Indianapolis, IN, 2001), I, p. 70.

[124] Ibid, pp. 71-2.

[125] Ibid, p. 72.

against a Tyrant', he believed that party spirit in general represented a corruption of the moral sense.[126] Being biased to one party or sect would pervert 'our natural Notions of Good and Evil', Hutcheson claimed.[127] Although Adam Smith disagreed with Hutcheson about much, he concurred with his old teacher in viewing 'party spirit' as destructive of morality.[128] Many other social thinkers, including Ferguson, sought to strike a balance between Shaftesbury and Hutcheson on this question. Hume, who said that the 'social sympathy in human nature' gave rise to 'party zeal, [and] a devoted obedience to factious leaders',[129] was clear that human beings were inclined to gregarious as well as conflictual dispositions. This line of thinking led to exaggerated statements such as Thomas Jefferson's that 'the terms whig and tory belong to natural as well as to civil history.'[130]

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While the debate about human sociability no doubt informed such philosophically minded political thinkers as Hume, the more common way to discuss and write about political parties in the century was in political, historical and constitutional terms, and this study will focus more closely on these idioms. This thesis will trace the conversation about 'party' in the writings of four 'British' authors: Bolingbroke, Hume, Burke, and John Brown. As our point of departure, however, we take Rapin, a French Huguenot, albeit one with close links to the Atlantic archipelago. More importantly, it will be argued that the French historian of England did more than perhaps anyone to shape the debate about party in the first half of the eighteenth century.

[126] Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), (Indianapolis, IN, 2004), pp. 141-2.
[127] Ibid, p. 142.
[128] Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), (Indianapolis, IN, 1982), pp. 155-6.
[129] Hume, *Enquiry II*, p. 224.
[130] Cited in Rosenblum, *On the Side of the Angels*, p. 18.

Chapter 1:
Paul de Rapin Thoyras and the Origins of Party Division in Britain

I: Introduction

Paul de Rapin Thoyras (1661-1725) – often mentioned, but rarely studied in detail – is known for having devised the pre-Macaulay Whig interpretation of the history of England.[1] A French Huguenot, Rapin had been driven out of his native country after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. He first went to England, but moved quickly on to the Netherlands, where the majority of the Huguenot diaspora resided along with many exiled Whigs.[2] He returned to England as part of William of Orange's invasion in 1688, and then served William as a soldier in Ireland, taking part in the battles of the Boyne and Limerick. From 1693 to 1704, he worked as a tutor to the son of William's favourite William Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland.[3] His *Historie de l'Angleterre* (10 vols, 1724-27) was a truly European enterprise: written in the French language, in Germany, and published in the Netherlands.[4] The thrust of his thesis was that 'England, alone in Europe, had contrived to preserve the old free constitution which had once been the common property of the "barbarian" conquerors of Rome'.[5] He thus agreed with his fellow Huguenot François Hotman (*Franco-Gallia*, 1573) that France had had an ancient constitution which involved power-sharing, but unlike England's constitution it was lost. Rapin had English predecessors, notably James Tyrrell and Laurence Echard,[6] but his became the standard Whig history for a generation. His thesis can helpfully be seen in contrast to that of the royalist historian Robert Brady, who had effectively refuted the idea

[1] Hugh Trevor-Roper, *History and the Enlightenment* (New Haven, CT, 2010), pp. 194-5; idem, 'Our First Whig Historian: Paul de Rapin-Thoyras', in *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution* (London, 1992), pp. 249-65, at 252.

[2] Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (1959), (Sinzheim, 2013), p. 51. For context, see also John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge, 2006), esp. part one.

[3] This son served as a Whig MP from 1705 to 1709, when he inherited his father's earldom and took his seat in the Lords. At the end of his life he was governor of Jamaica.

[4] For the success of the *Histoire*, see M.G. Sullivan, 'Rapin, Hume and the Identity of the Historian in Eighteenth-Century England', *History of European Ideas*, 26 (2002), pp. 145-62.

[5] Trevor-Roper, *History and the Enlightenment*, p. 195.

[6] Philip Hicks, *Neoclassical History and English Culture: From Clarendon to Hume* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 146-50.

that parliament was of immemorial antiquity in the 1680s.[7] Even if Rapin claimed to have written 'impartial' history, and was celebrated for this by Voltaire and others,[8] the Whig stamp is hard to avoid.[9] Yet, Rapin was not any Whig historian. Adam Smith regarded him as far superior to the 'party writers' Lord Clarendon and Gilbert Burnet, and 'the most candid of all those who have wrote on the affairs of the England' before he was surpassed by Smith's friend Hume.[10]

Quickly translated into English and 'continued' by Nicolas Tindal, the brother of the famous Deist, the work was particularly influential for two of the central thinkers of the present study: Bolingbroke and Hume.[11] Before Rapin's *Historie*, the Frenchman had made himself a name from a pamphlet entitled *Une Dissertation sur les Whigs et les Torys*, written in February 1716 and published the following year.[12] This text was often published together with his *Historie*; in the original French edition in the tenth and final volume, and in Tindal's translation in the penultimate volume fourteen (1731), dealing with the last twelve years of Charles II's reign. The main aim of the present chapter is to reconstruct the historical and political arguments in the *Dissertation*, which will serve as a backdrop for the later discussions of party in the works of Bolingbroke and Hume. It is necessary to treat this text at length, because it was foundational for party thought in the eighteenth century. It will provide an intellectual context for later writers, and a historical backdrop against which the origin and nature of party were understood. While the

[7] J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (Cambridge, second ed., 1987), ch. 8.

[8] Voltaire, *Philosophical Letters, or Letters Regarding the English Nation* (1733-4), (Indianapolis, IN, 2007), p. 92; Robert Wallace, *The Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance Considered* (Edinburgh, 1754), p. 23n.

[9] Trevor-Roper, 'Our First Whig Historian', p. 262-5; J.P. Kenyon, *The History Men: The Historical Profession in England since the Restoration* (London, second ed. 1993), p. 41; Laird Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing: Histories of England in the English Enlightenment* (Lanham, MA, 1991), ch. 3. C.f. Sullivan, 'Rapin, Hume and the Identity of the Historian', pp. 153-5.

[10] Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (Indianapolis, IN, 1985), p. 116.

[11] Bolingbroke was one of the subscribers to the first edition of the *Histoire*; see Raoul de Cazenove, *Rapin-Thoyras, sa famille, sa vie et ses œuvres: etudes historiques suive de généalogies* (Paris, 1866), p. 365. He referred to Rapin several times in his *Dissertation upon Parties* (1733-4). Hume had read Rapin early, at least by 1730; see Hume to Michael Ramsay, [1730], *Letters*, II, p. 337. On the continent, it made a strong impression on Montesquieu; see Nelly Girard d'Albissin, *Un précurseur de Montesquieu: Rapin-Thoyras, premier historien français des institutions anglaises* (Paris, 1969); Erich Haase, *Einführung in die Literatur des Refuge: Der Beitrag der französischen Protestanten zur Entwicklung analytischer Denkformen am Ende des. 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1959), pp. 401, 524.

[12] The *Dissertation* was translated into English by John Ozell the same year as it was published. It was also translated into Dutch, Danish, Spanish, and German, and became a best-seller across Europe. A short extract of the text in English was published in J. A. W. Gunn (ed.), *Factions No More: Attitudes to Party in Government and Opposition in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1972), and the entire text in its original French in Bernard Cottret and Marie-Madeleine Martinet, *Partis et factions dans l'Angleterre du premier XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1987).

Dissertation could not possibly have been entirely accurate, the strength of the pamphlet was that it explained with enviable clarity what seemed to many unintelligible, and it may have come closer than anyone before Hume to capturing both the essence and nuances of British party politics. This chapter will also consider Rapin's discussion of party in the *Histoire* in the context of its immediate predecessors, but it should be noted that the work itself deserves a more detailed and holistic analysis than can be offered in the present study.

II: Contexts of the *Dissertation*

Anyone expecting to find a wholehearted endorsement of the Whig party in Rapin's dissertation will be sorely disappointed. Instead, writing as the relatively detached foreigner he was,[13] at least by this stage of his life, he argued that absolute preponderance of either party was to be avoided. He wanted to see the defeat of what he regarded as the extreme wing of the Tory party, which had become strongly associated with Jacobitism, but he was equally critical of the small and declining republican clique within the Whigs.[14] The *Dissertation* was written when single-party government, or at least near-single party government, was beginning to be practised in Britain. Although all ministries between 1689 and 1710-11 had been mixed, that is containing both Whigs and Tories in key positions, one party was usually more dominant, like the Tories after 1690, and the Whig Junto between 1693-4 and 1700.[15] After the resignation of Robert Harley (later Earl of Oxford) and Henry St John (later Viscount Bolingbroke) in 1708, the government was dominated by the Whigs, even if the nominal Tory Sidney, 1st Earl of Godolphin, remained a leading figure. Both Godolphin and Harley should be seen as royal servants and managers rather than as party leaders. They sought to achieve a balanced ministry comprising moderate politicians from both parties. This proved difficult, however, at a time when Parliament was divided into Whig and Tory.[16]

[13] He said that he was 'n'est attaché ni par inclination, ni par intérêt, à aucun des deux Partis' (*Dissertation,* p. 85 [preface]).

[14] For this minority within the Whigs after the Glorious Revolution, see Mark Goldie, 'The Roots of True Whiggism, 1688-1694', *History of Political Thought,* 1 (1980), pp. 195-236.

[15] Tony Claydon, *William III* (London, 2002), ch. 4.

[16] The best study remains Geoffrey Holmes's *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (London, revised ed., 1987).

In the wake of the High Church Tory reaction to the Whig impeachment of Henry Sacheverell – who had preached non-resistance and attacked Dissenters on Gunpowder Plot Day[17] – the Godolphin-Marlborough administration crumbled, and Harley was back in office in August 1710. In October of the same year, the Tory party won by a landslide at the general election, and soon formed something akin to a single-party administration, although led for the most part by the moderate Harley. Bolingbroke, who served as Secretary of State in 1710-14, described the Tory 'revolution' of 1710 in the following way:

> I am afraid that we came to court in the same dispositions as all parties have done; that the principal spring of our actions was to have the government of the state in our hands; that our principal views were the conservation of this power, great employment to our selves, and great opportunities for rewarding those who had helped to raise us, and of hurting those who stood in opposition to us.[18]

The Tory triumph proved short-lived, however, and the Hanoverian accession after Queen Anne's death in August 1714 eventually marked the beginning of Whig supremacy and the proscription of the Tory party from office, which, with some exceptions, was to last until 1760. This was far from a predetermined outcome when George I ascended the throne, however. Prior to his accession, Georg Ludwig had initially sought to keep both parties at an equal distance, but he came to regard the Peace of Utrecht of 1713 as the Tories betraying their continental allies. The Whigs grasped this opportunity and pitched themselves as the true friends of Hanover. Notably, John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, showered Jean Robethon, George's private secretary, with letters warning of 'the designs of the English Ministry to bring in the Pretender'.[19] As a result, Bolingbroke and nearly all Tory ministers had either resigned or been dismissed even before George I had arrived in England.

For Rapin, writing in February 1716 without the benefit of hindsight, more ministerial 'revolutions' and further alternations between Whig and Tory

[17] Henry Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church, and State: Set forth in a Sermon preached…at the Cathedral-Church of St. Paul, on the Fifth of November, 1709* (London, 1710).
[18] Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham* (1717), *Works*, I, pp. 8-9.
[19] BL Stowe MS 242, f. 47.

administrations seemed highly likely.[20] Indeed, one reason the Whigs gave for introducing septennial parliaments in April-May 1716 was that frequent parliaments impaired Britain's reputation abroad: 'Foreigners, who see that we have scarce *Two Parliaments together of the Same Mind;* and that everything is manag'd according to the *Humour of the prevailing Party*, are apt to *think* that not only our *Parliaments*, but our *Government is Triennial*'.[21] The Septennial Act was designed to end ministerial alterations, which had been perfectly natural in the 1689-1714 period. As Strafford explained to Sophia of Hanover in May 1714: 'A King or Queen of England must govern by the Bulk of their people, & must never be tied to one or t'other party, which made King W[illia]m & all the Kings his Predecessors change from one to the other party, as they had the majority in the Nation & Parliament.'[22]

The second and decisive justification for the Septennial Act was the Jacobite threat, as the country had recently suffered a rebellion, the so-called 'Fifteen', defeated at the beginning of February 1716, and to which Rapin referred in the *Dissertation*. Even if the 'Fifteen' failed, a restoration of the House of Stuart did not look inconceivable when Rapin started writing his text. The Tory party was around this time split into 1) outright Jacobites, 2) Hanoverians, and 3) undecided or 'whimsical' Tories, who did not desire to be under a king who was German, Lutheran, and, in their eyes, unlawful, but who saw the Pretender's conversion to Anglicanism as a *sine qua non.*[23] As we shall see, Rapin believed that the Jacobite cause was doomed *if* the Whigs made the right choices and did not alienate moderate Tories and Church members. Rapin may have addressed the Whigs partly because they were in government, but it is evident from his tone and emphasis (as well as his background) that he sympathised with that party, although not

[20] Rapin himself spoke of 'la force du parti des Torys' in May 1717; see Rapin to Jean Robethon, secretary to George I, BL Stowe MS 230, f. 118. The Tories themselves expected to gain office on several occasions after the Hanoverian succession, especially after the Whig split of 1716-17, even if they became less optimistic as time wore on; see H.M.C., *Calendar of the Stuart Papers belonging to his Majesty the king, preserved at Windsor Castle* (7 vols., London, 1907-23), III, p. 379, IV, pp. 221-2, VI, p. 405; Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party, 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), esp. pp. 25-50.

[21] *A Letter to a Country Gentleman, shewing the inconvenience, which attend the last part of the Act for Triennial Parliaments* (London, 1716), p. 35.

[22] BL Stowe MS 242, f. 106.

[23] D'Iberville to de Torcy, 6 March 1714, BL Add MS 34495, ff. 12-14.

as much as one might expect.[24] It should be noted, moreover, that other Huguenot refugees with a stake in England were much more eager to glory in Whiggism.[25]

Rapin's pamphlet was successful in Britain because the country was still learning how to live with party conflict and the phenomenon was poorly theorised. The main reason for Rapin composing the *Dissertation,* however, was the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713. This treaty concluded Britain's participation in the War of the Spanish Succession, a war which involved virtually all the great European powers against France, and had made the British parties relevant on the European stage. The reason was that a Tory administration had negotiated a peace which was extremely disliked by the oppositional Whig party. The two parties had disagreed for years over how the war should be waged, with most Tories favouring a naval, so-called 'blue-water', strategy, while the Whigs supported a land war.[26] Then they clashed over how urgently and the terms upon which Britain should seek peace, with the Whigs famously wanting 'no peace without Spain'. Long before the Treaty of Utrecht was concluded, the Tory party was known as the 'peace party', and when Harley became the Queen's first minister in 1710, it was widely expected that the making of peace would be his first priority.[27]

Around this time, Rapin was present at the house of the Prussian governor of Wesel, the state of his residence, when the nature of the British parties had been debated.[28] The Frenchman went away with the impression that the discussants knew little about the Whigs and Tories, and wrote a paper to clarify his own ideas. The Whig courtier Sir Andrew Fountaine was shown the paper when visiting Wesel, and convinced Rapin to publish it.[29] In the 'Avertissement' to the *Dissertation sur les Whigs et les Torys*, Rapin duly remarked that the 'English' party division had been of little interest to foreigners before Utrecht.[30] After this event, even foreigners started to be partial in British domestic politics and even 'take party' (*prendre parti*), since one party was for

[24] This is even more evident in his private correspondence (Rapin to Robethon, BL Stowe MS 230, ff. 114-21).

[25] Jean Armand Dubourdieu, *Apologie de nos Confesseurs qui etoient aux galères, au mois de Janvier 1714* (London, 1717), esp. Part III : 'On confond la Neutralité recommandé aux Réfugiez, par le Sir R[iva]l'.

[26] For a recent discussion, see Jeremy Black, 'Foreign Policy and the Tory World in the Eighteenth Century', in *The Tory World: Deep History and The Tory Theme in British Foreign Policy, 1679-2014*, ed. idem (Farnham, 2015), pp. 33-68.

[27] Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, pp. 64-81.

[28] Cazenove, *Rapin-Thoyras*, p. 228.

[29] Ibid, pp. 237-8.

[30] Rapin, *Dissertation*, pp. 83-4 [preface].

peace and another for war.[31] Partisans of France embraced the Tories, and their enemies the Whigs. Even if Rapin was clear and pointed out that both parties were equally in favour of Protestantism, foreign Catholics supported the Tories because of that party's penchant for Jacobitism, which meant the backing of a Catholic monarch (James 'III', the Old Pretender).[32] In Britain, or England as he invariably referred to it, Rapin remarked in a 'Spectatorial' manner that many were Tories and Whigs 'sans avoir une idée bien distincte du Parti qu'ils ont embrassé.'[33] However, he stressed that he was not writing for an English audience.[34] Since Utrecht had demonstrated that the party that won the day in England could influence and indeed decide the most important affairs of Europe, Rapin's intention of publishing was to instruct the European public about the exact nature of these two 'factions', or parties.[35] He believed himself to be singularly suited to offer an 'impartial' analysis of the parties as a foreigner, since everything published in Britain was written by partisans of either party.[36] He also assured his readers that he had spent a long time in England and studied its history with care.[37]

Rapin was in fact not alone in attempting this. In the same year, *Histoire du Whigisme et du Torisme* was published in Leipzig by Emmanuel de Cize, another Huguenot refugee who had served in the British army.[38] It was dedicated to Jakob

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[31] *The Whigs Appeal to the Tories in a Letter to Sir T[homas] H[anmer]* (London, 1711), pp. 2-3, passim.

[32] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 84 [preface]. The association between Toryism and Jacobitism was cemented in the wake of a Jacobite plot to assassinate William III in 1696, when the Whig Junto rose to power, and asked members of parliament to subscribe to 'the Association' to defend their 'rightful and lawful monarchy' against Catholics. About one-hundred Tories in both chambers, principally the lower, refused to sign. See Geoffrey Holmes, *Religion and Party in Late Stuart England* (London, 1975), p. 24.

[33] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 84 [preface].

[34] Ibid, pp. 85-6 [preface]. The English translation said that the work was not *only* for an English readership; see *An Historical Dissertation upon Whig and Tory*, translated by Mr. Ozell (London, 1717), p. vii.

[35] At first glance, it appears as if Rapin was utilising 'party' and 'faction' interchangeably, but as Girard d'Albissin has remarked, we should note that he only used 'faction' three times in the *Dissertation*, twice in the preface and once in the text and then in order to avoid repetition of party (*Un précurseur de Montesquieu*, p. 99 and n335).

[36] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 85 [preface]. For examples of such partisan descriptions of party in this period, see [Charles Davenant], *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented. Being a Second Part of His Picture. And a Real Vindication of his Excellency the Earl of Rochester* [i.e. the Tory leader]…*and of Several Other True Patriots of our Establish'd Church, English Liberty, and Ancient Monarchy* [i.e. Tories] (London, 1702); [Jonathan Swift], *The Public Spirit of the Whigs* (London, 1714), written when Swift was employed by the Tory government.

[37] He had begun working on his *Histoire* perhaps around 1707, and announced it in 1714 (BL Stowe MS 230, f. 121).

[38] For de Cize, see Myriam Yardeni, 'The Birth of Political Consciousness among the Huguenot Refugees and their Descendants in England (c. 1685-1750')', in *From Strangers to Citizens: The Integration of Immigrant Communities in Britain, Ireland and Colonial America, 1550-1750*, ed. Randolph Vigne and Charles Littleton (Portland, OR, 2001), pp. 404-11. Extracts from the book is printed in Cottret and Martinet, *Partis et factions dans l'Angleterre*.

Heinrich von Flemming, a Saxon military officer in the Great Northern War, and republished in The Hague in 1718. De Cize's detailed work follows the history-writing conventions of the time, which meant the inclusion of long speeches and original documents; conventions which Rapin would follow in his *Histoire* but dispense with in his fast-paced but slightly repetitive *Dissertation*. More than twice as long as Rapin's 184-page pamphlet, it does not appear to have had the same impact, at least not in Britain. It is true that Ephraim Chambers cited de Cize in his *Cyclopaedia* (1738), but not at the same length as Rapin's *Dissertation*.[39] De Cize presented a more straightforward condemnation of parties, of which there was no lack in Britain, and many of his insights were virtually the same as Rapin's.[40] He could of course have come up with them independently of Rapin, but some internal evidence suggests that it may have been written and published after Rapin, although this cannot be said for certain since de Cize's narrative finishes in 1714 and he does not comment on events after the accession of George I.[41] Also, *Histoire du Whigisme et du Torisme* contains a great deal of information that is not from Rapin, notably more information about the political allegiance of the twenty-four English bishops, fourteen or fifteen of whom he classified as Tory, singling out Francis Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, as the most 'furious'.[42] One source for de Cize is likely to have been the contemporary hack-historian Abel Boyer, another French Huguenot who had settled in England in 1689.[43]

III: The Rise of Party in England

Rapin regarded history as vital for understanding the birth and progress of the British parties. The *Dissertation* began with 'l'origine du gouvernement d'Angleterre', and its two first sentences summarised the thesis which would make Rapin famous as a Whig historian *par excellence*: 'Le Gouvernment d'Angleterre est d'une espéce particuliére,

[39] See the entries for 'Whig' and 'Tory' in Chambers, *Cyclopaedia: or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (2 vols., London, 1738).

[40] For example, that 'il est possible que ceux qui sont *Toris* our *Whigs* en matiere Politique, suivent des maximes matiere de Religion, mais cela est rare.' De Cize, *Histoire du Whigisme et du Torisme* (Leipzig, 1717), p. 2.

[41] On the first page, he lists Rapin's party categories: *Rigides*, *Outrez*, *Mitigez*, and *Moderez* (which will be discussed at greater length below), as if referring the reader to Rapin's work (ibid, p. 1).

[42] Ibid, p. 25.

[43] His works include *The History of King William the Third* (3 vols, 1702-3); *The History of the Reign of Queen Anne Digested into Annals* (1703–13); *The Political State of Great Britain, being an Impartial Account of the most material occurrences, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military, in a monthly letter to a friend in Holland* (38 vols., 1711-29).

qui n'a point aujourd'hui de semblable dans tout le reste du Monde. C'est, pourtant, le même qui fut autrefois établi, dans tous les Royaumes, formez en Europe, du débris de l'Empire Romain. La différence qui se trouve…vient de ce que les Anglois ont conservé la forme de leur Gouvernement'.[44] This form of government was partly monarchical and partly republican, in other words 'un Gouvernement Mixte'.[45] Rapin then offered a brief summary of the history of England, from the Saxon period to his own time. The crucial century for party formation in this narrative was the seventeenth century. This was the time when James I, under the pernicious influence of his favourite Buckingham began to seek to diminish the power of parliament.[46]

Rapin then described how James I's son and successor, Charles I, pursued a project of becoming 'absolute & independent des Loix'.[47] In 1640, he was forced to call his first parliament since 1629 in order to pay for war against Scotland, on which he sought to impose Anglicanism. Rather than aiding the king, the new parliament was eager to assure 'les Libertez de la Nation' by circumscribing royal power.[48] The real tussle between the privileges of the people and the prerogative of the crown began at this point, according to Rapin. That was how 'deux Partis' were formed in England, one for the king and the other for parliament, or rather the lower house of parliament. There was no doubt in Rapin's mind that these parties were the ancestors of the later parties: 'Partisans du Roi furent d'abord nommez *Cavaliers*, nom qui a été changé depuis, en celui de Torys. Ceux du Parlement, qu'on appella d'abord *Tètes Rondes*, ont reçù, ensuite le nom de *Whigs*.'[49] Rapin also traced the *names* of Tory and Whig to this early stage, remarking that these appellations were as old as these 'troubles'. Admitting that he was unable to say exactly when it happened, Rapin believed that the Cavalier and Roundhead appellations lasted until Charles II's reign and were then 'peu-à-peu' replaced by Tory and Whig.[50] In the *Histoire,* he was able to trace the beginning of Tory and Whig more accurately, as will be seen in the next section. Already in the *Dissertation*

[44] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 87 [1-2].
[45] Ibid [3].
[46] Ibid, p. 94 [22].
[47] Ibid [23].
[48] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 96 [28].
[49] Ibid, p. 98 [34].
[50] From the start of Charles II's reign, he called them Tories rather than Cavaliers. It long remained common to call the parliament elected in May 1661 a 'Tory' parliament, as Carte complained in *A Full Answer to the Letter from a Bystander* (London, 1742), p. 79. De Cize was more precise in dating the birth of the Tory and Whig appellations to 1678 (*Histoire du Whigisme et du Torisme,* pp. 50-1).

he was convinced, however, that the division that had begun before the Commonwealth era was the same that still divided England in 1716.

Rapin supported the connection he made between these two sets of party names by pointing to shared political and religious principles. The king's party during the civil war (the Cavaliers), consisted of two sorts of people: those who were attached to the interest of the crown and those attached to the interest of the Anglican Church. This mixture of two different points of view, one monarchical and one religious, was still a cause of confusion in the Tory party in eighteenth century, he argued.[51] Rapin thus made a distinction between *Cavaliers Politiques*, or *d'Etat,* and *Cavaliers Ecclésiastiques*, or *d'Eglise,* each of which was sub-divided into two further categories. Among the political Cavaliers were the likes of Buckingham, Bishop Laud, and the Earl of Strafford, who strove for absolute monarchy and the destruction of parliament. Such extremists were in the minority, however, and he called them *Cavaliers Outrez*.[52] Most of the political Cavaliers were *Moderez*, and wanted to reinforce the power of the monarch, but as part of the ancient constitution, which included an important role for parliament.[53] The ecclesiastical Cavaliers were also divided into two groups: one 'rigid' and one 'mitigated'.[54] As we shall see, Rapin believed that he could trace the same division between moderate and extreme elements within the Tories in the different ministries of Queen Anne: first Godolphin and the moderate Tories who joined with Junto Whigs to form the queen's first ministries in 1702-10, and then the so-called high-flying Tories who ruled in a (near) single-party government in 1710-14, when Dissenters were attacked and a Jacobite restoration became an alternative.[55]

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[51] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 98 [36].

[52] Literally 'outraged', but translated as *arbitrary* Tories in the English translation by Ozell (*An Historical Dissertation upon Whig and Tory*, p. 23), and more literally as *furious* Tories by Tindal, see *Dissertation*, in *History of England* (15 vols., London, 1727-31), XIV, p. 440. Around this time, 'furious' was commonly used in contradistinction with 'moderate' and in a similar sense to the way we would use 'extreme'; see, e.g., the sub-title of Mary Astell's *A Fair Way with Dissenters and their Patrons: Not writ by Mr. L[esle]y, or any other Furious Jacobite, whether Clergyman or Layman; but by a very Moderate Person and Dutiful Subject to the Queen* (1704).

[53] Others, like Brady and Filmer, disagreed about the antiquity of Parliament and the Commons in particular; see Brady, *An Introduction to the Old English History, Comprehended in Three Several Tracts* (London, 1684), esp. *The First, An Answer to Mr. Petyt's Rights of the Commons Asserted;* Filmer, *Patriarcha and Other Writings* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 54.

[54] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 99 [37-8]. 'Les Rigides' was the standard term used by l'Hermitage, a Dutch agent in London, for the Tories (Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne,* p. 460 n28).

[55] Daniel Szechi has shown, however, in *Jacobitism and Tory Politics, 1710-14* (Edinburgh, 1984) that the mass of the Tory party were committed to the Hanoverian succession before 1714. For the shift to Jacobitism, see Eveline Cruickshanks, *Political Untouchables: The Tories and the '45* (New York, NY, 1979).

The Roundheads, on their part, were divided into two groups along similar lines: one political, which championed the rights of the people (*les droits du peuple*), and one ecclesiastical, which sought to advance Presbyterianism. Among the political Roundheads were the republicans, who wanted to destroy royal power, as well as moderates, who merely sought to prevent the king from abusing it.[56] Finally, there were both rigid and moderate Presbyterians, the former seeking to abolish bishops and the latter wanting toleration. These different labels and their principles will be discussed at greater length below.

Rapin skated over the civil war and the 'unfree' Commonwealth era fairly quickly.[57] In the reign of Charles II, Rapin singled out the Duke of York (the future James II) as the leader of the Tories.[58] The main project of the duke, according to Rapin, was to establish Catholicism in England, a religion James had embraced during his exile, as he made public in 1676. The Whigs regarded him as a threat to the government of the state as well as the Protestant religion, and prepared a bill to exclude him from succession to the throne.[59] They were not successful, however, and as James II, he proclaimed liberty of conscience to all his subjects, and permitted people of all faiths to worship publicly. The aim of this policy was twofold, according to Rapin: to favour the papists and placate the Presbyterians.[60] The Tories, who had hitherto supported James II, began to repent their past actions, as they saw how each step of the king tended to the dissolution of the established government and the ruin of Protestantism.

Not willing to sacrifice their religion and liberty to ensure the destruction of the Whigs, the Tories united with their nemeses and invited William of Orange, the Dutch Stadtholder who was the son-in-law *and* nephew of James II. The king's party was extremely weak at this stage, as it consisted only of Catholics, the *Torys Outrez*, and a few courtiers.[61] Rapin contended that the Glorious Revolution demonstrated that the English, although still divided into two parties, prioritised saving their (Protestant)

[56] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 99 [38-9].
[57] Ibid, p. 101. The first historian to defend the 'Rump Parliament' was Catherine Macaulay, many years later; see J.G.A. Pocock, 'England's Cato: The Virtues and Fortunes of Algernon Sidney', *HJ*, 37 (1994), pp. 915-35, at 935.
[58] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 101 [45].
[59] Ibid, p. 103 [49-50].
[60] Ibid, p. 105 [55].
[61] Ibid, p. 105 [57].

religion and liberty over defeating their counterparts.[62] Under William and Mary (1689-1694), and later under William alone (1694-1702), moreover, moderate men from both parties were employed, especially before the rise of the Junto Whigs in 1694. Since it was impossible to make both parties content at the same time, as there were not enough offices to dispose, William 'affecta de changer souvent de Ministers, & de server des deux Partis, tour à tour.'[63]

Division did not come to an end, however, and it was mainly religion that helped to sustain the parties. The ecclesiastical Tories of the rigid kind were furious to see Presbyterians enjoying complete liberty of conscience, worshipping publicly and holding office, despite the Act of Uniformity 1662.[64] The extremists among the political Tories, who advocated absolutism and had seen James II as their leader and defender, became Jacobite.[65] The common slogan among these discounted Tories became '*l'Eglise étoit en danger*'.[66] It would be wrong, however, to view the continuous division as an exclusively religious disagreement, Rapin argued, as was evidenced in the continued existence of the *Torys Outrez* and the *Whigs Républiquains*, even if the latter faction was minuscule.

William III's successor Anne – the daughter of James II – was raised in religious principles conforming to the *Torys Rigides* and political principles similar to the *Torys Outrez*, Rapin claimed.[67] Surprisingly, in the first part of her reign, she chose not to rely on such Tories, among whom her uncle the Earl of Rochester was regarded as the leader.[68] The reason was that she was pressurised by a coalition between the moderates

[62] As will be seen in chapter three, Hume would mirror this analysis closely in 'Of the Parties of Great Britain' (1741).

[63] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 107 [61].

[64] They were granted exemption from the penalties of the Test Act under the inaccurately named Toleration Act, which was not as far-reaching as James II's Declaration of Indulgence of 1687. Occasional conformity became common practice from 1689 onwards.

[65] Ibid, p. 107 [62-3].

[66] Ibid, p. 107 [63].

[67] Ibid, p. 108 [65-6]. It was a common opinion among Whigs that the queen was a Tory, and this was clearly expressed by Lord (William) Cowper and Lord (Thomas) Coningsby, both of whom were Whigs who presented 'histories of parties' to George I early in his reign. Cowper, 'An Impartial History of Parties' (1714), manuscript printed in John Campbell, *The Lives of the Lord Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal of England* (10 vols., London, 1846), VI, pp. 421-9; Coningsby, 'History of Parties; presented to King George the First' (1716), manuscript printed in *Archaeologia, or Miscellaneous Tracts relating to* Antiquity (110 vols., London, 1770-1992), XXXVIII, pp. 3-18 (also in BL Lansdowne MS 885, ff. 65-74).

[68] Laurence Hyde, 1st Earl of Rochester (1642-1711), son of Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon, had held high office under Charles II and James II, served as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1700-3 and returned to the cabinet as Lord President of the Council in 1710 until he died the following

of the two parties.[69] Accordingly, Anne turned to Godolphin, Marlborough[70] and other moderate Tory leaders,[71] in conjunction with Whigs. From this time forth, moderate Tories and Whigs looked almost like the same party, Rapin remarked, undoubtedly thinking of the aforementioned Godolphin and Marlborough, who are hard to classify even for modern scholars.[72]

Marlborough, Godolphin, and Harley formed what contemporaries called a triumvirate until 1708. If this administration had stayed in power until the death of Queen Anne, the *Torys Outrez* and *Rigides* would have seen their number depleted, Rapin speculated. He suggested that more extreme Tories came back into power by convincing the queen that she was a slave to an administration that went against her inclinations. She thus replaced them with the 'furious' and rigid Tories in 1710. The Tory party won by a landslide at the general election that same year, helped by the fact that they were at Court, and by the 'church is in danger' slogan, entirely chimerical in Rapin's mind, but highly effective with the people.[73] It was also during the 1710-14 administration that the Tories took the decisive step towards Jacobitism, fearing that their day in the sun would come to an end under the Elector of Hanover, who was set to ascend the throne on Anne's death, in accordance with the Act of Settlement 1701.[74] Rapin conceded, however, that it was uncertain whether the 'habile Ministre, qui est aujourd'hui à la Tour, etaoit de ce sentiment', referring to Harley/Oxford, who was imprisoned in the Tower of London at the time of the composition of the text.[75]

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year. William III had had to rely on Rochester from the end of 1700, but Rochester resigned from the government in 1703.

[69] Rapin did not think highly of the queen but modern historians have tended to give Anne more credit; see particularly Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (New Haven, CT, new ed. 2001).

[70] However, Marlborough's wife, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, was a staunch Whig, and Marlborough himself became a Whig hero after his victories against the French in the War of the Spanish Succession; see Eveline Cruickshanks, 'Religion and Royal Succession – The Rage of Party', in *Britain in the First Age of Party, 1680-1750,* ed. Clyve Jones (London and Ronceverte, WV, 1987), pp. 19-43, at 33.

[71] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 109 [67-8]. The administration also included Harley and Henry St John (Bolingbroke) between 1704 and 1708. The concept of 'moderation' was ridiculed by High Church men; see William Shippen, *Moderation Displayed* (London, 1704); J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 81.

[72] In the words of Holmes, their Toryism had ceased by the time of Anne's accession and was merely nominal (*British Politics in the Age of Anne,* pp. 189-90).

[73] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 110 [71-2].

[74] The Hanoverian dynasty were Anne's nearest Protestant relatives.

[75] Ibid, p. 111 [74]. Harley corresponded with the Pretender in 1710-14, but his intentions remain uncertain; see G. V. Bennet, 'English Jacobitism, 1710-15; Myth and Reality', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 32 (1982), pp. 137-51. It has been suggested in Cruickshanks, 'Religion and Royal Succession', p. 37 that he embraced Jacobitism more wholeheartedly after his imprisonment.

Having taken his historical narrative up to the time of writing, Rapin proceeded to consider the principles of the two parties in greater detail. He began with the *Torys Outrez*, or the high-flying (*volant haut*) Tories, unflatteringly called thus after a bird lost in the clouds and flying outside the common sphere of other birds.[76] Rapin was sure that these Tories wanted to establish absolutism of the French kind in England. This party was not numerous but remained considerable. Rapin gave three reasons to account for this. Firstly, their leaders usually held high office at court and church, and from there could direct those below them. That is why the Tory party as a whole was often but unfairly accused of advocating despotic government, when this was only the objective of a minority.[77] Secondly, this Tory branch had often been aided by the ecclesiastical Tories, whose numbers were much greater,[78] in preaching the dogma of passive obedience to the monarch, especially under Charles II, James II, and at the end of Anne's reign.[79] Finally, the high-flying Tories tended to become powerful when they were backed by the monarch, as they had been under James II and Charles I (as well as Richard II, Edward II and Henry III, 'car le Parti des Torys Outrez est plus ancien qu'on ne pense').[80] More recently, they had pushed Queen Anne into creating twelve new peers in 1711 in order to break the Whig control of the Lords.[81]

The second category of political Tories, the *Modérez,* were also monarchical and protective of the monarch's prerogatives, but not at the expense of his or her subjects. Perhaps surprisingly, Rapin had nothing but admiration for these Tories, who had often saved the state, from *Torys Outrez* and republican Whigs alike, both of whom wanted to *change* the government.[82] It would be a grave injustice to confound these Tories with their high-flying namesakes, Rapin stressed. The moderate Tories wanted to conserve the just prerogatives of the crown, and were prepared to join with moderate Whigs to maintain the balanced constitution.[83]

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[76] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 112 [78].
[77] Ibid, p. 113 [80].
[78] Ibid, p. 123 [110].
[79] Ibid, p. 113 [81].
[80] Ibid, pp. 113-4 [81-2]. One of Rapin's signature techniques was to apply the vocabulary of post-revolutionary politics to much older events to make them more comprehensible; see Sullivan, 'Rapin, Hume and the Identity of the Historian', p. 150.
[81] Many considered this to be unconstitutional at the time, e.g. [Richard Steele], *A Letter to Sir Miles Wharton, Concerning Occasional Peers* (Fleet Street, 5 March, 1713).
[82] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 114 [82].
[83] Ibid, p. 124 [113-4].

As Rapin had already stated, the republican Whigs were a small minority of the Whig party, even if the Tories sought to persuade the public that all Whigs were republicans.[84] The moderate Whigs were roughly of the same principles as the moderate Tories and 'veritables Anglois' for the same reasons: they wanted to maintain the government on its ancient foundations. This was a common way to distinguish between moderate and extreme positions at the time: a moderate wanted to preserve the constitution and an extremist change it. As the Whig James Tyrrell put it, 'I am not what the world calls a *Republican* or *Commonwealthsman*, nor do I design or desire alterations in the government either of Church or State'.[85] The ancient constitution could be interpreted in different ways, and the views of Tyrrell and Rapin differed widely from those of Thomas Salmon and Thomas Carte.[86] The latter claimed to be as opposed to alterations as Tyrell and Rapin, however, writing in 1722 that 'all experiments of Alterations in any Essential Part [of the constitution] have been always thought of a very dangerous nature & wise men ever tremble at them.'[87]

So far Rapin had mainly analysed the parties' political principles, but party formation was as much about church as state affairs; 'ce qui contribuë le plus à les faire regarder comme deux Partis différents, c'est la Religion', as he put it.[88] Turning to the latter, Rapin began by disputing the idea that all Episcopalians were Tory and all Presbyterians Whig. Moreover, some could be Tory regarding the church but Whig vis-à-vis the government, and vice versa.[89] The main reason why rigid Episcopalians tended to be Tory and Presbyterians Whig, however, was the question of hierarchy (i.e. bishops), which generally conformed to their political beliefs, even if they sometimes clashed as in the Convocation Controversy of 1697-1701.[90]

The division between Whig and Tory could be traced not only to the conflict between king and parliament in the seventeenth century, but also the religious rift

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[84] See, e.g., [Charles Leslie], *A View of the Times, their Principles and Practices, in the Rehearsals* (3 vols., London, 1750), II p. 218 (5 June 1706).

[85] Tyrrell, *Bibliotheca Politica: or An Enquiry into the Ancient Constitution of the English Government* (1694), (London, 1718), p. vi.

[86] Thomas Salmon, *The History of Great Britain and Ireland…The Second Edition, with a Preface wherein the Partiality of Mons. Rapin and other Republican Historians, is demonstrated* (London, 1725); [Carte?], *A Defence of English History, against the Misrepresentations of M. de Rapin Thoyras, in his History of England, now publishing weekly* (London, 1734), esp. pp. 11, 65-6.

[87] Carte MS 230, Bodleian, f. 362.

[88] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 129 [128].

[89] Ibid, p. 119 [98-9].

[90] Ibid, p. 118. For the Convocation Controversy, see R.J. Smith, *The Gothic Bequest: Medieval Institutions in British Thought, 1688-1863* (Cambridge 1987), pp. 28-38.

between two different visions of what road the church should take in the wake of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Unlike in Scotland, the reformed English church retained its bishops. Separatists were called Presbyterians, because they refused to submit to the authority of bishops, arguing that Presbyteries, or a body of ministers and lay-elders, held the same rank. Two parties were thus formed: Episcopalians and Puritans, the latter being denominated such because of their conviction that bishops went against the *purity* of Christianity.[91] As we have seen, the Wars of the Three Kingdoms began initially when Charles I sought to reform the Scottish church along Anglican lines, as was stressed by Rapin in this context.[92] When the English parliamentarians needed the aid of Scotland, they promised to bring Presbyterianism to England. The division between Episcopalians and Presbyterians, neither of whom tolerated one another, had lasted until Rapin's day and still worked to underpin the split between Whig and Tory.[93]

The ecclesiastical Tories, or the church Tories, included almost the entire country, because it could be considered to be made up of all the members of the Anglican Church, according to Rapin.[94] They were thus far superior to the Presbyterian Whigs: the Dissenting vote is estimated to have been between fifteen and twenty per cent of the total electorate in the reign of Anne.[95] In short, it was religion that made the Tory party powerful.[96] Rapin believed that if the *Tory Outrez* were far less numerous than the moderates among political Tories, the opposite could be said for church Tories. In other words, the *Torys Rigides* outnumbered the *Torys Mitigez.*[97] High-Church (*Haute Eglise*) Tories in fact made up almost all of the lower clergy (*le bas Clergé*), some of the bishops and Oxford University.[98] Rapin defined High Church as a church without any mixture

[91] Rapin, *Dissertation*, pp. 116-7 [90].

[92] Ibid, p. 117 [92].

[93] Ibid, p. 118 [94].

[94] It has often been said that the Tories enjoyed a natural majority in early eighteenth-century England and perhaps beyond. The Tories themselves at least were confident that they constituted 'the vast majority' of the population; see Thomas Blackwell to unidentified, 14 April 1717, in H.M.C., *Stuart Papers*, IV, p. 214. Bolingbroke reportedly said that the Tories outdid Whigs by eight to one in the country, and were roughly equal in London; see d'Iberville to de Torcy, 6 March 1714, BL Add MS 34495, ff. 12-23. Tories were also confident that they enjoyed a strong majority in Scotland: 'The proportion between Whig and Torie in Scotland…may be, at most, one to three, even whilst the government of the State, Church [i.e. the Presbyterian Church] and army, is in their hands, and if it were otherways, scarce one to five.' ('History of Whigs and Tories in Scotland' (*c.* 1702), BL Add MS 61136, f. 201.)

[95] Geoffrey Holmes, *Politics, Religion, and Society in England, 1679-1742* (London, 1986), p. 201.

[96] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 126 [118].

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid [119]. Seventy-five to eighty per cent of the parish clergy voted Tory in Anne's reign (Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power*, p. 343). William Bromley, MP for Oxford University, wrote the

of Presbyterianism; indeed he believed that many of them would rather see England Catholic than Presbyterian. They were less driven by religious zeal than by party spirit, however, because their hatred of Presbyterianism stemmed not only from different opinions about bishops but more importantly from the fact that most Presbyterians were Whigs. Papists were another branch of the Tory party. They were often united with the *Torys Outrez,* since they could only hope to make Catholicism dominant in a Protestant country with the aid of an absolute king, according to Rapin.[99] Even if the Catholics had little political sway in England, being disenfranchised, they played a role in attaching the Tory party to Catholic powers abroad, especially France. This was useful occasionally but came at a dear price, since it made them an easy target for Whig criticism.[100]

The ecclesiastical Whigs were divided into two categories: rigid and mitigated Presbyterians. The former rejected all forms of ecclesiastical hierarchy as well as all Anglican ceremonies. These were fairly numerous in England, but what made them more considerable was their real power base in Scotland, united with England in a union of crowns since 1603 and a parliamentary (but not ecclesiastical) union since 1707.[101] In the other group, the mitigated Presbyterians, Rapin also included all non-conformists, such as Quakers and Anabaptists. They were less fiery than their rigid brethren and could easily blend in with the Anglican Church when they needed to, and Rapin here clearly referred to occasional conformists. Such ecclesiastical Whigs wanted to see Presbyterianism become dominant, but rejected violent means to achieve this end. They were the biggest threat to the *Torys Outrez* and *Rigides,* because they made it harder to complain that the Whigs sought to destroy the Anglican Church.[102]

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following to college head Arthur Charlett in May 1715: 'I have such Reports of Riots & Disorders committed at Oxon [i.e. Oxford], & the Scholars having been concerned in them, that I shall be glad to be favoured with a particular Account of them from you.' MS Ballard 38, Bodleian, f. 94. The Oxford non-juror Thomas Hearne described these riots enthusiastically: 'There was not an House next to the Street but was illuminated. For if any disrespect was shewn the Windows were certainly broke. The People run up and down crying King James the 3d, the true King, no Usurper, the Duke of Ormond, &c. & Healths were every where drank suitable to the Occasion, & every one at the same time Drank to a new Restauration, which I heartily wish may speedily happen.' *Hearne's Recollections,* V, p. 62.

[99] Rapin, *Dissertation,* pp. 126-7 [120-1].

[100] Anti-Catholicism was widespread in the eighteenth century and one of the few things which Tories and Whigs agreed about; see J.C.D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832* (Cambridge, revised ed., 2000), passim; Tim Harris, *Politics under the later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society, 1660-1715* (London, 1993), p. 70.

[101] Rapin, *Dissertation,* p. 130 [130].

[102] Ibid, p. 131 [133].

It was against these Whigs that the Tories sought to strike when they passed an act against Occasional Conformity in 1711.[103] Occasional conformity had been a way for non-conformists to circumvent Charles II's Test Acts and attain state employment. The Act of 1711 was an attempt by the Tories to deal a decisive blow to the Whigs by excluding all non-conformists from holding office and requiring actual membership of the Church of England rather than a single act of conformity. The Act was still in place at the time of Rapin's writing but was repealed a year after the *Dissertation* was published. Somewhat surprisingly, Rapin recommended the Whigs to keep the Act so as to pre-empt the Tory complaint that they threatened the established church.[104] As long as king and parliament worked in unison and refrained from interfering with the church, the Pretender's cause was doomed, Rapin was convinced.[105] He repeated similar views in correspondence with George I's private secretary in 1717.[106]

Rapin proceeded to consider the motives and interests of the two parties. Naturally, they all professed to be more just and equitable than their adversaries and that they fought for the glory of God, honour of the king, and the public good. Rapin was sceptical about such motivations, and argued instead that, because the parties were made up of people, they were mainly moved by self-interest (*l'intérêt propre*).[107] The influence of Pierre Bayle, Rapin's fellow Huguenot, may here be detectable.[108] While Rapin did not mean entirely to exclude other motivations, including the well-being of the state and religious beliefs, he maintained that these were of secondary importance.[109]

Rapin believed that if the Tory party only aimed at the maintenance of the royal prerogatives and protection of the Anglican Church, they would be invincible, because these were the true interests of the kingdom. As it happened, however, the Tories had sometimes used these policies as a fig leaf for absolutism and even Jacobitism.[110] When the monarch favoured the Tories in general, it was difficult for the moderates to detach themselves from the high-flying Tories because of their self-interest and desire for

[103] Geoffrey Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London, 1973), pp. 268-75.

[104] Rapin, *Dissertation,* p. 131 [133-5]. Surprisingly, on account of Rapin's critics presenting him as pro-Dissent and anti-Church of England ([Carte?], *Defence of English History*, pp. 149, 152).

[105] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 132 [136].

[106] 'L'Angleterre est Episcopale, c'est le gros de l'arbre, où, selon mon petit avis, le Roi le doit toujours tenir attaché' (BL Stowe MS 230, f. 119).

[107] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 120 [100-1].

[108] Bayle, *Miscellaneous Reflections, Occasion'd by the Comet, which appear'd in December 1680* (London, 1708), esp. sect. CLXI.

[109] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 121 [105].

[110] Ibid, p. 127 [121-2].

office.[111] Rapin was here undoubtedly nodding to the Tory administration of 1710-14, when the moderate Harley had been caught up with *Torys Outrez*, and Bolingbroke attached himself with the latter faction in opposition to Harley.[112] Self-interest also explained why they would consider restoring a Catholic king, in opposition to their religious inclinations: if they helped to restore the Stuarts, they could expect to be rewarded. At this juncture, after the accession of George I, the *Torys Outrez* found themselves completely out of favour, and they could not be expected to remain tranquil when being excluded from office and honours, the attainment of which were their main motivation.[113] That is why they had played such a rash part in the late *Troubles*, meaning the 'Fifteen'.

Moving to consider personalities and character traits in the two parties, Rapin described Tories as proud, haughty and passionate.[114] Since they were the Church of England party, and had a natural majority in the nation, they saw themselves as the dominant party and could not stand being equal, let alone inferior to their adversaries.[115] Another characteristic of the Tories was that they changed their principles depending on whether they were in or out of government.[116] When they had the monarch's favour, they pushed for passive obedience, a doctrine they often forgot when they found themselves in opposition. Having been established during the *Troubles* of Charles I's reign, for instance in the preaching of Laud, Rapin pointed out that passive obedience came back into fashion in the last years of Anne, and the English translation in fact points more precisely to the case of Sacheverell.[117] In short, Rapin's Tories were distinguished by ideological flexibility. In contrast with the Tories, the Whigs had not been led by its extreme wing since the Long Parliament. The Whig leaders were thus much more moderate than their Tory counterparts, and they were characteristically slow in contrast to the passionate speed by which the Tories acted.[118]

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[111] Ibid, p. 124 [113].
[112] H. T. Dickinson, *Bolingbroke* (London, 1970), pp. 111-33.
[113] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 128 [124].
[114] Ibid, p. 133 [140].
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid, p. 135 [145].
[117] Rapin, *An Historical Dissertation upon Whig and Tory*, p. 87. It is uncertain whether this was the example Rapin had in mind, since Sacheverell gave his notorious sermon in 1709, when the Tories were in opposition, and it fits uneasily with Rapin's contention that this was an argument Tories used in government rather than in opposition.
[118] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 136 [149].

In terms of foreign connections, Rapin said that everyone knew the Estates General of the United Provinces to be friends and partisans of the Whigs. This was natural since the Whigs always supported their interest in England.[119] The reason was straightfoward: 'C'est que la France, toùjours Ennemie de la Hollande, n'a jamais cessé de soùtenir les *Torys*'.[120] Despite his Catholic religion, the Holy Roman Emperor had to be an ally of the Whigs by virtue of being sovereign of the Low Countries. In his bid to establish a universal monarchy in Europe, the recently deceased Louis XIV, had forged a coalition with Charles II and his (*avant la lettre*) Tory ministers against Holland in 1672, but since 1689 his policy had simply been to cause as much unrest as possible in England in order to achieve this aim, which, according to Rapin, explained his attachment to Jacobitism.[121]

At the time of the composition of the *Dissertation,* France was at a crossroads since Louis XIV had died in September 1715.[122] Rapin argued that if his successor, Louis XV, five years old on his accession, gave up the aim of achieving universal monarchy in Europe, France would no longer have an interest in inflaming disturbances in England. Unfortunately, the Regent of France, Philippe II, Duke of Orléans, continued to support, at least indirectly, the Pretender's cause, as was demonstrated in the 'Fifteen'. Rapin believed that the Regent may have been badly informed about the state of the parties in Britain and that he could have been deceived by the Pretender himself. A footnote was added to this passage, stressing that the *Dissertation* was written in February 1716 and that Britain, France, and Holland formed an alliance in January 1717.[123] The alliance meant that France had taken the path Rapin had advocated. The relationship between the French and the Stuarts had soured in the wake of the Treaty of Utrecht, and the Jacobite court, which between 1689 and 1713 had resided at France's second palace at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, moved to the Duchy of Lorraine, then Avignon, then Urbino in the Papal States, before settling permanently in Rome in 1719. Be that as it may, as the

[119] Ibid, p. 141 [165].
[120] Ibid, p. 142[166].
[121] Ibid, pp. 143-5 [170-7].
[122] His death was described by Bolingbroke in *Letter to Windham, Works,* I, p. 48 as a big blow to the Jacobite cause.
[123] *Dissertation*, p. 145 [177n].

leading Catholic power in Europe and Britain's greatest rival, in many respects France continued to be a nerve centre for Jacobitism in the coming decades.[124]

Rapin's *Dissertation* was strongly entrenched in its immediate political context. In the *Histoire,* to which we will turn next, he would return to the seventeenth century and, within the framework he had already set out, refine his views on the rise of party in certain aspects.

IV: Party in Rapin's *Historie*

As an historian of party, Rapin was not entirely without predecessors. His main contemporary French rival historian of England was the Protestant Isaac de Larrey, who published his *Histoire d'Angleterre* at Rotterdam in four volumes between 1697 and 1713. De Larrey's rendition of the rise of party was taken verbatim from Roger Coke, whom he cited. What is more, we find in de Larrey an eagerness to praise the Whig party, which does not occur to the same degree in Rapin.[125] By far the most relevant among British historians for Rapin was Laurence Echard, who published a three-volume *History of England* from Roman Britain to modern times between 1707 and 1718, the two last volumes of which dealt with the seventeenth century. Echard also translated the Jesuit Pierre-Joseph d'Orléans's Jacobite *Histoire des révolutions d'Angleterre* into English, which contributed to the debate about whether Echard wrote Tory or Whig history.[126] This did not lessen Rapin's admiration, who himself pondered translating Echard into French. Echard was no fan of parties, saying among other things that '[t]he Extremities of Parties are the Scandals and Excrescencies of Human Nature…it is more eligible and less slavish to write for Bread, than for a Party'.[127]

Rapin (†1725) lived just long enough to have been able to read the first volume of Gilbert Burnet's posthumous *History of His Own Time* (1724), which was cited in the ninth and tenth volumes of his *Histoire*.[128] Like Rapin, Burnet was in exile in The Hague

[124] Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 90-104.

[125] Isaac de Larrey, *Histoire d'Angleterre, d'Ecosse et d'Irlande; avec un abregé des évenemens les plus remarquables arrivés dans les autres etats* (4 vols., Rotterdam, 1697-1713), IV, p. 543.

[126] Deborah Stephan, 'Laurence Echard: Whig Historian', *HJ*, 32 (1989), pp. 843-66.

[127] Echard, *An Appendix to the Three Volumes of Mr. Archdeacon Echard's History of England* (London, 1720), p. 36.

[128] Rapin, *Histoire*, IX, pp. 567-78; X, pp. 83-96. In the earlier volumes, he had cited Burnet's *The History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (3 vols., 1679-1714).

along with other Whigs in the late 1680s, and also like Rapin, he landed in Torbay with William on 5 November 1688. The first volume of Burnet's *History* dealt with the 1660-1689 period. It was questioned at the time whether Rapin had actually read Burnet or whether the quotations were inserted afterwards, since the ninth and tenth volumes were published after Rapin's death.[129] Whether he read him or not, there was nothing in Burnet's *History* that brought to bear on Rapin's discussion of party. Burnet offered an explanation of the origin of the word 'Whig' in the context of Scotland in 1648, in the preamble to the real beginning of the *History* in 1660. Rapin also referred to the Scottish origin of the term Whig, but his source was probably Echard rather than Burnet, since the Frenchman, with Echard, traced it to 'sour milk' rather than to 'Whiggamore' (a term for horse driver that became associated with a Scottish faction that took part in the Whiggamore's Raid of 1648).[130] Burnet remarked that 'from *Scotland* the word was brought into *England,* where it is now one of our unhappy terms of distinction.'[131] Party played a prominent role in Burnet's second volume which dealt with the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne, but it was first published in 1734, nine years after Rapin's death.

In the words of Laird Okie, Rapin represented a 'substantial advance over his predecessors', partly because he 'developed themes and made an effort to interpret the facts rather than simply list them.'[132] In the *Histoire,* Rapin once again traced party division far back in the seventeenth century, as far as the reign of James I, where he observed a curious mixture of puritanism in politics as well as religion in parliament. This confusion of ideas had continued (*s'est conservée*) until the Rapin's day.[133] There was no doubt in his mind that the parties that arose under James I represented something in addition to religious sentiments, even if he by no means wanted to play down the importance of religion. Two parties were properly formed in the third parliament of James I, who Rapin regarded as intent on securing absolute power, in 1621, 'l'un pour la Cour, l'autre pour le Peuple'.[134]

[129] [Carte?], *Defence of English History,* p. 134.
[130] *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time* (2 vols., Dublin, 1724-34), I, p. 26. This long passage was included in Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) under the entry for 'Whig'.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Okie, *Augustan Historical Writings,* p. 47.
[133] Rapin, *Histoire,* VII, p. 131.
[134] Ibid, p. 152.

In contrast to the *Dissertation*, Rapin was less explicit in emphasising continuity between Cavalier-Roundhead[135] and Tory-Whig, although, as we shall see, he pointed out that this was a connection the latter parties made themselves, when they arose. He now described the divisions within the parliament that was called in 1640 without any references to later party divisions.[136] Moreover, rather than calling the parties Tory and Whig from the start of Charles II's reign as in the *Dissertation*, he referred to high churchmen and Presbyterians. Since he had already pointed to continuity between the parties that arose under James I and the Tories and Whigs in the eighteenth century, he probably felt that it was unnecessary to make the same argument when discussing the civil war.

Another reason may have been that he had now acquired the knowledge, perhaps thanks to Echard, to be much more precise and accurate with regards to *English* parties,[137] when tracing the beginning of the Tory and Whig appellations to the Exclusion Crisis.[138] Closely following Echard's narrative, he described how in late 1679 and early 1680, Country sympathisers petitioned Charles II to call a parliament, who responded that such interventions represented an invasion of the royal prerogative. Court sympathisers agreed and made addresses in which they expressed abhorrence that some people made these demands on the king.[139] These 'Adresseurs' and 'Abhorans' (*petitioners* and *abhorrers*, in the English translation)[140] gave each other names of reproach, namely Whig and Tory. The 'Whigs' viewed their opponents as 'entiérement dévouez à la Cour & au Parti Catholique, [and thus] leur donnérent le nom de *Torys*, qui étoit celui des voleurs de grand chemin Irlandois, gens de sac & de corde & prêts à tout entreprendre.'[141] These Tories viewed their opponents 'comme des gens entiérement

[135] He used these terms, but more sparingly than in his *Dissertation*, preferring to talk of royalists and parliamentarians, and, even more frequently, of Episcopalians and Presbyterians (rigid and moderate).

[136] Rapin, *Histoire*, VIII, pp. 4-7.

[137] Robert Willman, 'The Origins of "Whig" and "Tory" in English Political Language', *HJ*, 17 (1974), pp. 247-264. Whig was an older Scottish term, as was highlighted by Burnet, and also in *The Character of an Honest Man; whether stiled Whig or Tory, and his Opposite, the Knave* (1683), in *A Collection of Tracts on all Subjects: But chiefly such as relate to the History and Constitution of these Kingdoms* (London, 1748), IV, p. 278; 'History of Whigs and Tories in Scotland', BL Add MS 61136, ff. 199-203.

[138] Rapin, *Histoire*, IX, p. 484.

[139] Neither side ought to be viewed as a reliable measurement of the true sentiment of *the* people, as was demonstrated by their mutual existence, according to Rapin (ibid, p. 485).

[140] Rapin, *The History of England*, XIV, p. 244.

[141] Rapin, *Histoire*, IX, pp. 485-6. He added that these were the same that were since called 'Rapparies' (Rapparees in the English translation).

dans les principes du Parlement de l'année 1640, & comme des Presbytériens, [and thus] leur donnérent le nom de *Whigg,* ou *Lait-aigre*, qui étoit le même qu'on avoit donné autrefois aus Presbytériens d'Ecosse les plus rigides, & les plus attachez au Covenant.'[142]

From this time forth, the Tories always sought to unite the two interests of monarchy and religion, until the revolution, 'lors qu'il ne fut plus possible de les tenir unis.'[143] In a similar vein to his argument in the *Dissertation,* Rapin contended that the strength of the Tories consisted entirely of this union, since they represented the established Church, to which a majority of people belonged. By contrast, the Whigs, perceiving that this union was entirely to the benefit of the Tories, 'ont semblé modérer leur prétentions par rapport à la Religion, en se contentant de procurer aux Presbytériens une simple Liberté de Conscience.'[144] Since the greatest part of the Whigs comprised either Presbyterians or people inclined that way, and the Tories were victorious in the Exclusion Crisis, a violent persecution of all non-conformists ensued.[145] The *Torys Outrez* were not satisfied, however, and made it their aim to make the king absolute, as if they saw it as the only way to save the Church from the Presbyterians.[146]

The Tories had been deluded to think that the Court had the same interest as them, but it became clear that they did not align when the Catholic James II ascended the throne.[147] The principle of passive obedience could be seen as 'la principale cause des maux dont le Royaume étoit affligé', and the turning point came when churchmen realised that they had to dispense with it to save their Protestant religion from a Catholic king.[148] The first step was thus an anti-Catholic union between the Church of England and non-conformists, followed by a political reconciliation between Tories and Whigs. This reconciliation was a fatal blow to the king, 'puisque c'étoit de leur division qu'il tiroit sa plus grande force.'[149] While it was debatable whether a union, or league, against the king, was permissible in other monarchies, Rapin remarked in what can be read as either a Whiggish or a relativist manner that it was fully justifiable in the circumstances and under such a constitution as England's, since James II had violated the constitution of church

[142] Ibid, p. 486.
[143] Ibid, p. 522.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid, p. 529.
[146] Ibid, pp. 529-30.
[147] Ibid, X, pp. 2-3.
[148] Ibid, pp. 102-3.
[149] Ibid, p. 104.

and state.[150] It has been argued that 'relativism' had a long prehistory in Huguenot political thought; Moïse Amyraut (1596-1664) supported royal absolutism in France but saw it as a given that the English monarchy should be limited and monitored by parliament.[151]

Rapin's argument rested on a contrast between Elizabeth I and the Stuarts, a contrast Bolingbroke would endorse and Hume would reject. However, both Bolingbroke and Hume would follow Rapin in arguing that the Glorious Revolution was the product of a union between the two great parties. Previous histories of England said little about this alleged union between Whigs and Tories, and many Whigs argued long after that the Revolution was 'entirely owing' to the Tories.[152] After Rapin, this union became a staple historical argument.[153] In a throwaway comment, though the sincerity of which we should not doubt, Rapin said that it was unfortunate that the union between Whigs and Tories did not last beyond the Glorious Revolution.[154] Rapin also damned the effect of 'party' on history writing itself.[155] A major, final assessment of parties of the kind that is found in Burnet's conclusion to the *History of his Own Times* (n.b. published in 1734) is lacking in the *Historie.*[156] This can be explained by the fact that Rapin only oversaw the publication of the first eight volumes of his masterpiece before his death, in other words up to and including the reign of Charles I. The final two volumes of the French edition

[150] Ibid. He also noted that several had persisted to this day in the opinion that it was unjust, who together with Catholics formed 'le Parti des *Jacobites*'.

[151] Yardeni, 'The Birth of Political Consciousness', p. 405. Rapin wrote the following in the preface to the *Dissertation:* 'Quelqu'un pourra peut-être, trouver étrange, que l'Auteur, qui vit sous un Gouvernement purement Monarchique, parle, en certains endroits, d'une maniére qui peut faire juger, qu'il n'approve pas cette sorte de Gouvernement. Pour prévenir ce scoupçon, il prie les Lectours de considéres, qu'il n'a pû parler, pertinemment sur cette maniére, sans revétir l'eprit Anglois, & sans se conformer aux Principes qui sont communs en Angleterre (p. 86 [preface]). In general, Huguenot political thought was absolutist prior to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; see Tim Hochstrasser, 'The Claims of Conscience: Natural Law Theory, Obligation, and Resistance in the Huguenot Diaspora', in *New Essays on the Political Thought of the Huguenots of the Refuge,* ed. John Christian Laursen (Leiden, 1995), pp. 15-51, esp. 17-20.

[152] *The Whigs Appeal to the Tories*, p. 7; Coningsby, 'History of Party' (1716), p. 8. As Mark Goldie has shown, this was also a commonplace argument among Augustan Tories, and modern historiography has tended to corroborate this view; see *Tory Political Thought, 1689-1714* (PhD. Thesis, Cambridge, 1977), p. 65.

[153] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation upon Parties,* p. 72; Hume, *History,* VI, pp. 502-3. It also became the dominant view in the nineteenth century (Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing,* pp. 215-16).

[154] Rapin, *Histoire,* X, p. 104.

[155] Ibid, IX, pp. 184-5.

[156] *Burnet's History of His Own Time*, II, pp. 393-4, 396-7.

were published posthumously from his manuscripts.[157] For this reason, we have to view the *Dissertation* as his key statement on party.

V: Rapin and the Party Structure

Rapin viewed the categorisation of the two parties into distinct groupings – *Tories Outrez*, rigid church Tories, moderate Tories in church and state on the one hand, and republican Whigs, rigid Presbyterian Whigs, moderate Whigs in church and state on the other – as the key part of his 'petite Dissertation'.[158] Perhaps with a tinge of false modesty, he said that '[t]out le reste n'est qu'un accessoire où il peut y avoir plus ou moins que ce que j'en ay dit'.[159] This is not to say that he invented these terms, however; the Whig Lord Coningsby spoke of 'moderate Whigs', and the Huguenot René de Saunière de l'Hermitage referred to the Tories as 'les Rigides', just to give two examples. There is little doubt, however, that Rapin's specific way of using the nomenclature had resonance, as can be seen in the de Cize's *Histoire du Whigisme et du Torysme*, most likely published shortly after Rapin's work.[160]

The division and subdivision of different groupings and factions within the Tories and Whigs should not confuse us into believing that there was something akin to a multi-party system in place in early eighteenth century England or Britain, or that Rapin held such an opinion. There was no doubt in his mind that virtually all members of the political class were either Tory or Whig. His point was that the parties were not monolithic, although more disciplined and organised than we might imagine.[161] Sub-categories and labels were used as an explanatory device to make sense of varieties within the parties, and especially to explain why opinions he considered extreme, particularly absolutism and Jacobitism, could have any sway in a Protestant country with a mixed constitution. As we have seen, the reason he gave was that a small clique could control a larger body of people simply by virtue of being in leadership positions.

[157] Okie believes that the treatment of James II and the Revolution was 'very probably compiled after his death and tacked on to the main body of his narrative' (*Augustan Historical Writing*, p. 59).

[158] Rapin to Robethon, BL Stowe MS 230, f. 114.

[159] Ibid.

[160] De Cize, *Histoire du Whigisme et du Torisme*, p. 1.

[161] See, e.g., the work of Clyve Jones, including 'The Extra-Parliamentary Organisation of the Whig Junto in the Reign of William III', *Parliamentary History*, 32 (2013), pp. 522-30.

Rapin did not refer to Court or Country parties in his *Dissertation,* as he had done briefly in his *Histoire*, giving the impression that he thought that Tory and Whig had supplanted them. When he spoke about the Court, he often simply referred to the centre of government, or the ministry, comprising the monarch and his or her ministers, including junior ones. Court party usually denoted little more, since there was no alternative centre of government to the Court, and 'Court' was often used synonymously with 'ministry'. It could also refer to those members who invariably voted with the king or queen's government, which, although a small minority, constituted a source of stability in the first age of party.[162] There were Court Whigs and Court Tories, but on major ideological issues such as the Sacheverell trial, Whig and Tory mattered more.

'Country party' could have a variety of meanings, but was commonly used as a euphemism for oppositions combining Whigs and Tories.[163] Country principles entailed suspicion of central government and particularly government spending, and related issues such as the standing army, placemen in parliament, the moneyed interest, and the national debt.[164] As Rapin demonstrated in his *Histoire,* the Whig party had begun its life as a Country party,[165] but from the reign of William III it became increasingly associated with the Tory party and even Jacobitism.[166] Indeed, Country gentlemen became a synonym for Tories.[167] The most prominent example of such an opposition in the period was Harley's 'New Country party'.[168] As modern research has confirmed, however, Country constellations should be seen as temporary alliances rather than parties. Rapin may have referred to this type of alliance indirectly,[169] but it was not a major part of his narrative. Country members remained Whig or Tory first and

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[162] Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne,* pp. 345-403.

[163] This was a platform rather than an organised party; see David Hayton, 'The "Country" Interest and the Party System', in *Party and Management in Parliament, 1660-1784,* ed. Clyve Jones (Bath, 1984), pp. 37-85; idem, 'Moral Reform and Country Politics in the Late Seventeenth-Century House of Commons', *Past and Present,* 128 (1990), pp. 48-91.

[164] Tories had been against the standing army from the start, as they associated it with Cromwell and Commonwealth England (Harris, *Politics under the later Stuarts,* p. 100).

[165] A leading historian of the period has referred *A Letter from a Person of Quality to his Friend in the Country* (1675), by Locke or someone else in the Shaftesbury circle, as the manifesto of the Whig party (*avant la lettre*); see Mark Goldie, 'Priestcraft and the Birth of Whiggism', in *Political Discourses in Early Modern Britain,* ed. Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 209-31, at 226.

[166] Paul Monod, 'Jacobitism and Country Principles in the Reign of William III', *HJ,* 30 (1987), pp. 289-310.

[167] Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne,* p. 120.

[168] Brian W. Hill, *Robert Harley: Speaker, Secretary of State and Premier Minister* (New Haven, CT, 1988), pp. 34-61.

[169] Rapin, *Dissertation,* p. 139 [158].

foremost,[170] and in the context of 1716 it made little sense to talk of Court and Country when the most prominent question of the day was the Protestant Succession.

Rapin was clear that people were attached to the same party for different reasons, and the division between the political and ecclesiastical branches within the parties is therefore highly relevant. Rapin concluded his dissertation by saying that while he was convinced that the entire people (*tout le Peuple*) enlisted themselves in one or the other 'faction', from interest or inclination, it did not follow that everyone acted from the views that he had attributed to the parties. In fact, '[i]l est certain que la plûpart des Gens se laissent mener, sans savoir où on à dessein de les conduire, & sans s'informer de la Route qu'on leur fait prendre.'[171] For example, a person who was attached to the Anglican Church was often a committed Tory, and by association obliged to support the *Torys Outrez* and *Rigides*, even if it was against their inclinations.[172] In theory, a person could thus be a Church Tory and a political Whig, or vice versa, but in practice Whig and Tory were separated, for historical reasons, and as party strife tended to produce a dichotomy.

Rapin was in many ways as critical of party intrigue as most British writers, especially, as we saw in the previous section, in the *Histoire*. Even in the *Dissertation*, he suggested that twelve neutral Lords, that is the size of the cabinet, would suffice to break the power of the two parties, implying that this was a desirable outcome. It was very difficult to achieve neutrality, however, because few people with no ambition and avarice were to be found.[173] The days when a 'trimmer' (Halifax) held high office were over. Since the dominant party employed and promoted their friends and backers, *les Neutres* found themselves out of office. Moreover, the parties often accused each other of extreme positions which only few people in either party in fact espoused.[174] Since both sides accused their adversaries of seeking to destroy church and state, it was hard for people not to take sides when such great dangers appeared to be at stake.[175]

[170] As the Country Whig Edward Wortley Montagu conceded: 'The Country Whigs and Country Tories were not very different in their notions, and nothing has hindered them from joyning but the fear that each have of the others bringing in their whole party.' See 'On the State of Affairs when the King Entered' (1715?), manuscript source printed in *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Montagu,* ed. Lord Wharncliffe (2 vols., London, new revised ed. 1898), I pp. 15-21, at 21.

[171] Rapin, *Dissertation,* p. 146 [178].

[172] Ibid [179].

[173] Modern research has indeed established that there were only a handful people with no party ties in the political nation; Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, pp. 13-50.

[174] Rapin, *Dissertation,* p. 119 [99].

[175] Ibid, p. 146 [180].

Accordingly, Rapin was reluctant to blame the rank and file for these party divisions, described here as unnatural (*denaturées*). Instead, the blame should be reserved for the leaders, who fomented division in order to advance their particular interest.

The *Dissertation,* with all its flaws, is a crucial text because it was the most extensive historical treatment of the parties to date. In addition, the Frenchman stood out by offering a defence of the British party structure as he understood it. This was unusual at a time when most political literature was written to justify one party in opposition to the other, alternatively lambast party altogether.[176] Even if Rapin believed that the moderate branches of the two parties were roughly of the same sentiments *politically*,[177] the fact that they argued for the rights of monarchy and parliament respectively maintained a balance between the two branches of the constitution.[178] When the safety of the state demanded it, these two parties joined forces, as at the Glorious Revolution. In general, however, the *raison d'être* of the political Tories was to defend the authority of the monarch from Whig attacks, and this was what gave them their reputation and credit at court as well as among the people.[179] On their part, the moderate Whigs defended parliament against royal encroachments. If neither side prevailed completely, the ancient Anglo-Saxon constitution and the Anglican Church would be protected. The Whigs had indeed been favoured by the court to a considerable degree, especially since 1693 and since 1688-9 in Scotland, but it remained common to argue that the Whigs wanted to 'use that very power and authority…to cutt the sinews of the Royalty.'[180]

Consequently, '[o]n peut assurer positivement que ce n'est pas l'intérêt du Rouyame, qu'un des Partis devienne si supérieur, qu'il ne trouve plus de contradiction.'[181] Crucially, this did not only apply to the extreme wings of the two parties: if moderate Tories became too superior, their penchant for the royal prerogative would make the king powerful enough to get rid of parliament. On the other hand, if the moderate Whigs had complete power, they would attack royal power, turning the

[176] Spectator, No. 125 and 126 (24 and July 1711), in *The Works of Joseph Addison* (3 vols., New York, NY, 1845), pp. 190-3. Addison was himself a Whig MP and a member of both the Kit Cat and the Hanover Club. He held office before 1710 and again after 1714, notably as Secretary of State for the Southern department in 1717-18 (*Commons, 1690-1715,* III, pp. 11-14). His Spectator colleague Steele was also a Whig MP.

[177] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 115 [86].

[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid, p. 124 [114].

[180] 'History of Whigs and Tories in Scotland', BL Add MS 61136, f. 201. The author of this manuscript viewed the Whigs as the ancestors of the Roundheads.

[181] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 147 [181].

sovereign into the condition of the Doge of Venice.[182] The same logic applied in the religious arena: exclusive reign of either Episcopalians or Presbyterians would mean the ruin of their adversaries. It was therefore 'toujours plus avantageux a l'Etat, que le Peuple demeure dans la Division, ou il se trouve', becasue it would be disastrous (*funeste*) to the public to disrupt the 'l'egalite qui entretient la Discorde.'[183]

On the other hand, Rapin was clear that 'l'esprit de Parti, les Cabales des Chefs, les Intrigues de la Cour, les Intérêts des Particuliers, n'ont que trop d'infleunce sur les Deliberations de cette Assemblée qui répéresente la Nation Angloise.'[184] This was largely inevitable, however, since parliament was made up of men who could not be expected to be either perfect or exempt from passions. All that could be done was to reform abuse. The primary abuse as he saw it was court influence over the election of members of the Commons, as it upset the balance of the constitution. The ruling party, that is the Court party of the day, could spend money and exert influence in constituencies to ensure the election of the members of parliament it wanted.[185] They could thus control deliberations in parliament. Thus it happened that ordinarily the parliament was Whig when the ministry was Whig, and Tory when the ministry was Tory.[186] This seems obvious from a modern point of view, but this was a time when ministries were formed *before* elections,[187] and Rapin and others assumed that the mixed constitution implied some kind of 'Lockean' separation between the legislative and the executive.[188] The creation of twelve Lords under Anne was an example of an attempt by

[182] Ibid, p. 147 [182].

[183] Ibid, pp. 147-8 [183-4].

[184] Ibid, p. 138 [155].

[185] As Cowper put it, the governing party would have 'a clear majority, as it will always happen whenever the Court have a mind to have it so' ('An Impartial History of Parties', p. 426). Both Rapin and Cowper may have exaggerated the influence of the Court on elections, however. The leading modern historian of the period has described most elections before 1722, when a party won a majority for the first time since 1681 that was clearly disproportionate to its strength in the country, as popular triumphs (Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power*, pp. 329-32).

[186] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 139 [157-8].

[187] A Jacobite wrote the following in December 1716, when the fall of Townshend from the Whig ministry looked like a dandy opportunity for the Tories: '[I]f a Tory Ministry can be had, a new Parliament must be of course, for they can never make any thing of this flaming Whig one.' J. Menzies to Michel Fribourgh (L. Inese), 20 December 1716, in H.M.C., *Stuart Papers*, III, p. 378.

[188] This principle has been entirely given up in unicameral systems like Sweden and some quasi-bicameral systems like the United Kingdom, where the party or coalition of parties that can control the majority of seats in the legislative forms the executive.

the executive to upset the balance of the constitution by controlling the legislative, according to Rapin.[189]

The *Dissertation* finished on a highly ambivalent note. The only thing that could put an end to Britain's 'intestine' war (*Guerre intestine*) – a phrase often used with reference to factional strife in the Roman republic – was a just, equitable and moderate king, who loved Protestantism and was occupied to ensure the well-being of his subjects, he argued.[190] Rapin thus ended with a homage and an exhortation to the newly crowned George I, to whom he would later dedicate his *Historie*.[191] Perhaps this was simply a conventional way to round off a fairly controversial pamphlet, like Machiavelli in *Il Principe*, or Lord Chancellor Cowper, who in the conclusion of a memorandum for George I talked of 'means to extinguish the being and the very name of party amongst us', just after he had advised the king to employ nominal Whigs.[192] However, it is also fully conceivable that he believed that this was possible to achieve, if the new government addressed the abuses in the political system he had listed in the pamphlet, and if the beliefs of the extreme wings of the two parties were revealed for what they were: a way to gather support to further private ambition. Most statements in his *Histoire* would corroborate the view that Rapin disliked party division and that his defence of the British party structure was strictly a 'lesser evil' argument. Even so, it was momentous.

VI: Rapin on ideology[193]

As has been shown, Rapin was prepared to vindicate the moderate aims of the two parties: the preservation of the 'ancient', mixed constitution as he understood it, and the protection of the Anglican Church combined with toleration for Dissenters. If the equilibrium of the constitution, and the balance between Church and Dissent, could only be secured through a compromise between the two parties, they were both necessary to control and check each other, and make sure that neither side became superior. Although

[189] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 139 [158]. Other abuses Rapin pointed out included the inequality in size between different constituencies, bribery at elections, and the inability of constituents to instruct or hold their representatives accountable.

[190] Ibid. p. 148 [184].

[191] Ibid.

[192] Cowper, 'An Impartial History of Parties', p. 429.

[193] The term 'ideology' is an anachronism, being coined in the 1790s, but the concept is arguably older; see Donald R. Kelley, *The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation* (Cambridge, 1981), esp. p. 4.

he believed that whereas the moderates of both parties were cut from the same cloth, the political Whigs were somewhat superior to the political Tories, even if this this was mainly due to the fact that extreme Tories were in the leadership of their party whereas the republican Whigs, although equally pernicious, were barely noticeable within the Whigs. Moreover, the religious Tories were in many ways preferable to the religious Whigs, since they encompassed almost the entire established Church.[194] Introducing Presbyterianism in an Anglican country would be as extreme and impracticable as introducing Catholicism, according to Rapin.

His starting point, however, was that the most obvious difference between the parties in Anne's reign had been foreign policy, essentially different ideas about how the Protestant interest in Europe was best protected.[195] The Tory party was more or less isolationist and against entanglements on the continent. In other words, they were a party for peace, alternatively for naval as opposed to land warfare, which is not the same as a xenophobic or anti-trade party, even if some modern scholars, unlike Rapin, seem to think that.[196] The Whigs, on the other hand, were interventionist and for war against France. This was the division that mattered to Europeans on the continent. What Rapin sought to do was to explain how these contrasting views on foreign policy could be explained by a historical analysis of the parties' traditions and ideas.

While Rapin did pay attention to ideas and principles, he did not seem to think that they were prime movers in high politics. Rather, he believed that they were a way to gather support as a means to satisfy personal ambitions. By contrast, the Whig Lord Cowper informed George I that 'it has been often said, that the only difference is about places; but this is either a superficial judgment, or a desire to hinder the true causes from being discerned.'[197] Before we blame Rapin for either accusation, we have to remember

[194] Rapin to Robethon, BL Stowe MS 230, ff. 114-21.

[195] See Andrew C. Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest, 1688-1756* (Woodbridge, 2006).

[196] Peter Jupp, *The Governing of Britain, 1688–1848: The Executive, Parliament and the People* (New York, NY, 2006), p. 69; Brian Hill, 'Parliament, Parties, and Elections 1688-1760', in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. H. T. Dickinson (Oxford, 2002), pp. 55-68, at 61. The Tory-Jacobite William King (1685-1763) of Oxford retold an anecdote about the Jacobite hero Archbishop Fénélon in which the Frenchman was quoted as having said that 'You should endeavour to divest yourself of all national prejudices, and never condemn the customs and manners of a foreign people, because they are altogether different from your own. I am a true *French*-man, and love my country; but I love mankind better than my country.' King, *Anecdotes*, 21.

[197] Cowper continued: 'For if that was true, then the struggle would only be between individuals, and not between two set of parties of men, which can only be kept up by some diversity of opinion upon fundamentals ('An Impartial History of Parties', p. 427). By contrast, his fellow Whig Lord Coningsby

that he did not dismiss the influence of ideas entirely. While leaders may have used them only to gain support, they were not without influence on policy and political developments.[198] Even if he was sceptical about the sincerity of principles, he was convinced that it was opinions and beliefs (political and religious) that divided and united people. Also, while self-interest was important in the sense of office-seeking, Rapin did not pay any attention to the role of class interest in party formation.[199]

Rapin's investigation into beliefs and principles was limited, however. While he did refer repeatedly to the doctrine of passive obedience, in the *Dissertation* he did not seek to probe further into divine right theories of kingship that may have underpinned this principle.[200] Interestingly also, while referring to the right to resistance recognised by the Whigs, Rapin made in the *Dissertation* no reference to contract theory. In the *Histoire,* the debate about the 'original contract' at the Convention Parliament of 1689 was mentioned, but Rapin did not seek to link this notion to the Whig party. His relative silence on these questions, at least in the *Dissertation,* may have several explanations. He might not have been sufficiently informed about them, but this seems questionable considering his extensive knowledge of British politics. It is also clear that he was aware of different versions of absolutist arguments in the seventeenth century, as he compared England to France.[201]

With regards to contract theory, Rapin may have been aware of John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* (written *c.* 1680-3) as the *Second Treatise* was translated by David Mazel, a Huguenot pastor in London, as early as 1691.[202] Rapin was also

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put more emphasis on personality and court intrigue in his 'History of Parties', which he also presented to George I.

[198] As Quentin Skinner has forcefully argued, moreover, ideas are important even for actors who are purely motivated by self-interest, since the range of actions open to an actor is determined and circumscribed by the principles she appeals to in order to justify her actions, whether or not she sincerely believes in the chosen principles. Skinner, 'The Principles and Practice of Opposition: The Case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole', in *Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society in honour of J.H. Plumb*, ed. Neil McKendrick, (London, 1974), pp. 93-128.

[199] Modern research has been carried out on the relationship between socio-economic background and party allegiance, and it has generally been found that Tory voters were less affluent than Whig; see Gary S. De Krey, 'Political Radicalism in London after the Glorious Revolution', *Journal of Modern History*, 55 (1983), pp. 585-617.

[200] De Cize referred to 'droit divin' numerous times in his *Histoire du Whigisme et Torisme,* a phrase that never occurs in the *Dissertation.*

[201] Rapin, *Dissertation*, p. 135 [146].

[202] John Christian Laursen, 'Introduction', in *New Essays on the Political Thought of the Huguenots,* p. 10. We know that Rapin was aware of Locke's writings on philosophy and religion; see Rapin to Jacques Lenfant, 1723, in 'Receuil de lettres et fragments poétiques', in Cazenove, *Rapin-Thoyras*, p. xxix. For Rapin as a political disciple of Locke, see Girard d'Albissin, *Un précurseur de Montesquieu,* p. 12, 110-13, passim.

acquainted with Jean Le Clerc, who edited and disseminated Locke's works for a Protestant audience on the continent.[203] Rapin's fellow Huguenot and party historian de Cize mentioned Locke's death in 1704 as a significant event and singled out the *Treatises* 'où il refute les opinions du Chevalier Filmer…[and] etablit l'origine des gouvernements, comme je l'ay expliquee dans les maxims des Whigs [i.e. contract theory], & justifia la revolution.'[204] Moreover, Locke was not the only contract theorist at the time and it is not unthinkable that Rapin would have known about Benjamin Hoadly.[205]

Why did Rapin not spend more time on the parties' speculative systems of government, if we assume that he was aware of them? Was he frightened of contract theory and did not want to draw attention to it? That seems unlikely considering his approval of the Glorious Revolution. We can therefore consider the possibility that Rapin may have diagnosed that the 'original contract' and 'divine right' theories were relatively unimportant in the context in which he was writing, since he believed that extreme partisans were mainly motivated by self-interest or religious sectarianism, and moderate ones by ancient constitutionalism. In this area, Hume, who in many respects built on Rapin, would go beyond the Frenchman and offer a more sustained discussion of the speculative systems of the two parties.[206] Rapin and Hume agreed that principles mattered more for the rank and file and that party leaders were mainly motivated by self-interest. It should not surprise us that the Frenchman put more emphasis on the latter and Scotsman on the former. As Smith put it, Rapin's drawback as an historian vis-à-vis Hume was that Rapin 'has entered too much into the private affairs of the monarchs and the parties amongst the severall great men concern'd, so that his history as many others is rather an account of the Lives of the princes than of the affairs of the body of the people.'[207]

[203] However, when Le Clerc's summary of the *Two Treatises* appeared in *Bibliothèque universelle* in December 1690, Rapin was in Kinsale, Ireland. Le Clerc later became a key source for Rapin's historical enterprise and crucially obtained for him Thomas Rymer's *Foedera* (Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing,* p. 53).

[204] He added that Locke 'gagna plus de prosélites au Party *Whig* qu'aucun homme qui ait jamais écrit.' De Cize, *Histoire du Whigisme et du Torisme,* pp. 263-4, 3-5.

[205] E.g. Benjamin Hoadly, *The Original and Institution of Civil Government, Discuss'd* (1710).

[206] See chapter four.

[207] Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,* p. 116.

VII: Conclusion

One of the most important moves that Rapin made was to connect the eighteenth-century Tory-Whig polarisation to the 'Court' and 'Country' parties that he saw emerging in the early 1620s, as a result of James I's ambition to become an absolute monarch and expand Anglicanism on the one hand, and popular Puritanism on the other. The party divide thus had its roots in the split between Episcopalians and Presbyterians after the Reformation in England and Scotland in the sixteenth century. The visible division that emerged under James I fed into the civil-war parties, or combatants, of Cavalier and Roundhead. As Rapin stressed in the *Histoire,* the civil war connection was one that the parties of the 1680s made themselves, especially the Tories. The relationship between the Roundheads and Cavaliers of the civil war and the Whigs and Tories was taken for granted by many in the eighteenth century, and prompted reactions and explanations from others dealing with the subject later.[208] That the pre-Revolutionary Whigs and Tories were essentially the same as those of his own time, Rapin regarded as a given. As we have seen, the dividing lines he identified between the parties, for the seventeenth century and his own time, were religious as well as political. Modern scholarship has, with good reason, tended to stress the primacy of religion over politics in the early history of party formation,[209] perhaps as a reaction to an older historiographical tradition, which saw the seventeenth century struggles as mainly constitutional. For Rapin, the parties had always contained a mixture of political and religious principles, but as his terminology shows, he saw these principles as distinct and believed that one set of principles could be more dominant than the other.

In the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, many British historians believed that their own two-party system was more or less prefigured in the seventeenth century, even if some looked to the civil war and others to the Restoration period for the watershed moment.[210] Some even argued that '[t]he germs of party, in the councils and

[208] Later, Chambers, who quoted from Rapin's *Dissertation* at length in his entries for both Whig and Tory, wrote in his *Cyclopaedia* (1738), that 'England has, for upwards of a century, been divided into two *parties*.' The connection was naturally not Rapin's invention; Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (published in 1702-4) became a key text for Tories, and the legacy of the civil war was debated between White Kennett and Mary Astell in 1704.

[209] Mark Goldie, 'Danby, the Bishops and the Whigs', in *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England*, ed. Goldie, Tim Harris and Paul Seaward (Oxford and Cambridge, MA, 1990), pp. 75-105.

[210] George Wingrove Cooke, *The History of Party; from the Rise of the Whig and Tory Factions, in the Reign of Charles 2., to the Passing of the Reform Bill* (3 vols., London, 1836-7), I, preface; T.B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II* (1848), (5 vols., Chicago, IL, 1890), I, p. 100; Wilbur C. Abbott, 'The Origin of English Political Parties', *The American Historical Review*, 24

Parliament of England, – generated by the Reformation, – were first discernible in the reign of Elizabeth', for exactly the same reason as Rapin had suggested.[211] As a reaction to this anachronism or at least presentism, famously criticised by Herbert Butterfield and Lewis Namier in the interwar period, later historians have tended to stress discontinuity between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[212] The most extreme version of this tendency in relation to party has been an attempt to deny that political parties existed in any organisational sense in the late Stuart period.[213] But writers in the eighteenth century were not so interested in organisation. When Rapin and others tentatively before him searched for the origin of party, they looked for ideological polarisation, although Rapin largely saw this as a fig leaf for the pursuit of power. For Rapin and others of his generation, party meant primarily ideological allegiance under a banner, or a party name. What Rapin tried to do in his *Dissertation* was to show the relevance of pre-revolutionary issues for post-revolutionary ones.[214] He is thus an important historical thinker for helping us not to lose sight of how people in the eighteenth century themselves believed that seventeenth-century issues, and even those of the Reformation, had been carried into their own time. Whether he was right or merely helped to sustain a myth, continuity in this limited sense is worth highlighting, which is not the same as pointing to an unbroken chain of development towards the current Westminster model of politics.

(1919), pp 578-602; G.M. Trevelyan, *The Two-Party System in English Political History* (Oxford, 1926). Many who were more cautious about drawing parallels with their own time still argued for continuity between the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century; see Henry Hallam, *The Constitutional History of England from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of George II* (1827), (2 vols., Cambridge, 2011),, II, pp. 549-657; Keith Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714* (Oxford, 1924).

[211] Thomas Erskine May, *The Constitutional History of England since the Accession of George III* (1861), (2 vols., New York, NY, 1874), II, p. 19.

[212] The generation of political historians succeeding Namier stressed the limitations of his method, but were still writing against Whig historians, and wanted to show how the eighteenth century was different to the previous century; see J.H. Plumb, *The Growth of Political Stability, 1675-1725* (London, 1967); Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne.* However, some historians have been willing to recognise continuity between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but they have generally been disinclined to go further back than the Restoration; see Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts*; Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832*.

[213] This case has been made by Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 9-17, 21-5, passim. Scott has been criticised and responded to this criticism in a series of articles in a special issue of *Albion*, including Tim Harris, 'Party Turns? Or, Whigs and Tories Get Off Scott Free', *Albion*, 25 (1993), pp. 581-91. If we use a looser eighteenth-century understanding of party, it is clear why people at the time regarded them as parties. Scott's thesis only holds up if we apply a stricter, modern-day definition of party, borrowed from political science.

[214] This was something Whigs were extremely keen to refute, as they were eager to dissociate themselves from the regicide and republican principles, e.g. in Cowper, 'An Impartial History of Parties', pp. 421, 428.

The emphasis in Rapin's historical narrative was thus on continuity. While he did not disregard context and contingency, it is fully possible to argue that he underplayed the role of the Glorious Revolution as a watershed for the parties, as regular sessions of parliament after 1688-9 enabled the development of a more regular two-party structure. Others may have been guilty of the converse, however. As will be argued in the following chapter, Bolingbroke, no doubt for partisan purposes, was to exaggerate its effects in his own *Dissertation upon Parties*. As a historical synthesis of how seventeenth-century issues had been carried into the eighteenth century, and, for good or ill, continued to inform the Whig-Tory dichotomy, Rapin's achievement is far more impressive.

Rapin's *Dissertation* was read immediately in Britain, as can be seen in an unpublished Tory-Jacobite commentary on the British constitution, most likely written in the same year as the publication of the *Dissertation.*[215] Although this Jacobite writer was critical, especially of Rapin's 'keep[ing] company mostly with the Whigs',[216] the long-term impact of Rapin was colossal. For example, Rapin's influence, at least indirectly, is evident in the case of the Court Whig scribbler-historian Samuel Squire, Bishop of St David's in 1761-6, who argued that 'the two parties of *Whig* and *Tory,* were first virtually formed' in the sixteenth century in the shape of 'the *Puritans* and *Church-of-England-men.*'[217] These parties were initially 'entirely religious' but were divided into religious and civil branches, *'Church-whigs'* and '*State-whigs',* in the reign of James I.[218]

In the sphere of political theory, Rapin's *Dissertation* can be regarded as an intellectual milestone as it may be the first clear expression of the idea that balance between parties, as distinct from Machiavelli's social orders, is recommended as a way to achieve proper balance in a mixed constitution.[219] As we have seen, however, Rapin

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[215] *A View of the English Constitution with some Facts not generally known* [*c.* 1717], in NLS, MS 296, ff. 22-35. Although the advertisement is dated 1749-50, it refers to an issue from Addison's *Freeholder,* published in 1715-16, as 'write June last year', and no events later that this period (f. 26). The copy in the NLS is followed by a postscript dated 1747, in which the author refers to the *Histoire* ('since that time Monsr. Rapin has produced a much greater Work' (f. 46)).

[216] Ibid, f. 28.

[217] [Samuel Squire], *An Historical Essay upon the Ballance of Civil Power in England…in which is introduced a new Dissertation upon Parties* (London, 1748), pp. 60-1. The *Dissertation* alluded to in the title was Squire's nemesis Bolingbroke.

[218] Ibid, pp. 61-3.

[219] This argument has been advanced in Girard d'Albissin, *Un précurseur de Montesquieu*, p. 106.

ended the pamphlet on an ambivalent note by appealing to unity, which ultimately appears to have been his highest ideal. In the *Histoire,* he deplored that the union between Whigs and Tories, which he saw as a catalyst for the Revolution, had not been maintained after the event. However, it is questionable whether he saw unity as a realistic objective of state. He knew from his own experience that it was not an attainable religious ideal. At the same time, he can be seen as seeking to prop up unity, by suggesting a compromise between the moderate wings of the two parties. In the religious sphere he advocated support for the national church combined with toleration for Dissenters. If the ruling Whig party desisted from repealing the Occasional Conformity Act 1711, they might be able to defeat the *Torys Outrez* in general and Jacobitism in particular, by not giving the Church of England a reason to associate with the extreme Tory forces. Church and Dissent could then co-exist, and moderate Whigs and Tories could co-operate in politics, as they had on several occasions, notably in 1704-8.

We can be sure, however, that Rapin did not think that the disputes between High and Low Church, or those about the proper balance between monarchical and parliamentary power were going to disappear in the foreseeable future. In the unlikely event that they would, he believed that office-seeking would help to maintain the parties, since they competed about employment and shared the spoils of victory with their supporters. Parties had come to stay, and his *Dissertation* tried to understand them and explain where they came from, not how they could be exterminated. We have to remember that his intention behind publishing the *Dissertation* was to instruct Europeans in British party strife as they had proved to be important in European affairs and were likely to continue to be so.

Finally, Rapin's correspondence with George I's secretary Robethon suggests that the message of the pamphlet may have been communicated or even shown to the first Hanoverian king, who was as perplexed as other continental Europeans by the British parties.[220] Shortly after his accession and some years thereafter, the king was

[220] Rapin's letter to Robethon in May 1717 is a response to a letter in which George I's private secretary must have asked Rapin about his *Dissertation* and appears to have wanted policy advice. Like Rapin, Robethon was a French Huguenot in exile, who had been private secretary to William III before entering the service of Hanover; see Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest*, pp. 50-1, 69. His ties with Rapin appear to go a long way back: they both accompanied the Earl of Portland on his mission to Paris in 1698. On his grand tour in 1701-3, Rapin's pupil Lord Woodstock (later 2nd Earl of Portland) visited Celle (where Robethon was working for George I's uncle, Georg Wilhelm of Celle), but at that stage Rapin had already left his pupil for Holland (BL Egerton MS 1706, ff. 127-30, 164).

exposed to several memoranda about the history and state of the British parties.[221] In short, by proscribing the Tories, he followed the advice of Cowper and Coningsby rather than Rapin,[222] since the Stanhope-Sunderland ministries from 1717 clearly went against Rapin's advice of not touching the Church of England as they embarked on an aggressive reform agenda of the church establishment.[223] The reform of ecclesiastical establishment came to a halt under Walpole, but by that time a significant chunk of the Tory party was so estranged that they remained tangled up with Jacobitism until the abandoned Elibank Plot in the early 1750s.

[221] Cowper's 'Impartial History of Parties' (1714) and Coningsby's 'History of Party' (1716) have been cited earlier in the present chapter.

[222] It was widely believed that the initial intention of George I was to employ both Whigs and Tories; see Montagu, 'On the State of Affairs when the King Entered', p. 15.

[223] Justin Champion, *Republican Learning: John Toland and the Crisis of Christian Culture, 1696-1722* (Manchester, 2003), ch. 6; G.M. Townend, 'Religious Radicalism and Conservatism in the Whig Party under George I: The Repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts', *Parliamentary History*, 7 (1988), pp. 24-44; G. V. Bennett, *The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730: The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 205-222; Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell*, epilogue. The Whig government also introduced the Act for Quieting and Establishing Corporations as a 'bonus' to the Dissenters. Plans to regulate Oxford and Cambridge were dropped, however.

Chapter 2:
Bolingbroke's Country Party Opposition Platform

I: The Life and Times of Bolingbroke

Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751) has commonly been portrayed as the paradigmatic anti-party writer of the eighteenth century.[1] It has also often been suggested that he tried but failed to illustrate the ideal of a non-party state.[2] In his own lifetime, however, Bolingbroke was more often seen as a party-man and a party-writer. This chapter will demonstrate that Bolingbroke was in fact the promoter of a very specific party, a systematic parliamentary opposition party in resistance to what he perceived as the Court Whig faction in power. Whenever this political party has been acknowledged in existing literature, it has almost exclusively been construed as 'a party to end all parties'.[3] Moreover, Bolingbroke has been associated with the anti-party catchphrase 'not men, but measures'.[4] This chapter will demonstrate not only that these slogans were never used by Bolingbroke but also that they are arguably incompatible with his political writings.[5]

Firstly, however, we need to say something more about Bolingbroke's formation and political career, which was already touched upon in the previous chapter. His upbringing was unorthodox, to say the least. With a Whig father and his education likely having been in a Dissenting academy, his background 'promis'd that he would one Day be a Pillar of the common Cause' of Whiggism, in the words of the Whig hack John

[1] Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840* (Berkeley, CA, 1970), pp. 10, 18; Terence Ball, 'Party', in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, ed. Ball et al. (Cambridge, 1989, 1995), p. 170. One exception to the prevalent view of Bolingbroke as an anti-party thinker is Kurt Kluxen, *Das Problem der Politischen Opposition: Entwicklung und Wesen der Englischen Zweiparteienpolitik im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1956), esp. pp. 103-119.

[2] Caroline Robbins, '"Discordant Parties": A Study of the Acceptance of Party by Englishmen', *Political Science Quarterly*, 37 (1958), p. 507; H. N. Fieldhouse, 'Bolingbroke and the Idea of Non-Party Government', *History*, 23 (1938), pp. 41-56.

[3] Nancy Rosenblum, *On the Side of the Angels* (Princeton, NJ, 2008), pp. 35-6; Russell Muirhead, *The Promise of Party in a Polarized Age* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), p. 39.

[4] Harvey C. Mansfield, *Statesmanship and Party Government: A Study of Burke and Bolingbroke* (Chicago, IL, 1965), p. 179.

[5] On the only occasion I have found Bolingbroke using 'men' and 'measures' in the same sentence, he spoke of their interrelation: 'do not drop your protest against the *men & the measures* that ruine it [the country]', see Bolingbroke to Wyndham, 18 November 1739, *Unpublished Letters*, V, p. 249.

Oldmixon.[6] In the event, however, as a parliamentarian in 1701-8 and 1710-15, Bolingbroke cut a figure as a loyal Tory, although it was only occasionally and principally towards the end of the latter period that he became associated with the *Torys Outrez*. For a large part of the early period he was closely allied with the moderate Country Tory Robert Harley, with whom he served in the mixed ministry as Secretary at War in 1704-8. His friendship with Harley deteriorated and turned into rivalry during the course of the administration of 1710-14, however.[7] Bolingbroke aimed for leadership of the die-hard Tory and High Church elements, which was ironic considering his own lack of religious sympathies. Pocock commented that '[w]hat so outspoken a deist as Bolingbroke had been doing at the head of an Anglican party in Anne's reign is a question that seems to transcend any answer (however justified) in terms of political duplicity.'[8] We should remember, however, that Bolingbroke's religious freethinking was publicised posthumously, and that in terms of policy he was not an odd one out in the Church of England party. In October 1710, he wrote to one of his earliest political friends, Sir William Trumbull, that 'I have resolv'd to neglect nothing in my power wch may contribute towards making the Church interest the prevailing one in our Country.'[9]

Having been a prominent member of the Tory administration of 1710-14 and the chief negotiator of the Treaty of Utrecht, Bolingbroke fled to France about six months after George I ascended the British throne in August 1714, an event which instigated what he would later describe as 'the millenarian year of Whiggism'.[10] His decision to take up a position at the court of James 'III', the Stuart Pretender, whom he served for less than a year, prevented him from returning to Britain until the mid-1720s. Shortly after his dismissal following the failed Jacobite rebellion of 1715, Bolingbroke defended his

[6] Oldmixon, *Memories of the Press, Historical and Political, for Thirty Years Past, from 1710 to 1740* (London, 1742), p. 17. H. T. Dickinson has shown that one of St. John's fellow-travellers on the grand tour in 1698-1700 was shocked by him joining the Tory ranks when entering parliament in 1701; see Dickinson, 'Henry St. John: A Re-appraisal of the Young Bolingbroke', *Journal of British Studies*, 7 (1968), pp. 33-55, at 52.

[7] For Bolingbroke's criticism of Harley, see Bolingbroke, *Of the State of Parties at the Accession of King George the First* (1739), in *Works*, III, pp. 134-5, passim. (Hence: *State of Parties*.)

[8] J.G.A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 240.

[9] *The Correspondence of Henry St. John and Sir William Trumbull, 1698–1710*, ed. Adrian Lashmore Davies, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 32 (2008), p. 172.

[10] 'Letter addressed to an unnamed Lord', [*c.* 1750], printed in *Unpublished Letters*, pp. 304-310. Unlike Lashmore-Davies, I believe that this letter should be regarded as a draft of a political essay, though probably not intended for wider publication, rather than a piece of correspondence. In terms of tone, style, spelling and grammar, it is much closer to Bolingbroke's political writings than his private correspondence. I will henceforth refer to it as ['Reflections on Walpole'].

conduct by arguing that he was acting in the belief that he was helping the Tory party in England.[11] This may have been partly genuine; in October 1714 he had dramatically written to his political ally Bishop Atterbury that 'the grief of my soul is this, I see plainly that the Tory party is gone…where are the Men of Business, that will live and draw together[?]'[12] Bolingbroke had corresponded with the Pretender and Stuart agents prior to 1714, but his flirtations with Jacobitism appear to have been opportunistic rather than principled.[13] Indeed, the diehard Jacobite Thomas Carte was convinced that 'The Design of L[ord] B[olingbroke] at the time [of Queen Anne's death] was to bring about the Hanover Succession'.[14]

Bolingbroke put on a brave face – 'Wise men are certainly superior to all the evils of exile'[15] – but there was no secret that he actively sought to return to England. When he was eventually allowed to return, he remained barred from taking up his seat in the House of Lords. Deprived of a political voice in parliament, he launched the *Craftsman* journal with the opposition Whig William Pulteney in 1726. It has persuasively been argued that the draconian City Elections Act 1725 had previously paved the way for co-operation between Tories and opposition Whigs.[16] Bolingbroke and the *Craftsman* were part of a wider intellectual opposition against Walpole and Whig political order. The literary part of this opposition comprised such intellectual luminaries as Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, John Gay, Dr. Arbuthnot, and, at a later stage, James Thomson, Samuel Johnson and Henry Fielding.[17] Bolingbroke had known many of these wits since his time in

[11] Bolingbroke, *Letter to Windham*, in *Works*, I, pp. 37, 39, 83, 87. Importantly, Bolingbroke said that there was neither a conspiracy to overthrow the Hanoverians nor an organised Jacobite party before the violence of the Whigs 'forced them [the Tories] into the arms of the pretender' (p. 31). See also, idem, *State of Parties*, in *Works*, III, pp. 130-133.

[12] Stowe MS, BL, f. 177. This letter is not included in *Unpublished Letters.*

[13] He later became extremely dismissive of Jacobitism publicly, but he appeared to have been more flexible behind the scenes; see Eveline Cruickshanks, 'Lord Cornbury, Bolingbroke and a Plan to Restore the Stuarts 1731-1735', *Stuart Papers*, 27 (1986), pp. 1-12. He did not cut his ties with his Jacobite friends, including Carte and Corbet Kynaston; see BL Add MS. 21500, f. 15 (6 September 1729).

[14] Carte MS 231, Bodleian, f. 92 (30 May 1726).

[15] Bolingbroke, 'Reflections upon Exile' (1716), in *Works*, I, p. 113.

[16] Nicholas Rogers, *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, 1989), p. 41.

[17] J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975), (Princeton, NJ, 2003), pp. 477-86, passim; Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (1968), (Ithaca, NY, 1992), pp. 205-35; Bernard A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722-42* (Lincoln, NE, 1976). Several members of both camps sought patronage from the Hanoverian regime and Walpole, and turned to opposition as a result of disappointment on this ground. 'Bob, the Poet's Foe', a phrase from Swift's poetry, became a common complaint in opposition literature and propaganda during the Walpole era.

government, as he was a supporter and member of what would later be known as the Scriblerius Club.

What did Bolingbroke mean by the 'millenarian year of Whiggism', and what was this new political order to which he was so vehemently opposed? The main development in party-political discourse in the early eighteenth century, in the words of an expert scholar, was that 'the Whigs, once the party of populist resistance to oligarchy, gradually became oligarchs themselves, while the Tories picked up the populist mantle'.[18] This process was intensified and accelerated after the Hanoverian Succession. Rapin had written his *Dissertation* in February 1716 and it is only with the benefit of hindsight that we know that the age of Whig supremacy had already begun by this point. The cementation of this new epoch took place a few months later when the Septennial Act was introduced, prolonging the life of an unpopular parliament. The ministry had already cracked down on extra-parliamentary discontent with the introduction of the Riot Act, which erased the distinction between public and private disorder, and made it a capital felony for a group of more than twelve people to fail to disband within one hour if so instructed by the authorities.[19]

In exile, Bolingbroke mellowed from his one-time tribal Toryism. He may to a small degree have been influenced by Rapin's *Dissertation,* but the main reason behind the shift was undoubtedly his personal circumstances. In any event, some of the sentiments in Rapin's *Dissertation* were repeated by Bolingbroke in a letter to John Dalrymple, 2nd Earl of Stair on 18 August 1718.[20] Stair was at this point the British ambassador to France and his *raison d'être* was to combat Jacobitism. For this purpose, Stair cultivated Bolingbroke and the Earl of Mar, who had succeeded Bolingbroke as the Pretender's secretary. Bolingbroke did not need Rapin to inform him about the state of British politics, but the similarities are still striking, and it would by no means be rash to assume that Bolingbroke had read the *Dissertation* at this point in time since it had been a bestseller across Europe the previous year. The former Tory Secretary of State was now intent on 'breaking the Confederacy of Party'. This was not an unselfish goal since

[18] Hayton, 'Introduction', in *Commons 1690-1715,* I, 463. See also Mark Goldie, *Tory Political Thought: 1689-1714* (PhD thesis., Cambridge, 1977), ch. 6 and epilogue; Nicholas Rogers, 'The City Elections Act (1725) Reconsidered', *English Historical Review,* 100 (1985), pp. 604-617.

[19] Rogers, *Whigs and Cities,* p. 29.

[20] DAN/394, ESRO. This letter is missing from the various collections of Bolingbroke's correspondence, including the recent *Unpublished Letters* as well as earlier collections which did include letters between Bolingbroke and Stair.

partisanship obstructed his return to England; most Whigs naturally viewed him as *persona non grata* and many Jacobites blamed him for the failure of the rising in 1715.[21] Conspicuously, Bolingbroke argued in the letter that 'the object of the Tories is Jacobitism, and that of the Whiggs some fantastical alterations in the Constitution of our Laws & Government'. Similarly to Rapin, Bolingbroke held that 'many go on with the two Partys, who do not mean either of those two things, but the seamen will be Hurried out of their Depths by the Torrents of Party unless they go ashoar in time'. The king was in the shackles of his ministry because he could not submit to the Tories without losing his crown, or to the discontented Whigs without becoming contemptible. Bolingbroke's solution was nevertheless to 'emancipate' the king by choosing Tories *and* Whigs who were 'ready to Support the Government in opposing extream of all Sides'. Nothing other than this coalition comprising the moderates of both parties could save the country from 'running into Immediate Confusion', he concluded.[22]

Some years later, owing to the delays to his return by party politics in England, Bolingbroke became even more forthcoming in his condemnation of party, writing to Swift in August 1723 that 'I forget I was ever of any Party myself; nay, I am often so happily absorbed by the abstracted Reason of Things, that I am ready to imagine that there never was any such Monster as Party.'[23] At the end of his life, he wrote in his own epitaph that he had been 'the enemy of no national party; the friend of no faction' during the Hanoverian era.[24] This distinction between national party and faction had been at the heart of his political writings. As we shall see, although Bolingbroke's starting point as a political writer was a critique of Whig and Tory, he did condone and indeed advocate a systematic opposition *party*. In order to give 'party' a positive connotation, he had to carefully distinguish it from 'faction'. We will now turn to these endeavours.

II: Historian of Faction and Party

History for Bolingbroke was 'philosophy teaching by examples', and party and faction were always at the heart of his historical enquiries.[25] Already in No. 142 of the *Craftsman*,

[21] Dickinson, *Bolingbroke* (London, 1970), pp. 152-3; *Unpublished Letters*, V, pp. 30, 47.
[22] DAN/394, ESRO, n.f.
[23] *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope* (5 vols., Oxford, 1956), II, p. 187.
[24] Cited in Dickinson, *Bolingbroke*, p. 295.
[25] Bolingbroke, *Letters on the Study and Use of History* (1735), in *Works*, II, p. 9.

published in March 1729, he used the technique of pointing out '*Parallels*' in the past as a way to 'forewarn all *Ages* against *evil Counsels* and *corrupt Ministers*'.[26] The reason why such an indirect approach had to be adopted was that even though the press had been unlicensed since 1695, publications critical of government were often prosecuted as seditious libel, a practice which began at the turn of the eighteenth century under Lord Chief Justice John Holt.[27] This paved the way for a golden age of political satire and irony, and the age of Defoe and Swift was also the age of Bolingbroke and the *Craftsman.* The tactic was not entirely risk-free, however, and the ministerial press busied itself with trying to read Jacobite hints into most oppositional statements, as Bolingbroke complained in *Craftsman* No. 225, published on 24 October 1730.[28] Nathaniel Mist had been prosecuted and obliged to go into exile in Paris after having printed the Duke of Wharton's ('Amos Dudge') 'Persian Letter' in August 1728, as it was interpreted as an indirect commentary on the Hanoverian family and Walpole.[29]

From June 1730 to May 1731, Bolingbroke's first major political work, the *Remarks on the History of England*, was serialised in the *Craftsman*.[30] The *Remarks* abound with references to contemporary political disputes, as when he referred to ministerial writers who defended the maintenance of a standing army in peacetime as 'doctors of slavery'.[31] Being actively engaged in opposition at a time when such activities were regarded as morally and legally dubious, and indeed often prosecuted,[32] Bolingbroke's most important intention in the *Remarks* was to show that oppositional

[26] Bolingbroke, *Contributions,* pp. 82-3. The idea of 'counsel' had been crucial in the prefaces to the most significant historical works published during Bolingbroke's formative years: Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, with prefaces written by his son, the Earl of Rochester, a Tory leader.

[27] Philip Hamburger, 'The Development of the Law of Seditious Libel and the Control of the Press', *Stanford Law Review,* 37 (1985), 661-765.

[28] Bolingbroke, *Contributions,* p. 119.

[29] 'Wolf [Mist] the Printer to S[i]r R[obert W[alpole]', [c. 1728], MS Eng. Hist. C. 374, Bodleian, ff. 21-2. The manuscript is in Carte's handwriting, and was probably dictated to him by Mist as Carte himself was in exile in Paris until November 1728.

[30] Bolingbroke enjoyed a sustained reputation as a historian on the basis of the *Remarks.* William Pitt recommended them to his nephew 'before any other reading of history', despite being 'warped' as they contained 'the truest constitutional doctrines' and were 'to be studied and almost got by heart, for the inimitable beauty of the style, as well as the matter'; see *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham* (4 vols., London, 1840), I, pp. 107-9.

[31] Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England* (1730-1), in *Works,* I, p. 490. (Hence: *Remarks*.) For the ministerial press, see Reed Browning, *Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Court Whigs* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1982); Simon Targett, 'Government and Ideology during the Age of Whig Supremacy: The Political Argument of Sir Robert Walpole's Newspaper Propagandists', *HJ*, 37 (1994), pp. 289-317.

[32] The *Craftsman's* printer Richard Francklin was tried and freed in 1729, but two years later the Walpole ministry managed to secure a verdict against him. Henry Haines, who took over the printing after Francklin, was sentenced in 1737.

activity had historically not been factious but had on the contrary been necessary for liberty, which for him meant the survival of the free and mixed constitution.[33] Bolingbroke conceived of the history of England as a perennial battle between the spirit of liberty and the spirit of faction. As Duncan Forbes has pointed out, this was essentially 'diluted Rapin', the *Craftsman's* favourite historian.[34] We have already noted in the previous chapter that Bolingbroke was one of the subscribers to the first edition of Rapin's *Histoire.* In the *Craftsman,* Bolingbroke often transcribed entire passages from Rapin,[35] although he mixed Rapinesque Whiggism with a tinge of Harringtonian economic analysis, which was entirely absent in Rapin.[36] In any event, Carte was extremely unhappy with the *Craftsman's* idolising of the French Huguenot and complained about it in a letter to the Tory MP Corbet Kynaston on 4 July 1738.[37]

Although 'party' and 'faction' were often used interchangeably in the period, faction in this context should not be confused with the concept of party, as Bolingbroke made a distinction between the two terms. This distinction had been expressed as early as 1717 by William Paterson, the founder of the Bank of England, who argued that parties were usually harmless and 'capable of Good, as well as Hurt, of Love as well as Hatred', unlike factions, which 'hate, but love not, are hurtful in their Nature, and chiefly produces Enmity'.[38] Bolingbroke's own journal, albeit when he was in exile, defined party as 'a national Division of Opinions, concerning the *Form* and *Methods of Government,* for the benefit of the *whole Community*', and faction as 'a Set of Men arm'd with *Power*, and acting upon no one Principle of *Party*, or any Notion of *Publick Good*, but to preserve and share the Spoils amongst *Themselves*, as their only Cement'.[39]

Bolingbroke's distinction between party and faction runs along similar lines. In his ironic dedication to Walpole prefixed to the publication of his *Dissertation upon*

[33] For Bolingbroke's linkage between liberty and the preservation of the integrity of the constitution, see Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties* (1733-4), in *Political Writings,* p. 169. (Hence: *Dissertation*.) For Bolingbroke as a theorist of opposition, see also Skinner, 'The Principles and Practice of Opposition: The Case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole', in *Historical Perspectives: studies in English Thought and Society in Honour of J.H. Plumb,* ed. Neil McKendrick (London, 1974), pp. 93-128.

[34] Duncan Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 241.

[35] Bolingbroke, *Contributions,* pp. 116-7

[36] The same mixture would reappear in the Court Whig writer Samuel Squire, one of Bolingbroke's foes.

[37] BL Add MS 21500, f. 117.

[38] William Paterson, *An Enquiry into the State of the Union of Great Britain…*(London, 1717), p. 45.

[39] *The Country Journal, or the Craftsman,* No. 674, 9 June 1739.

Parties in book form in 1735,[40] Bolingbroke said that '[t]here may be such a conduct, as no national party will bear, or at least will justify. But faction hath no regard to national interests. Factions therefore will bear any thing, justify any thing.'[41] Factions struggled for power, not principle, Bolingbroke argued.[42] He believed that numbers were a good benchmark for whether a cause is national or factional: '[p]rivate motives can never influence numbers. When a nation revolts, the injury is national.'[43] Bolingbroke's favourite historical example of a national party that had degenerated into faction was the Whigs under Queen Anne, who, in Bolingbroke's biased rendition, had initially adhered to the Protestant Settlement out of honourable zeal for the nation's liberty and religion, but this 'national interest became soon a secondary and subservient motive' and they started to care more about the establishment of their own.[44] This spirit of faction is what had ended his own political career, Bolingbroke was convinced (and, as we have seen, he was not entirely unjustified in thinking that).

The key message Bolingbroke wanted to convey in the 1730s was that Walpole was not the leader of a national party but of a court faction, which was something completely different. According to Bolingbroke, a national party 'will always retain some national principles, some regard to the constitution', which meant that 'a national party will never be the instruments of completing national ruin', unlike a faction.[45] Accordingly, 'the minister who persists in so villainous a project…will be found really at the head of a faction, not of a party.'[46] For Bolingbroke, 'the difference between one and the other is so visible, and the boundaries where party ceases and faction commences, are so strongly marked, that it is sufficient to point at them',[47] even though a faction will always seek to hide 'under the name and appearance of a national party.'[48]

Bolingbroke viewed the spirit of faction as the prioritising of private interest at the expense of the public good, and the spirit of liberty as a willingness to do whatever it takes to put the common good first. The two spirits 'are not only different, but repugnant

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[40] Bolingbroke referred to the work as his 'Epistle to Sir Rob' (*Unpublished Letters,* V, p. 123).

[41] Bolingbroke, *Dedication to Sir Robert Walpole* (1735), in *Works*, II, pp. 14-5. (Hence: *Dedication*.) See also idem, ['Reflections on Walpole'], *Unpublished Letters,* V, p. 307.

[42] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 76. See also ['Reflections on Walpole'], *Unpublished Letters,* V, p. 308.

[43] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation,* p. 86.

[44] Bolingbroke, *State of Parties,* in *Works*, III, pp. 137-8.

[45] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation,* pp. 99-100.

[46] Ibid, p. 100.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Bolingbroke, *Dedication,* in *Works,* II, p. 15.

and incompatible: so that the life of either is the death of the other.'[49] Throughout history, the spirit of liberty had often found its outlets in opposition to powerful monarchs, he argued. This jealous spirit of liberty was something Bolingbroke sought to reinvigorate in his contemporaries, but directed at the chief minister rather than the monarch. In his historical writings, he often drew attention to unpopular ministers and Court favourites in the past, particularly Buckingham, Rapin's favourite target.[50] Unlike many court favourites in previous centuries, Walpole did not hold a formal court position, but the historical parallel could not have been missed.[51]

Being in opposition to the Court Whigs, Bolingbroke had to explode the belief that faction was only to be found in opposition to the Court and demonstrate that it could equally be found *at* Court. One of his favourite tactics was to associate the ministerial position against 'factious opposition' with absolutist theories, of which he saw James I as an exponent.[52] '[H]e, who confines his notions of faction to oppositions made to the crown, reasons, in an absolute monarchy, in favour of the constitution', he wrote in the *Remarks.*[53] Bolingbroke's intention was to show that the reigns of James I and Charles I demonstrated how the spirit of faction *at* Court could lead the country wayward. In presenting the first Stuart kings as 'innovators', Bolingbroke followed Rapin. It was not solely the royalist faction that was responsible for pushing the country into civil war at mid-century, but Bolingbroke believed that '[t]he faction of the court tainted the nation, and gave life and strength, if it did not give being, to the factions in the state'.[54] Opposition could thus be a counter-factional measure: 'If there had not been an early and honest opposition, in defence of national liberty, against King James, his reign would have sufficed to establish him in the seat of arbitrary power.'[55]

The key move made by Bolingbroke was to associate opposition to the court with the spirit of liberty. He began the *Remarks* by setting out that 'liberty cannot be long

[49] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, p. 292.
[50] Ibid, p. 515.
[51] While it became less common for politicians of the top rank to hold place at court in the early Hanoverian period, the favour of and closeness to the monarch remained key for political influence. Ministers were still ministers of the crown and appointed by the monarch. See Hannah Smith, *Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714-60* (Cambridge, 2006), ch. 5.
[52] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 120; idem, *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1738), in *Political Writings*, p. 243. (Hence: *Patriot King*.)
[53] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, p. 439.
[54] Ibid, pp. 460-1.
[55] Ibid, p. 492.

secure, in any country, unless a perpetual jealousy watches over it'.[56] This jealousy has to be 'permanent and equal'.[57] The reason is straightforward: Bolingbroke viewed the love of power as natural and insatiable. Consequently, liberty was always 'in some degree of danger under every government'.[58] The fear of losing liberty is common to all and 'may become a general principle of union'.[59] This perpetual jealousy, if well-grounded, 'may have the good effect of destroying a wicked minister, of checking a bad, or of reclaiming a misguided prince.'[60] James I was an epitome of the latter and Walpole of the former. In the ministerial press, the jealous spirit of liberty was equated with 'opposition' and 'contention' and was described as a '*dreadful State*'.[61]

There is little doubt that Bolingbroke's main aim was the destruction of Walpole and his Whig ministry.[62] Bolingbroke has misleadingly been associated with the 'not men, but measures' opposition slogan, for example by Harvey Mansfield.[63] While Bolingbroke never used this catchphrase in his public writings, it is true that he paid lip service to similar lines of thought, for instance when he discussed the Wars of the Roses in the *Remarks.* He described the war as a conflict about who should govern rather than how they should be governed, and he argued that the latter was worth contending for, as in the civil war preceding *Magna Carta,* whereas the former 'ought always to be looked upon with great indifference'.[64] However, certainly with Walpole in mind, Bolingbroke added a crucial qualification: 'except in cases where [the personnel] has so immediate and necessary a relation to the [measures of government], that securing the first depends, in a great measure, on settling the last.'[65] This position was later adopted by the Patriot opposition, which Bolingbroke did so much to inspire. As Stair would put it five years later, 'there is a preliminary absolutely necessary to the saving of the nation, and that is, the removing of Sir Robert.'[66] As chapter seven will demonstrate, the slogan 'not men,

[56] Ibid, p. 278.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid, p. 284.
[59] Ibid, p. 282.
[60] Ibid, p. 288.
[61] The *London Journal*, No. 570, 4 July 1730.
[62] Bolingbroke to Wyndham, 25 January 1740, in William Coxe, *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford, with Original Correspondence and Authentic papers, Never Published Before* (3 vols., London, 1798), III, p. 554.
[63] Mansfield, *Statesmanship and Party Government*, p. 179.
[64] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, p. 336.
[65] Ibid.
[66] *Marchmont Papers*, II, p. 171.

but measures' is much more appropriate for discussing the political writings of John Brown, who did indeed use this catchphrase.

It is not without significance that Bolingbroke in the *Remarks* cited Machiavelli, who had notoriously argued that tumult in the Roman Republic between different orders in the state had been a blessing rather than a curse.[67] Bolingbroke did not draw attention to this controversial teaching, but instead referred to another lesson from Machiavelli's *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* (*c.* 1513-19), namely that the best governments are such 'which by the natural effect of their original constitutions are frequently renewed or drawn back…to their first principles.'[68] The fact that the state has subsisted is sufficient evidence that its first principles are sound. In other words, the purpose of Bolingbroke's opposition would not be to innovate but to reform the state by drawing it back to its foundation, by which he meant the Revolution Settlement of 1688-9. Unlike some ministerial writers, Bolingbroke regarded this settlement as a reassertion of ancient liberties rather than a new beginning.[69] His oppositional theory, which will be discussed at greater length below, is thus related to his adherence to the ideology of the ancient constitution.[70] Bolingbroke's main inspiration in this respect was certainly Rapin, but also domestic historians such as Nathaniel Bacon, known for *An Historical Discourse of the Uniformity of Government* (1647-51).

Bolingbroke was guarded about associating himself with Machiavelli, and he felt obliged to qualify his reference by saying that he 'would not advise you to admit the works of MACHIAVEL into your cannon of political writings; yet…in them, as in other apocryphal books, many excellent things are interspersed'.[71] One of those excellent things was Machiavelli's argument about first principles, and it was also considered a safe reference in an age where innovation was widely seen as evil and zeal for the Revolution Settlement – whether conceived as a new beginning or a reassertion of ancient liberties –

[67] Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, (Chicago, IL, 1998), Bk. I, ch. IV, pp. 16-17.

[68] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, p. 289. See also Machiavelli, *Discourses*, Bk. III, ch. I, p. 209. As so often, Bolingbroke's choice of references have echoes in the 1701-14-period; his friend Swift had cited exactly the same lesson from Machiavelli in his *Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners* (London, 1709), pp. 61-2.

[69] For the ministerial counter-argument, see [Hervey], *Ancient and Modern Liberty: Stated and Compar'd* (London, 1734), pp. 4-5, passim.

[70] For Bolingbroke's ancient constitutionalism, see *Dissertation*, pp. 81-2, 114-5. His views on the ancient constitution were of a peculiar kind: on the one hand, there was no need to look further back than 1688-9, on the other, the Glorious Revolution had been a reassertion of ancient liberties, see J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (Cambridge, second ed.1987), pp. 231-2.

[71] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, pp. 164-5.

was mainstream. At this point in time, it was evident that opposition had to take the form of 'zeal for the constitution' rather than 'zeal for this or that party'.[72] This elucidates why Bolingbroke spent so much of his later *Dissertation upon Parties* attempting to explain the British constitution, which was far from unambiguous. The notion that the 'mixed constitution' – combining monarchy, aristocracy and democracy – was the optimal way to prevent decline seriously entered English discourse with *His Majesty's Answer to the Nineteen Propositions* (1642), drawing on book six of Polybius' *Histories.*[73] In the eighteenth century, the British constitution was universally described as mixed, but it was uncodified and there was no unanimity as to how the mixture ought to work in practice.

In the third letter of the *Remarks*, Bolingbroke hit out at the ministerial writer James Pitt ('Francis Osborne').[74] On 4 July 1730, Pitt had in the *London Journal* claimed that 'a Man of Sense…had much rather have liv'd under the Pacific Reign of *Augustus*, tho' cloath'd with all Power, than under *a Mob Government*, always quarrelling at *Home*, or fighting *Abroad*', referring to the 'perpetual Struggles between the *Senate* and the *People*', which had been defended by Machiavelli.[75] In return, Bolingbroke recommended Thomas Gordon's 'excellent' discourses, prefixed to his translation of Tacitus, in which he portrayed Augustus as a tyrant.[76] For all of Gordon's sneers at parties and factions, he nevertheless held that 'a free State the worst constituted, as was that of Florence, is, with all its disorders, factions, and tumults, preferable to any absolute Monarchy, however calm'.[77]

Bolingbroke's explicit intention in his next central opposition tract, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, serialised in the *Craftsman* between October 1733 and December 1734, was to make 'an enquiry into the rise and progress of our late parties; or a short history of Toryism and Whiggism from their cradle to their grave, with an introductory account of their genealogy and descent.'[78] The kernel of the argument is that Tory and Whig had

[72] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 122. See also, idem, *Dedication*, in *Works*, II, pp. 24-5.

[73] Lorenzo Sabbadini,'Popular Sovereignty and Representation in the English Civil War', in *Popular Sovereignty in Historical Perspective*, ed. Richard Bourke and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 164-186, at 166.

[74] Targett, 'Government and Ideology', p. 290.

[75] The *London Journal*, No. 570, 4 July 1730.

[76] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, p. 310. In the following issue of the *London Journal* on 18 July, Pitt defended and repeated his claim but toned it down by removing the phrase 'mob government' as a description of the Roman Republic.

[77] [Thomas Gordon], *The works of Tacitus. Containing the Annals. To which are prefixed Political Discourses upon that Author* (2 vols., London, 1728-31), I, p. 60.

[78] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 12.

become redundant as national parties as there was no disagreement about the fundamentals of the British constitution, at least not among those he regarded as honest Whigs, such as his political ally Pulteney.[79] When the parties had come into being during the Exclusion Crisis, there had been real differences at stake, with the Tories espousing divine right monarchy, lineal succession and passive obedience, whereas the Whigs sought to exclude the Catholic Duke of York from the succession to the throne.[80] Bolingbroke described the Glorious Revolution, which he, following Rapin, believed was carried out by a coalition of parties, as 'a fire, which purged off the dross of both parties; and the dross being purged off, they appeared to be the same metal, and answered the same standard.'[81] The Whigs and Tories had no need to fear each other after the revolution, as they both had rid themselves of their extreme doctrines: republicanism and divine right theory, respectively. While the real essence of the parties had been destroyed, the names had survived for factious purposes and continued to haunt and divide the political nation like ghosts, according to Bolingbroke.[82] More specifically, he accused the Court Whigs in power for having turned into a faction that sought to keep alive artificial party distinctions for their own benefit.[83]

The claim that Whig and Tory had become redundant was not new and little more than a repetition of that in *Cato's Letters* more than a decade earlier.[84] It was a powerful tool for Bolingbroke's polemical purposes, however, as it allowed him to portray Walpole as a divider.[85] As mentioned in the introduction, Bolingbroke has often been portrayed as an anti-party writer. This is certainly true if we take it to mean a denial of the relevance of the Whig and Tory labels in the context of the 1730s. Importantly, however, Bolingbroke's criticism of Whig and Tory should not necessarily be construed as an attack on party in all circumstances. For all his scorn of party passion, he fairly consistently differentiated between a national party seeking to address a general grievance

[79] As he put it in an unpublished essay, 'The Whigs…owe to him [Pulteney] the honour of having kept up & supported the true Spirit & Credit of their Party, whilst so many under that denomination, were prevaild on some how to shew; though to their own dissatisfaction, the utmost passive obedience even to the Ministry.' See MS 533, Senate House Library, f. 19. For attribution, see Joseph Hone and Max Skjönsberg, 'On the Character of a "Great Patriot": A Newly Ascribed Bolingbroke Essay', *Journal of British Studies* (forthcoming).

[80] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 5.

[81] Ibid, p. 65.

[82] Ibid, pp. 70, 61.

[83] Bolingbroke, *Dedication*, in *Works*, II, p. 12.

[84] John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, *Cato's letters* (1720-3), (4 vols., Indianapolis IN, 1995), III, p. 65 (No. 80, 9 June 1722).

[85] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 3. See also idem, *Dedication*, in *Works*, II, p. 13.

and a faction interested in maximising its power. Indeed, Bolingbroke's attack on Whig and Tory was reported by ministerial pamphleteers as a partisan rather than anti-party position.[86]

As the old parties had long been irrelevant, a national union had become a possibility, Bolingbroke argued. The political nation was still divided, however, and instead of Whig and Tory, Bolingbroke believed that 'new combinations force themselves upon us', namely the Country and Court parties.[87] It is to these parties that this chapter will now turn.

III: Advocate of the Country party

The *Dissertation upon Parties* abounds with anti-party comments, as when Bolingbroke speaks of the 'spirit of party' (not faction, this time) as a spirit that '[i]nspires animosity and breeds rancour, which hath so often destroyed our inward peace, weakened our national strength, and sullied our glory abroad.'[88] He also made a distinction between moral and party justice, with the former being based on reason, while the latter 'takes its colour from the passions of men, and is but another name for injustice'.[89] The historical example of the Whigs in the wake of the accession of George I in 1714 was the one that mattered for Bolingbroke, who wrote that he wanted 'to change the narrow spirit of party into a diffusive spirit of public benevolence.'[90] For this purpose, he invoked the memory of Halifax, the great Trimmer, as someone who tried to 'allay this extravagant [party] ferment'.[91]

And yet, it is clear that Bolingbroke did not simply say that Britain was divided into Court and Country parties but also that he sought to promote the latter.[92] He separated the political landscape into three camps: 1) those who were enemies of the government but friends of the constitution, i.e. his own Country party; 2) those who were enemies of both, i.e. the Jacobites; and 3) those who were friends of the government but enemies of

[86] [William Arnall], *Opposition No Proof of Patriotism: With Some Observations and Advice Concerning Party-writings* (London, 1735), p. 18.
[87] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation,* p. 5.
[88] Ibid, p. 6.
[89] Ibid, p. 17.
[90] Ibid, p. 6.
[91] Ibid, p. 48.
[92] Ibid, pp. 61, 187.

the constitution, i.e. the Court Whigs.[93] He claimed that he was only interested in the first and the third division since the Jacobites were so few and insignificant. Importantly, Bolingbroke's utterances on Jacobitism in the 1730s should not be viewed as statements of facts; dynastic politics remained a crucial aspect of politics up until mid-century. The significance of the dynastic dimension along with his own past made it all the more important for Bolingbroke to play down the significance of Jacobitism.

We should also note that the Jacobites saw themselves as invested in the same parliamentary strife against Walpole. As the 5th Earl of Orrery wrote Carte in January 1733: 'A bad minister who has been long the Woolsay [sic] of my Father's affairs, has left me to say with Hamlet: The Times are out of Joynt; Oh! cursed Spight! / That ever I was born to set 'em right. However the greater Labour, the greater glory, nor do I at all doubt but at last we shall bring him to Justice.'[94] Carte himself referred to Walpole as 'that detestable corrupter of the virtues of his Country' upon his resignation.[95] The Oxford Jacobite Thomas Hearne described Walpole as 'a wicked man, & imployed to do all the dirty tricks that can be thought of to inrich miserably covetous Princes, and to drain the Subject.'[96]

Bolingbroke was of course far from neutral when he argued that the first division, in other words those who were enemies of the government but friends of the constitution, 'might hope to unite even the bulk of the nation to them, in a weak and oppressive regime', in opposition to the third, around which 'our greatest and almost our whole danger centres'.[97] In sharp contrast to the Court party, '[a] Country party must be authorized by the voice of the country'.[98] Such a party had the potential to unite Whigs and Tories, as '[i]t must be formed on principles of common interest. It cannot be united and maintained on the particular prejudices, any more than it can, or ought to be, directed to the particular interests of any set of men whatsoever.'[99] The Country party was an opposition party whose *raison d'être* was to defeat what was perceived as Walpole's system of corruption. By corruption, Bolingbroke meant executive influence over the legislature as well as the Machiavellian sense of degeneration of civic *virtù*.

[93] Ibid, pp. 85, 177.
[94] Carte MS 227, Bodleian, f. 66.
[95] Carte MS 230, f. 200.
[96] *Hearne's Recollections,* XI, p. 174.
[97] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, pp. 85, 86.
[98] Ibid, p. 37.
[99] Ibid.

The Country party had a distinct ideology that emphasised the importance of independence of parliament from Crown influence, support of the landed and traded interests in opposition to the moneyed interest, and a preference for a citizen militia and a strong navy as opposed to the standing army.[100] Both the Whig and Tory parties had had Country elements since the Glorious Revolution, but they had usually only collaborated on specific issues, for example the standing army question in 1697-8. From the reign of Queen Anne onwards, Country sentiments were more dominant among Tories than Whigs.[101] Bolingbroke wanted to turn the occasional Country coalition into a permanent political force and this was the aspiration of his joint enterprise with Pulteney.[102] The enterprise of bringing Tories and Whigs together in opposition was for a limited time successful. Stair wrote the 2nd Earl of Marchmont in 1736: '[i]t is true, that in the opposition we have made to the ministers' measures, we have had the assistance of many persons, who have been called by [the] name of Tories; but I am very far from being ashamed to take the assistance of Tories to preserve our constitution'.[103]

The Court Whigs under Walpole had moved closer to the Church of England. Since they thought that they could count blindly on the support of the Protestant Dissenters, Walpole had paused further legislative measures in their favour.[104] Some Whigs appear to have pondered removing the bishops from the upper house at George I's accession, but Walpole had then protested that 'turning them out of the H. of Lords would give a general distaste; & that tho' many of the B[isho]ps were at present ag[ain]st them, yet their number would lessen every day, & a new set might be put in that would be

[100] H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-century Britain* (London, 1977), pp. 163-192.

[101] David Hayton, 'The "Country" Interest and the Party System', in *Party and Management in Parliament, 1660-1784,* ed. Clyve Jones (Bath, 1984), pp. 37-85, at 40-4.

[102] David Mallet, who edited Bolingbroke's collected works, believed that the idea of a coalition of parties originated with Robert Harley (later the Earl of Oxford), who was a leading figure in the Country opposition to the standing army in the 1690s, see Mallet, *Memoirs of the Life and Ministerial Conduct, with some Free Remarks on the Political Writings of the Late Lord Viscount Bolingbroke* (London, 1752), p. 337. As Dickinson has pointed out, Bolingbroke seemed to have been genuinely won over by Harley's moderation when entering the mixed ministry as Secretary at War in 1704 ('Henry St. John', p. 52).

[103] *Marchmont Papers,* II, p. 81. Both Stair and Marchmont were staunch Whigs and acquainted with Sarah Marlborough.

[104] Jeremy Black, *The Politics of Britain: 1688-1800* (Manchester, 1993), p. 66.

entirely subservient to the Court measures'.[105] Between 1723 and 1736, Walpole formed a formidable alliance with his 'pope' Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London.[106]

Bolingbroke sought to convince Protestant Dissenters, who were the natural enemies of High Church Tories and a key ally of the Whigs, that they had nothing to fear from this new Country platform, even if it contained a prominent Tory element: 'The principal articles of your [the Dissenters'] civil faith, published some time ago, or, to speak more properly, the civil faith of the Old Whigs, are assented and consented to by the Country party'.[107] Bolingbroke was here referring to the age-old union between Whiggism and Dissent, going back to the first formation of the Whigs under Shaftesbury in the 1670s. Bolingbroke tried to persuade the Dissenters that there could be no doubt about which side they should now espouse, as the principles they believed in were 'manifestly pursued' by the Country party whereas the Court party pursued 'those which they have opposed, or others equivalent to them in their effect'.[108] This was an important argument since, as the ministerial press constantly pointed out, he had once been the head of the Church of England party, despite his own heterodox religious background and views. As William Arnall ('Walsingham') wrote in 1731: 'What would be the Case of the *Protestant Dissenters*, should the Patron of the *Schism Bill* [1714] come again into the Management of Parliamentary Councils.'[109]

Bolingbroke qualified his defence of the Country party by arguing that 'A party, thus constituted, is improperly called party. It is the nation, speaking and acting in the discourse and conduct of particular men.'[110] Be that as it may, he then continued to call it a 'party'.[111] Bolingbroke concluded the *Dissertation* by arguing that both sides should agree 'to fix upon this principal and real distinction and difference; the present division of parties; *since parties we must have*; and since those which subsisted formerly are quite extinguished, notwithstanding all the wicked endeavours by some men [i.e. the Court Whigs and their hired pens]…to revive them.'[112] Just as nothing could be more

[105] [Notes on conversation with Sir John Hynde Cotton MP], 5 August 1737, Carte MS 266, Bodleian, ff. 29-32.

[106] Stephen Taylor, '"Dr Codex" and the Whig "Pope": Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, 1716-1748', in *Lords of Parliament, 1714-1914*, ed. R. W. Davis (Stanford, CA, 1995), pp. 9-28.

[107] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, pp. 8-9.

[108] Ibid, p. 8. See also p. 187.

[109] [Arnall], *Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his Two Hon[oura]ble Patrons* (London, 1731), p. 58.

[110] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 37.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid, pp. 185-6. (My italics.)

'ridiculous' than to preserve the nominal division of Whig and Tory when the difference of principles no longer existed, 'so nothing can be more reasonable than to admit the nominal division of constitutionists and anti-constitutionists, or of a Court and a Country party, at this time, when an avowed difference of principles make this distinction possible.'[113] This Country-Court polarity would be applicable as long as there were people 'who argue for, and who promote even a corrupt dependency of the members of the two houses of Parliament on the crown'.[114] The Court party had to be opposed by the Country party, for if the independency of parliament was lost, the constitution would be a 'dead letter'.[115] The rationale for and the nature of this opposition party will be further explored in the next section of the present chapter.

IV: Theorist of Opposition

Bolingbroke was the most prominent theorist of formal opposition of his generation. This was urgently needed from the point of view of those discontented with Walpolean Britain. In the words of Carte, one of the major reasons why 'the corrupt & distructive measures of ministers' prevailed was 'the want, as well of a proper method of Union among the principal members of the opposition & concert of their measures'.[116] The problem was not only that opposition members were lured with places and pensions, significant as that was, but also the fact that 'fox-hunting, gardening, planting, or indifference having always kept our people in the country, till the very day before the meeting of the Parliament,' as Chesterfield complained in 1741.[117] Already in the *Remarks*, Bolingbroke had spelled out what he regarded as the proper characteristics of the business of opposition: opposition had to commence early and vigorously if the fundamentals of the free constitution were being attacked.[118] In one of his earliest political writings in the *Craftsman,* Bolingbroke attacked neutrality *per se,* when he referred to ancient Athens where the citizen who took no side 'was branded for his infamous neutrality.'[119] Bolingbroke believed that '[o]ur

[113] Ibid, p. 186.
[114] Ibid, pp. 186-7.
[115] Ibid, p. 187.
[116] 'Scheme for the Counties' [*c.* 1730?], in Carte MS 237, Bodleian, f. 27. Carte himself proposed a triennial council of eleven gentlemen representing and instructed by the counties and the opposition, or the 'Country interest', generally.
[117] Lord Chesterfield, *Letters*, (Oxford, 1998), p. 24.
[118] Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, p. 492.
[119] Bolingbroke, *The Occasional Writer in the Craftsman*, No. 3, 13 February 1727, in *Works*, I, p. 180.

duty must oblige us in all public disputes to take the best side, and to espouse it with warmth.'[120]

The main enterprise of the *Dissertation,* besides demonstrating the redundancy of the names of Tory and Whig and the relevance of the Court-Country division, was to specify why it was necessary to oppose Walpole, or the 'prime, or sole minister' as Bolingbroke mockingly referred to him at a time when the office of prime minister had no official place in the British constitution.[121] As we saw in the previous section, Bolingbroke made use of the Country ideology to legitimise opposition. The ministerial press responded by labelling the opposition Jacobite and republican, and portrayed Walpole and the Court Whigs as the only ones who could be trusted as custodians of the Glorious Revolution, the Act of Settlement 1701 and the Hanoverian succession of 1714.[122] Bolingbroke had to find responses to all three points.

Firstly, Bolingbroke argued that Walpole and the Court Whigs had not lived up to the principles of the Revolution. More specifically, he saw it as the chief end of the revolution to secure the nation against corruption, by which he meant a dependency of parliament on the court. The revolution was thus incomplete since the means for this technical sense of corruption (or influence) had increased immensely in the decades after 1688-9, because of the larger revenue of the crown and the proliferation of government offices and employments, which had led to higher taxes and national debt.[123] Bolingbroke was an enemy of the so-called financial revolution, which had seen the erection of the Bank of England and national debt in the 1690s, and the creation of what he saw as a 'moneyed interest' in opposition to the landed and traded interests.[124] In short, he believed that landowners and traders had to bear the cost of the ever-expanding state – what John Brewer later dubbed the fiscal-military state.[125] One of the reasons why his Country opposition was such a fierce opponent of the proposed excise scheme in 1733 was that

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[120] Ibid.

[121] Bolingbroke, *Dedication,* in *Works,* II, p. 8.

[122] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation,* p. 49. For the ministerial case, see, e.g., [Lord Hervey], *The Conduct of the Opposition and the Tendency of Modern Patriotism…*(London, 1734), pp. 37, 40, passim.

[123] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation,* pp. 84, 174, 177, 180. In Letter XII of the *Dissertation*, Bolingbroke replied to an article in the *London Journal* on 28 September 1734 (No. 796) which defended this type of influence (p. 121).

[124] Bolingbroke, *Contributions,* pp. 34, 57-8; idem, *Some Reflections on the Present State of the Nation, principally with regard to her Taxes and her Debts, and on the Causes and Consequences of Them* (1749), in *Works*, III, p. 174, passim. See also P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (London, 1967), esp. pp. 18-28.

[125] John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (London, 1989).

the scheme would increase the number and powers of revenue officers and thus grow the number of people in the government's pay and, consequently, its size and power.[126] Moreover, the revolution had provided for frequent parliamentary sessions and elections, but this had partly been overturned by the Septennial Act 1716.[127] In a word, Bolingbroke wanted to show that the opposition could be better trusted to cherish the legacy of the Glorious Revolution, as 'the settlement then made is looked upon by the whole Country party as a new Magna Carta'.[128]

Secondly, Bolingbroke repeatedly argued that the Jacobite party had become an inconsiderable faction in the state, and that Jacobitism had nothing whatsoever to do with either him or his Country platform, as when he ridiculed the writings of the Jacobite Charles Leslie, writer of the notorious *Rehearsal* in the beginning of the century.[129] This was an essential move by Bolingbroke, as he had served the Pretender in 1715-6, and Walpole and the ministerial press never tired of portraying him as a Jacobite and a traitor.[130] We have also seen above that many of his Jacobite acquaintances saw themselves as being involved in the same struggle against Walpole, and thus Bolingbroke had to distance himself from them.[131] Already in his apologia of 1716, he had said that he was as anti-Catholic as any sensible Englishman and that he had tried to convince James 'III' to convert to Protestantism.[132] In private, however, the Court Whigs knew that Bolingbroke was no principled Jacobite and that his periodic involvement in the cause was largely opportunistic. Hervey likened Bolingbroke's mobility and flexibility to Handel: 'His fortune in music is not unlike my Lord Bolingbroke's in politics. The one has tried both theatres, as the other has tried both Courts. They have shone in both, and

[126] Bolingbroke, *Contributions*, pp. 145-6; idem, *Dissertation*, p. 175; William Pulteney, *A Review of the Excise Scheme…*(London, 1733), pp. 53-4. Excise was a question which could unite Whigs and Tories, since tradesmen and shopkeepers of both persuasions were strong opponents; see Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 28-33.

[127] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, pp 101-10. Frequent elections meant that 'there is not sufficient time given, to form a majority of the representatives into a ministerial cabal' (p. 104). Bolingbroke recommended annual or at least triennial parliaments.

[128] Ibid, p. 9.

[129] Ibid. See also ibid, pp. 5, 198; idem, *Remarks*, in *Works*, I, pp. 277, 299. These views were by and large consistent with those Bolingbroke expressed in private, see Bolingbroke to Wyndham, 25 January 1740, in Coxe, *Memoirs of Walpole*, p. 555.

[130] Walpole's speech on the Excise Crisis in *Hervey's Memoirs*, I, pp. 183-4; [Arnall], *Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication*, pp. 6, 28, passim; [Hervey], *The Conduct of the Opposition*, pp. 57-8; [Arnall], *Opposition No Proof of Patriotism*, pp. 17-8.

[131] See n13, however.

[132] Bolingbroke, *Letter to Windham*, in *Works*, I, pp. 90-1, 104-5.

been ruined in both; whilst everyone owns their genius and sees their faults, though nobody either pities their fortune or takes their part.'[133]

Thirdly, although the revenue of the crown had increased, Bolingbroke contended that the present royal family had not been net gainers under Walpole. In his dedicatory letter to the *Dissertation,* he argued that the security of Hanover depended on the full completion of the Glorious Revolution.[134] Just as the violence of the Whigs had turned the Tories into Jacobites, the proscription of Tories had created unnecessary enemies for the royal family.[135] The message was that George II could effectively kill off all remnants of Jacobitism within the Tory party by ending proscription.

In *A Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism* (1736), Bolingbroke would elaborate on his oppositional theory. Bolingbroke had written about the 'Godlike Spirit of *Patriotism*' since his very first writings in the *Craftsman,* as in his eulogy to Nicholas Lechmere on 15 July 1727.[136] His 1736 text was originally not written for general distribution but for a smaller readership and this presumably gave him more freedom. The *Letter* is in one sense pessimistic in tone, which is not strange considering that Bolingbroke had a year earlier felt obliged to go into a second exile in France, mainly because of the revelation of his closeness to the French government,[137] but perhaps also partly because the opposition had failed to bring down Walpole at the general election of 1734. He did not hold back when describing the gravity of the state of Britain, which he thought had 'lost the spirit of [its] constitution' and become an oligarchy in the hands of '[o]ne party [the Court Whigs, which have] given their whole attention, during several years, to the project of enriching themselves, and impoverishing the rest of the nation'.[138] Bolingbroke expressed disappointment with the Country Tory-Whig coalition he had forged with Pulteney in 1726, which had missed a golden opportunity to defeat Walpole. 'I expect little from the principal actors that tread the stage at present', he said, 'these men have

[133] Hervey to Digby, 25 November 1735, in *Lord Hervey and His Friends, 1726-38: Based on Letters from Holland House, Melbury, and Ickworth* (London, 1950), p. 239.

[134] Bolingbroke, *Dedication,* in *Works,* II, p. 11.

[135] Ibid, p. 14.

[136] Bolingbroke, *Contributions,* p. 22. Bolingbroke hails Lechmere for opposing the Septennial Act 1716, and for being of '*no Party,* nor attached to any Interest, but that of his Country'.

[137] *The Grand Accuser the Greatest of All Criminals* (London, 1734).

[138] Bolingbroke, *Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism* (1736), in *Political Writings,* pp. 206, 198. (Hence: *Spirit of Patriotism*).

been clogged, or misled, or overborne by others; and, seduced by natural temper to inactivity.'[139]

Bolingbroke's second exile in France in conjunction with the bad health of Pulteney was a major blow for the opposition. As Hervey put it,

> Lord Bolingbroke's going out of England on account of the bad situation both of his public and private affairs slackened, too, extremely the spirit of the public papers; and Mr. Pulteney, partly from a very ill state of health, and partly, as some people thought, from being weary of the opposing part he had so long unsuccessfully acted, withdrew himself the greatest part of the session from all attendance in the House of Commons…Sir William Wyndham, deprived of his private prompter, Lord Bolingbroke, and his coadjutor in public action Mr. Pulteney, made a very inconsiderable figure, and was as little useful to the party he espoused as formidable to that he opposed.[140]

Stair, who had previously been optimistic about the opposition coalition with the Tories, was more pessimistic at the start of 1738. While he spoke of the necessity of unity in the opposition, he admitted 'that it may prove a very difficult matter to unite all the different pieces, of which the opposing party is made up, into one body, nay, it may be impossible'.[141]

While Bolingbroke appears to have given up his coalition with Pulteney at the beginning of 1736 – he said that he was 'quits with [his] friends, party friends I mean'[142] – the *Letter* is far from defeatist. 'I turn my eyes from the generation that is going off, to the generation that is coming on the stage', he wrote, undoubtedly referring first and foremost to the twenty-six-year-old Lord Cornbury, the addressee of the *Letter*, who, as Clarendon's grandson and MP for Oxford University, was one of the most promising young Tories in parliament.[143] Cornbury had been heavily involved in Jacobite intrigues, but seems to have stopped corresponding with the Stuart court from 1735.[144] Bolingbroke may also have alluded to a group of young opposition politicians led by Lord Cobham,

[139] Ibid, pp. 207-8.
[140] *Hervey's Memoirs*, p. 529.
[141] Stair to Marchmont, 1 January 1738, *Marchmont Papers*, II, p. 91.
[142] Bolingbroke to 3rd Earl of Essex, 30 May 1736, *Unpublished Letters*, V, p. 168.
[143] Bolingbroke, *Spirit of Patriotism*, p. 208.
[144] Cruickshanks, 'Lord Cornbury, Bolingbroke', p. 9.

the so-called 'Boy Patriots', which included William Pitt and George Lyttelton, who would later create an opposition group centred around Frederick, the Prince of Wales. These young men, especially Cornbury, were destined to be 'the guardian angels of the country they inhabit'.[145] It was the duty of such people 'to oppose evil, and promote good government'.[146] Bolingbroke emphasised repeatedly that this opposition had to be strong and persistent, as he was convinced that not even the worst thinkable minister could do harm unless others supported him in his mischief, and, importantly, unless those who oppose him were 'faint and unsteady' in their conduct.[147] For Bolingbroke, there was 'little difference…between opposing faintly and unsteadily and not opposing at all.'[148]

Bolingbroke equated opposition with duty to one's country. His greatest fear was that many undertook opposition 'not as a duty, but as an adventure'.[149] These people 'look[ed] on themselves like volunteers, not like men listed in the service'.[150] It is clear that Bolingbroke sought to encourage young noblemen such as Cornbury to view opposition as an even higher duty than office. It was a tangible worry in the period that able opposition politicians could be bought off by bribes, government positions and sinecures, since the executive had a great deal of patronage at its disposal. He asked rhetorically: 'To what higher station, to what greater glory can any mortal aspire, than to be, during the whole course of his life, the support of good, the control of bad government, and the guardian of public liberty?'[151] It was the duty of every politician 'to promote good, and to oppose bad government; and, if not vested with the power of a minister of state, yet vested with the *superior* power of controlling those who are appointed such by the crown.'[152]

One obvious objection to the centrality of Bolingbroke's theory of opposition in the intellectual history of party is that he may have meant opposition by individual members of parliament and that he was as opposed as anyone to concerted opposition. Towards the end of the *Letter,* however, Bolingbroke went beyond everything he has written about opposition thus far. He dismissed the widespread idea 'that opposition to an

[145] Bolingbroke, *Spirit of Patriotism,* pp. 193, 195.
[146] Ibid, p. 197.
[147] Ibid, p. 198.
[148] Ibid, p. 200. See also *Unpublished Letters,* p. 210.
[149] Bolingbroke, *Spirit of Patriotism,* p. 201.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid, p. 202.
[152] Ibid, pp. 215-6. (My italics.)

administration requires fewer preparatives, and less constant application than the conduct of it [the administration]'. This way of thinking is as a 'gross error' and a 'false notion of opposition', warning that '*Want of concert*… [and] want of preliminary measures' would lead to disappointment.[153] Opposition was not to be undertaken in a haphazard way: '[e]very administration is a system of conduct: opposition, therefore, should be a system of conduct likewise.'[154] As Burke was to do more than three decades later, Bolingbroke compared the struggle between opposition and administration to military combat.[155] The moral of this metaphor is straightforward: oppositions and governments are like armies with generals; in other words, they are like parties and not made up of mavericks.

Bolingbroke stressed that opposition needed to be as systematic as government, and suggested that an organised party is acceptable to achieve concerted action: '[t]hey who engage in opposition are under as great obligations, to prepare themselves to control, as they who serve the crown are under, to prepare themselves to carry on the administration, *and that a party formed for this purpose,* do not act like good citizens nor honest men, unless they propose true, as well as oppose false measures of government.'[156] At the end of the *Letter,* Bolingbroke said that he had demonstrated 'the duty of an opposing *party*', and that such 'a party who opposed, systematically, a wise to a silly, an honest to an iniquitous scheme of government, would acquire greater reputation and strength, and arrive more surely at their end, than a party who opposed occasionally…*without any general concert, with little uniformity*'.[157]

Further evidence that Bolingbroke was thinking of opposition in terms of concerted activity can be found in his private correspondence. For example, he wrote the following to his close friend Sir William Wyndham, one of the leader of the Tories in the Commons, in May 1737, after the opposition had supported the Prince of Wales in his request of an increased allowance: 'when your Party appeared lately in the Prince's cause, I took it for granted, as I do still, that this step was part of a *scheme*, and the *scheme* that might follow it, & be built upon it, easily occurred to my mind.'[158] The episode had frightened Walpole, who had felt compelled to produce a compromise over Prince

[153] Ibid, p. 215. (My italics.)
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid; Burke, *Present Discontents,* pp. 190-1.
[156] Bolingbroke, *Spirit of Patriotism*, p. 216. (My italics.)
[157] Ibid. (My italics.)
[158] Bolingbroke to Wyndham, 11 May 1737, *Unpublished Letters,* V, p. 204. (My italics.)

Frederick's allowance.[159] Bolingbroke believed that the bad health of George II, fifty-five years old at the time, had rocked Walpole's confidence. In a later letter to Wyndham, Bolingbroke continued to press for an organised opposition centred around Frederick: 'this affair would have alarmed, and have done more than alarm them, in what ever state the Kings health had been, if it had been the first measure of a scheme of conduct wisely formed, and *concerted among all those that stand in opposition to the present administration*.'[160] A formal opposition with Prince Frederick as figurehead was formed the same year.[161]

Another obvious objection to the importance of Bolingbroke's conception of an oppositional Country party is that the Bolingbrokean party was meant to be a party to end all parties.[162] It is important to note, however, that Bolingbroke never used a phrase corresponding to this evocative and oft-repeated slogan. Although he was sanguine about what the Country party could achieve, he never expressed any belief in a final end to political conflict. On the contrary, he said that although the constitution was near-perfect, people could never allow themselves to rest on their laurels.[163] Bolingbroke appears to have accepted continued political conflict in a limited monarchy such as the British, where the 'struggle between the spirit of liberty and the spirit of dominion…always hath subsisted, and…must always subsist'.[164] Such conflicts could even in the future encompass the dethronement of a monarch as in the Glorious Revolution, as long as all parties recognised the overall constitutional framework: 'Better ministers, better Kings, may be hereafter often wanted, and sometimes found, but a better constituted government never can.'[165]

Finally, it is also worth drawing attention to one of Machiavelli's teachings that Bolingbroke firmly believed in: the natural mortality of states, which is closely linked to

[159] Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 236-7.

[160] Bolingbroke to Wyndham, 9 June [1737], *Unpublished Letters*, V, p. 211. (My italics.) Lack of concert was a persistent worry in opposition correspondence in the late 1730s; see, e.g., James Erskine to Marchmont, 8 September 1739, Stair to Marchmont, 9 December 1739, in *Marchmont Papers*, II, pp. 161-2, 169. Stair echoed Bolingbroke when he said that in order to remove Walpole, 'there must be a perfect union amongst the leaders of the country party…all the operations must be directed by one common council.' *Marchmont Papers*, II, pp. 171-2.

[161] Gabriel Glickman, 'Parliament, the Tories and Frederick, Prince of Wales', *Parliamentary History* 30 (2011), pp. 120-41.

[162] Rosenblum, *On the side of the angels*, p. 36; Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System*, p. 18.

[163] Bolingbroke, *Dissertation*, p. 84.

[164] Ibid, p. 91.

[165] Ibid, p. 86.

the argument about 'first principles' discussed above.[166] 'The best instituted governments, like the best constituted animal bodies, carry in them the seeds of their destruction', Bolingbroke wrote. 'All that can be done, therefore, to prolong the duration of a good government, is to draw it back, on every favourable occasion, to the first principles on which it was founded.'[167] Consequently, Bolingbroke must have accepted that even if his opposition party had successfully rolled back Walpole's allegedly corrupt regime and managed to bring the state back to its first principles, decay and decadence would have returned at some stage, as all states contain the seeds of their own destruction. There could therefore never be a party to end all parties and the rationale for opposition could not be forever eradicated.

On balance, the evidence presented here suggests that it is an overstatement to view the Bolingbrokean opposition party as a party to end all parties. This interpretation stands in sharp contrast to that of Shelley Burtt, who reads Bolingbroke as a thinker who rejected 'the inevitability of conflict'.[168] Burtt's analysis hinges on *The Idea of a Patriot King,* as she sees the patriot king as someone who 'can and will govern in such a way as to transcend the usual adversarial nature of government.'[169] The *Patriot King* is indeed the text commonly used to demonstrate Bolingbroke's alleged belief in absolute unity and harmony without party political conflict. This chapter will now turn to this important but enigmatic text.

V: The *Patriot King*

Many interpretations of Bolingbroke as an anti-party writer, and as a political thinker in general, are heavily based on *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1738). It is indeed in this text that we find some of Bolingbroke's most negative comments about political parties, for instance that they are political evils, and such statements cannot be ignored. It remains clear, however, that Bolingbroke had not abandoned his distinction between party and faction: 'faction is to party what the superlative is to the positive: party is a political evil,

[166] Machiavelli, *Discourses*, Bk. I, ch. II, pp. 10-14. See also Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment,* pp. 217-8.
[167] Bolingbroke, *Patriot King*, p. 252.
[168] Shelley Burtt, *Virtue Transformed: Political Argument in England, 1688-1740* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 96.
[169] Ibid, p. 95.

and faction is the worst of all parties.'[170] Meanwhile, he now maintained that '[p]arties, even before they degenerate into absolute factions, are still numbers of men associated together for certain purposes, and certain interests, which are not, or which are not allowed to be, those of the community of others.'[171] Bolingbroke believed himself to be particularly suited to understand the inner workings of political parties, since he had seen 'the inside of parties'.[172] These statements reflect his disillusionment with the Country party platform at this stage of his life. As we shall see, however, this state of mind did not lead him to reject the inevitability of conflict and prescribe a non-party state.

The *Patriot King* is a mirror-for-princes, modelled on Machiavelli's *Il principe* (*c.* 1513) and influenced by Fénelon's *Les aventures de Télémaque* (1699).[173] It has commonly been read as an abstract political text.[174] By contrast, the present author would argue that it should be read as a highly topical oppositional tract written for a small circle consisting of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and his advisers, at a time when the prince was seen as a figurehead of the opposition. Many of Bolingbroke's friends would no doubt have read a Jacobite message into the text, but there is no evidence that Bolingbroke had any Jacobite intentions at this point in his career. His main objective remained the replacement of Walpole, who was given the full responsibility for the corrupt state of the nation, 'since he has been so long in possession of the whole power' and 'corrupt[ed] the morals of men.'[175] Bolingbroke's wish was that '[a] wise and honester administration may draw us back to our former credit and influence abroad.'[176] If we are to believe the author himself, he never wanted to publish the *Patriot King*, but only did so in order to correct an unauthorised version printed and distributed by his friend Pope.[177] The *Patriot*

[170] Bolingbroke, *Patriot King*, p. 257.

[171] Ibid, p. 258.

[172] Ibid, p. 268.

[173] Herbert Butterfield, *The Statecraft of Machiavelli* (1940), (London, 1960), pp. 149-165; Jeffrey Hart, *Viscount Bolingbroke: Tory humanist* (London and Toronto, ON, 1965), pp. 83-143. Bolingbroke's choice of genre was not idiosyncratic in the context of the 1730s; Fénelon's mirror for princes *Les aventures de Télémaque* (1699) had been published in several translations and editions in early Hanoverian Britain, notably Charles Forman's *Protesilaus: Or, the Character of an Evil Minister. Being a Paraphrase of the Tenth Book of Telemachus* (1730). Like the book form of Bolingbroke's *Dissertation*, Forman's adaptation of Fénelon was dedicated to Walpole and part of the literary Patriot opposition to the Court Whigs, see Doowhan Ahn, 'From Idomeneus to Protesilaus', in *Fénelon in the Enlightenment: Traditions, Adaptations, and Variations*, ed. Christoph Schmitt-Maaβ, Stefenie Stockhorst and Ahn (Amsterdam, 2014), pp. 99-128.

[174] See, e.g., Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth, 1725-1742* (Oxford, 1994), p. 186.

[175] Bolingbroke, *Patriot King*, p. 219.

[176] Ibid.

[177] Bolingbroke to Lyttelton, 15 April 1748, in *Memoirs and Correspondence of George, Lord Lyttelton, from 1734 to 1773* (2 vols., London, 1845), II, pp. 429-30. For the complicated printing history

King is rightly considered as Bolingbroke's most utopian writing; for example, he calls the patriot king 'the most uncommon of all phenomenon in the physical or moral world' and even a 'standing miracle', but there is not sufficient textual evidence to support the claim that Bolingbroke rejected the inevitability of political conflict.[178]

Like Elizabeth, the paradigmatic patriot princess, the patriot king would be a unifier and a healer.[179] The patriot king has a duty 'to govern like the common father of his people…he who does otherwise forfeits his title.'[180] He (Bolingbroke uses the masculine pronoun, although he thought that Elizabeth had been the greatest patriot monarch) would not 'be exposed to the temptation, of governing by a party; which must always end in the government of a faction'.[181] It is important to remember, however, that Bolingbroke had a specific precedent in mind. In *Of the State of Parties at the Accession of George I* (1739), written a year after the *Patriot King* and published together with it in 1749, with the explicit intention to complement the sections on party in the *Patriot King*, he attacked the policy of George I, a policy of which he himself had been a victim.[182] Upon George I's accession, Bolingbroke was shocked to find that the king had 'immediately let loose the whole fury of party, suffer the queen's servants, who had surely been guilty of no crime against him, nor the state, to be so bitterly persecuted, and proscribe in effect every man in the country who did not bear the name of whig.'[183] Bolingbroke contrasted this conduct with that of Charles II upon the Restoration in 1660, and that of Henry IV of France, who 'not only exercised clemency, but shew[ed] favour to those who had stood in arms against them' after coming to the throne.[184] He believed that the accession of George I and the subsequent violent behaviour of the Whigs drove

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of the *Patriot King*, see Giles Barber, 'Bolingbroke, Pope, and the Patriot King', *The Library*, 19 (1964), pp. 67-89.

[178] Bolingbroke, *Patriot King*, pp. 221, 251.

[179] Ibid, pp. 271-3. For the Elizabethan cult in the 1730s, see Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole*, pp. 150-184.

[180] Ibid, p. 257.

[181] Ibid. John Toland wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Art of Governing by Partys* (London, 1701), in which he used language which Bolingbroke may have tried to imitate, e.g. 'a King can never lessen himself more than by heading of a Party; for thereby he becomes only the King of a Faction, and ceases to be the common Father of his People' (p. 41).

[182] Bolingbroke, *State of Parties*, in *Works*, III, p. 129.

[183] Ibid, p. 139. Bolingbroke's friend Jonathan Swift, who had worked as a government hack for the Tory administration in 1710-14, ridiculed George I's approach to parties in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). On the island of Lilliput, although the Tramecksans, or the High Heels, were widely seen as being 'most agreeable to our ancient Constitution', the king only employed Slamecksans, or Low Heels. The king himself wore lower heels than anyone at his court. *Gulliver's Travels* (London, 2003), p. 47.

[184] Bolingbroke, *State of Parties*, in *Works*, III, p. 139.

the Tories into rebellion, a direct effect 'of maintaining divisions in a nation, and of governing by faction.'[185]

Bolingbroke concluded the *State of Parties* by saying that 'division has caused all the mischief we lament, [and] that union can alone retrieve it'.[186] By 'union', however, he meant the ascendency of 'the coalition of parties, so happily begun, so successfully carried on, and of late so unaccountably neglected', meaning the Country platform, combining Tories and opposition Whigs. Bolingbroke was explicit that this union would not incorporate the Court Whigs, and probably not even George II, who he at this point thought had turned into a party king resembling his father: 'such a union can never be expected till patriotism fills the throne, and faction be banished from the administration.'[187]

To return to the *Patriot King*, while such a king, according to Bolingbroke's advice, was not at liberty to espouse or proscribe any party, '[h]e may favour one party and discourage another, upon occasions wherein the state of his kingdom makes such a temporary measure necessary'.[188] Needless to say, this implies that there would be political parties under the patriot king. Moreover, personnel and measures remained intertwined in Bolingbroke's thinking. The first action of the patriot king, who 'must begin to govern as soon as he begins to reign', would be 'to purge his court, and to call into the administration such men as he can assure himself will serve on the same principles on which he intends to govern.'[189] By this he meant that Walpole and his Court Whigs, or 'the prostitutes who set themselves to sale' as he referred to them, would be banished.[190] Entire parties were not to be proscribed, however, and the patriot king must make a distinction 'between those who have affected to dip themselves deeply in precedent iniquitous, and those who have had the virtue to keep aloof of them'.[191]

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[185] Ibid, p. 140.
[186] Ibid, p. 141.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Bolingbroke, *Patriot King*, p. 263.
[189] Ibid, p. 253.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid, p. 254. Bolingbroke remained a friend and admirer of Lord Hardwicke, who was Lord Chancellor under Walpole from 1737. He was careful to differentiate Hardwicke from 'the narrowness, & lowness…of the people with whom he acts', see *Unpublished Letters*, V, p. 201. For their correspondence, see George Harris, *The Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke; with sections from his Correspondence, Diaries, Speeches, and Judgments* (3 vols., London, 1847).

There has been a tendency among readers of the *Patriot King* to focus on the sweeping statements about the patriot king's ability to unify and purify the nation.[192] The all-important qualifications have sometimes been neglected. For Bolingbroke, it is axiomatic that '[a] people may be united in submission to the prince, and to the establishment, and *yet be divided about general principles, or particular measures of government*.'[193] Accordingly, under such a reign, people 'will support or oppose particular acts of administrations, and defend and attack the persons employed in them; *and both these ways a conflict of parties may arise*'.[194] The patriot king must 'pursue the union of his subjects, and the prosperity of his kingdoms independently of all parties', but Bolingbroke recognises that this in practice would mean that he would choose the best side rather than no side when two parties are clashing: 'When parties are divided…He may and he ought to show his dislike or his favour, as he judges the constitution may be hurt or improved, by one side or the other.'[195]

Bolingbroke believed that under a patriot king 'the opportunities of forming an opposition…will be rare, and the pretences generally weak.' Importantly, '[s]uch opportunities, however, may happen; and there may be reason, as well as pretences, sometimes for opposition even in such a reign…Grievances then are complained of, mistakes and abuses in government are pointed out, and ministers are prosecuted by their enemies.'[196] The patriot king 'knows that neither he nor his ministers are infallible, nor impeccable. There may be abuses in his government, mistakes in his administration, and guilt in his ministers, which he had not observed'.[197] On the rare occasion when an opposition would be justified in such an illustrious reign, the patriot king will not 'treat those who carry on such prosecutions in a legal manner, as incendiaries, and as enemies of his government', as Bolingbroke and Pulteney had been treated in the ministerial press.[198]

To conclude this section, although the *Patriot King* is probably Bolingbroke's most anti-party piece of writing, he does not in it appear to conceive of a state without

[192] David Armitage, 'A Patriot for Whom? The Afterlives of Bolingbroke's Patriot King', *Journal of British Studies*, 36 (4), 1997, pp. 397-418, at 405.
[193] Bolingbroke, *Patriot King*, p. 259. (My italics.)
[194] Ibid. (My italics.)
[195] Ibid, pp. 259, 260.
[196] Ibid, p. 260.
[197] Ibid, p. 261.
[198] Ibid.

either parties or opposition. As we have seen, many of his anti-party comments have contextual explanations and can be seen as part of his general discontent with George I and George II, both of whom he regarded as (Court) Whig kings.[199] In case Prince Frederick would ascend the throne, Bolingbroke was eager to ensure that he would not be ensnared by Walpole and the Court Whigs, as had happened to George II upon his accession in 1727, when a great part of the political nation expected at least some change in the administration.[200] The denomination of his paradigmatic ruler as a *patriot* king was not a neutral move, since 'patriotism' had been the watchword of Bolingbroke's earlier coalition, and the new generation of politicians in Prince Frederick's circle were known as the 'boy patriots'.[201] This group included Lyttelton, Frederick's secretary at the time of the *Patriot King's* composition and originally intended as the dedicatee of the work. When the work was finally about to be published in an authorised version a decade later, Lyttelton wrote Bolingbroke to turn down this 'honour', since he was no longer in Frederick's service and instead connected with many of the late Walpole's close friends, meaning that he had joined Henry Pelham's ministry.[202] The episode demonstrates that the *Patriot King* was far from an abstract political text about how to avoid conflict and achieve harmony in a polity but was an oppositional tract and a contribution to the (party) political struggle of the day.

VI: The Impact of Bolingbroke

Although Bolingbroke was an influential voice in the opposition, the greater part of the Tory party, the High Church and Jacobite Tories, did not, at least not immediately, adopt his argument that Court and Country had entirely superseded Whig and Tory.[203] His impact was, however, enormous. For example, the importance of the idea of 'opposition' can be seen in the case of his friends Pope and Wyndham. Writing to Lyttelton in November 1738 about a meeting with Wyndham, Pope said that the Tory leader was worried about 'the present State & Conduct of the Opposition', and more particularly that it 'would be drawn off from the Original Principle on which it was founded, by two

[199] He also complained that Britain's interests abroad had been subordinated to those of Hanover since 1714; see Bolingbroke to Lyttelton, 4 November 1741, *Correspondence of Lyttelton*, I, p. 196.
[200] Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People,* pp. 11-15.
[201] T.C.W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002), p. 314.
[202] Lyttelton to Bolingbroke, 14 April 1748, in *Correspondence Lyttelton*, II, p. 428.
[203] See, e.g., *Fog's Weekly Journal,* 6 March 1731, and William Shippen's speeches in parliament.

Persons [Carteret and Pulteney]'. Under the direction of these opportunistic Whigs, 'the Opposition…would become nothing more than a Bubble-Scheme, wherein multitudes who intended the publick Service, would be employ'd to no other purpose than to service private Ambition.'[204] The letter proved prophetic since Pulteney and Carteret left their Tory allies in the opposition after the fall of Walpole, to the disgust of Bolingbroke.[205] The letter testifies, moreover, that both Wyndham and Pope were more comfortable to view the Patriot Prince (Frederick) as 'the Head of the Party'; indeed Pope thought 'it a Nobler Situation, to be at the head of the best Men of a Kingdom than at the Head of any Kingdom upon earth.'[206]

His impact on the next generation of opposition wits was colossal. George Lyttelton rehashed Bolingbroke's analysis of party in his Montesquieu-inspired *Letters from a Persian in England* (1735), along with many of Bolingbroke's other ideas, as was pointed out in the pamphlet *The Persian Strip'd of his Disguise* (1735).[207] Although the idiom of opposition Toryism had been replete with populist and 'libertarian' rhetoric prior to Bolingbroke, there is no doubt that he perfected the language of liberty. 'Old Whig' Jacobites such as Wharton had already espoused a union of opposition Whigs and Tories,[208] but after Bolingbroke this idea became the favoured policy, or at least rhetorical technique, even among Tory-Jacobites. As William King, principal of St Mary Hall at Oxford, wrote James Edgar, clerk to the Old Pretender in November 1736:

> I could heartily wish some proper steps were taken to unite Garth [the Jacobites] and Mercer [the Whigs] in the same interest, which I conceive would not be at all difficult to be affected at this juncture. I mean the same Mercer [i.e. the opposition Whigs], who is such a professed enemy to all the measures of 500 [George II] and 503 [Walpole]. I cannot help intimating this, because I am fully persuaded 473 [the Stuart restoration] in a great measure depends on that union.[209]

The following year, the Pretender founded the opposition journal *Common Sense, or the Englishman's Journal,* under the editorship of Charles Malloy, the erstwhile editor of

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[204] *The Correspondence of Pope,* IV, pp. 142-3.

[205] *Unpublished Letters*, V, pp. 274-6. The action of Pulteney was notoriously defended by John Perceval in a bestselling pamphlet called *Faction Detected* (1742).

[206] *The Correspondence of Pope,* IV, p. 144.

[207] Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits,* pp. 140-1.

[208] *His Grace the Duke of Whartons* [sic] *Reasons for leaving his native Country & espousing the Cause of his Royal master K. J.3. in a Letter to his friends in G. Britain & Ireland* [*c.* 1727], English History MS C 374, Bodleian, f. 26.

[209] Cited in David Greenwood, *William King: Tory and Jacobite* (London, 1969), p. 75. The letter is deciphered with the help of a key from the Stuart papers, provided by Greenwood.

the *Fog's Weekly Journal,* successor to the more openly Jacobite *Mist's Weekly Journal.* King contributed at least one piece to *Common Sense*, while the opposition Whigs Chesterfield and Lyttelton wrote more regularly.[210] The journal in some ways continued the legacy of Bolingbroke and the *Craftsman*, which ran out of steam after Bolingbroke's second exile in France. King's one known essay in *Common Sense*, appearing in May 1737, has many similarities with Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* but with a stronger anti-Hanoverian undertone.[211]

Bolingbroke's influence extended well beyond his circle and he quickly became an authority on the subject of party. In his *Lettres d'un François* (1745), Abbé Le Blanc hailed Bolingbroke's works 'pour l'élégance du style & la solidité du Raisonnement, est au-dessus de tout ce que les Anglois ont produit en ce genre'.[212] For decades, everyone dealing with party had to respond to Bolingbroke. In 1750, Thomas Pownall wrote a noteworthy treatise which was largely a response to Bolingbroke. His major objection to Bolingbroke, and all writers wedded to the notion of mixed government, was this tradition's view on the inevitability of conflict. In the preface he attacked what he perceived as an anti-Harringtonian message in the *Patriot King*, which had the previous year been published in an edition authorised by Bolingbroke for the first time.[213] By encouraging the patriot king to make appointments based on talent rather than property, Pownall argued that 'the Measures recommended to the Patriot Prince, instead of healing, uniting and restoring, do seem more likely to run ALL into *Party*'.[214] Pownall's main target, however, was the *Dissertation upon Parties*, which had been printed for the seventh time in 1749, and more specifically he criticised Bolingbroke's firm belief in the mixed constitution.[215] In short, Pownall found it unsound to perceive of king and people as separate estates. '[I]t is of the very Essence of these Governments to subsist, and be carried on, by Parties and Opposition, as the noble Author of the Dissertation on Parties

[210] Ibid, pp. 77-8. Although the Pretender had been involved in setting up *Common Sense*, the Jacobite Carte referred to it as an 'Old Whig' journal (BL Add MS 21500, f. 114).

[211] On the article, see Greenwood, *William King*, pp. 78-80.

[212] Abbé Le Blanc, *Lettres d'un François* (3 vols., The Hague, 1745), II, p. 28 (note).

[213] [Thomas Pownall], *A Treatise on Government: Being a Review and Doctrine of an Original Contract* (London, 1750), pp. 12-13.

[214] Ibid, p. 14. James Harrington had influentially stated that '[d]ominion is property' in *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656), (Cambridge, 2001), p. 11.

[215] One can thus argue that Pownall fits better than Bolingbroke in Rosenblum's anti-party tradition of holism (*On the Side of the Angles*, ch. 1).

hath fully shown', he wrote.[216] For Pownall, Bolingbroke's principles were essentially conflictual, 'calculated for an opposition' and 'incompatible with establish'd Power'.[217]

The present chapter has tried to reflect that Pownall's critical reading was in many ways closer to Bolingbroke's own intentions than those of most of his commentators in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Pownall was right to view the Bolingbrokean party as an opposition party, which is not necessarily the same as a party to end all parties. Bolingbroke's *raison d'être* as a political writer was opposition to Walpole and the Court Whigs. All his major political writings extol the virtues of opposition. We have also seen that Bolingbroke conceived of opposition as organised and concerted, to be undertaken by a party of political actors (who could be drawn from several parties in the sense of Whig and Tory) disciplined by leadership. He sometimes referred to this opposition as a Country party, which, in contrast to the Court faction, was a national party seeking to address national grievances and equipped with principles, which, unlike the Whig and Tory creeds, were fit for the political climate of the 1730s.

Bolingbroke had little to say about what would happen if this oppositional Country party was successful. Would it become a party of government, a new Court party? Some historians have speculated that Bolingbroke would likely have followed a similar path as Walpole if he had been in power.[218] Needless to say, it did not fit his polemical purposes to spell out how the Country party would behave after the fall of Walpole and the Court Whigs. The closest we come to a description of a future political order in Bolingbroke's writings is the *Patriot King.* This text has often been read as a pie-in-the-sky attempt to abolish parties and political conflict as all political actors would unite in awe of the virtuous patriot king. The present chapter has shown, however, that the *Patriot King* should also be read as an opposition tract. Crucially, it has been demonstrated that Bolingbroke, even in this somewhat utopian text, emphasised that causes for opposition may arise even in the reign of the patriot king. He was indeed explicit that parties divided over political issues would survive in such a reign, and while the patriot king would not govern by party – like Bolingbroke thought George I and George II had done – he would be at liberty to take sides in political disputes.

[216] [Pownall], *Treatise on Government*, pp. 22-3.
[217] Ibid, p. 32.
[218] Dickinson, *Bolingbroke*, p. 192.

It remains true that Bolingbroke sometimes appeared to have damned party while condoning opposition, and evidence in favour of that view has not been concealed within the present analysis. The ambition has been, however, to explode the persistent myth of Bolingbroke as the paradigmatic anti-party thinker, because his views on these subjects are more complex. His writings were calculated to legitimise opposition and a specific kind of political party: the Country party. Finally, his writings on the Court and Country party division in British politics, and his constitutional thought more generally, would provoke and influence writers for decades.[219] Notably, David Hume, to whom we will now turn, used them as his starting point – and targets of criticism – when writing his first batch of political essays in the early 1740s.

[219] For Bolingbroke's relationship with Montesquieu, see Rachel Hammersley, *The English Republican Tradition and Eighteenth-century France: Between the Ancients and the Moderns* (2010), (Manchester, 2016), pp. 73-8.

Chapter 3:
David Hume's Early Essays on Parties and Party Politics

I: Introduction

Few if any political thinker of the eighteenth century dealt as thoroughly and extensively with party as David Hume (1711-1776). Not only did he write three essays exclusively devoted to the subject, but the genesis of party also played a significant part in his *History of England*, especially the two Stuart volumes published as *The History of Great Britain* in 1754 and 1756. When analysing Hume's first batch of political essays in this chapter, a somewhat different approach has been adopted than the one recommended by Hume himself in the advertisement to the first edition of the first volume of *Essays, Moral and Political* (1741),[1] and the one by his latest (and incomparably best) biographer, namely to consider each essay on its own.[2] While this chapter will consider the key essays individually, it will also seek to establish connections between them, which Hume incidentally also did, as well as attempt to understand what Hume wanted to say about party in aggregate.

Hume was in London between August 1737 and February 1739, and, on his return to Ninewells, Scotland, he began drafting his essays in the summer of 1739 at the latest.[3] Many at the time, especially in opposition to Walpole's Whigs, denied the relevance of the party distinctions of Whig and Tory. This used to mislead historians into believing that that Court and Country represented the 'real' party division in the mid-Hanoverian era, rather than the additional dimension that it was.[4] As we saw in the previous chapter, this was a tactic associated with Bolingbroke, while the government position was that Whig and Tory were still relevant, and that the Tories were predominantly Jacobite. However, Hume arrived in London hot on the heels of the debate over the Mortmain and

[1] David Hume, 'Advertisement', *Essays, Moral and Political* (Edinburgh, 1741), p. v. The second volume of the *Essays*, published in 1742, contained less material overtly on party politics, with the exception of 'A Character of Sir Robert Walpole', which Hume wrote as the first minister was fighting for his political life. That Hume was aware of this context we learn from a different essay in the same volume; see idem, 'Of Eloquence', *Essays*, p. 100. See also Hume to Henry Home (later Lord Kames), 13 June 1742, *New Letters*, p. 9.

[2] James Harris, *David Hume: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge, 2015), p. 145.

[3] Hume to Kames, 4 June and 1 July, 1739, *New Letters*, pp. 5, 6-7.

[4] William Speck, *Stability and Strife: England, 1714-60* (London, 1977), p. 7; H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1977), part II.

Quakers' Tithe Bills, which had made it hard for even the opposition to deny the survival of Whig and Tory as it had divided Parliament along such lines.[5] The episode caused Bolingbroke to berate his brother-in-law Robert Knight, an opposition Whig and MP for Great Grimsby: 'if you have broke the coalition by stating high whig points, whilst Torys have been kept so long from their old follys that they are weaned almost from 'em, the damage is great, & such as I apprehend it will be hard to repair.'[6] As we shall see, for Hume the Whig-Tory as well as Court-Country alignments were at the heart of British party politics, with the former dividing the political nation along dynastic and religious lines, and the latter being a natural expression of the workings of the mixed constitution and parliamentary conflict. Hume's analysis can thus be read as a compromise between Bolingbroke and Walpole. Yet it was something more than that and arguably the most ambitious attempt to make sense of party in British politics to date.[7]

Hume's first collection of political essays tells us a great deal about the impact of Bolingbroke. By the time Hume arrived in London in 1737, Bolingbroke had gone into a second exile in France. When Hume wrote and published his first essays between 1739 and 1741, however, it was still within the framework established by Bolingbroke in the heyday of his journalism in 1730-34, even if it was a framework Hume sought to supersede.[8] Unlike the government hacks, of whom he did not think highly, Hume did not seek to smear Bolingbroke as a Jacobite, but instead engaged with his arguments. He clearly wanted to go beyond Bolingbroke's partisanship and aimed to establish a science of politics expressed in Addisonian polite prose rather than a party-political programme. Be that as it may, we should not minimise the fact that it was Bolingbroke who had set the terms for political debate.

While Bolingbroke was Hume's main interlocutor, his principal factual source for his first pronouncements on the British parties must have been Rapin. We know that

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[5] Stephen Taylor, 'Sir Robert Walpole, the Church of England, and the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736', *HJ*, 28 (1985), pp. 51-77; T. F. J. Kendrick, 'Sir Robert Walpole, the Old Whigs and the Bishops, 1733–1736: a Study in Eighteenth-Century Parliamentary Politics', *HJ*, 11 (1968), pp. 421-45.

[6] *Unpublished Letters,* V, p. 171. See also p. 185.

[7] J. A. W. Gunn is thus wide of the mark when arguing that Hume's views on party are 'quite unremarkable'; see *Factions No More: Attitudes to Party in Government and Opposition in Eighteenth-century England* (London, 1972), p. 258.

[8] The most important study of Hume's engagement with Bolingbroke remains Duncan Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge, 1975), esp. 193-223. After the publication of Bolingbroke's posthumous *Works*, with which Hume was not impressed, in 1754, Hume and Bolingbroke were often bundled together owing to their controversial views on religion; see *Admonitions from the Dead, in Epistles to the Living…to promote the cause of religion and moral virtue* (London, 1754); *The Beauties of Hume and Bolingbroke* (London, 1782).

Hume had read Rapin's *Histoire* at an early stage,[9] and we can take for granted that he had also seen the *Dissertation sur les Whigs et les Torys* (1717), which was included within the *Histoire.* This *Dissertation* would have given Hume the insight that the study of politics in Britain was the study of party. It also meant that Hume, as Nicholas Phillipson has remarked, looked back on the reign of Anne as the time when the agenda of modern political discourse had been set.[10] After having written the Stuart volumes of the *History of England*, Hume added a footnote at the end of 'The Parties of Great Britain', saying that he had come to revise some of the conclusions reached in the essay, apologising in effect for vulgar Whiggism.[11] Despite Hume's fairly Whiggish, or at least Rapinesque, account of seventeenth-century events at this stage of his career, it would be a mistake to think that he was not making a genuine attempt to give a disinterested account, starkly different both in tone and content from the ministerial as well as the oppositional press.[12]

II: Of Parties in General

As has often been pointed out, Hume adopted the essay format from Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's polite essays in the *Tatler* (1709) and *Spectator* (1711-12).[13] The idea was to write about politics in a polite manner, but with a more philosophical and non-partisan bent than was to be found in Bolingbroke's political writings.[14] Hume publicised these intentions in the advertisement to the first edition of the first volume of *Essays, Moral and Political* (1741). '[T]he READER may condemn my Abilities, but must approve of my Moderation and Impartiality in my Method of handling POLITICAL SUBJECTS', he wrote.[15] Hume's targeting of Bolingbroke would not make sense if the latter is read as an anti-party thinker, a common misreading the previous chapter has sought to revise. What Addison and Bolingbroke had in common, however, was that they

[9] Hume to Michael Ramsay, [1730], *Letters,* II, p. 337.

[10] Nicholas Phillipson, 'Propriety, Property and Prudence: David Hume and the Defence of the Revolution', in *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain* ed. Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge, 1993), p. 304.

[11] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 72n. 'Vulgar Whiggism' is Forbes's term (*Hume's Philosophical Politics,* pp. 150-1).

[12] See, e.g., the *London Journal's* articles in response to Bolingbroke's *Dissertation upon Parties,* where the Tories are called 'tyrants' in power and 'deceivers' out of it (No. 779, 1 June, 1734).

[13] For the impact of Addison and Steele on Hume, see Nicholas Phillipson, *David Hume: The Philosopher as Historian* (1989), (London, 2011), pp. 24-7, passim.

[14] Hume, 'Advertisement' (1741), p. iii.

[15] Ibid, p. iv.

in their respective contexts called for all honest men to unite into what Addison called a 'neutral body' and Bolingbroke a 'Country party'.[16] Hume took a more realistic, or sceptical, view: he had come to realise that party division was not going away. Party was both an intrinsic part of the British constitution, and a reflection of the fact that people were naturally inclined to conflict as well as gregarious sentiments.[17] The goal of the philosophically minded writer was simply to promote moderation – a highly controversial message if considered in context.

Hume's first extensive discussion of parties, or factions, came in the form of his essay 'Of Parties in General' (1741).[18] Hume opened the essay with a curious tribute to lawgivers, who play a very subordinate if any role in his political thought. He then proceeded to castigate parties in a well-known passage:

> As much as legislators and founders of states ought to be honoured and respected among men, as much ought the founders of sects and factions to be detested and hated…Factions subvert government, render laws impotent, and beget the fiercest animosities among men of the same nation, who ought to give mutual assistance and protection to each other…And what should render the founders of parties more odious is, the difficulty of extirpating these weeds, when once they have taken root in any state.[19]

His first more balanced observation was that parties 'rise more easily, and propagate themselves faster in free governments [i.e. mixed governments[20]], where they always infect the legislature itself, which alone could be able, by the steady application of rewards and punishments, to eradicate them'.[21] What some readers may have expected

[16] *Spectator*, No. 126, 25 July 1711, in *The Works of Joseph Addison* (3 vols., New York, NY, 1845), I p. 192. Addison and Bolingbroke meant of course different honest men, and the latter was in the midst of his parliamentary career as a leader of the *Torys Outrez*, in Rapin's language, when Addison wrote his *Spectator* essays. Addison himself was a Whig MP and held high office in the Whig administrations of 1708-10 and 1714-18.

[17] Hume, *Enquiry II*, pp. 224, 275.

[18] In contrast to Bolingbroke, Hume used the two terms interchangeably. As Forbes pointed out, he frequently changed 'factions' into 'parties' and *vice versa* when editing his essays (*Hume's Philosophical Politics*, p. 202).

[19] Hume, 'Parties in General', *Essays*, p. 55.

[20] For Hume's understanding of free governments as mixed governments, see 'Of the Origin of Government' (1777), *Essays*, pp. 40-1. For Hume's approval of such a government, see 'Politics a Science', *Essays*, p. 18. It is important to note, however, that Hume differed from many thinkers in the period by arguing that civilized monarchies such as France were also governments of laws rather than men; see 'Of Civil Liberty' (1741), (originally: 'Of Liberty and Despotism'), *Essays*, esp. p. 94.

[21] Hume, 'Parties in General', *Essays*, pp. 55-6.

after such a grand opening was a more precise explanation by Hume for how the legislature could go about 'eradicating' parties. Nothing of that kind followed, however.

Instead Hume stayed true to the title of the essay and proceeded to analyse the phenomenon of party supported by concrete examples from history. He divided parties into *personal* and *real,* adding that most parties were a mixture of both.[22] Personal factions were most common in small republics, where every domestic quarrel became an affair of state. Hume believed that people had 'such a propensity to divide into personal factions, that the smallest appearance of real difference will produce them', and like Jonathan Swift he referred to the Prasini and Veneti factions, which had begun as different teams wearing different colours, green and blue, in chariot racing, but culminated in what we call the Nika riots.[23] Hume duly listed personal factions of the Italian city-states, most of which emerged in the *Trecento*: the Neri and Bianchi of Florence, the Fregosi and Adorni of Genoa, and the Colonesi and Orsini of Rome (from the second edition of the essay onwards, he also referred to the Castelani and Nicolloti of Venice later in the essay). The Colonesi (Colonna) and Orsini were the leading families of the notorious Guelph and Ghibelline factions, which began as two sides supporting the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor respectively in the twelfth century and created a division that spread beyond Rome and lasted until the sixteenth century.[24] Hume commented that '[n]othing is more usual than to see parties, which have begun upon a real difference, continue even after that difference is lost', the reason being that after a division has occurred, people 'contract an affection to the persons with whom they are united, and an animosity against their antagonists', sentiments which are often transmitted to posterity.[25] That is why such parties are categorised as *personal,* although they differed in opinion from the outset.

Hume's main interest, however, was parties he classified as *real*, meaning parties representing a more tangible difference. In this category, he made a tripartite classification into parties from *interest, principle,* and *affection.* Those from interest he called 'the most reasonable, and the most excusable' of all factions.[26] This was a bold

[22] Ibid, p. 56.
[23] Ibid, pp. 56-7.
[24] Modern scholarship tends to view these factions as more ideological; see Serena Ferante, 'Guelphs! Factions, Liberty and Sovereignty: Inquiries about the *Quattrocento*', *History of Political Thought,* 28 (2007), pp. 571-598.
[25] Hume, 'Parties in General', *Essays*, p. 58.
[26] Ibid. Crucially, this is not the same as saying that they were less dangerous or violent. Indeed, the contrary may be the case, as we shall see below.

step by Hume, since at this time, as Pocock has reminded us, '[p]arty was for most men tolerable only when it embodied principle and so was capable of virtue', whereas parties representing interests were seen as perpetuating 'the reign of corruption'.[27] The virtue-corruption dichotomy had been at the heart of Bolingbroke's enterprise. Hume did not think that Bolingbroke's platform passed the test of objectivity and moderation, however; the erstwhile Tory was simply making a partisan case against the government, according to Hume.

Why, then, were parties from interest the most excusable? First of all, they were inevitable. With the history of the Roman republic before his eyes, Hume argued that when parties represented different orders in the state, such as nobles and people (or *nobili* and *plebe* in Machiavelli's idiom), and when these orders had a part in government, 'they naturally follow a distinct interest'.[28] Considering the 'selfishness implanted in human nature', it would be vain to expect anything else.[29] Indeed, he further commented that it would require great skill on the part of the legislator to prevent such parties, and that many philosophers believed it impossible to achieve in practice. Signalling his agreement with this notion, Hume argued that such parties of interest were in existence even in despotic governments, similarly to Montesquieu in *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (1734).

Hume followed Bolingbroke in criticising the 'attempt' to divide England into landed and trading interests.[30] Both would likely have been familiar with Charles Davenant's influential demonstration of the correlation between increases in land prices and expansion of trade.[31] Hume's main point in the present context was that the British parties were not parties based on interest in this economic sense of land versus trade. The British Whig and Tory parties, as we will see, were a mixture of the two other forms of real parties, namely those of principle and affection. At the same time, the Court and Country polarity, in other words the government-opposition dimension, was to a great extent, although not entirely, based on interest in the sense that they competed for office. This is most likely what Hume referred to when he said that such factions were 'the most

[27] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975), (Princeton, NJ, 2003), pp. 483-4
[28] Hume, 'Parties in General', *Essays*, p. 59.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid, p. 60; Bolingbroke, *Contributions*, pp. 142, 145. Despite the *Craftsman's* championing of trade, Bolingbroke is still seen as an apologist for the landed interest in particular, following Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle* (1968), (Ithaca, NY, 1992).
[31] Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Properties Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1994), p. 42.

reasonable, and the most excusable'; interests were more tangible and accountable than principles.

In contrast with parties from interest, parties from principle, 'especially speculative principle, are known only to modern times, and are, perhaps, the most extraordinary and unaccountable *phœnomenon,* that has yet appeared in human affairs'.[32] Divisions from principle led to madness and fury, according to Hume, who explicitly linked ideological differences to 'religious controversies'. The reason was that such partisans, like religious fanatics, were intent on making everyone a convert to their beliefs. Most people were eager to debate and dispute, even those with the most speculative opinions, because the human mind was 'wonderfully fortified by an unanimity of sentiments' and 'shocked by any contrariety'.[33] That is why two people of opposite principles of religion could not pass each other when travelling in different directions on a highway without arguing, although Hume believed that the road was 'sufficiently broad' for them to pass without interruption.[34]

While it may appear frivolous, this tendency in human nature 'seems to have been the origin of all religious wars and divisions', Hume believed.[35] Importantly, he had earlier in the same essay broached the questions of both civil and religious wars, two concepts inescapably and fatally linked to party division in the most extreme form as he understood it. Europeans were wrong to laugh at the racial civil wars of Morocco of 1727 when their own religious wars had been even more ridiculous. Whereas skin colour is a real difference everybody can observe, 'the controversy about an article of faith, which is utterly absurd and unintelligible, is not a difference in sentiment, but in a few phrases and expressions, which one party accepts of, without understanding them; and the other refutes in the same manner.'[36] The racial war in Morocco was also more 'reasonable' because neither the 'whites' nor the 'blacks' sought to convert their opponents.[37]

The rise of Christianity explained why parties from principle were only known to modern times, as the ancients had only known parties from interest such as nobles versus people, and personal factions such as those of Caesar and Pompey, although the latter

[32] Hume, 'Parties in General', *Essays*, p. 60.
[33] Ibid, pp. 60-1.
[34] Ibid, p. 60.
[35] Ibid, p. 61.
[36] Ibid, p. 59.
[37] Ibid, p. 610 (variant readings).

were not discussed by Hume in the present essay. In antiquity, '[t]he magistrate embraced the religion of the people, and entering cordially into the care of sacred matters, naturally acquired an authority in them, and united ecclesiastical with the civil power'.[38] Christianity arose, however, in opposition to the established religion and government, and priests could thus monopolise power within this new sect. The fact that priestly government continued after it had become the established religion led to a spirit of persecution at the heart of this religion, according to Hume.[39] This spirit of persecution had 'ever since been the poison of human society, and the source of the most inveterate factions in every government'.[40] Hume thus believed that 'parties of religion', were 'more furious and enraged than the most cruel factions that ever arose from interest and ambition'.[41] The Reformation worsened religious division. Interestingly, Hume believed that such religious factions could be classified as factions of principle on the part of the followers but factions of interest on the part of the priest-leaders. As we shall see, he would make the same argument about the British parties.

Hume concluded the essay with a paragraph on the third kind of real party: parties from affection, and by this Hume simply meant dynastic parties.[42] It may be difficult to distinguish this category of *real* party from the *personal* factions that Hume referred to at the beginning of his essay, but from the example he gives it is clear that he had different kinds of parties in mind. The key example of a real party from affection at the time was the Jacobite faction with its attachment to the exiled Stuart family. The question of Jacobitism was always prominent in Hume's thinking, even if the essay was written four years before the Jacobite rebellion in 1745, and Hume was keen to play down the significance of Jacobitism in his native Scotland. Hume had little sympathy with this type of party as it was often 'very violent'. The attachment could be good-natured or ill-natured. Activated by the splendour of majesty and power, it could be based on an imaginary interest which makes people attached to a single person and gives them the impression that they have an intimate relationship with him or her. But it could also arise 'from spite and opposition to persons whose sentiments are different from [their] own'. In general, this inclination was often found in people with 'no great generosity of spirit'

[38] Ibid, p. 61.
[39] Ibid, p. 62.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid, p. 63.
[42] Ibid.

who are not 'easily transported by friendship beyond their own interest'.[43] The allusion to Jacobitism is an appropriate segue into Hume's second major essay on party, to which we will now turn.

III: The Parties of Great Britain

'Of the Parties of Great Britain' (1741) is one of the most heavily edited of Hume's essays, which is not strange considering how much the state of parties changed between the first edition of the *Essays* (1741) and the final version of his *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* (2 vols., 1777). Importantly, he never withdrew the essay, but instead sought to amend it. Hume began the essay by arguing that party division was inevitable in a mixed government such as the British, delicately balanced between its monarchical and republican elements. In addition to this uncertain balance, people's passions and prejudices would necessarily generate different opinions concerning the government, even among people of the best understanding. While all reasonable people would agree to maintain the mixed government, they would disagree about particulars. Those with a mild temperament, who love peace and order and detest sedition and civil war, would incline towards monarchy and entrust greater powers to the crown than those of bolder and more passionate lovers of liberty.[44] In short, 'there are parties of PRINCIPLE involved in the very nature of our constitution, which may properly enough be denominated those of COURT and COUNTRY'.[45] The parties of Court and Country would always subsist as long as Britain remained a limited monarchy, that is as long as there was a parliament, Hume believed, in this regard echoing Bolingbroke and the opposition press.[46] This analysis was starkly different from that of the ministerial press, which called Bolingbroke's Court-Country distinction 'wicked', since it suggested that the interests of the king and court were opposite to those of the country.[47]

Arguing for the Court-Country division was just to say that there would always be parties of government and opposition. Since there was no alternative centre of

[43] Ibid.

[44] Adam Smith would follow Hume closely in these descriptions in his *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, (Indianapolis, IN, 1978), pp. 219-21 (Report of 1762-3).

[45] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 65.

[46] Bishop Berkeley would also say that 'There is and ever will be a natural Strife between Court and Country' in *Maxims concerning Patriotism* (Dublin, 1750), p. 6.

[47] *London Journal*, No. 767, 9 March 1734.

government than the monarch there would always be a Court party, and since the Country party platform represented the standard set of opposition arguments, there would always be a Country party. In all editions of the essay up until and including the one published in 1768, Hume emphasised that he did not attach any value judgement to the appellations but simply used them because they were prevalent. He was clear that the Court party may occasionally look after the interest of the *country* and the Country party oppose it.[48] He believed that Cicero, whose oratory if not philosophy Hume adored,[49] had spoken as a 'true party man' when he defined the *Optimates* as 'the best and worthiest of the ROMANS'.[50] Probably in opposition to Bolingbroke's *Dissertation upon Parties*, which Hume was to cite later in the same essay, he added that the term 'Country party' may have a positive connotation in the same manner as the term *Optimates,* '[b]ut that it would be folly to draw any argument' on account of names given by partisans.[51]

Similarly to Rapin's analysis of Whig and Tory, Hume continued by highlighting that the Court and Country parties were mixed parties, that they were not just motivated by principle, but also by interest, 'without which they would scarcely ever be dangerous or violent'.[52] The statement appears to be at odds with Hume's argument in the previous essay when he expressed a preference for parties of interest over parties of principle. However, we have to remember that he never said that interested parties were less 'dangerous or violent', simply that they were 'the most reasonable, and the most excusable'. We also have to note that not all principles are equally dangerous. The Court and Country parties represented a struggle between the monarchical and republican elements of the constitution (exactly what Rapin thought that Tory and Whig had done in his day), but their disagreement was not extra-constitutional. This division did not involve principles regarding religion to the same extent (but, as we shall see below and in chapter five) as Whig and Tory, nor those regarding dynastic conflict.

Hume believed that leaders of factions were mainly motivated by interest, because they were closer to power, whereas inferior members were more attached to principles. The crown would naturally entrust and give government positions to those who were most

[48] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays,* p. 610 (variant readings).

[49] Hume, 'Of the Standard of Taste', *Essays,* p. 243. For Cicero's impact, see Tim Stuart-Buttle, *From Moral Theology to Moral Philosophy: Cicero, Christianity and Human Nature from Locke to Hume* (Oxford, forthcoming).

[50] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays,* p. 610 (variant readings).

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid, p. 65.

favourable to monarchical power, who at this time paradoxically were the Whigs because of Jacobitism and proscription of the Tories. Hume hinted that the Whigs in government had moved ground somewhat, as he highlighted that 'this temptation will naturally engage them to go greater lengths than their principles would otherwise carry them'.[53] Likewise, '[t]heir antagonists, who are disappointed in their ambitious aims, throw themselves into the power whose sentiments incline them to be most jealous of royal power, and naturally carry those sentiments to a greater height than sound politics will justify'.[54] In the original edition of the essay, Hume, echoing Rapin as well as the *Spectator*, added that 'the greatest part are commonly men who associate themselves they know not why; from example, from passion, from idleness.'[55]

Hume then turned to the religious dimension of party politics, highlighting that 'in all ages of the world, priests have been enemies to liberty', since freedom of thought always posed a threat to priestly power.[56] For these reasons, 'the established clergy, while things are in their natural situation, will always be of the *Court*-party; as, on the contrary, dissenters of all kinds will be of the *Country*-party; since they can never hope for that toleration, which they stand in need of, but by means of our free government'.[57] The Swedish sixteenth-century king Gustavus Vasa may have been the only king who managed to supress both the established church and liberty at the same time, according to Hume.[58] The natural order would have been the opposite, as in the situation in Holland. As we shall see, however, religion and dynastic conflict had interrupted the natural development of politics in Britain. Although Hume agreed with Bolingbroke that the Dissenters should normally side with the 'Country party', he differed starkly from the Englishman by acknowledging and analysing the religious and dynastic aspects of politics.

Having outlined what he referred to as a 'general theory', Hume went on to try and explain 'the first rise of parties in ENGLAND'. What followed was by and large an historical account, which should not surprise us since we know that Hume had already read Rapin at this time. Much like Rapin's *Dissertation*, Hume related the rise of party to

[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid, p. 610 (variant readings).
[56] Ibid, pp. 65-6.
[57] Ibid, p. 66.
[58] Ibid.

the division between Roundhead and Cavalier during the great rebellion.[59] '[T]he species of government gave birth to them, by a regular and infallible operation', Hume contended.[60] Hume was never more Whiggish as when he described Charles I as '[a]n ambitious, or rather a misguided prince…who… openly acted in violation of liberty'.[61] However, Hume's larger point was that it was not strange that the civil war divided the people into 'parties', since even the impartial in his own day could still not make up their minds about the event. Both the king and parliament threatened to break the balance of the constitution by their respective absolutist and republican aims. Since the contest was so equal, interest played no role, but 'men naturally fell to the side which was most conformable to their usual principles'.[62] Hume did not describe Roundhead and Cavalier as extremists but instead argued that neither 'disowned either monarchy or liberty' but simply reflected inclinations.[63] That is how they fitted into his 'general theory' of party: 'they may be considered as court and country-party, enflamed into civil war, by an unhappy concurrence of circumstances, and by the turbulent spirit of the age'.[64] They also fitted with the religious aspect of his theory, as the established clergy joined the king's party, and the non-conformist Presbyterians were on parliament's side.

The civil war was fatal to the Cavaliers at first, as the king was executed in 1649, and the Roundhead cause second, as the royal family was restored in 1660. According to Hume, however, 'Charles II was not made wiser by the example of his father; but prosecuted the same measures, though at first, with more secrecy and caution'.[65] This seems to have been why new parties arose, according to Hume, 'under the appellations of *Whig* and *Tory,* which have continued ever since to confound and distract our government'. It was at this stage that Hume's general theory of party became problematic, as he acknowledged that '[t]o determine the nature of these parties is, perhaps one of the most difficult problems, that can be met with, and is a proof that history may contain questions, as uncertain as any to be found in the most abstract sciences'.[66] At this point in the essay, it is clear that Hume was imitating the *Spectator's* polite prose, when he said that 'we are at a loss to tell the nature, pretensions, and principles of the different factions',

[59] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 67.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid, p. 68. For Hume's revision on this score, see chapter five.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid, p. 69.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.

even if partisans of both parties were ubiquitous.[67] It remains clear, however, that he took them much more seriously than previous essayists, because, unlike Addison, he proceeded to try and explain these pretensions and principles.

Since Whig and Tory had been preceded by Roundhead and Cavalier, Hume began by comparing them. His first, somewhat surprising, and probably mistaken, claim was that 'the principles of *passive obedience,* and *indefeasible right,* which were but little heard among the CAVALIERS, but became the universal doctrine…of a TORY'.[68] Pushed to its extremity, this would imply an absolute as opposed to a limited monarchy, and 'a formal renunciation of all our liberties', since a *limited* monarchy which cannot be resisted would be an absurdity.[69] Quoting Bolingbroke directly for the first time in the essay, Hume added that passive obedience was absurd enough to disturb the common sense of comparatively uncivilised peoples such as the Samoyedes or the Hottentots.[70] Fortunately, the Tories never carried this doctrine into practice, for '[t]he TORIES, as men, were enemies to oppression; and also as ENGLISHMEN, they were enemies to arbitrary power'.[71] They may not have been as zealous for liberty as their antagonists, but were sufficiently flexible to forget about passive obedience and indefeasible right 'when they saw themselves openly threatened with a subversion of the ancient government'.[72] Hume is here referring to the alleged attempts by James II to impose a form of absolutism, which led to the invitation by the 'immortal seven' of William of Orange and the Glorious Revolution.

From the Revolution, 'the firmest foundation of BRITISH liberty' as Hume described it in his early Rapinesque rhetoric, a great deal could be learned about the Tories. The revolution showed that the Tories were 'a genuine *court-party,* such as might be expected in a BRITISH government'. In other words, while they were attached to monarchy they were also attached to liberty.[73] Hume is here highly critical of the Tories, as he believed that they 'carried their monarchical principles further, even in practice, but

[67] Ibid, p. 70.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid, pp. 70, 611; Bolingbroke, *Dissertation upon Parties,* in *Political Writings*, p. 15.
[71] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 70. Hume was closely following Rapin at this point; see Rapin, *Dissertation,* p. 114.
[72] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 70. Hume would put more emphasis on religion in his account of the same episode in his *History.*
[73] Ibid, p. 71.

more so in theory, than was, in any degree, consistent with a limited government'.[74] However, while they may have been doubted before the revolution, their active part in it seems to have vindicated them in Hume's eyes.[75]

Hume acknowledged, however, that neither the revolutionary nor the Hanoverian settlements were entirely satisfactory for the Tories, because they were at odds with their principles of passive obedience and indefeasible hereditary right, as well as their affections for the Stuart family. They compromised because 'any other settlement…must have been dangerous, if not fatal to liberty'. On this basis, Hume arrived at a general definition of a Tory since the Glorious Revolution as '*a lover of monarchy, though without abandoning liberty; and a partizan of the family of* STUART'. From this he also derived his definition of a Whig as '*a lover of liberty though without renouncing monarchy; and a friend to the settlement in the* PROTESTANT *line*'.[76] The parties were different in degree rather than kind.

At this stage Hume signalled his main disagreement with Bolingbroke, who had argued that the real difference between Whig and Tory had disappeared after the Revolution. If Bolingbroke were right, it 'would turn our whole history into an ænigma', Hume said, and, in the 1741 and 1742 editions of the essay, he added that it was also 'so contrary to the strongest Evidence, that a Man must have a great Opinion of his own Eloquence to attempt proving it'.[77] A crucial piece of evidence for the continuing existence of the Tory party was their Jacobitism: 'Have not the TORIES always borne an avowed affection to the family of Stuart, and have not their adversaries always opposed with vigour the succession of that family?'[78] How could Hume be so confident that they were, at heart, Jacobite? As Walpole, who was convinced of the reality of the Jacobite threat,[79] put it, '[n]o man of common prudence will profess himself openly a Jacobite', as doing so was not only treason and carried the death penalty, but could also hurt the

[74] Ibid.

[75] At least two of the 'immortal seven' (Danby and Compton) have generally been considered Tories.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, pp. 611-2 (variant readings). Hume expressed his admiration for Bolingbroke's 'genius for oratory' twice in the original version of 'Of Eloquence' (1742). In the edition of the essay published in *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* (4 vols., 1753-4), he added that Bolingbroke's works contained 'defects in argument, method and precision'; see *Essays*, pp. 621, 622 (variant readings).

[78] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 612 (variant readings).

[79] Paul Fritz, 'The Anti-Jacobite Intelligence System of the English Ministers, 1715-45', *HJ*, 16 (1973), pp. 265-89.

cause.[80] In the earlier paper war, Bolingbroke had denied the prominence of Jacobitism as much as the ministerial press had warned about it.[81] In parliament, Walpole identified it as the number one threat while Sir William Wyndham of the Hanoverian Tories said it was merely a ghost haunting the Court Whigs.[82] Without any hard evidence, Hume had to make a judgement call. It was simply the only thing that could explain why the Tories, whose principles were more favourable to monarchy, had been hostile to all monarchs since the Revolution with the exception of Anne, who was both a Stuart and a devout Anglican, and selected a Tory administration in 1710-14.[83] In other words, during the reign of Anne, affection, principle and interest coalesced for the Tories. During his stay in London, Hume may also have been convinced of the prominence of Jacobitism in the Tory party by members of the Marchmont family, the powerful Scottish Whig political dynasty, with whom Hume was on familiar terms and indeed distantly related.[84]

Hume recognised that 'the TORY party seem, of late, to have decayed much in their numbers; still more in their zeal; and I may venture to stay, still more in their credit and authority'.[85] Most educated people and at least most philosophers since the time of John Locke[86] would be ashamed to be associated with the Tory party, he argued. By contrast, 'in almost all companies the name of OLD WHIG is mentioned as an uncontestable [sic] appellation of honour and dignity'.[87] That is why some members of the opposition referred to the courtiers as the true Tories and themselves the true Whigs.[88] Hume was fully aware, however, that the Tories had a power base which was much more consistent and reliable than Jacobitism: High-Church Anglicanism. The popularity of journals such as *Mist's Weekly Journal* (1716-28) and *Fog's Journal* (1728-37), which differed widely from Bolingbroke's *Craftsman* in their attitude to Protestant Dissenters,

[80] *Commons, 1715-54*, I, pp. 68-9.

[81] The ministerial press continued to warn about Jacobitism; see *Daily Gazatteer*, No. 883, 4 May 1738.

[82] *Parl. Hist.*, X, col. 445.

[83] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 612 (variant readings). Unlike Bolingbroke, Hume did refer directly to proscription.

[84] Hume, 'My Own Life', *Essays*, p. xxxii; Hume to George Carre of Nisbet, 12 November 1739, *Letters*, I, p. 36. The Marchmont family was in opposition to Walpole and remained in opposition until coming to terms with Pelham in 1747.

[85] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 614 (variant readings).

[86] Even if Locke played a limited role as a political thinker in the aftermath to the revolution, as J.P. Kenyon, *Revolutionary Principles: The Politics of Party* (Cambridge, 1977), has shown, he was clearly seen as a Whig hero at this stage; see, e.g., *Craftsman*, No. 540, 6 November 1736.

[87] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 614 (variant readings).

[88] A writer in the *Craftsman* described himself as 'a Whig after the old fashion' (*Craftsman*, No. 512, 24 April 1736).

demonstrates the ubiquity of this tradition, which was linked to royalism in general and Jacobitism in particular.[89] Hume was by no means saying that Toryism had become irrelevant; if that was what he thought then he would not have treated it so seriously.[90] By contrast, Hume was clear that '[t]here are…very considerable remains of that party in ENGLAND, with all their old prejudices'.[91]

While Hume believed that the Whig-Tory dichotomy was real in the 1740s, he was fully aware that the fact that the Whigs had become a Court party, and many Tories resorted to Country party politics,[92] caused problems for his general theory. ''Tis monstrous to see an established episcopal clergy in declared opposition to the court, and a non-conformist presbyterian clergy in conjunction with it', he wrote.[93] The only thing that could have produced 'such an unnatural conduct in both', was that 'the former espoused monarchical principles too high for the present settlement, which is founded on the principles of liberty: And the latter, being afraid of the prevalence of those high principles, adhered to that party from whom they had reason to expect liberty and toleration'.[94] As we have seen, Bolingbroke knew that he had to win over the sizable voting block of Dissenters to create a viable Country party that could unite opposition Whigs and Tories. However, when Gibson and Walpole fell out in 1736,[95] just before Hume arrived in London, the opposition split along Whig and Tory, or low and high church, dealing a blow to Bolingbroke's hopes for such a union, at temporarily.

The most important evidence for Hume that the British party division had not turned into Court and Country was that almost all Dissenters sided with the Court, that is the Whigs, and all the lower clergy of the Church of England (and the non-jurors)[96] sided with the opposition, i.e. the Tories. Unlike Jacobitism, this could be more openly expressed, for obvious reasons. 'This may convince us, that some biass still hangs upon our constitution, some extrinsic weight, which turns it from its natural course, and causes

[89] These journals were also Jacobite, but their clericalism could be expressed more openly. For the relationship between High Church and Jacobitism, see Richard Sharp, '"Our Church": Nonjurors, High Churchmen, and the Church of England', *Royal Stuart Papers*, 57 (2000), pp. 1-21.

[90] Modern research has indeed shown that the Tory party remained buoyant in parliament at least until the mid-1750s; see, e.g., Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982).

[91] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 72.

[92] This was not just Bolingbroke, but also his friend Sir William Wyndham.

[93] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 612 (variant readings).

[94] Ibid.

[95] See n5.

[96] Many non-jurors did not attend public churches, but regarded themselves as the 'true Church of England' (Hearne's Recollections XI, pp. 131, 212).

a confusion in our parties', Hume concluded.[97] This extrinsic weight was religion, which Hume would analyse in greater detail in 'Superstition and Enthusiasm' (1741) as well as his *History*.

Hume argued briefly in a passage highly indicative of Rapin's influence that foreign policy differentiated the two parties, as he saw France as the natural ally of the Tories and Holland the natural ally of the Whigs.[98] Indeed, Whig pamphlets from the War of the Spanish Succession to the Austrian Succession had argued that opposition to France was the *only* real criterion of Whiggism.[99] France was indeed the country where James II had first gone into exile, and where the Jacobite court had been located until it moved in 1713. France remained a hotspot for Jacobites, however, and the French government continued to support Jacobitism periodically.[100] Such well-known Jacobite writers as the Chevalier Ramsay and Nathaniel Hooke were given titles and jobs by the French court. France was also the country to where many Jacobite conspirators fled, including Francis Atterbury and Nathaniel Mist. Holland was the native land of William III, and also a commercial republic, with which many Whigs would naturally sympathise. Once again, the ascendency of Walpole had produced a change in this respect. While foreign policy was not Walpole's main area of interest, at least not before the dismissal of Townsend in 1730, the initial focus of his foreign policy had been friendship with France.[101] This friendship was increasingly strained after 1731, however, and by the time Hume's essay was published the two countries were on opposite sides in the Anglo-Spanish conflict, the 'War of Jenkin's Ear' (1739-48), as France was allied with Spain.[102] Yet the passage on foreign policy looked rather out of place in the essay, and seems like it could have been taken from, and was more suitable to the period of, Rapin's *Dissertation*, where the Frenchman had gone into more detail to make the same point.[103]

In the last pages of the essay, Hume returned to the dynastic question, stressing again that this was the main dividing line between the parties. Importantly, however, the

[97] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 72.

[98] Ibid, p. 612 (variant readings). For background, see Jeremy Black, 'Jacobitism and British Foreign Policy under the first two Georges', *Royal Stuart Papers*, 32 (1988), pp. 1-18.

[99] *The Whigs Appeal to the Tories in a Letter to Sir T[homas] H[anmer]* (London, 1711), pp. 2-3, passim; [Lord Perceval], *Faction Detected* (London, second ed. 1743), pp. 17, 18,

[100] Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 90-104.

[101] It was the death of Louis XIV in 1715 and the Anglo-French alliance in 1716-31 that kept the Jacobite court south of the Alps.

[102] H. T. Dickinson, *Walpole and the Whig Supremacy* (London, 1973), pp. 113-139.

[103] See above p. 51.

Whigs were attached to the Hanoverian succession only as a means to support liberty. He acknowledged that the Whig government may have taken steps inimical to liberty,[104] but only in the ignorant belief that this would support the present royal family and thus liberty, since the Stuarts posed a threat to the Revolution Settlement. He then continued, with a nod to his preceding essay 'Of Parties in General', to argue that the Tories' attachment to the Stuarts was based on affection.[105] The conclusion that Hume kept in the last edition of the essay simply said that the Tories had 'so long [been] obliged to talk in the republican stile, that they seem to have been made converts of themselves by their hypocrisy'.[106] What did it mean to talk in the republican style at a time when there were virtually no self-styled republicans? In its simplest form, it meant that the Tories had sided with the people versus the Court, as they had been in opposition. Yet Hume may have had a more specific political programme in mind.

As Montesquieu had done when visiting England, Hume may have attended parliament and perhaps the debate about the King's Speech at the opening of the new session of parliament on 24 January 1738, since he was in London at the time and, we can safely assume, deeply immersed in the study of British politics.[107] In that debate, the leading Tory-Jacobite Sir Watkin Williams Wynn attacked Walpole's ministry for curtailing freedom of speech,[108] allowing public debt to rise, and corrupting parliament and the people, while stressing the importance of the 'the preservation of our excellent constitution'.[109] When the reduction of the standing army was debated on 3 February 1738, William Shippen, another leading Tory-Jacobite, said that the maintenance of the

[104] He was probably referring to such common oppositional complaints as Septennial Act 1716, the question of influence (see below), and heavily borrowing (see 'Of Public Credit' from 1752).

[105] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 614 (variant readings).

[106] Ibid, p. 72.

[107] Hume's essay 'Of Eloquence' suggests that he had attended parliamentary debates. Even if he did not attend these particular debates in person, these and other debates would have been discussed in London circles at the time. During his 1737-1739 stay in London, Hume was acquainted with certain Scottish members of parliament, notably such members of the influential Marchmont family as Alexander Hume-Campbell and Lord Polwarth (later 3rd Earl of Marchmont); see *Letters*, I, p. 28. From the early 1740s, some of his friends sat in the Commons, e.g. William Mure of Caldwell and James Oswald. Moreover, although direct parliamentary reporting was not allowed until 1771, Samuel Johnson satirised parliamentary debates ('the senate of Lilliput'), or reported during recess, in the *Gentlemen's Magazine* from the mid-1730s, to circumvent the laws. We also know that Hume later frequented the House of Commons (Hume to William Robertson, *Letters*, I, p. 300).

[108] Wynn was referring to the censorship of stage plays and parliamentary reporting, issues which may well have occasioned Hume's essay 'Of the Liberty of the Press' (1741). The Licensing Act 1737 placed control of censorship under the Lord Chamberlain. The first play to be banned under the new legislation was *Gustavus Vasa* by Henry Brooke. What is more, a Commons resolution on 13 April 1738 ruled parliamentary reporting to be illicit (*Parl. Hist*, X, col. 800).

[109] Ibid, cols. 371-2.

standing army 'produces but one single good, which is security of the [Whig] administration'.[110] By 'the republican stile', Hume may have meant that Wynn, Shippen and other Tories had adopted the rhetoric of the Country party opposition. This tactic, which had originally been Whig and viewed by Tories as quasi-republicanism, was recommended by Bolingbroke, and had in fact had been staple Tory rhetoric for decades.

In the conclusion of the various editions of the essay prior to 1770, Hume turned to his native Scotland, arguing that there never were any Tories in that country but only Whigs and Jacobites.[111] An outright Jacobite differed from a Tory by having 'no regard to the constitution, but is either a zealous partizan of absolute monarchy, or at least willing to sacrifice our liberties to the obtaining the succession in that family to which he is attached'.[112] We have seen that the Tories were not prepared to push things to that extreme. The reason behind the difference was that the political and religious divisions corresponded to each other in Scotland unlike in England. All Presbyterians were Whigs and all Episcopalians were Jacobites in Scotland. Since the governance of the Presbyterian Church had been decided at the Williamite Revolution, Scottish Anglicans had no motivation to swear oaths to William III.[113] The Jacobites had thus been more violent in Scotland than their Tory 'brethren' in England, wrote Hume, with a reference to the rebellion of 1715, which had been centred on Scotland.

Writing in 1741, Hume believed that the Jacobite party was almost entirely extinguished in Scotland, and that 'the Distinction of *Court* and *Country*, which is but creeping in at LONDON, is the only one that is ever mention'd in this *kingdom*'.[114] At least this was the message Hume wanted to convey to his London readers. That Scotland

[110] Ibid, col. 380.

[111] The same argument was made by William Cleghorn (who was chosen for the moral philosophy chair at Edinburgh University ahead of Hume in 1745) in *The Spirit and Principles of the Whigs and Jacobites Compared* (London, 1746), and Thomas Reid, invoking Cleghorn, in his *Lectures on Politics* (1765-66); see *Thomas Reid on Society and Politics: Papers and Lectures* (Edinburgh, 2015), p. 50.

[112] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 615 (variant readings). In other words, they were either infatuated with principle or affection.

[113] In 1712, under Queen Anne, these non-jurors formed the Scottish Episcopal Church, but the split had taken place after the Glorious Revolution when the episcopal, or Anglican, segment of the Kirk were unwilling to swear allegiance to William and Mary, and became exterior to the state-church, which from then on became wholly Presbyterian. According to modern scholarship, it was the Jacobitism of the Scottish bishops that motivated William of Orange to break their control and hand it over to the Presbyterians instead; see Bruce Lenman, 'The Scottish Episcopal Clergy and the Ideology of Jacobitism', in *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 36-48, at 39. As Lenman put it, 'A Scots episcopalian was, in some cases until Prince Charles died in 1788, more often than not a Jacobite at heart' (p. 46).

[114] Hume, 'Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 616 (variant readings).

was hopelessly divided is clear from an entertaining pamphlet from 1744 fairly evenly splitting Edinburgh's ladies into Whigs and Jacobites.[115] More empathically, the 'unhappy troubles'[116] of the 'Forty-five' would prove Hume badly wrong, and his reflections about the decline of Jacobitism in Scotland naturally did not survive in the third edition of the *Essays* published in 1748.

Against this backdrop it is hard to classify Hume of the early 1740s as anything else than a Whig. The main point Hume appears to have promoted in the conclusion of the original essay, however, was the distinction of Court, representing monarchy, and Country, representing liberty, with which he had begun the essay. This conclusion brings Hume closer to the person who is usually seen as his *bête-noire*, namely Bolingbroke. It is important to stress, however, that Hume was, and viewed himself as, making a very different argument from Bolingbroke, whom he believed was disingenuously arguing that Tory and Whig had disappeared when everyone could see that they had not. Convinced of the danger of religious principles, it should not surprise us that Hume was willing to promote a Court-Country polarity. As we have seen, however, religion stood in the way, and Whig and Tory still won the day.

IV: Superstition and Enthusiasm

Hume's two essays on party are immediately followed by 'Of Superstition and Enthusiasm', which, as Pocock has pointed out, 'offers to explain the reasons why an unnatural bias or extrinsic weight still hangs upon the British constitution'.[117] In total, they form a trilogy as all essays deal with the genesis of the British party division. More generally, Hume attempted in this essay to explain the impact of the 'two species of false religion', superstition and enthusiasm, defined as excessive fear and hope respectively, on government and society.[118] The two sentiments were opposite in the sense that superstition had a bias towards priestly power whereas enthusiasm was a friend of civil liberty. The most extreme form of superstition was 'popery', but Hume was clear that it

[115] *An Impartial and Genuine List of the Ladys on the Whig…or…Jacobite Partie. Taken in hand merely to show that the Common Accusation and Slander, Rashly Thrown on the…Female…Sex. As to their being all Jacobites is False and Groundless. As upon a Calculation the Whigs are Far Superior in numbers and not inferior either in Rank, Beauty or Sollidity*, NLS, MS 293, fols. 1-5.

[116] Hume to Sir James Johnstone, 19 September 1745, *Letters*, I, p. 63.

[117] Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* (6 vols., Cambridge, 1999-2015), II, p. 193.

[118] Hume, 'Superstition and Enthusiasm', *Essays*, pp. 73, 75.

also applied to the Church of England with its 'Propensity to Priestly Power and Dominion'.[119] The most extreme forms of enthusiasm were the various Protestant sects that had rebelled against the king in the English Civil War, including the Presbyterians in Scotland.[120] In that conflict, superstition had prevailed within the royalist and Church party, or the Cavaliers, and enthusiasm within their antagonists, the parliamentary party, or the Roundheads.

Since the origin of Whig and Tory, the leaders of the Whigs had either been deists or latitudinarians, in other words moderate Anglicans, who were 'friends to toleration, and indifferent to any particular sects of *christians*'.[121] For that reason, the various Protestant sects 'who have all a strong tincture of enthusiasm, concurred with that party [the Whigs], in defence of civil liberty'.[122] Hume believed that the 'tolerating spirit' of the Whigs had led to a rapprochement between that party and the Catholics, who had previously been united with 'high-church *tories*…in support of prerogative and kingly power'.[123] This was especially the case at the inception of the party appellations, during the Exclusion Crisis of 1679-81, when those who were called Whigs sought to exclude the Duke of York (the future James II) from the succession to the throne due to his Catholicism, while those who were called Tories defended the royal succession.[124]

The main conflict when Hume wrote this essay, however, was not between prerogative and privilege, but between High Church on the one hand, and Low Church and Dissenters on the other (and Episcopalians and Presbyterians in Scotland). Rather than trying to make a point about Protestantism versus Catholicism, it is possible that Hume's main intention was to point to the importance of this tripartite division within Protestantism, which was more relevant in the British context. The gulf between High Church and Dissenters in particular helped to explain why the Tory and Whig parties had survived. Religious beliefs would trump political considerations for those disposed to either superstition or enthusiasm. The High Church Tories opposed the Whigs because they believed that the Church was undermined by the Dissenting interest. The key slogan of the Tory party in the first age of party had been 'the Church is in danger', as we saw

[119] Ibid, p. 617 (variant readings).
[120] This was in fact the beginning of armed conflict in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms.
[121] Ibid, p. 79.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] This episode will be dealt with in greater detail in chapter five.

in chapter one. Once the Tories formed the government in 1710-14, their main reforms were pushed against Dissenters, including the Occasional Conformity Act 1711 and the Schism Act 1714,[125] both of which were repealed by the Sunderland-Stanhope Whig government in 1718 and 1719. While the Whigs managed to build up a strong power base among bishops after 1714, and in particular under Walpole, most of the lower clergy remained Tory, and the 1736 conflict over the Mortmain and Quakers' Tithe Bills created a rift between opposition Whigs and Tories.

These ecclesiastical divisions help to explain the political situation in Britain in the early Hanoverian period, when the Court party was made up of Whigs and the Country party predominantly of Tories, and were a strong reason why the latter could not support the Court. This may have been 'unnatural' as the Whigs were the party of civil liberty and the Tories the party of royal power, but their respective policies vis-à-vis Protestant Dissenters explain why this division endured. They also shed light on what Hume meant when he said that even if the Tories had long talked in the republican style, a considerable chunk of 'that party in ENGLAND, with all their old prejudices', remained. It is true that the renegade Tories Bolingbroke and Wyndham worked with opposition Whigs from 1726, but, as Eveline Cruickshanks has shown, a letter from the Pretender was required to make the lion's share of the Tory party ally with Whigs in opposition in 1731 and 1741.[126] As the split in 1736 demonstrated, religion remained the greatest stumbling block. Religion cannot be separated from ideology in the eighteenth century any more than dynastic conflict; indeed, more overtly political debates can sometimes appear as window dressing by comparison. The power and originality of Hume's analysis was that he demonstrated how interest and principle intermingled.

[125] The latter Act was never enforced, however, as Queen Anne died on the day it was to take effect. The achievements of the 1710-14 Tory government were by and large disappointing to the High Church segment of the Tory party, whose ambitions were frustrated by Harley and Queen Anne; see Geoffrey Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London, 1973), pp. 268-76.

[126] Cruickshanks, *Political Untouchables*, pp. 12, 27-8. For revised dates of the first letter, see Cruickshanks, 'Jacobites, Tories and "James III"', *Parliamentary History*, 21 (2002), pp. 247-54; Andrew Hanman, '"So Few Facts": Jacobites, Tories and the Pretender', *Parliamentary History*, 19 (2000), pp. 237-57.

V: Party Politics at the end of the Walpole Era

Intellectually, Hume's claim that Whig and Tory still mattered may have placed him firmly in the Whig camp,[127] but it did not necessarily make him a government supporter. It has become a commonplace to categorise Hume with Duncan Forbes as a 'sceptical Whig'.[128] This may be as close as we can come to labelling his politics,[129] although the local nature of Hume's self-labelling as a sceptical Whig will be discussed in the next chapter. Many have tried to portray him as a supporter of the Court Whig government, or at least an exponent of establishment Whiggism.[130] His early essays, however, especially 'A Character of Sir Robert Walpole' (1742), gave a highly ambivalent impression.[131] As M. M. Goldsmith has pointed out, Hume was in fact received by some as an opposition writer.[132] Moreover, Hume heaped praise over the giants of the literary opposition, on Swift, Pope, and even, albeit with heavy qualifications, Bolingbroke.[133] While some commentators have endeavoured to classify Hume as either a Whig or a Tory,[134] instead of a philosopher above party as Hume believed himself to be, more recent scholars have rightly pointed out that Hume's main intention in his early essays was to teach lessons of moderation to government and opposition alike.[135] This is the line Hume explicitly took in the original introduction to his essay 'Of the Independency of Parliament' (1741), where he compared the Court and Country parties.[136] Hume began by arguing that he had

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[127] *Common Sense, or the Englishman's Journal,* 17 July 1737, in vol. I (London, 1737), p. 172.

[128] Forbes, 'Sceptical Whiggism, Commerce and Liberty', in *Essays on Adam Smith*, ed. Andrew Skinner and Thomas Wilson (Oxford, 1975), pp. 179-201.

[129] As Forbes has remarked, as soon as one has found enough evidence that points in one ideological direction, evidence pointing in the opposite direction, from the same chronological phase, will be found (*Hume's Philosophical Politics,* p. 135).

[130] Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 138, 250; Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, pp. 132-3.

[131] This essay first appeared in the second volume of *Essays, Moral and Political*, which was published early in 1742 just before the fall of Walpole. Hume then turned it into a footnote to 'That Politics may be reduced to a Science' (1741), before dropping it completely in 1770. Hume's correspondence suggests that he was even more damning of Walpole in private (Hume to Colonel Abercromby, 7 August 1747, *Letters*, I, p. 103).

[132] Goldsmith, 'Faction Detected: Ideological Consequences of Robert Walpole's Decline and Fall', *History*, 64 (1979), pp. 1-19, at 15-16.

[133] Hume, 'Civil Liberty', *Essays*, pp. 91; idem, 'Eloquence', *Essays*, pp. 99, 108. Hume was later, in private, much less polite about Bolingbroke (*Letters*, I, pp. 168, 208). However, he kept using Bolingbroke, along with Pope, as a reference for style (Hume to Andrew Millar, 20 June 1758, *Letters*, I, pp. 282-3).

[134] James Conniff, 'Hume on Political Parties: The Case for Hume as a Whig', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 12 (1978-9), pp. 150-173; Marjorie Grene, 'Hume: Sceptic and Tory?', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 4 (1943), pp. 333-348.

[135] Harris, *Hume*; Steven J. Wulf, 'The Skeptical Life in Hume's Political Thought', *Polity*, 33 (2000), pp. 77-99, esp. 89-94.

[136] This introduction was removed after 1760, and is overlooked by Goldsmith (see n132).

found the Court party 'less assuming and dogmatical in conversation' than the Country party.[137] He added that this only applied 'to Conversation, and to Gentlemen, who have engag'd by Interest or Inclination in that Party'.[138] The Court party's 'hir'd Scribblers' were 'altogether as scurrilous as the Mercanaries of the other Party', and in that sense the government-funded *Daily Gazetteer* had no advantage over *Common Sense, or the Englishman's Journal* of the opposition.[139] Generally speaking, however, Court politicians were more apt to make concessions than their more zealous adversaries. The opposition would say that their party was founded on public spirit and that they could not endure any doctrines pernicious to liberty. The Court would refer to Shaftesbury's description of a clown who could not support his cause by arguments and instead became violent.[140]

Characteristically, Hume contended that we should believe neither opinion.[141] Instead, Hume thought that he could explain the difference in conduct between Court and Country without offending either side. He argued that Country had usually been 'the most popular' party, in both senses of the word. Since they were used to prevailing in public debates, they became overconfident in their opinions and could not stand being challenged. The Court party, however, was so accustomed to being 'run down by popular talkers' that they were always surprised when met with moderate arguments and concessions, and would then return like for like. Hume expanded this thought into a general observation: 'In all controversies, we find, without regarding the truth of falshood on either side, that those who defend the established and popular opinions, are always the most dogmatical and imperious in their stile'.[142] That is why the religious free-thinkers,[143] who 'oppose the exorbitant power of the clergy', were more moderate and good-mannered compared to 'the furious zeal and scurrility of their adversaries'.[144] Similarly,

[137] Hume, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays*, p. 607 (variant readings).

[138] Ibid, p. 608

[139] Ibid, pp. 608-9. The *Daily Gazaetteer* was a Walpole-funded newspaper where Ralph Courteville, under the pseudonym of Algernon Sidney, was the main writer. For the latter journal, see George Hilton Jones, 'The Jacobites, Charles Molloy, and *Common Sense'*, *The Review of English Studies*, 4 (1953), pp. 144-7. For a contemporary assessment of party writers, from a ministerial point of view, see *An Historical View of the Principles, Characters, Persons, &c of the Political Writers in Great Britain* (London, 1740).

[140] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), (3 vols., Indianapolis, IN, 2011), III, p. 67.

[141] Hume, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays*, p. 608 (variant readings).

[142] Ibid.

[143] Hume listed the deists Anthony Collins and Matthew Tindal, and such freethinking clergymen as Benjamin Hoadly and James Forster.

[144] Hume, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays*, p. 608 (variant readings).

in relation to the ancient-modern debate in France at the beginning of the century, Hume believed that those arguing the case for modern learning, the less popular side, 'never transgressed the bounds of moderation and good breeding', in stark contrast to those in favour of the ancients. In both controversies, there is little doubt that Hume was on the side of gentlemanly moderation in opposition to what he saw as popular, or democratic, cant.[145] Religious freethinking was clearly a minority, elite movement at this time, unlike High Church Anglicanism, which is why Cruickshanks may well be right when she remarked that the Tories would have won every election between 1715 and 1745 if the voting system had been more proportional, as they tended to represent counties and larger constituencies.[146]

Hume went on to consider one of the most heated party-political disputes of his time, that of influence (or corruption) of parliament. As we have seen, this had been at the heart of Bolingbroke's attack on Walpole's government. Hume followed the Court position in arguing that such influence, as long as it was confined to offices and honours as opposed to outright bribes, actually helped to maintain the balance of the mixed constitution. Hume had already established in 'Of the Liberty of the Press' (1741) that liberty, or parliament, as opposed to authority, or monarchy, predominated in the British constitution, which he emphasised again in 'The Independency of Parliament'.[147] Fortunately, the crown's patronage prevented the body of the Commons from scuppering the entire constitution, by appealing to the self-interest of individual members.[148] Rather than attacking this type of influence, 'the country-party should have made some concessions to their adversaries, and have only examined what was the proper degree of this dependency, beyond which it became dangerous liberty'.[149] This essay is sometimes read as Hume inventing a new type of justification, a 'Humean' defence, of crown influence. We have long known, however, that there was little new about Hume's argument, but that he simply adopted a familiar Court Whig argument, which he applied with a lot more panache than his predecessors.[150] The essay, especially in its original form

[145] For Hume as a 'modern', see Harris, *Hume*, pp. 186-95, 284-5.
[146] Cruickshanks, *Political Untouchables*, p. 5.
[147] Hume, 'Liberty of the Press', *Essays*, pp. 11-12.
[148] Hume, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays*, p. 45.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle*, pp. 123-4.

and context, was simply meant as a case study of the excesses of party-political debate to demonstrate that 'moderation is not to be expected in party-men of any kind'.[151]

The essay on the independence of parliament can helpfully be read in conjunction with 'Whether the British Government inclines more to Absolute Monarchy, or to a Republic', which immediately followed. If Hume came across as a Court Whig in the former essay, the latter essay, which was reprinted in the *Craftsman,* gave the opposite impression. In this essay he established, somewhat contrary to elsewhere in his early essays, that Britain inclined more to absolute monarchy than a republic. Hume did so by following the Harringtonian argument that power follows property, but amending it by saying that less property in a single hand could counterbalance more property in several hands. In other words, the king could use the size of the civil list of £1 million per annum, along with an additional £2 million from taxes and funds to pay for salaries in the army, navy, and the church, to create dependencies, even if the Commons had a greater annual income in total.[152] It is not odd that the opposition found this essay palatable; in the same essay Hume reported arguments against luxury, corruption, and the standing army.[153] On a less superficial reading, however, it is clear that Hume attempted to strike a balance between the two sides, highlighting that while all these things may have been dangerous in a usurped power, the same cannot be said for a 'legal authority' with limitations.[154] Moreover, due to 'a sudden and sensible change in the opinions of men within the last fifty years…Most people…ha[d] divested themselves of all superstitious reverence to names and authority'.[155] Accordingly, the clergy's 'talk of a king as GOD's vicegerent on earth….would but excite laughter in every one'.[156] This may have been out of hope as much as belief, however, and in any event he would come to revise this statement after the 'Forty-five', as we shall see in the following chapter.

Hume agreed with the Country party that 'the power of the crown, by means of its large revenue, is rather upon the encrease [sic]'.[157] This may seem paradoxical seeing what Hume had just said about people's opinion about monarchy. There was little doubt,

[151] Hume, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays*, p. 45.
[152] Hume, 'British Government', *Essays*, pp. 47-49.
[153] For Hume on the standing army question, see John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh, 1985), esp. pp. 60-97.
[154] Hume, 'British Government', *Essays*, p. 50.
[155] Ibid, p. 51.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.

however, that the revenue of the crown had inflated in recent years. Upon the accession of George II in 1727, after he had hinted at a change of government, Walpole managed to double the size of the civil list and ensured an extra £100,000 for his close ally Queen Caroline.[158] It is less clear why the remainder of the essay would have pleased the readers of the *Craftsman* journal. Since no states last forever, Hume speculated that absolute monarchy would be the preferable '*Euthanasia*' to a republic. An imagined republic would have been preferable still, but that was not something Britain could hope for. The example of Oliver Cromwell's dictatorship of the previous century was a much more likely outcome, according to Hume. If the Commons ever dissolved itself in such a scenario, each election would lead to a civil war. If it maintained itself, 'we shall suffer all the tyranny of a *faction,* subdivided into new factions'.[159] In the end, an absolute monarchy would be set up to re-establish order. Britain could therefore avoid many convulsions and civil wars by establishing an absolute monarchy from the start. The takeaway point, however, should not be that Hume was advocating either solution. Rather, the intention was, as ever, to 'teach us a lesson of moderation in all our political controversies'.[160] Put differently, Hume was seeking to steer a course between Court and Country.

Hume believed that disagreements between the Court and Country parties in the Walpole period were on many issues not as major as both sides pretended. The upshot was that the debate became 'a very frivolous one, and can never be brought to any decision, as it is managed by both parties'.[161] The solution was not to abolish parties, however. The conclusion of one of his most famous essays, 'That Politics may be reduced to a Science' (1741), was also intended as a lesson of moderation for government as well as opposition. Towards the end of the essay, after Hume had established that constitutional design mattered more than personnel in free/mixed governments, he proceeded to direct his attention to the Court and Country parties. Although the parties were united in extolling the British constitution as the envy of the world, those in opposition to Walpole 'carr[ied] matters to an extreme', Hume complained, and accused the minister not just of 'mal-administration' but also of 'undermining the best constitution

[158] Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1992), p. 15.
[159] Hume, 'British Government', *Essays*, p. 52. (My emphasis.)
[160] Ibid, p. 53.
[161] Ibid.

in the world'.[162] On the other hand, others defended Walpole just as excessively, and praised him for 'a religious [i.e. strict] care of the best constitution in the world'.[163] Hume argued that the arguments of the accusers as well as the defenders were at variance with their hostility to each other: if the constitution was so excellent, 'it would never have suffered a wicked and weak minister to govern triumphantly for a course of twenty years, when opposed by the greatest genius in the nation', (including Bolingbroke, Pope, and Swift).[164] If Walpole was as wicked as the opposition claimed, the constitution must be faulty if it allowed him to remain in office, since a 'constitution is only so far good, as it provides a remedy against mal-administration'.[165] Likewise, if the constitution was as good as the government held, '[t]hen a change of ministry can be no such dreadful event'.[166]

Hume was careful to underline that he did not wish to argue 'that public affairs deserve no care and attention at all'.[167] What he wanted to do was to 'persuade men not to contend, as if they were fighting *pro aris & focis* [for God and Country, or, literally, for altars and hearths], and change a good constitution into a bad one, by the violence of their factions.'[168] In summary, then, Hume was not arguing against the Court and Country distinctions, or against party *per se*. These constitutional debates that divided people along Court and Country lines were different from the Whig-Tory dichotomy in that, as long as they were kept within certain bounds, they did not pose an existential threat to the constitution. Hume realised that it was immensely difficult to define these bounds, but this is exactly what he tried to do in the essays discussed in this section. He wanted to give examples of when both the Court and the Country parties had good arguments, and that is why some essays may seem irreconcilable. The two sides were frequently not as far apart as they purported to be, as on the question of instructions.[169] The key point he wanted to hammer home was that these debates should be carried on in a civilised manner and no one should pretend that they were fighting *pro aris et focis.*

[162] Hume, 'Politics a Science, pp. 27-8.
[163] Ibid, p. 28.
[164] Ibid, p. 29.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid, p. 30.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid, pp. 30-1.
[169] Hume, 'Of the First Principles of Government', *Essays*, p. 606 (variant readings; this original conclusion was removed in 1770).

VI: Conclusion

To a limited extent, Hume was as disapproving of parties as Addison had been in the *Spectator*.[170] As he set out in the advertisement to the first edition of *Essays, Moral and Political,* Hume believed that public spirit meant 'bear[ing] an equal Affection to all our Country-Men; not to hate one Half of them, under the Pretext of loving the Whole'.[171] The greatest danger, as he repeatedly stressed, was that honour as a check on behaviour was largely ignored 'when men act in faction'.[172] To partisans, it only mattered to be of service to their own party and to promote the interests of that body. He realised, however, that party was an intrinsic part of the British constitution, as he argued at the very beginning of his essay on the British parties. As Pierre Bayle, writing about religious division at the end of the seventeenth century, had put it, perfect unity 'is a thing more to be wish'd than hop'd for'.[173] Hume's intention was thus not to abolish parties but simply to 'repress [party-rage] as far as possible' and he hoped his approach would be 'acceptable to the moderate of both Parties; at the same Time, that, perhaps, it may displease the Bigots of both'.[174] Echoing Mandeville, Hume believed 'every man ought to be supposed a knave' in politics.[175] The point of his science of politics was to make it the interest even of bad people to act for the public good, hence the emphasis on institutions and constitutions that could bring this about.[176]

The Hume that emerges from this investigation is a careful anatomist of politics who analysed parties in a more detached manner than perhaps anyone had done before him. The only one who had come close was Rapin. Hume's rejection of Bolingbroke's analysis, which he viewed as a partisan appeal, did not make him a Court Whig. He was not finished with his analysis of party, however, and would continue this enterprise not

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[170] In other writings, notably the *Freeholder,* Addison was much more openly Whiggish; see Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, *Joseph Addison's Sociable Animal* (Providence, RI, 1971), ch. 5.

[171] Hume, 'Advertisement' (1741), pp. iv-v.

[172] Hume, 'First Principles of Government', *Essays*, p. 33; idem, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays,* p. 43.

[173] Bayle, *A Philosophical Commentary on These Words of the Gospel, Luke 14.23, "Compel Them to Come In, That My House May Be Full"* (1686-8), (Indianapolis, IN, 2005), p. 208. For Hume and Bayle, see John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (Cambridge, 2005), ch. 6.

[174] Hume, 'Advertisement' (1741), p. v.

[175] Hume, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays,* p. 42. For Mandeville, see Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment,* p. 266.

[176] Hume, 'Politics a Science', *Essays,* p. 16; idem, *Treatise,* p. 537; idem, *Enquiry I,* p. 90. See also Richard Bourke, 'Theory and Practice: The Revolution in Political Judgement', in *Political Judgement: Essays for John Dunn*, ed. Bourke and Raymond Geuss (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 73-109.

only in his *History of Great Britain,* but also in a series of essays on party ideology written in the wake of the 'Forty-five', to which we will now turn.

Chapter 4:
Hume on the Parties' Speculative Systems of Thought

I

In his still unsurpassed study of British high politics in the 1740s, John Owen said that it was difficult to define 'Tory' and impossible to define 'Whig' in this period.[1] *Pace* Owen, if we want to even begin to understand these mid-century party creeds, we could do worse than consider the writings of David Hume. For the 1748 edition of the *Essays, Moral and Political,* Hume removed some essays he regarded 'frivolous and finical', and inserted two new ones.[2] Of the new essays, one was '*against* the original Contract, the System of the Whigs, another *against* passive Obedience, the System of the Tories'.[3] In terms of the content of the essays, however, the separation is not as neat as their titles suggest, and, as we shall see, he dealt with both parties' respective speculative systems in the first, longer essay 'Of the Original Contract', and then the practical consequences of these systems in 'Of Passive Obedience'. He had also completed a third essay on the Protestant Succession, in which he 'treat[ed] that subject as coolly and indifferently, as I would the dispute between Caesar and Pompey'.[4] Hume said that '[t]he conclusion shows me a Whig, but a very sceptical one', hence Duncan Forbes's influential labelling of Hume.[5] Hume discussed 'Of the Protestant Succession' with his friends, most of whom thought that it would be 'extremely dangerous' to publish, and therefore it did not appear until his next essay collection: the *Political Discourses* (1752).[6] As this chapter will emphasise, the Glorious Revolution remained at the heart of British political debate in mid-century.[7] It will begin by setting out the contexts of Hume's discussion of the speculative systems of the Whigs and Tories respectively, and then treat the three essays in turn. Writing in

[1] John Owen, *The Rise of the Pelhams* (London, 1957), pp. 69-70.

[2] He kept all political essays. The two new essays had already appeared with 'Of National Characters' in *Three Essays, Moral and Political,* published earlier in 1748.

[3] Hume to Charles Erskine, Lord Tinwald, 13 February 1748, *Letters,* I, p. 112. (My emphasis.)

[4] Ibid, p. 111.

[5] Ibid; Duncan Forbes, 'Sceptical Whiggism, Commerce and Liberty', in *Essays on Adam Smith,* ed. Andrew Skinner and Thomas Wilson (Oxford, 1975), pp. 179-201.

[6] Hume to Erskine, *Letters,* I, pp. 112-3.

[7] This has also been emphasised recently by Gabriel Glickman, 'Political Conflict and the Memory of the Revolution in England, 1689-c. 1750', in *The Final Crisis of the Stuart Monarchy: The Revolutions of 1688-91 in their British, Atlantic and European Contexts,* ed. Tim Harris and Stephen Taylor (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 243-71.

the wake of the 'Forty-five', Hume now clearly focussed on politics in his native Scotland, and in particular the Scottish version of Toryism, which, as he had stated in his earlier essays, was synonymous with Jacobitism, and different from the more populist form of Country Toryism which prevailed south of the border.

II

The demolition of the 'original contract' is one of the interventions that David Hume is most famous for in the history of political thought.[8] The idea that government was founded on and received its legitimacy from a conditional contract between governors and the governed had long been a shibboleth of the Whig party. While it would be absurd to view the events of 1688-89 as a victory for contract theory, we should recognise that half of a sample of 139 pamphlets defending the revolution and three quarters of Whig pamphlets between 1689 and 1694 based their claim on contractual resistance.[9] The term 'original contract' later played a role in the prosecution of the High-Church Tory Henry Sacheverell, who was impeached by the Whigs in 1709-10 for preaching non-resistance, notably in the speeches of Nicholas Lechmere, one of the managers of the trial.[10] The independent Whig journal *Cato's Letters* (1720-23) asserted the existence of an original contract and defended the right to resist.[11] Few people in Hume's lifetime would have had any problems in recognising the original contract, and by extension the right to resist, as a Whig doctrine, and passive obedience as a Tory doctrine, although it was often pointed out that practice rarely corresponded to theory.[12] While Hume targeted the speculative systems of the two parties and not the precise articulations of any particular philosopher, he singled out John Locke as the Whig contract theorist *par excellence*, and in this regard

[8] Jeremy Bentham hailed Hume for this achievement in *A Fragment on Government* (1776), (Cambridge, 1988), p. 51.

[9] Mark Goldie, 'The Revolution of 1689 and the Structure of Political Argument', *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities*, 83 (1980), pp. 473-564, at 490. Seventy-three per cent of Whig defences affirmed contract theory. We have to bear in mind, however, that the phrase 'original contract' at this time often referred to a coronation oath to preserve the ancient constitution, as opposed to Locke's theoretical contract that explained the origin of government; see J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (Cambridge, second ed., 1987), p. 251.

[10] Interestingly, Walpole, another manager of the trial, did not evoke the contract; see Geoffrey Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London, 1973), pp. 132, 139-40.

[11] John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, *Cato's Letters* (1720-23), (4 vols., Indianapolis, IN, 1995), IV, p. 123.

[12] Ibid, III, p. 137.

he was closely followed by Adam Smith.[13] The significance of Locke in the formation of Whig principles is a scholarly discussion in its own right.[14] Locke's thought appears to have played a marginal role in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution.[15] In the early eighteenth century, however, the *Two Treatises on Government* (*c.* 1680-3) began to receive attention, as can be seen in the hostility they received from the Jacobite Charles Leslie.[16] In Scotland, the *Two Treatises* were recommended by the Advocates Library in Edinburgh already in 1695, and shortly afterwards Gershom Carmichael and later Francis Hutcheson incorporated the text into their teaching at Glasgow University.[17]

While the related doctrines of divine right, indefeasible hereditary right, non-resistance and passive obedience had been ridiculed by many in the 1730s and 1740s, Hume among others,[18] it is safe to assume that many still believed in such theories. The notion of hereditary right is theoretically distinct from divine right, but in practice divine right was commonly thought to be transmitted by hereditary succession.[19] Bolingbroke did not speak for all Tories when he renounced these ideas.[20] Divine-right Toryism and its twin Jacobitism remained buoyant in church circles and at the University of Oxford, with the latter being a training ground for the former.[21] Edward Gibbon, himself from a Tory family and a student at Magdalen College in 1752-3, attested that such theories survived until the accession of George III in 1760, the first Hanoverian king born in England.[22]

Divine right of kings and queens, or *divino jure*, is the idea that the monarch was accountable to God alone and could not be opposed by their subjects. It would be wrong

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[13] Hume, 'The Original Contract', *Essays*, p. 487; 'The Parties of Great Britain', *Essays*, p. 614 (variant readings); Hume to Francis Hutcheson, 10 January 1743, *Letters*, I, p. 48; Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (Indianapolis, IN, 1982), pp. 314-21. (Report of 1762-3.)

[14] For the state of the art, see Mark Goldie (ed.), *The Reception of Locke's Politics* (6 vols., London, 1999), I, introduction.

[15] J.P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party, 1689-1720* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 1-2, passim. See, however, Richard Ashcraft and M. M. Goldsmith, 'Locke, Revolution Principles, and the Formation of Whig Ideology', *HJ*, 26 (1983), pp. 773-800.

[16] Goldie (ed.), *The Reception of Locke's Politics,* introduction, p. xxxi.

[17] Ibid, p. xxxiv.

[18] Hume, 'Whether the British Government inclines more to Absolute Monarchy or to a Republic', *Essays*, p. 51.

[19] F. J. McLynn, 'The Ideology of Jacobitism on the eve of the rising of 1745', *History of European Ideas*, 6 (1985), pp. 1-18.

[20] Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, in *Political Writings*, pp. 5, 22.

[21] Jonathan Oates, 'Jacobitism in Eighteenth-Century English Schools and Colleges', *Royal Stuart Papers*, 72 (2007), pp. 1-27; R.J. Robson, *The Oxfordshire Election of 1754: A Study in the Interplay of City County and University Politics* (Oxford, 1949).

[22] Edward Gibbon, *Memoirs of my Life* (1788-93), (London, 1990), pp. 80, 90-1.

to conflate such a theory with unchecked or arbitrary royal power, however. In its eighteenth-century form, divine right was naturally closer to the arguments about legitimate kingship by the non-juror Leslie (1650–1722) than the somewhat atypical Sir Robert Filmer,[23] who had explicitly defended arbitrary monarchy in the previous century.[24] Indeed, the Jacobite movement conceived of itself as combatting the 'arbitrary power of Foreigners'.[25] It is also doubtful whether post-1689 divine right in the British setting should be associated with the absolutist theories of Jean Bodin and Hobbes.[26] By contrast, in the eighteenth century it was usually combined with mixed constitutionalism. An anonymous Scottish Jacobite, for example, writing in 1746 to justify his conduct in the 'Forty-five', described 'the British Constitution, as it stood in the year 1688' as 'a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, & Democracy.'[27] A key pledge of the Stuarts was a 'free & legal Parliament' without placemen.[28] Moreover, they could persuasively argue that they were aspiring to more power-sharing than afforded by the Whig-Hanover axis, since they promised to recall the Convocations of Canterbury and York to settle Church affairs.[29] As the Old Pretender put it, 'If any one Article of the last moment to the Wellfare, and Security of the Church, or State, should be wanting, Let the blame lay at your own doors, to whose Wisdome and Consciences we referr it; Make yourselv's happy'.[30] If we view divine right as backward-looking and anachronistic in the eighteenth century, we do little more than regurgitate the propaganda of its opponents – that is to say, the Whigs. Instead, we have to recognise that political reform was at the heart of the clearest expression of divine right, namely the Jacobite movement. As with the original contract, the flexibility of divine-right theory ensured its survival.

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[23] Paul Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688-1788* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 17-23.

[24] Filmer, *Observations Concerning the Orginall of Government* (1652), in *Patriarcha and Other Writings* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 281.

[25] *Hearne's Recollections,* V, p. 38.

[26] Unlike divine right, royal absolutism did not survive in its seventeenth-century sense in eighteenth-century Britain; see James Daly, 'The Idea of Absolute Monarchy in Seventeenth-Century England', *HJ*, 21 (1978), pp. 227-250. A new form of absolutism, which saw the legislative power, consisting of king, lords, and commons, as absolute, came to the fore, however.

[27] NLS, MS 296, f. 8. The same writer says repeatedly that it was not just the right of James but the constitution that was 'violated' in 1688-9 (f. 10).

[28] If restored, the Stuarts promised to 'refuse nothing a free Parliament can ask, for the Security of their religion, Laws & Liberty or the People'; see *Declaration of Charles Prince of Wales…Unto all his Majesty's Subjects…*[1745], in *English Jacobite Ballads, Songs & Satires, etc. From the mss. at Towneley hall, Lancashire*, ed. Alexander B. Grossart (printed for private circulation, 1877), pp. 132, 137.

[29] *The Kings* [i.e. James 'III'] *Letter to the Arch-bishop of Canterbury*, 27 December 1722, in Rawlinson MS 909, Bodleian, n.f.

[30] Ibid.

The immediate reason why thinkers opposed to divine-right theory of monarchy in the second half of the 1740s felt that they had to treat them seriously as opposed to mocking them was indeed the attempt to restore the Stuarts in 1745,[31] which was initially successful, especially in Scotland. Scottish Whigs could no longer pretend that Jacobitism was not a serious 'party' north of the border. '[T]he number of the Jacobites in Scotland is so great and their interests so considerable that I will honestly confess it gives me a great deal of uneasiness', wrote Robert Wallace shortly after the outbreak of the rebellion in a pamphlet which never saw the light of day.[32] While Wallace sought to counter the theoretical arguments for Jacobitism in the first half of his text, he spent the second half attempting to demonstrate that industry had increased at a faster pace than population growth in Scotland since 1688-9, in opposition to recently published pamphlets such as *Some Considerations on the Present State of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1744) and *The Present State of Scotland Consider'd: And Its Declining and Sinking Condition charged upon the Conduct of the Landed Gentlemen* (Edinburgh, 1745). According to Wallace, the Jacobites made use of these pamphlets to demonstrate that Scotland was in a state of decline which created discontent and made the country ripe for rebellion, although he stressed that he did not believe that this had been the intention of either author.[33]

The defeat at Culloden in April 1746 and the bloody clampdown on Jacobitism that followed did not immediately sound the death knell for Jacobitism, as popular riots in the decade that followed attested.[34] In his first essays from 1741, Hume had treated Jacobitism seriously in the sense that he linked the Tory party with the movement. In the Scottish context, however, he had underestimated, or at least played down, the threat of Jacobitism in his early essays, as we saw in the previous chapter. The 'Forty-five' proved that the theory of divine right continued to have more sway in Britain than he had previously thought, or perhaps hoped. One rebel who was executed after the 'Forty-five'

[31] I here disagree with the suggestion by James Harris's in his otherwise exceptional biography that Hume concentrated more on the Whig than the Tory doctrine because the latter 'look[ed] mostly irrelevant' after the failure of the 'Forty-five'; see *Hume: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge, 2015), p. 239.

[32] Wallace, *An Address to the Jacobites in Scotland. In which among other reasons offered to perswade them to acquiesce in the Revolution and the Settlement of the Crown in the Protestant line it is proved that Scotland has not declined in wealth since the Revolution but is richer att present than att that period* (*c.* 1745), Edinburgh University Library, La.II.97/5, f. 6.

[33] Ibid, f. 27.

[34] Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, pp. 195-232. The 1748 Act for Disarming the Scottish Highlands included attacks on the Scottish Episcopalian Church, the parishioners of which were part of the Jacobite stronghold north of the border; see Robert Ingram, *Religion, Reform and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century: Thomas Secker and the Church of England* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 203.

declared that 'the *Cause* for which I suffer is divine' and died convinced that he would go to heaven for his deeds.[35] The last words of another insurgent were that 'the thinking Few, who have not forsaken their Duty to God and their King, will…look upon [his execution] as being little inferior to MARTYRDOM itself.'[36]

On a superficial reading it may not be evident that Jacobitism and passive obedience were compatible, since the former was a rebellious movement. How could Hume and most of his contemporaries, including many Jacobites themselves, treat them as part of the same ideological package? The simplest answer is that passive obedience referred to 1688-9: the Hanoverians were seen as German usurpers and taking up arms against them meant fighting for the royal cause as they understood it. As Wallace put it, 'if the Revolution is overturnd and declared rebellion and the pretenders title recogniz'd on account of his Hereditary Indefesible and Divine right the doctrine of none resistance is Establishd for ever'.[37] Passive obedience played an essential role in Jacobite propaganda in 1745, as far as evidence is extant.[38] An anonymous Jacobite writing from October 1745 argued that '[i]f the Doctrines of the Church, & the Laws of the Kingdom do concur to assure us, that Subjects must not take Arms, or rebel against their King…then it is evident that…ye revolution in 1688 was against all rules of our established Religion & Policy'.[39] Longevity did not give legitimacy, according to the pamphleteer: the throne was either hereditary or elective, and if the former, 'the Prince who sits in it at present, has no right'.[40]

In the aftermath of the 'Forty-five', a literary controversy erupted between the Scottish minister George Logan and the classics scholar and Jacobite Thomas Ruddiman,

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[35] *True Copies of the Papers wrote by Arthur Lord Balmerino, Thomas Syddall, David Morgan, George Fletcher, John Berwick, Thomas Deacon, Thomas Chadwick, James Dawson, and Andrew Blyde; and delivered by them to the Sheriffs at the Places of their Execution* (N.p., 1746), pp. 22, 23. A recurrent theme in these 'vindications' is that the rebels believed that they had done what their 'conscience' (for them a highly religious concept) told them and many stressed their commitment to the Church of England (pp. 6, 8, 21, 22, 32, 33, 37).

[36] Ibid, p. 27.

[37] Wallace, *Address to the Jacobites in Scotland,* f. 21.

[38] Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People,* pp. 15-44.

[39] *A Letter to the Archbishop of York: humbly offering to His Grace's Solution some doubts and scruples suggested by his late Speech to the Grand Meeting of the County of York, called to subscribe an association for supporting the German Government in England* [1745], in *English Jacobite Ballads…,* p. 168. Unlike government propaganda, explicit Jacobite propaganda could not be published, and we must rely on this type of unpublished material. Songs and poems, communicated *viva voce,* played an important part in making the case for the Jacobite cause. One exception is the short-lived *The National Journal, or Country Gazette* (1746), which was suppressed.

[40] Ibid, p. 169.

who immediately preceded David Hume as Keeper of the Advocates Library in Edinburgh.[41] Ruddiman made use of divine right arguments in response to Logan's challenge that the Scottish crown was not strictly hereditary.[42] The Jacobite rebellion compelled Scottish writers in particular to respond to these arguments, which clearly had influenced a great deal of people. Hume's friend Henry Home (later Lord Kames) wrote a publication during the Jacobite rebellion and treated 'hereditary and indefeasible right' in an extensive appendix.[43] By concentrating on the legal side of the argument,[44] Kames sought to refute the widespread view that the British crown prior to the Glorious Revolution of 1688-9 had been lineal. Hume expressed his approval of his friend's *Essays,*[45] although he himself would use a different approach and seek not only to refute the religious and philosophical underpinnings of Tory-Jacobitism, but also Whiggism. In addition to Kames and Hume, it has already been noted that Wallace wrote an *Address to the Jacobites* in 1745, which was never published. However, Wallace returned to the theoretical debate in *The Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-resistance Considered* (1754), recycling many of his arguments about the advantages of the Glorious Revolution, this time in response to Lord Dun's *Friendly and Familiar Advices* (Edinburgh, 1754). He prepared a second edition in 1762, which, although never published, demonstrates the longevity of debates about these matters in Scotland.[46]

Hume's starting point was that 'no party, in the present age, can well support itself, without a philosophical or speculative system of principles, annexed to its political or practical one'.[47] He had already dealt with the parties' respective political and practical systems in his essays published in 1741. He now proceeded to deal with their speculative systems, religious and philosophical. Divine right theory and the original contract

[41] For the significance of Ruddiman in the intellectual life of the eighteenth century, see J.C.D. Clark, *Samuel Johnson: Literature, Religion and English Cultural Politics from the Restoration to Romanticism* (Cambridge, 1993).

[42] Ruddiman, *A Dissertation concerning the Competition for the Crown of Scotland…wherein is proved, that by the Laws of God and of Nature…*(Edinburgh, 1748), esp. pp. 88-90.

[43] [Lord Kames], *Essays upon Several Subjects concerning British Antiquities… With an appendix upon Hereditary and Indefeasible Right. Composed anno MDCCXLV* (3rd edition, Edinburgh, 1747), pp. 193-216. Hume's friend Kames had inherited Jacobite opinions, which he held onto until the early 1730s; see I. S. Ross, *Lord Kames and the Scotland of his Day* (New York, NY, 1972), pp. 44-58.

[44] The legal argument, i.e. that the Stuarts had a hereditary right to the throne by the law of succession, was as important as the religious one; see Howard Erskine-Hill, 'Literature and the Jacobite Cause: was there a Rhetoric of Jacobitism?', in *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 49-69, at 51.

[45] Hume to Kames, June 1747, *New Letters*, p. 25.

[46] Edinburgh University Library, La.II.96/6.

[47] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays*, p. 465.

represented such religious and philosophical systems of principles for the Tories and the Whigs respectively, with passive obedience being a practical consequence of the former theory and resistance of the latter. Hume here revised his earlier ridicule of divine right theory, now simply stating that 'one party [i.e. the Tories], by tracing up government to the DEITY, endeavour to render it so sacred and inviolate, that it must be little less than sacrilege, however tyrannical it may become, to touch or invade it'.[48] The Whigs, on their part, 'by founding government altogether on the consent of the PEOPLE, suppose that there is a kind of *original contract*, by which the subjects have tacitly reserved the power of resisting their sovereign, whenever they find themselves aggrieved by that authority'.[49]

Hume's main intention was as ever to promote moderation, as he explicitly set out at the start of the essay. In the first instance, he contended that both systems were in fact just, but not in the ways that the parties interpreted them. Secondly, both sets of practical consequences – passive obedience and resistance – were prudent, but not in the extreme to which each party carried them.[50] How could divine right theory be described as just by someone who famously did away with God in his own philosophy? Hume distinguished between divine right *kingship* and divine right *government.* For religious people, it would be appropriate to regard the deity as the author of all governments, and since the human race depended on government for its survival, it would be perfectly consistent for believers to regard this as intended by a beneficent being. Finally, as government was to be found in all countries and all ages, this could also be ascribed to the intention of an omniscient being, for those who believed in such a thing, Hume argued.

The problem with this theory was the belief in *providence,* which Hume regarded as at odds with the importance attached to lineal succession, and he consequently exploded the anti-Hanoverian case of the Jacobite Tories. For those who believed in providence and divine intention, 'the greatest and most lawful prince' must be incorporated in the same divine plan as usurpers, robbers and pirates.[51] Many divines had in fact relied on providence when shifting their allegiance from James II to William and Mary after the Glorious Revolution. Notably, William Sherlock, Dean of St Paul, took the new oaths after one year's hesitation and defended the new regime on the basis of

[48] Ibid, p. 466.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid, p. 467.

providential conquest and deliverance.[52] Another problem for the Tory system as Hume saw it was that if authority *per se* was regarded as divine, this would have to apply to 'every petty jurisdiction…and every *limited* authority' within a state, and even a constable would thus act 'by a divine commission'.[53]

Hume then moved on to the original contract, with which he had already dealt at length in book III of the *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739-40). In his earlier work, Hume had referred to the original contract, or the idea that government received its legitimacy from the consent of the governed, as 'the foundation of our fashionable system of politics' and 'the creed of a party amongst us, who value themselves, with reason, on the soundness of their philosophy, and their liberty of thought', i.e. the Whigs.[54] In a similar vein to his earlier treatment, Hume argued that if the contract was interpreted in what we may call the Hobbesian sense, with the people originally giving rise to government by having 'voluntarily, for the sake of peace and order, abandoned their native liberty, and received laws from their equal and companion', then 'all government is, at first, founded on a contract'.[55]

The mistake philosophers, 'who have embraced a party (if that be not a contradiction in terms)',[56] made was to believe that government continued to rest on no other foundation than a contract.[57] More precisely, Hume sought to expose the absurdity that people 'owe allegiance to no prince or government, unless bound by the obligation and sanction of a *promise*', a promise from which they may free themselves.[58] In the *Treatise,* Hume had argued that civil duties of obedience 'soon detach themselves from our promises, and acquire a separate force and influence'.[59] In short, we disapprove of rebellion because the execution of justice would be impossible without submission to

[52] For Sherlock's *Case of the Allegiance Due to Sovereign Powers* (1691), see Gerald Straka, 'The Final Phase of Divine Right Theory in England, 1688-1702', *English Historical Review,* 77 (1962), pp. 638-58, at 646-7. For a different variety of the conquest argument, one that took its cue from Hugo Grotius, see Mark Goldie, 'Edmund Bohun and *Jus Gentium* in the Revolution Debate, 1689-93', *HJ,* 20 (1977), pp. 569-86.

[53] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays,* p. 467.

[54] Hume, *Treatise,* p. 542.

[55] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays*, p. 468. This did not apply to 'all the governments, which exists at present, or of which there remains any record in story,' almost all of which had 'been founded originally, either on usurpation or conquest, or both' (p. 471). Moreover, in his final word on this topic, his posthumous 'Of the Origin of Government', he did away with even this minimal form of contract.

[56] Undoubtedly a reference to John Locke, whom he quoted at the end of the essay.

[57] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays,* p. 469.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Hume, *Treatise,* p. 544.

government.[60] 'Tho' there was no such thing as a promise in the world, government wou'd still be necessary in all large and civiliz'd societies', he asserted.[61] Allegiance to government rested entirely on opinion, of right as well as interest, and it was underpinned by habit, according to Hume.[62] In 1748, he appears to have been even more eager than in the *Treatise* to dispute the idea that the sovereign promised the subject justice and protection, and that if the subject believed they failed to deliver on this promise, the subject 'has thereby freed his subject from all obligations to allegiance'.[63] In other words, if interpreted this way, contract theory implied a charter of rights that could be invaded and a *right* of resistance in such cases.

Hume's objection to the original contract interpreted in this Lockean fashion was twofold: it was an historical absurdity that did not exist and had never existed anywhere,[64] and moreover, it posed a threat to the stability of government by encouraging rebellion. As he put it in his *History,* the idea that the people were the origin of all just power was a noble principle in itself, but belied by all history and experience.[65] Hume was clear that resistance would occur when real oppression was taking place, and no one could condemn it in such cases, but there was no reason to inspire this behaviour, as resistance would always take place when it was necessary.[66] The contract was also absurd because it placed an undue emphasis on consent. Hume remarked that Henry IV and Henry VII were elected kings by parliament, but never acknowledged this because they believed that it would weaken their authority. 'Strange, if the only real foundation of all authority be consent and promise', Hume scorned.[67] This type of Whiggism also led to a form of nationalism based on the idea that the British post-revolutionary regime was unparalleled. Hume

[60] Ibid, p. 546. Similarly, we condemn breach of faith in business because human commerce depends on promise-keeping.

[61] Ibid, p. 546.

[62] Hume, 'Of the First Principles of Government', *Essays,* p. 33; idem, *Treatise,* p. 548; idem, 'Of the Origin of Government', *Essays,* pp. 37, 39. For the centrality of opinion in Hume's account of political obligation, see Stephen Buckle and Dario Castiglione, 'Hume's Critique of the Contract Theory', *History of Political Thought,* 12 (1991), pp. 457-80.

[63] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays,* p. 469.

[64] Indeed, Hume believed that this belief would lead to imprisonment in most parts of the world if propagated.

[65] Hume, *History,* V, p. 533.

[66] Hume, *Treatise,* pp. 552-3; idem, *History,* V, p. 544. On this basis, some scholars have detected an 'implied contract' in Hume's thought, distinct from the notion of tacit consent which he rejected; see Knud Haakonssen, *Natural Law and Moral Philosophy: From Grotius to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 110-13.

[67] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays,* p. 473.

agreed that it was to some extent, but not in the sense commonly thought,[68] and he was always eager to put notions of particularly English exceptionalism to the test. Here he reminded his readers that the Glorious Revolution was not founded on universal consent, but the majority of seven hundred MPs who had decided the fate of the entire nation.[69]

In the following essay, 'Of Passive Obedience', Hume essentially repeated the argument that, 'as government binds us to obedience only on account of its tendency to public utility', obedience ceases when it would lead to public ruin.[70] Hume followed Hobbes and Locke in quoting from Cicero's *De Legibus* that *salus populi suprema lex esto.*[71] He then used the same examples as when covering similar ground in the *Treatise*: no one would condemn those who rebelled against Nero and Philip II, however 'infatuated with party-systems' they may be.[72] 'Even our high monarchical party [i.e. the Tories], in spite of their sublime theory [of passive obedience], are forced, in such cases, to judge, and feel, and approve, in conformity to the rest of mankind', Hume argued. Accordingly, in 'extraordinary emergencies', 'when the public is in the highest danger, from violence and tyranny', Hume granted that resistance would be permitted, which his modern-day liberal readers are always keen to emphasise.[73] This was mainstream Scottish Whiggism, or indeed English establishment Whiggism, at this point in time.[74] His larger point, however, was that 'obedience is our duty in the common course of things' and that 'it ought chiefly to be inculcated'.[75] Hume's main intention was to show that the

[68] '[T]he English Government is certainly happy, though probably not calculated for Duration, by reason of its excessive Liberty' (Hume to William Strahan, 3 March 1772, *Letters*, II, p. 261).

[69] Hume, 'Original Contract', *Essays*, p. 472.

[70] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays*, p. 489.

[71] As the examples of Hobbes of Locke show, *salus populi* arguments could be used by 'resistance' and 'non-resistance' advocates alike. In the wake of the Glorious Revolution, it was utilised by those arguing that passive obedience had not been breached in 1688-9: while people were not allowed to act against the prince, they did not need to actively support him (Goldie, 'Edmund Bohun and *Jus Gentium*', p. 583).

[72] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays*, p. 490; idem, *Treatise*, p. 552. Hume's wording in the *Treatise* suggests that he saw common sense and party systems as antithetical.

[73] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays*, p. 490; Frederick G. Whelan, 'Hume and Contractarianism', *Polity*, 27 (1994), pp. 201-24. Nicholas Phillipson, 'Propriety, Property and Prudence: David Hume and the Defence of the Revolution', in *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain* ed. Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 302-20; Istvan Hont, 'Commercial Society and Political Theory in the Eighteenth Century: the Problem of Authority in David Hume and Adam Smith', in *Main Trends in Cultural History: Ten Essays*, ed. Willem Melching and Wyger Velema (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 54-94, at 77-8.

[74] Wallace made a similar argument, emphasising that resistance was only lawful on 'extraordinary occasions' of tyranny, in *Address to the Jacobites in Scotland*, ff. 8-14.

[75] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays*, p. 490.

respective systems of both parties contained a grain of truth, but that both could be equally dangerous if misinterpreted and carried to extreme lengths.[76]

Nevertheless, Hume closed the essay on passive obedience with some arguments in favour of the Whigs. The first was that the Tories carried the doctrine of obedience to such a height that they not only never included the exceptions, but also excluded them outright.[77] It is likely that Hume was referring here to the Tory fiction that no resistance had taken place at the Glorious Revolution and that James II had abdicated the throne. This enabled Tories to obey William as king *de facto,* while James II remained king *de jure,* a way of thinking which continued to be a prominent part of Tory discourse for a long time after the revolution.[78] It was a potentially destabilising fiction, however, since James's 'abdication' did not apply to his offspring. In 1714, after the death of Anne, the last Stuart monarch of Britain, Jacobites could argue that James III, or the Old Pretender, was the rightful sovereign of Britain, notwithstanding the Act of Settlement 1701. Hume concluded that the Whigs should be applauded for insisting on exceptions to the general rule of obedience, because they consequently defended both truth (i.e. James II had been deposed) and liberty (the power of parliament).

Secondly and finally, Hume believed that the nature of the British constitution was more favourable to the Whig philosophical system in the sense that, while the king was above the law, it was only with regards to his own person.[79] The king's government and his ministers were subject to the full force of the law, and if the king attempted to usurp more legislative power than the mixed constitution allowed, as Charles I and James II had done in the seventeenth century, it would become 'necessary to oppose them with some vehemence'.[80] Hume thus concluded that resistance to monarchs was necessarily more common in mixed forms of government than in simple ones, where monarchs had little incentive to run into difficulties that would warrant resistance.[81] As has often been

[76] We can thus conclude that James Conniff misses the point when arguing that Hume gave the Whig doctrine serious consideration while rejecting the Tory doctrine out of hand in 'Hume on Political Parties: The Case for Hume as a Whig', *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 12 (1978-9), pp. 160-1. Conniff also anachronistically conflates the Whig party with the 'progressive movement of [Hume's] day' (p. 173).

[77] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays,* p. 491.

[78] Kenyon, *Revolutionary Principles,* pp. 32-3. See also, e.g., *Whig and Tory Principles of Government fairly stated in a Dialogue between an Oxford Scholar and a Whig Parson* (n.p., 1716), pp. 33-5, 40-1. Despite its title, we can easily identify it as a Tory pamphlet, since the 'Oxford scholar' in the pamphlet is doing most of the talking and winning all the arguments.

[79] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays,* p. 491.

[80] Ibid, p. 492.

[81] See also Hume, *Treatise,* p. 564.

pointed out, this appears to contradict Hume's earlier statement that resistance was only justified as a last resort 'when the public is in the highest danger, from violence and tyranny'.[82] This apparent contradiction may have stemmed from Hume's ambition to give both parties their due. While his final pronouncements on these matters are to be found in his *History of Great Britain* (1754-56), in the next section we shall investigate Hume's attempt to go beyond this inconsistency in book III of the *Treatise* and his essay 'Of the Protestant Succession'.

III

The two essays discussed in the previous section were meant to be accompanied by a third and highly related essay on the Protestant Succession, which Hume intended to include in the 1748 edition of the *Essays*, but the publication of which he postponed until 1752. The succession to the throne was a party-political issue and Hume was convinced that he had to deal with it in order to achieve his aim of mollifying party animosity. The essay was provocative because Hume by his own admission treated the subject 'coolly and indifferently' – a precarious enterprise in the aftermath of the 1745-6 Jacobite rising. Like the contract, Hume had in fact already dealt with the topic in *Treatise* book III.[83] In his earlier treatment, he had been clear that a disputed succession presented a near-intractable problem. When the principles deciding who should govern (most importantly long possession, present possession, and positive law) pointed in different directions, i.e. long possession for the Stuart family, and present possession and positive law (the Act of Settlement 1701) for Hanover, 'an impartial enquirer, who adopts no party in political controversies' would never be satisfied by any answer.[84]

Hume made several concessions to the Jacobite case in his contentious essay, in which he imagined himself a member of parliament between 1689 and 1714, the period between the Revolution and the Hanoverian accession. A restoration of the Stuart family at this time would have had the advantage of 'preserv[ing] the succession clear and

[82] Hume, 'Passive Obedience', *Essays*, p. 490. McLynn has called Hume's thinking on resistance 'muddled', and Forbes has called it 'ambivalent'; see 'Jacobitism and David Hume: The Ideological Backlash Foiled', *Hume Studies*, 9 (1983), p. 194 and *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 101, respectively.

[83] Hume, *Treatise*, pp. 553-67, esp. 563-7.

[84] Ibid, pp. 562-63.

undisputed, free from a pretender', Hume acknowledged.[85] Blood was the most straightforward indicator for the multitude to comprehend and strong feelings for the 'true heir of their royal family' were precisely what rendered monarchical government stable, according to Hume. It was foolish to place kings on the same level as the meanest of mankind, even if 'an anatomist finds no more in the greatest monarch than in the lowest peasant or day-labourer; and a moralist may, perhaps, frequently finds less.'[86] Such reflections are largely pointless, Hume argued, since 'all of us, still retain these prejudices in favour of birth and family'.[87] He gave the rather trivial but telling example that everyone prefers to see plays about kings rather than sailors; opinions which Smith would later echo.[88]

By comparison with the Stuarts, the Hanoverian succession 'violate[d] hereditary right; and place[d] on the throne a prince, to whom birth gave no title to that dignity'.[89] In contrast to his essays of the early 1740s, Hume was now prepared to defend the actions of the Stuart kings in the seventeenth century. Anticipating his later historical writings, Hume argued that James I and Charles I viewed England as a simple monarchy, based on the precedent of the Tudors and comparisons with other monarchs in Europe at the time. These ideas were bolstered by the flattery of courtiers, 'and, above all, that of the clergy, who from several passages of *scripture*...had erected a regular and avowed system of arbitrary power.'[90] On the other hand, Hume argued that a limited monarchy, which he saw as an important achievement, could never have been established within that royal line. The Stuart family was simply too bound up with the doctrine of divine right as he saw it. Indeed, the last Stuart monarch, Anne, revived the practice of royal touch, or the King's Evil, whereby the monarch touched subjects to cure their diseases, which William had previously discontinued because he viewed it as popish superstition.[91] While Hume unsurprisingly regarded royal touch as an 'ancient superstition', many educated and intelligent people still believed in the practice at the time, including Thomas Carte.[92]

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[85] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 503.
[86] Ibid, p. 504.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), (Indianapolis, IN, 1982), p. 53.
[89] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 505.
[90] Ibid.
[91] David Green, *Queen Anne* (London, 1970), p. 105.
[92] Hume, *History*, V, p. 491; Carte, *A General History of England* (4 vols., London, 1747-55), I, pp. 291-2 (note 4). See also MS Carte, Bodleian, ff. 247-8. For a discussion of rationality within irrational contexts, see Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume I: Regarding Method* (2002), (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 27-56.

According to Hume, '[t]he only method of destroying, at once, all these high claims and pretensions, was to depart from the true hereditary line, and choose a prince, who [was] plainly a creature of the public'.[93] This 'secured our constitutional limitations' and a peculiar, but in Hume's view salutary, situation whereby '[t]he people cherish monarchy, because protected by it, [and t]he monarch favours liberty [i.e. parliament, representing the people], because created by it.'[94] As in his essays from 1741, and *Treatise* book III, Hume thus came down firmly on the side of the Revolution Settlement.[95]

Be that as it may, Hume went on to consider that the Hanoverian monarchy had further disadvantages, chiefly the question of foreign dominions, which would engage Britain in intrigues and wars on the continent.[96] From George I's accession in 1714 up until the start of Queen Victoria's reign in 1837, Britain shared its monarch with the German state of Hanover. The first Hanoverian monarch to be born in Britain was George III, who ascended the throne in 1760. His two predecessors were German, spent a significant amount of time in Hanover, and were, at least according to their critics, more interested in the fate of their native land than their new kingdom. They were also Lutheran and occasional conformists. These were constant themes in Jacobite propaganda, especially secret poems full of sarcasm: 'Lest Rights & Liberties be in danger / They must be gifted to a German Stranger'.[97] The *Fog's Weekly Journal* (1728-37), the somewhat milder successor to *Mist's Weekly Journal,* gloried in the memory of the last Stuart monarch, who was described as 'that entirely English Queen', implicitly in contrast with her German successors.[98] Jacobite rebels who were executed in 1746 saw James III, or the Old Pretender, as not only their 'rightful' and 'lawful' sovereign but also 'native' and 'British' in contrast to George II, invariably referred to as the Elector of Hanover.[99]

Foreign influence had been a worry from the start of the reign of William III, who had largely relied on Dutch advisers and fought wars on the continent. As a response, the Act of Settlement 1701 barred foreigners from becoming privy councillors and members

[93] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, pp. 505-6.
[94] Ibid, p. 506.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] BL, Add MS. 14854, f. 142.
[98] *Fog's Journal*, 11 October 1729, in *Select Letters Taken from the Fog's Journal* (2 vols., London, 1732) I, p. 136. As Hannah Smith has demonstrated, however, not all British discourse was xenophobic and anti-German. Many German princes were widely hailed as Protestant heroes in the eighteenth century, including Frederick the Great, and, for loyalists, George I and George II belonged to the same tradition; see *Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714-60* (Cambridge, 2006).
[99] *True Copies of the Papers wrote by Arthur Lord Balmerino…* [etc], pp. 27, 32.

of parliament. The Act also forbade a monarch of England to engage the nation in a war in defence of foreign territories without the consent of parliament. Nevertheless, shortly after the Hanoverian succession in 1714, disagreement over the influence of Hanover on British foreign policy brought about a split in the Whig party.[100] In 1715, Hanover became involved in the Great Northern War (1700-21) against Sweden. The main reason why the small state of Hanover was accepted into the alliance with Russia and other big beasts was that George I had the British navy at his disposal. Britain's naval engagement gave plenty of ammunition for oppositional attacks on the ministry. In the editions of the essay up until and including the one published in 1768, Hume remarked that 'it would be difficult to show any harm we have ever received from the electoral dominions, except that short disgust in 1718, with [the Swedish king] CHARLES XII', referring to the failed Jacobite 'Swedish Plot' of 1717.[101] In the first half of the 1740s, the payment of Hanoverian troops in the War of the Austrian Succession was a major issue of political debate.[102] Elsewhere in the *Political Discourses* (1752), Hume referred to the parliamentary ruling in 1742 to pay for 16,000 Hanoverian troops as a 'factious vote'.[103]

The main disadvantage of the House of Stuart, according to Hume, was their Catholicism. The Act of Settlement 1701 declared that 'whosoever shall hereafter come to the possession of this crown, shall join in communion with the church of England, as by law established.'[104] The whole point behind the settlement was to secure the *Protestant* Succession, not the Hanoverian succession, which was only on the agenda because Anne's last surviving child died in 1700, hence the title of Hume's essay. The importance of not having another Catholic on the throne after what was perceived as the disastrous experience of James II was realised by both parties and the Act of Settlement had been supported by virtually all Tories.[105] On the two main occasions when Bolingbroke dabbled in Jacobite intrigue, he sought to convince the Stuart Pretender to change either his religion or the religion of his sons because he understood that it was the only way to

[100] W.A. Speck, *Stability and Strife: England, 1714-60* (London, 1977), p. 187.

[101] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 646 (variant readings). Sweden's involvement in Jacobite plotting was a direct result of Hanover's part in the Great Northern War; see Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 104-7.

[102] Harris, *A Patriot Press*, p. 74.

[103] Hume, 'Of the Balance of Power', *Essays*, p. 339.

[104] Act of Settlement 1701, in E. N. Williams (ed.), *The Eighteenth-Century Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1960), p. 59.

[105] Tim Harris, *Politics under the latter Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society, 1660-1715* (London, 1993), p. 157.

feasibly bring about a restoration.[106] Two of the most optimistic Jacobite scholars have argued that a Stuart restoration would have been fully possible in 1714 had the Old Pretender given up his religion as Bolingbroke urged him.[107] Hume had already contended in 1741 that Catholicism was an enemy of civil liberty and here he argued that Catholicism 'affords no toleration, or peace, or security to any other communion'.[108]

Hume pointed out that almost all Jacobites regarded the Catholicism of the Stuarts as problematic,[109] as much as Hanoverian loyalists admitted that foreign dominions presented a difficulty.[110] He then picked up the gauntlet he himself had thrown down in the *Treatise*, saying that '[i]t belongs, therefore, to a philosopher alone, who is of neither party, to put all the circumstances in the scale, and assign to each of them its proper poise and influence'.[111] Hume began by criticising the reign of the house of Stuart as a period when 'the government was kept in a continual fever, by the contention between the privileges of the people and the prerogatives of the crown', a domestic quarrel which allowed France to erect itself as a European superpower 'without any opposition from us, and even sometimes with our assistance.'[112] In contrast, in the sixty-year period after the Glorious Revolution, here referred to as a 'parliamentary establishment', 'an interrupted harmony has been preserved between our princes and our parliaments.'[113] In short, Britain in these years had enjoyed a longer period of glory and liberty than any other nation, according to Hume. This outcome stood in sharp contrast with the turbulence of the seventeenth century.

On the other hand, because of the exiled royal family, the same period had seen 'two rebellions [i.e. the 'Fifteen' and 'Forty-five']…besides plots and conspiracies without number.'[114] In other words, Hume would hardly have recognised J. H. Plumb's

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[106] Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham* (1716), in *Works*, I p. 90; Eveline Cruickshanks, *Political Untouchables: the Tories and the '45* (New York, NY, 1979), pp. 12-13.

[107] Eveline Cruickshanks and Howard Erskine-Hill, *The Atterbury Plot* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 7.

[108] Hume, 'Superstition and Enthusiasm', *Essays*, p. 78; idem, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 506.

[109] This would of course exclude those who were Catholic themselves, e.g. Hume's one-time acquaintance Chevalier Ramsay. The Stuarts could always rely on the Catholics for support, but they represented a tiny part of the population. Nevertheless, when Charles Stuart was planning an invasion with the help of France in 1743, the Privy Council ordered the Earl of Cholmondeley, *Custos Rotulorum* of the county of Chester, to enforce punitive laws against Papists and suspected Papists. BL Add MS 33954, ff. 7-8.

[110] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, pp. 506-7.

[111] Ibid, p. 507.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid, p. 508.

[114] Ibid.

'political stability'. Britain had so far been fortunate, but Hume feared that 'the claims of the banished family…are not yet antiquated' and he had no reason to believe that the 'Forty-five' would be the last major Jacobite rebellion or invasion.[115] As he had said in the *Treatise,* 'a century is scarce sufficient to establish any new government, or remove all scruples in the minds of the subjects concerning it.'[116] Hume believed that dynastic conflicts were even more dangerous than disputes between privilege and prerogative, because they could only be settled by war rather than debate and compromise.[117] What is more, a prince with a disputed title would not dare arming his subjects and set up a militia, an institution of which Hume approved.[118] Hume further argued that the 'precarious establishment' of the Hanoverians explained Britain's eagerness to contract debt to support the regime, a hazardous way of raising money in Hume's mind, as he expressed in 'Of Public Credit', also appearing for the first time in 1752.[119]

The situation of Hanover was precarious because even if Hume believed that a parliamentary title may be more advantageous to a hereditary one in theory, he was clear that most people would never see it that way.[120] As we have seen, he believed that bloodline was key in the eyes of the multitude. Why, then, had the Stuarts not been restored? The answer was that anti-Catholic sentiments in Britain were simply too strong. The real reason for the exclusion of the Stuart family was entirely their religion, Hume concluded, which threatened the country 'with much more dismal consequences' than the possession of the foreign dominion of Hanover.[121] This was a just reason, Hume believed. In addition to being more expensive and less tolerant than Protestantism, as he had already suggested, the most important argument against Catholicism was that it was *Roman* Catholicism, which not only separated the head of church from the regal office, something Hume regarded as highly pernicious, but also bestowed the sacerdotal, or priestly, office on a foreigner – that is to say, the Pope – who had a separate and sometimes opposite

[115] Although Jacobitism ceased to be a serious threat after the abandoned Elibank Plot in the early 1750s, a French invasion with Jacobite involvement was planned during the Seven Years' War in 1759, but it was aborted; see Claude Nordmann, 'Choiseul and the last Jacobite Attempt of 1759', in *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759,* ed. Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 201-17.

[116] Hume, *Treatise*, p. 557.

[117] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 508.

[118] John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh, 1985), pp. 60-97.

[119] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 509.

[120] Ibid, p. 646 (variant readings).

[121] Ibid, p. 510.

interest to that of the British state.[122] Moreover, even if Catholicism had been advantageous to society, it would be a mistake to have a sovereign of that religion when the great majority of the people were Protestant, especially since the spirit of moderation had made such slow advances in Europe.[123] The Stuarts were aware of this problem. After landing in Scotland in 1745, Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender to his enemies and the Prince of Wales to his supporters (and often caricatured as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' subsequently),[124] pledged 'not to impose upon any a religion they dislike, but to secure them all the enjoyment of those which are respectively at present establish'd among them, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland'.[125] In desperation, Charles even converted to Anglicanism in the early 1750s, but this backfired since it was seen as unprincipled.[126]

Although anti-Catholicism was the decisive factor for most people, Hume gave one final reason why he came down on the side of Hanover, namely that they had attained longevity.[127] Hume believed that the Hanoverians were now rightful kings according to the *imagination* of a slender majority.[128] While it may have been difficult for an 'impartial patriot' to choose between Hanover and Stuart immediately after the Act of Settlement 1701, the Hanoverian settlement had now been more or less consolidated and it would be highly unwise to restore the Stuarts by way of rebellion and civil war.[129] Time had given legitimacy to the settlement, even if no one could have known that it would turn out to be beneficial from the outset. For Hume, a government had to be judged on its present merit; its foundation was to a large degree irrelevant. As he had set out in the *Treatise,* few, if any, governments in history had a better foundation for their authority than present possession, and a change in government would naturally lead to bloodshed and

[122] Ibid. On Hume's views on these matters, see Andrew Sable, 'The Last Artificial Virtue: Hume on Toleration and Its Lessons', *Political Theory,* 37 (2009), pp. 511-538.

[123] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, p. 510.

[124] J.C.D. Clark, 'The Many Restorations of King James: A Short History of Scholarship on Jacobitism, 1688-2006', in *Loyalty and Identity: Jacobites at Home and Abroad,* ed. Paul Monod, Murray Pittock and Daniel Szechi (New York, NY, 2010), pp. 9-56, at 36.

[125] He further promised 'to pass any law, that his Parliament shall judge necessary' for the protection of Protestantism in *Declaration of Charles Prince of Wales* [1745], in *English Jacobite Ballads,..*pp. 131-2.

[126] Frank McLynn, *Bonnie Prince Charlie: Charles Edward Stuart* (London, second ed. 2003), p. 399.

[127] See also Hume, *Treatise*, p. 566.

[128] For Hume's justification by psychology, see Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics*, pp. 91-101.

[129] Hume, 'Protestant Succession', *Essays*, pp. 510-11.

confusion.[130] In the final analysis, then, Hume's intention was to undermine the Jacobite case.

We have to remember, however, that his intention was to refute the speculative systems of both parties, and his approval of the Hanoverian title was a balance-sheet assessment which boiled down to the avoidance of a bloody counter-revolution.[131] Indeed, Hume himself said that he 'very liberally abused both Whigs and Tories' in 'Of the Protestant Succession'.[132] In comparison with establishment discourse in the aftermath of the 'Forty-five', his treatment of Toryism and Jacobitism was fairly balanced and respectful. It would thus be an exaggeration to talk of Hume's 'utter lack of sympathy with the Jacobite cause', as Hume's latest biographer has done.[133] Hume had many Jacobites among his friends,[134] and he sent the new essays discussed in the present chapter to the known Jacobite Lord Elibank in January 1748, joking that 'I am afraid that your Lordship will differ from me with regard to the Protestant Succession, whose Advantages you will probably rate higher than I have done.'[135]

Hume's approach can helpfully be contrasted with Thomas Gordon's narrative of the rise of the Tory party in the fourth volume of the *Independent Whig*, written after the Jacobite rising of 1745-6 and mainly a commentary on that event. Rather than depicting the Tories as lovers of British liberty, as Hume had done in 1741, Gordon only saw them as 'fierce Enthusiasts for Popish and Arbitrary Princes' in the reigns of Charles II and James II and later 'Enthusiasts, more fierce, if possible, against a zealous Protestant Prince [William III]'.[136] This was Whig myth-making because we know that Jacobitism only played a limited role in the reign of William III and only became widespread after the Hanoverian accession in 1714.[137] Anti-Catholicism, which was the key Hanoverian

[130] Hume, *Treatise*, pp. 558, 557.

[131] Wallace warned the Jacobites that 'there are many thousands in Britain who will spill the last drops of their blood to support the Revolution', adding that 'I don't write in this manner from an inclination to Bully but to set before you the difficulties you may expect' (*Address to the Jacobites*, ff. 23-4).

[132] Hume to John Clephane, 4 February 1752, *Letters*, I, p. 167.

[133] Harris, *Hume*, p. 234.

[134] E.C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 177-86.

[135] Mossner, 'New Hume Letters to Lord Elibank, 1748-76', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 4 (1962), pp. 431-60, at 437.

[136] [Thomas Gordon], *The Independent Whig* (1720-47), (4 vols., London, 1741-47), IV, p. 352 (No. XXXI).

[137] Daniel Szechi, *Jacobitism and Tory politics, 1710-14* (Edinburgh, 1984), p. 199.

argument in the 1740s,[138] was part of Hume's case, but his was a more complex argument which did not simply equate Catholicism with despotism, and he also emphasised the importance of longevity. Finally, he refrained from the temptation to point to what could be presented as a glaring contradiction between the belief in passive obedience and resistance to Hanover.[139] Hume's approach was in some ways close to that of his countryman Wallace, who also made the effort to seek to understand the Jacobites, asserting his belief that their conviction must have stemmed from 'mistaken views of the Interest of your Country…without any wicked intention'.[140] Like Hume, Wallace also stressed the importance of longevity.[141]

In the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellion, Hume was extremely critical of the vindictive behaviour of many Whigs. In October 1747, Hume wrote a lesser known pamphlet in which he defended his friend Archibald Stewart, former Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who surrendered the city to the Jacobite army. As part of a wider crackdown on Jacobitism after Culloden, Stewart found himself imprisoned and trialled.[142] Hume's argument was essentially that Stewart had done a noble deed by avoiding a bloodbath since Edinburgh was so poorly defended. As Stewart was acquitted before Hume had published the pamphlet at the start of 1748, Hume added a postscript in which he noted that the trial had become a party-political affair, and Stewart's acquittal had been bemoaned by certain Whigs while celebrated by the Tory-Jacobites.

In the postscript, Hume, so often echoing Rapin's *Dissertation*, made a distinction between political and religious Whigs: 'The Idea I form of a political *Whig*, is that of a Man of Sense and Moderation, a Lover of Laws and Liberty, whose chief Regard to particular Princes and Families, is founded on a Regard to the publick Good'.[143] By contrast, Hume believed that the characteristics of a religious Whig were 'Dissimulation,

[138] Cleghorn, *The Spirit and Principles of the Whigs and Jacobites Compared*, pp. 41-4; Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, p. 43.

[139] This was an argument employed by Henry Fielding in his ironically entitled *Jacobite's Journal* (1747-8); see *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings* (Oxford, 1974), p. 158.

[140] Wallace, *Address to the Jacobites*, f. 7. It is clear that Wallace was bending over backwards to treat the Jacobites respectfully. When discussing the religion of kings in his unpublished pamphlet, he struck out 'a bigotted' before 'Papist', clarifying in a note to the editor that 'to avoid offence I shall not call him a bigotted'). He also changed 'his own Bigotry' to 'his attachment to popery' (ff. 10-11).

[141] Ibid, f. 24.

[142] For the immediate context and the punitive action against Jacobitism in Scotland, see Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689-1746* (London, 1980), pp. 260-282.

[143] Hume, *A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart, Esq: Late Lord Provost of Edinburgh. In a Latter to a Friend* (London, 1748), p. 33.

Hypocrisy, Violence, Calumny, [and] Selfishness'.[144] According to Hume, '[t]his Species of *Whigs*…form but the Fag-end of the Party, and are, at the Bottom, very heartily despised by their own Leaders.'[145] He compared such Whigs to leading Roundheads from the English Civil War and Commonwealth era, including Oliver Cromwell, Henry Ireton and Lord Warriston. These could presumably be regarded as Whigs *avant la lettre* for Hume because of their extreme anti-Episcopalian bias. On this basis, he argued that the 'religious *Whigs*…are much worse than the religious *Tories*; as the political *Tories* are inferior to the political Whigs.'[146] In this context, Hume was evidently eager to point out, maybe as a provocation since his friend had already been acquitted, that he regarded divine-right Tories as superior to Whig extremists: '[A] Zeal for Bishops, and for the Books of Common-Prayer, tho' equally groundless, has never been able, when mixt up with Party Notions, to form so virulent and exalted a Poison in human Breasts, as the opposite Principles.'[147] Hume concluded that all *political* Whigs, unlike *religious* Whigs, were pleased with the acquittal of Stewart because he was innocent, adding 'I am charitable enough to suppose, that the Joy of many of the *Tories* flowed from the same Motive.'[148]

The postscript to the pamphlet thus offered a classic Humean paradox: the Whigs may have had the soundest politics, but some of their supporters, the fanatic Presbyterians, were more violent and zealous than even the High-Church followers of the Tory party. As Hume had set out in 'Superstition and Enthusiasm', Protestant sects may have been conducive to civil liberty, but they were also extremely violent, as he would elaborate in his *History.* In other words, Whigs were not necessarily more tolerant of their ideological opponents just because they were tolerant of various Protestant Dissenters, i.e. their supporters. Indeed, Hume evidently believed that the contrary was the case. 'Passion and Party-Zeal' when carried too far had little regard for justice, he bemoaned: 'many of the *Whigs* have betrayed such a furious Zeal on this Occasion, that they are mortified, or rather indeed inraged to the last Degree, that an innocent Man has been found innocent'.[149] At the same time, he was prepared to vindicate moderates in both parties in a Rapinesque manner. This episode and pamphlet can only strengthen our

[144] Ibid, pp. 33-4.
[145] Ibid, p. 34.
[146] Ibid, p. 33.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid, p. 34.
[149] Ibid, pp. 32-3.

conviction that Hume sought to give a fair hearing to Whigs and Tories alike, even as he was writing *against* both parties' systems. On a personal level, he was as relieved as he was surprised that both Whigs and Tories supported his election as Keeper of the Advocates Library in Edinburgh in 1752.[150] He had expected to be opposed by both sides.

IV

To conclude, this assessment of Hume's views on party ideology in the latter part of the 1740s leads us to disagree with Paul Monod's depiction of the period as an era of ideological confusion.[151] Systems of thought are rarely static and uncompromising, but that does not necessarily make them confused, and it would indeed be hard to think of an historical period to which Monod's description could not apply. Hume never seemed to have believed that Toryism might have become indistinguishable from the patriot creed in the 1740s, as has been argued by Robert Harris.[152] Nor did Hume think that the Whigs had become Tories by virtue of having become a Court party and pursuing such seemingly authoritarian policies as the Riot Act, which was a common opposition rant. For Hume, an analysis of the parties' speculative systems of thought in many ways helped to explain their more practical commitments, which he had sketched in his earlier essays. To generalise and simplify, Tories believed in divine right because they were High Church, and the concrete consequences of such a belief were indefeasible hereditary right and passive obedience, which in turn explained their penchant for Jacobitism. Conversely, being Low Church, Whigs regarded government as man-made and based on a conditional contract which gave subjects the right to withdraw their consent and resist authority. In their minds, James II had broken the contract and was justly opposed and replaced. Their allegiance to Hanover was thus unproblematic.

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[150] Hume to John Clephane, 4 February 1752, *Letters*, I, p. 167.

[151] Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, p. 42.

[152] Harris, *A Patriot Press*, pp. 48-83. It may well have been the case that 'patriotism' motivated a substantial body of people 'without doors' (ibid, p. 82), but many people remained motivated by Tory-Jacobitism. It also played a large part at elections. For example, when Charles Lennox, courtier and friend of the Pelhams, wrote to Sir/Dr John Hill in June 1747 to advise him who to vote for in impending elections in Westminster and Middlesex, he had no qualms about the fact that ''tis the honest old Whig cause I recommend to you in opposition to the Jacobite schemes.' BL Stowe MS 155, f. 116. Moreover, it is clear from Egmont's and other diaries that the Tories remained a parliamentary block in the late 1740s and early 50s (*Egmont Papers*, pp. 108-11, 159, 178, 204).

Fully aware that party passion was not going to disappear, Hume's intention was to sound a note of moderation in the midst of division, and pacify party animosity by revealing the strengths and weaknesses of both parties' ideologies and worldviews, both of which could be beneficial if not taken too far. Neither speculative system held water if philosophically and historically probed, which Hume was keen to demonstrate, being convinced that political legitimacy had to be divorced from foundations. His way of discussing politics and comparing parties set him apart from virtually all his contemporaries. Hume even sought to discuss the Protestant Succession in a cool and indifferent manner. The main reason he gave against a Jacobite restoration was the overarching need to avoid a civil war, and he arrived at this conclusion after he had offered several concessions to the Jacobite case. He was clear that obedience was the general rule and that armed resistance to the established government was only permitted in cases of egregious tyranny like that of Nero, and the Hanoverian kings did not even come close.[153] That may well be why he called his essay 'Passive Obedience' as opposed to 'Divine Right', even if both aspects of the Tory doctrine are part of his definition. He wanted to encourage Tory-Jacobites to limit their resistance to making disloyal toasts and not taking oaths, which was indeed what most Jacobites did.[154] Although Hume's exact arguments only come alive when considered in their specific contexts, he set a gold standard for all subsequent debaters aspiring to moderation amidst tribal strife. While it may not be possible to label even a balance-sheet Hanoverian a non-partisan in an age dominated by dynastic conflict, he may have approximated that ideal as far as was possible in a divided society.[155]

[153] It is doubtful whether James II qualified as a tyrant, but Hume's point was that this mattered little sixty years later. James II was a harmless if not a good man in his private character, but he had mistaken the nature of the constitution and lacked due regard for the nation's religion; see *Essays,* p. 492; idem, *History,* VI, pp. 520-1.

[154] Hume's emphasis on obedience can thus be read as a message to the Jacobites (Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics,* pp. 91-101).

[155] This description is more commonly associated with an earlier period; see G. Holmes and W.A. Speck (eds.), *The Divided Society: Party Conflict in England, 1694-1716* (London, 1967).

Chapter 5:
Hume and the History of Party in England

I: Background and contexts

Hume's *History of England* (6 vols., 1754-62) has commonly been hailed as a cosmopolitan history,[1] which may be true but should not distract us from the fact that domestic politics was at the heart of the work. As Richard Bourke has put it, 'politics, for Hume, had a very specific meaning cantered on the dynamics of "party" or factional struggle'[2] – an approach shared by Rapin. Hume explained to Adam Smith that he began his historical enterprise with the Stuart period partly because the factions, which he believed still informed British politics in the eighteenth century, arose at that time.[3] His own historical work, however, was a conscious attempt to rise above faction,[4] and to seek to see things both ways, which he believed English historiography had failed to do before him.[5] Not only did the factions emerge in the Stuart period, 'the misrepresentations of faction [in history writing] began chiefly to take place' at that time.[6]

According to Smith, it had been the fate of all modern histories of England to be written in a 'party spirit', and Rapin had been 'the most candid' before Hume.[7] Even if it would be a mistake to see Rapin as a straightforward party writer in the same mould as someone like Bishop Burnet, the Frenchman had clearly not been entirely free from partiality and Hume sought to improve on the Huguenot in this regard. Hume was well-

[1] Karen O'Brien, *Narratives of Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon* (Oxford, 1997), ch. 3; Duncan Forbes, 'The European, or Cosmopolitan, Dimension in Hume's Science of Politics', *British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 1 (1978), pp. 57-60; idem 'Introduction', in Hume, *The History of Great Britain: the Reigns of James I and Chares I* (1754), (Middlesex, 1970); Friedrich Meinecke, *Historism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook* (1959), (London, 1972), p. 176.

[2] Richard Bourke, 'Pocock and the Presuppositions of the New British History', *HJ*, 53 (2010), pp. 747-770.

[3] Hume to Smith, 24 September 1752, *Letters*, I, p. 168. He later came to regret that he had not begun with Henry VII, since that was when 'modern History commence[d]'; see Hume to Andrew Millar, 20 May 1757 (p. 249). He also believed that he would have escaped many objections by beginning with the Tudors, because it could then be shown that James I's ideas about the royal prerogative differed little from his illustrious predecessor, Elizabeth I. Hume to Clephane, *Letters*, I, p. 264; Hume to Catherine Macaulay, *New Letters*, pp. 80-2. See also Hume, *History*, IV, appendix III.

[4] He later admitted that he fell short of his own standard of impartiality when had originally started, as he believed that he was too infected with Whiggism (*New Letters*, pp. 69-70).

[5] For statements of this intention, see *Letters*, I, pp. 171, 179; 185, 193, 210, 226, 235, 242, 244, 461; New *Letters*, p. 231. See also J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* (6 vols., Cambridge, 1999-2015), II, ch. 11.

[6] Hume, 'My Own Life', *Essays*, p. xxxvi.

[7] Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1762-3), (Indianapolis, IN, 1985), p. 116.

acquainted with Rapin when he began his historical work.[8] Having been a friendly critic and even an admirer, he turned extremely disapproving as time wore on.[9] He downgraded Rapin to a 'compiler',[10] in the same mould as the Jacobite Thomas Carte and Laurence Echard.[11] We shall see, however, that Hume remained indebted to Rapin's framework to a great extent. Just as he believed that he could rely on Carte for background without subscribing to his Jacobitism,[12] so the same could be said of Rapin and his Whiggism. However, as we saw in chapter one, Rapin was not just a mere compiler, but perhaps the first historian to put party strife at the heart of history, especially in his *Dissertation.*

As we have seen, Hume believed that embracing a party was out of the question for a philosophically minded anatomist of politics. As Pierre Bayle had put it, '[t]he very perfection of a good history is to be disagreeable to all sects and to all nations, given that it proves that the author flatters neither one party nor the other, but has given his frank opinion of each.'[13] While Hume's obsession with impartiality was not novel in the eighteenth century,[14] the way he pursued this goal was. Being disinterested for Hume did not mean never taking sides or favouring a particular policy of any party, but rather avoiding following a consistent party line; in other words, being independent.[15] Hume's *History* has puzzled many readers because it contains a mix of traditional Whig and Tory positions, sometimes next to each other. Hume himself said that '[m]y view of *things* are more conformable to Whig principles; my presentations of *persons* to Tory prejudices', probably referring to the combination of his balance-sheet defence of the Glorious Revolution with his sympathy for at least some of the Stuart kings in the seventeenth

[8] Hume to Michael Ramsay, [1730], *Letters*, II, p. 337. As we saw in chapter three, his historical account in 'Of the Parties of Great Britain' was heavily indebted to the Frenchman. Finally, he had referred to Rapin approvingly in 'The Original Contract' and 'The Protestant Succession', discussed in the previous chapter.

[9] *Letters*, I, pp. 170, 179, 258.

[10] For a distinction between 'compilers', whose work contained large chunks of transcriptions from other works as well as primary documents, and lacked a clear narrative voice, and genuine Enlightenment historians, see Laird Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing: Histories of England in the English Enlightenment* (Lanham, MA, 1991), p. 210. For Hume's ambition to go beyond 'compiling-history' and write 'polite' history, see Philip Hicks, *Neoclassical History and English Culture: From Clarendon to Hume* (Basingstoke, 1996), ch. 7.

[11] Hume to [John Francis Erskine], 26 July [c. 1755-58?], *Further Letters*, p. 33.

[12] Hume was greatly indebted to Carte, particularly for the mediaeval part of his *History* (Harris, *Hume*, pp. 390-91).

[13] Bayle, *Political Writings* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 331.

[14] Hugh Blair listed 'Impartiality, Fidelity, and Accuracy' as the fundamental qualities of a historian. He also said that a historian 'must not enter into faction, nor give scope to affection' in *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783), (Carbondale, IL, 2005), p. 397.

[15] *Letters*, I, pp. 179, 189; Hume, 'My Own Life', p. xxxviii.

century.[16] He also came to believe that the first and second Stuart volumes (the *History of Great Britain*, which later became volumes five and six of the *History of England*) should have been published together, because whereas the first volume was more favourable to Tory opinion, the second one was more Whig.[17] If considered together, he believed that the right balance had been struck. Historians disagree about Hume's success in this respect.[18]

Hume's *History of Great Britain* caused an outcry, chiefly among Whigs, among them Robert Wallace, because of his unwillingness to villainise the Stuart kings of England, at least the first two, leading to suspicion of Jacobitism.[19] Hume complained in a letter to an ex-Jacobite that he was unfairly conflated with the known Jacobite historian Carte, who in a notorious footnote had claimed that the Stuart Pretender had cured a sick man by touching him.[20] For Hume it was vulgar to think that 'the Cause of Charles the I and James the 2 were the same, because they were of the same Family.'[21] Hume said that all revisions he made to his *History* were 'invariably to the Tory party', meaning that he became less and less inclined to blame the Stuart monarchs for the turbulent seventeenth century.[22] What is more, he allegedly said to James Boswell that 'he became a greater friend to the Stuart family as he advanced in studying for his *History*; and he hoped he had vindicated the two first of them so effectually that they would never again be

[16] Hume to John Clephane, 1756, *Letters*, I, p. 237.

[17] Hume to Andrew Millar, 12 April 1755, *Letters*, I, pp. 217-18. Hume predicted that this would be the case after having finished the first volume; see Hume to John Clephane, 28 October 1753, *Letters*, I, p. 180.

[18] For accounts that put emphasis on Hume's 'Tory' leanings, see Giuseppe Giarrizzo, *David Hume politico e storico* (Turin, 1962); Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, pp. 195-207. For the opposite case, see David Wootton, 'Hume, the Historian', in *The Cambridge Companion to Hume*, ed. David Fate Norton (Cambridge, 2006).

[19] Wallace, *Characteristics of the Present Political State of Great Britain* (London, 1758), pp. 56-8. For accusations of Jacobitism, see *Letters*, I, pp. 222, 263-4, 314. The cold reception was only initial, however. The complete *History* replaced Rapin's as the standard history of England, and became the most popular of such work ever written, until it was eclipsed by Macaulay in the nineteenth century (Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, p. 195).

[20] Hume to the Earl of Balcarres, 17 December 1754, *Letters*, I, p. 214; Carte, *A General History of England* (4 vols., London, 1747-55), I, pp. 291-2 (note 4). Carte's *History* received financial backing from people and institutions with Tory-Jacobite background such as John Hynde Cotton, Watkin Williams-Wynn, the Duke of Beaufort, Oxford University and the City of London, but also the Whig Speaker Arthur Onslow (Carte MS 175, Bodleian).

[21] Hume to Strahan, 30 November 1756, *Letters*, I, p. 235.

[22] Hume, 'My Own Life', p. xxxviii. See also E.C. Mossner, 'Was Hume a Tory Historian? Facts and Reconsiderations', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 2 (1941), pp. 225-36, which shows that a great majority if not all of Hume's revisions can be labelled as 'Tory' in accordance with Hume's own understanding of the term. Forbes has demonstrated even more convincingly that many changes were simply stylistic and that Hume's main thesis remained the same in *Hume's Philosophical Politics,* pp. 324-26.

attacked.'[23] What underpinned this disinclination to blame the early Stuart monarchs, and even 'shed[ding] a generous tear for the fate of Charles I',[24] was not Jacobitism in any meaningful sense but his disbelief in the myth of the ancient constitution.[25] For Hume, there was no ancient constitution, but a series of constitutions.[26] A judicious Whig like Edmund Burke remarked that this did not mean that Hume let the Stuart kings off the hook entirely; they could still be duly criticised for 'not having sagacity enough to see that they had fallen in the times, when, from the opinions and fashions of the age, it behoved them to slacken and remit of the authority exercised by their predecessors.'[27]

It may be hard to understand why Hume was so harshly criticised by Whigs for breaking with the ancient constitution tradition. Brady had been appropriated by Whigs as far back as the Convocation Controversy of 1697-1701, in opposition to the 'ancient liberty' argument by the Tory and future Jacobite Francis Atterbury.[28] Tories had long been eager to argue for ancient liberties such as fair and frequent elections, notably in the debates about the Septennial Act 1716.[29] As we saw in chapter two, ministerial Whigs in the 1730s had embraced a 'modern liberty' thesis in opposition to Bolingbroke, notably in Lord Hervey's *Ancient and Modern Liberty* (1734). The Court Whigs still differed from Hume, however, because they were never prepared to vindicate the Stuart kings in any way, even if this would have been a logical extension of their argument.[30] Moreover, that ancient constitutionalism had had a renaissance as Whig orthodoxy in Hume's day can be seen from George Lyttelton's *History of Henry II* (1767-71), whose Whiggery Hume ironically recommended to Smith.[31] Hume's *History* acquired a persistent reputation of being Tory and royalist, as can be seen in the way it was interpreted by Gilbert Stuart later in the eighteenth century and George Brodie in the nineteenth century.[32]

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[23] *Boswell's Edinburgh Journals 1776-1786* (Edinburgh, 2013), p. 258.

[24] Hume, 'My Own Life', p. xxxvii.

[25] Dr Johnson, royalist and Jacobite of sorts, knew that he had no ally in Hume; 'Sir, the fellow is a Tory by chance', as he had said to Boswell (*Boswell's Edinburgh Journals,* p. 258).

[26] Hume, *History*, IV, p. 355 (note l). C.f. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, II, ch. 14.

[27] Review of the *History* in the *Annual Register*, Vol. 4, December 1761, in *Early Responses to Hume*, ed. James Fieser (10 vols., Bristol, 2nd ed. 2005), VII, p. 264.

[28] R.J. Smith, *The Gothic Bequest: Medieval Institutions in British Thought, 1688-1863* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 28-38.

[29] See the speeches of Shippen, Bromley, Nottingham, and others in *Parl. Hist.*, vol. VII.

[30] Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics,* pp. 248-49.

[31] *Letters*, II, p. 150.

[32] Stuart, selections from *A View of Society in Europe in its Progress from Rudeness to Refinement* (1778) and Brodie, selections from *History of the British Empire* (1822), in *Early Responses,*

However, Hume's *History* was Whig in the strong sense of defending the settlement of 1688-9, even if it sought to demonstrate its accidental nature. This was comparable to the Court Whig position personified by Hervey and was called 'true Whig principles' by the Jacobite Sir James Steuart.[33] It stood in sharp contrast with Bolingbroke, who had described the settlement as a confirmation of Magna Carta.[34] Hume may well have had Bolingbroke in mind when he scoffed at '[t]hose who, from a pretended respect to antiquity, appeal at every turn to an original plan of the constitution, only cover their turbulent spirit and their private ambition under the appearance of venerable forms'.[35] As we saw in chapter three, the paper war between the Court Whigs and Bolingbroke was in many ways the immediate context for Hume's early essays. The earlier Whig historiographical tradition embodied by Rapin had been appropriated by Bolingbroke as part of his Country party opposition to the Whig government. It is evident that Bolingbroke was still on Hume's mind when he turned to history, as he referred to the *Dissertation upon Parties* in the second Stuart volume.[36] While he agreed with Bolingbroke that history was philosophy teaching by example,[37] they drew very different lessons from their respective studies, even if there was also some common ground.

As will become clear, when describing the rise of party in English history, Hume was not partial to either the Whigs or the Tories, or to any of their predecessors. His key concern was to investigate how religion, faction, and interest were all connected and mutually supportive principles that produced 'party spirit', and Bolingbroke would have agreed with him in this respect. However, Hume also explained in much more detail and with greater sophistication how the constitution of England, at the time uncertainly balanced between royal prerogative and parliamentary privilege, gave birth to parties of government and opposition. Hume's history of party in the seventeenth century will be reconstructed at length below, because it is arguably the most refined eighteenth-century account of the non-lineal emergence of party.

VIII, pp. 50-55, 217-72. See also Richard Hurd's critique of Hume's alleged Toryism in *Early Responses*, VII, pp. 173-80, and Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689-c.1830* (Cambridge, 1993), esp. pp. 240, 244.

[33] Steuart to Hume, 10 November 1767, *Letters of Eminent Persons addressed to David Hume* (Edinburgh, 1849), pp. 175-6.

[34] J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (1959), (New York, NY, revised ed. 1987), pp. 231-32.

[35] Hume, *History*, II, p. 525.

[36] Ibid, VI, p. 377.

[37] Hume, *History*, V, p. 545. See also idem, *Enquiry I*, p. 83.

II: 'Court' and 'Country' under James I

The crucial difference between Hume and Rapin (and his 'disciple' Bolingbroke) was that the latter believed that the first Stuart kings had actively tried to stretch the royal prerogative. Hume's denial of this claim put him closer to his contemporary William Guthrie.[38] While Hume diverged from Rapin's ancient constitutionalism and 'vulgar Whiggism', in his account of the rise of party in the seventeenth century, we shall see that he remained indebted to Rapin's narrative in some important respects.[39] This is not strange; he also shared Smith's low opinion of Burnet,[40] but nevertheless referred to him frequently, particularly in the second Stuart volume. Hume followed Rapin in arguing that 'party' as a parliamentary phenomenon began in the reign of James I, and that the underlying facilitators could be traced to the previous century: the split in the Protestant church between Episcopalians and Puritans, and a gradual revolution in learning and manners.[41] The Elizabethan age was thus the dawn of the mixed constitution, as the 'precious spark of liberty' had been kindled and preserved by the Puritan sect.[42] As a result of differences in religious opinions, England 'contained the seeds of intestine discord', which is why the Stuart volumes cannot be considered in isolation from the Tudor volumes.[43]

These novelties in the Tudor period, which truly took hold in the seventeenth century, meant that 'the love of freedom…acquired new force' in the shape of 'a passion for a limited constitution'.[44] As Hobbes had been dismayed to see, men of high birth and education were particularly fond of reading Greek and Roman authors, who, according to Hume, encouraged an emulation of 'manly virtues'.[45] Even if James I's accession in 1603 had been extremely smooth, Hume emphasised that the new king was not popular enough

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[38] Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics*, pp. 253-58. Hume likened Tudor England to Turkey and Elizabeth to Peter the Great in *History*, IV, pp. 360, 364.

[39] The fact that he did not refer to Rapin in the footnotes does not mean much. Hume was criticised by Horace Walpole for omitting references (*Letters*, I, pp. 284-85). As James Harris in *Hume*, pp. 326-27 has highlighted, Hume's *History* was unusual in its complete silence on general histories preceding it.

[40] Hume to Millar, 4 December 1756, *Letters*, I, pp. 235-6.

[41] Hume, *History*, III, pp. 81-2, 211-12, 290, 339, 347, IV, pp. 123, 167, 278, 384-85.

[42] Ibid, IV, pp. 145-6. This perspective had been anticipated by the Dissenting minister Daniel Neal in his *History of the Puritans* (1732); see Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, pp. 85-91.

[43] Hume, *History*, IV, p. 147.

[44] Ibid, V, p. 18.

[45] Ibid, p. 19. For the role of humanist rhetoric in this period, see Markku Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics, and Popularity in Pre-Revolutionary England* (New York, NY, 2013).

to keep 'this rising spirit' within as narrow bounds as his prudent predecessor.[46] The king, who 'had established within his own mind a speculative system of absolute government', found himself of an 'opposite disposition' from his parliament.[47] The 'spirit of liberty' that became increasingly dominant, particularly in the Commons, was the beginning of a 'more regular plan of liberty'.[48] It was evident that leading members 'less aspired at maintaining the ancient constitution, than at establishing a new one, and a freer, and a better.'[49]

Hume was clear that zeal for civil liberty and religious principles had been conflated in the 'great revolution of manners, which happened during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries', across Europe but particularly in England.[50] At this point in time, the Commons became increasingly powerful, as the balance of property had shifted in their favour.[51] In his essays, Hume had modified Harrington's thesis that power always followed property by arguing that this was only the case when the original constitution allocated a share of power to the order of 'men' concerned, as with the lower house in England.[52] All this produced a much different political and intellectual climate at the beginning of the seventeenth century. As Hume said plainly in private, this was the time when England became a cultivated nation; by contrast, '*When good Queen Elizabeth sat on the Throne,* there was very little good Roast Beef in [England], and no Liberty at all.'[53]

Hume stressed that this 'spirit of liberty' was the real novelty; the opposing doctrines of divine right of kings and passive obedience could be traced to homilies in Elizabeth's reign.[54] Rather than being invented in the Stuart age, they 'were only found by the court to be more necessary at that period, by reason of the opposite doctrines, which *began* to be promulgated by the puritanical party.'[55] In this clash of contrasting principles, religious and political, the first Stuart monarch could not resist putting his head

[46] Hume, *History,* V, pp. 3, 19.
[47] Ibid, p. 19.
[48] Ibid, p. 40.
[49] Ibid, p. 42.
[50] Ibid, p. 80.
[51] Ibid, p. 40. See also ibid, III, pp. 77, 80; 'Of Refinements in the Arts' (1752, originally 'Of Luxury'), *Essays,* p. 278.
[52] Hume, 'First Principles of Government', *Essays,* pp. 33, 35
[53] Hume to Thomas Percy, 16 January 1773, *New Letters,* p. 198.
[54] Hume, *History,* V, p. 563 (Note Q), IV, p. 357. Hume also stressed that patriarchal theory was not invented by Filmer.
[55] Ibid, p. 127. As Forbes pointed out in *Hume's Philosophical Politics,* p. 287, 'began' was not italicised in the first edition.

above the parapet. James I – a scholar in his own right[56] – had an unfortunate fondness for discussing theology. From the Hampton Court Conference at the beginning of his reign, the king 'showed the strongest propensity to the established church'.[57]

All these factors combined to produce an environment conducive to the birth of parties. Like Rapin, Hume identified the parliament of 1621 as 'the epoch, in which were first regularly formed, though without acquiring these denominations, the parties of court and country', or parties of government and opposition.[58] Closely paraphrasing the Frenchman, Hume stressed that these were 'parties, which have since continued'.[59] These formulations were originally part of the main text of the *History*, but were later moved to an endnote, as Hume did not want to interrupt the narrative with too many digressions.[60] They should not be regarded as views he later repudiated, however, and he kept them in the note because they were 'important'.[61] Moreover, a similar statement was kept in the main body of text towards the end of the same chapter.[62] The immediate context for the advent of these 'parties' was public displeasure over the king's policy towards Spain and Roman Catholics in England, as James I sought to bring about a marriage treaty with Philip III. This stirred up anti-Catholic sentiments and brought parliamentary opposition to the king to a new level, according to Hume. Whether Hume, or indeed Rapin, was correct to identify 1621 as the beginning of the Court-Country party system does not need to concern us now since our main interest is the way 'party' was understood in the eighteenth century.[63]

Hume's argument was not entirely taken from Rapin. In an important modification, he argued that parliamentary 'parties' emerged under James I because parliament became important for the first time.[64] Under the feudal constitution, parliament only sat for a few days and no one would then have dared opposing the monarch as he would find himself unprotected upon the dissolution of parliament a few

[56] Albeit a 'middling' one, according to Hume (*History*, V, p. 154).
[57] Ibid, p. 12.
[58] Ibid, p. 556. By contrast, Guthrie pointed to the parliamentary session of 1614 as the beginning of 'constitutional opposition' to James I; see *A General History of England* (4 vols., 1744-51), IV, p. 703.
[59] Hume, *History*, V, p. 556.
[60] Hume to William Robertson, 25 January 1759, *Letters*, I, p. 294.
[61] Hume, *History*, V, p. 558.
[62] Ibid, p. 121.
[63] However, recent work suggests that the political culture of the early Stuart age became increasingly adversarial; see Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics, and Popularity*.
[64] For the servility of parliaments in the Tudor era, see Hume, *History*, III, p. 264, 323, IV, pp. 144-45, 346, 374.

days later. Even under the Tudors, parliament was not a road to either honour or preferment, as it was merely an 'organ of royal pleasure'.[65] In such a situation, '[o]pposition would have been regarded as a species of rebellion.'[66] It had been perfectly natural for James 'to take the government as he found it', but alas 'neither his circumstances nor his character could support so extensive an authority' as exemplified by Elizabeth.[67] Due to his small revenue and lack of frugality, he became increasingly dependent on parliament. Thanks to a general spread of knowledge and greater emphasis on civil liberty, the outcome was that 'a party, watchful of a free constitution, was regularly formed in the house of commons.' Crucially, these political considerations intermingled with religious views. Hume believed that royal authority remained so extensive that few would have considered 'resisting it, had they not been stimulated by religious motives, which inspire a courage unsurmountable by any human obstacle.'[68] Importantly, Hume's choice of words is indicative of intellectual distance between him and Bayle, who argued against the importance of religion in human motivation.[69] Accordingly, Episcopalians rallied behind the Court party, and the Puritans behind the Country party. The 'bold, daring, and uncontrouled' spirit of the latter made them inclined towards republican principles.[70] Similarly, the alliance between monarchical power and ecclesiastical authority was a natural one.[71]

Even if Hume believed that a parliamentary party system of sorts was now emerging, it was still highly irregular. This was a time when parliamentary sessions were short, and most saw England as an unmixed monarchy, and parliament as a mere ornament.[72] This general perception was key, as government was entirely founded on opinion, according to Hume.[73] He did not just think that the (*avant les lettres*)[74] Court and Country parties that emerged in the parliament of 1621 still informed British party politics. Even more strikingly, he claimed that 'while they [the parties] oft threaten the total dissolution of the government, [they] are the real causes of its permanent life and

[65] Ibid, V, p. 557.
[66] Ibid. See also ibid, IV, p. 368.
[67] Ibid, V, p. 558.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Bayle, *Miscellaneous Reflections, Occasion'd by the Comet, which appear'd in December 1680* (London, 1708), esp. sect. CLXI.
[70] Hume, *History*, V, p. 559.
[71] Ibid, p. 558.
[72] Ibid, p. 127.
[73] Ibid, p. 128; idem, 'First Principles of Government', *Essays*, pp. 32-3.
[74] Hume never specifies when the terms began.

vigour.'[75] This statement, a classical Humean paradox, was more positive than anything he had written in his previous essays about parties.[76]

A similar wording can be found in Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois*, the major intellectual impression made on Hume between his early political essays and the publication of the *History.* After having described the British constitution (or the English constitution, as he called it) in book eleven of his *chef-d'œuvre,* Montesquieu proceeded in the final chapter of book nineteen to adumbrate how Britain was perpetually divided into two 'parties', with one inclining to the executive and the other to the legislative power.[77] With the power of patronage, 'all those who would obtain something from [the executive] would be inclined to move to that side, and it could be attacked by all those who could expect nothing from it.'[78] The competition will generate 'hatred, envy, jealousy, and the ardor for enriching and distinguishing oneself…to the full extent'.[79] However, since Montesquieu saw liberty as the principle of the British constitution, 'if this were otherwise, the state would be like a man who, laid low by disease, has no passions because he has no strength.'[80] Montesquieu's discussion of the executive and legislative partisans is believed to have been derived from Bolingbroke's Court-Country analysis of British politics in the *Craftsman,* with which Hume had already engaged in his essays.[81]

Hume had read *De l'esprit des lois* in the autumn of 1748, the same year the book was published. The following spring he wrote a lengthy letter to Montesquieu, congratulating him for having written a work 'qui sera l'admiration de tous les siècles'.[82] He then proceeded to give Montesquieu detailed feedback on specific passages in the book, before returning to flattery, noting that the Earl of Bath (Pulteney) had quoted the Frenchman in the Lords.[83] Hume believed that the French aristocrat, with some justification, had made the English proud of their beloved form of government. But this

[75] Hume, *History,* V, p. 556.

[76] Despite this statement, many scholars, even those citing from the *History,* persist in arguing that Hume simply 'condemned parties'; see, e.g., Paul Halliday, *Dismembering the Body Politic* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 8.

[77] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), (Cambridge, 2015), p. 325.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid, pp. 325, 156.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Robert Shackleton, *Montesquieu: A Critical Biography* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 297-98.

[82] *Letters*, I, p. 133.

[83] Hume could not help mocking Bolingbroke's erstwhile opposition colleague who had joined the government side upon the fall of Walpole in 1742 but was 'à present dans le opposition; vous avez que ces distinctions ne sont pas souvent de longue durée parmi nous et sont très casuelles.' (Ibid, p. 138.)

pride should not lead to complacency: 'Mais ne peut-on pas remarquer que, si les formes simples de gouvernement sont par leur nature sujettes à l'abus, parce qu'il n'ya aucun contrepoids, d'un autre côté les formes compliquées où une partie réprime l'autre, sont, comme les machines compliquées, sujettes à déranger par le contraste et l'opposition des parties.'[84] In other words, Hume believed that Montesquieu had been too optimistic about the pacific nature of British party strife. While Hume was eager to stress the disruption (*déranger*) of party politics in mixed constitutions in his letter to Montesquieu, it is possible that Montesquieu's choice of words left a lasting impression on Hume. As we have seen, Hume had earlier held that party politics was an inescapable part of Britain's mixed government. In his *History* he took one further step and explicitly argued, with Montesquieu, that it also gave 'life and vigour' to the government.

Hume argued that while 'the wise and moderate in the nation endeavoured to preserve, as much as possible, an equitable neutrality between the opposite parties…they regarded the very rise of parties as a happy prognostic of the establishment of liberty'.[85] In other words, a mixed government and a parliamentary system required partisans, and parties were a price worth paying for such an 'invaluable blessing'.[86] As Hume saw it, 'Governments, especially those of a mixed kind, are in continual fluctuation: The humours of the people change perpetually from one extreme to another'.[87] As we shall see, however, his *History* would also put emphasis on the destructive role of party. At this time, the balance between parliamentary privilege and royal prerogative was so uncertain that not only was it inevitable that the people became divided, but a 'civil war must ensue; a civil war, where no party or both parties would justly bear the blame'.[88] We will now turn to Hume's treatment of that unhappy episode.

III: Charles I and civil war

Charles I inherited a parliament possessed by a jealous 'spirit of liberty'.[89] This Bolingbrokean phrase, which Bolingbroke himself had seen as constantly present in the history of England, now began to become truly relevant for the first time, according to Hume. Discontent was not restricted to the lower house, but 'diffused itself over the

[84] Ibid.
[85] Hume, *History*, V, p. 95.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid, p. 353.
[88] Ibid, p. 96.
[89] Ibid, pp. 191, 221.

nation'.[90] This 'republican spirit' was countered by a 'monarchical spirit', for instance in the shape of sermons preaching that parliamentary consent was not a prerequisite for the imposition of taxes, as the sovereign needed to have access to all the nation's property when deemed necessary. These opposite spirits tended to augment each other, 'and the just medium was gradually deserted by all men.'[91] Two ideological polar opposites, some aspects of which could be detected already in the previous reign, now became increasingly prominent.

That the Commons 'seriously formed a plan for reducing their prince to subjection' was evident when they declared it illegal to levy tonnage and poundage, a form of taxation, without the consent of parliament, in the face of the precedent of many reigns.[92] The *Puritans* at this time were made up of three *parties* that became united: political Puritans, attached to civil liberty; Puritans in discipline, who opposed the ceremonies and hierarchy of the Episcopalians or the Anglicans; and the doctrinal Puritans, who defended the speculative system of the first reformers.[93] As had been common since the time of Elizabeth, 'the puritanical party' was dominant in the Commons. This party was opposed by the Court party, the hierarchy (i.e. the established Episcopalian church), as well as the Arminian sect. Hume believed that the last sect gradually incorporated itself into the established church, as it found 'more encouragement from superstitious spirit of the church than from the fanaticism of the puritans'.[94] The supporters of episcopal government, including Bishop Laud, 'were the strenuous preachers of passive obedience'.[95] Theological and metaphysical controversies were carried out together with the debates on tonnage and poundage.

Charles I dissolved parliament in 1629 and did not call another one for eleven years, resorting to ship money for finance. Hume argued that the king now 'entertained a very different idea of the constitution, from that which *began*, in general, to prevail among his subjects', i.e. the spirit of liberty.[96] Hume was careful to stress, however, that the situation would have been sustainable had it not been for the fact that discontent broke out in Scotland, as a result of Charles I seeking to introduce Episcopalian uniformity in

[90] Ibid, p. 203.
[91] Ibid, p. 199.
[92] Ibid, p. 208.
[93] Ibid, p. 212.
[94] Ibid, p. 211.
[95] Ibid, pp. 212-13.
[96] Ibid, p. 236.

the northern kingdom. Lack of funds to support war with Scotland obliged the king to summon a parliament in 1640. The majority of men elected to parliament were not compliant but 'stubborn patriots' and country gentlemen outside the reach of crown influence.[97] Realising that his enemies in parliament outnumbered his friends, the king violently and abruptly dissolved parliament (but not Convocation), producing further discontent among the people.[98]

The king was shortly obliged to call another parliament, which became known as the 'Long Parliament'. It began in a violent manner by prosecuting some of the king's closest men, Strafford and Laud, for high treason, and having sought to introduce arbitrary and unlimited monarchy.[99] The belief that the king could do no wrong, and only his ministers and servants could be found culpable, had thus far retained its prominence.[100] In a bid to weaken the king's already small 'party', projectors and monopolists were expelled from the Commons. The king had to acquiesce to the Triennial Act and give up his independent right to tonnage and poundage. The Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, seen as instruments of discretionary royal and ecclesiastical power respectively, were abolished. In hyperbolic language, Hume argued that the changes undertaken at the beginning of the Long Parliament changed the country instantly 'from a monarchy almost absolute, to a pure democracy'.[101]

The popular leaders in parliament, seized by passion for Presbyterianism and the wild enthusiasm that accompanied this religion, soon began to plan for abolition of the entire monarchy.[102] They also attacked 'the hierarchy' – that is to say, the bishops – in the Lords. The king was so emasculated at this point that 'the fears and jealousies, which operated on the people, and pushed them so furiously to arms, were undoubtedly not of a civil but a religious nature.'[103] The 'dread of popery' was the foremost concern among the populace, even if this was often a 'groundless charge', such as when Bishop Laud was executed.[104] The 'party-names' of Roundhead and Cavalier emerged in the context of the run-up to the civil war, as Hume had already pointed out in his *Essays*. These were

[97] Ibid, p. 271.
[98] Ibid, p. 276.
[99] Ibid, p. 290.
[100] Ibid, p. 291.
[101] Ibid, p. 293.
[102] Ibid, p. 348.
[103] Ibid, p. 380.
[104] Ibid, p. 457.

initially terms of reproach, but allowed 'the factions [to] rendezvous and signalize their mutual hatred.'[105] The king sought to strike back by prosecuting five popular leaders in parliament, including Pym, Hollis and Hampden, and a civil war in England began to look imminent, and duly commenced in 1642.

Sometimes when referring to 'the people' as opposed to the king, it is clear that Hume refers to one segment of the population, as both sides sought to 'gain the people's favour and good opinion', and both sides had their partisans.[106] As he put it, '[w]hen two names, so sacred in the English constitution as those of KING and PARLIAMENT, were placed in opposition, no wonder the people were divided in their choice, and were agitated with the most violent animosities and factions.'[107] The religion of the people 'corresponded exactly to these divisions': 'The Presbyterian religion was new, republican, and suited to the genius of the populace: The other [Episcopalian] had an air of greater show and ornament, was established on ancient authority, and bore an affinity to the kingly and aristocratical parts of the constitution.'[108] Other sects hid among the Presbyterians, notably the Independents, of whom Oliver Cromwell was a leader.[109] As already mentioned, most nobles sided with the king, whereas the City of London had adopted republican principles and sided with parliament. Hume described the manners of the two 'factions' of Roundhead and Cavalier as being 'as opposite as those of the most distant nations.'[110] The Cavaliers were fond of pleasure; the Roundheads were gloomy enthusiasts, opposed to all forms of recreation.[111] Hume was clear that most advantages laid with the parliamentary party, especially since the veneration for parliaments was generally 'extreme' at this time, and '[m]en considered the house of commons, in no other light than as the representatives of the nation'.[112] Crucially, thanks to their 'popularity', this party acquired the power to affix epithets: the king's adherents were called 'wicked' and 'malignant', and his adversaries 'godly' and 'well-affected'.[113]

For obvious reasons, the two parties, or ideological counterparts, at this point in time started to look less like *political* parties and more like two warring parties. The fact

[105] Ibid, p. 363.
[106] Ibid, p. 380.
[107] Ibid, p. 386.
[108] Ibid, p. 387.
[109] Ibid, pp. 441-44.
[110] Ibid, VI, p. 141.
[111] Ibid, VI, pp. 141-42.
[112] Ibid, V, p. 388.
[113] Ibid, p, 389.

that a clear distinction between the two was difficult to make for the seventeenth century is important when we assess how people in the eighteenth century understood 'party'. Parliamentary parties were, in historical as well as political writing, related to civil war 'parties', which is why a discussion of Whig and Tory was usually incomplete without reference to Cavalier, Roundhead and the civil war.[114] For similar reasons, references to the parties and factions that brought down the Roman Republic were also common in discussions of British party politics.[115] We will now turn to the second half of the seventeenth century, and Hume's second Stuart volume, and see how the survival of religious parties once again produced a Court and Country polarity, which in turn would give way to Tory and Whig.

IV: Restoration

After eleven years of republican rule, many under the essentially military government of Cromwell,[116] monarchy was restored with the aid of General Monck, lavishly praised by Hume.[117] A reconciliation between erstwhile rival parties paved the way for the Restoration.[118] Upon his restoration, Charles II 'admitted the most eminent men of the nation, without regard to former distinctions'.[119] Hume was clear that Cavalier and Roundhead expired at the Restoration, as a result of the 'lenity and equality of Charles's administration.' Meanwhile, '[t]heological controversy alone still subsisted, and kept alive some sparks of that flame, which had thrown the nation into convulsion.'[120] Presbyterianism and Episcopacy (or Prelacy), which was restored with the king, competed for superiority.

Religious struggle was in fact the main 'party' competition that took place in English politics until a Court-Country polarity once again became apparent in the 1670s. That the Episcopalian and royalist party which now had the upper hand was a church

[114] *Spectator,* No. 125, 24 July 1711, in *The Works of Joseph Addison* (3 vols., New York, NY, 1845), I p. 190.

[115] Thomas Gordon's 'First Discourse: on Party and Faction', in *Political Discourses on Tacitus and Sallust: Tyranny, Empire, War, and Corruption* (1728-1744), (Indianapolis, IN, 2013).

[116] Hume, *History,* VI, pp. 5, 54, 74, 85-6, 93.

[117] In an extensive footnote, Hume attacked the 'factious spirit' by Bishop Burnet for treating Monck with 'malignity'. The Whig Burnet's treatment was 'a singular proof of the strange power of faction', according to Hume (*History*, VI, p. 247 note g).

[118] Ibid, pp. 117, 132, 135.

[119] Ibid, p. 156.

[120] Ibid, p. 170.

party rather than a Court party can be seen from the fact that 'when any real power or revenue was demanded from the crown, they were neither so forward nor so liberal in their concessions as the king would gladly have wished.'[121] The 'popular' or 'parliamentarian' 'party' had a long history of anti-Catholicism, which was often turned into anti-clericalism.[122] By contrast, 'a spirit of opposition, inclined the court and all the royalists to adopt a more favourable sentiment towards that sect'.[123] This came to the fore now as the king had during his exile 'imbibed strong prejudices in favour of the catholic religion', and perhaps was himself a closeted Catholic.[124] Charles II and his brother, the more 'zealously' Catholic James, Duke of York, formed a plan for a general toleration of sects, which would include Catholics.[125] This produced tension between the king and his parliament, which otherwise would have supported him.[126] 'Anti-popery' would be the main catalyst for the emergence of the Whig-Tory dichotomy that appeared at the Exclusion Crisis in 1679-81.

In the early 1670s, England attached itself to France in alliance against Holland. This alliance with a Catholic power against a Protestant country equalled a war 'against the religion and liberties of his own subjects, even more than against the Dutch themselves.'[127] The king had to resort to long and frequent prorogations of parliament. In the spirit of an absolute monarch, the king issued a declaration of indulgence, suspending penal laws against non-conformists, a measure 'laudable, when considered in itself; but if we reflect on the motive whence it proceeded…it will furnish a strong proof of the arbitrary and dangerous counsels, pursued by the king and his ministry.'[128] It was around this time when government business was carried out by the notorious 'cabal', a group of ministers that sought to extend royal power. It was called thus after the first letter of the

[121] Ibid, p. 177.
[122] Ibid, V, pp. 90, 175-6, 198, 201-2, 347, 373, 380.
[123] Ibid, VI, p. 185.
[124] Ibid, VI, p. 185. See also p. 175: 'The catholics, though they had little interest in the nation, were a considerable party at court.' Hume reported that Charles II received the sacraments from a Catholic priest on his deathbed (p. 446).
[125] Ibid, p. 186. In fact, Hume discovered when perusing the memoirs of James II at the Scotch College of Paris that Charles II and his brother aimed to change the religion of the country, which they believed was feasible seeing the propensity of the 'cavaliers' and the 'church party' for Catholicism. As Hume discovered, Charles II became a French pensioner from 1669-70 (p. 286n). See also *New Letters,* p. 76.
[126] For the king's neglect to support 'loyalists', see Hume, *History,* VI, p. 189.
[127] Ibid, pp. 252-3.
[128] Ibid, p. 254.

names of its five members,[129] and the word became a common term in eighteenth-century discourse, usually as a synonym for 'faction'. In sum, Charles II alienated large chunks of his parliament, on which he was still dependent to raise money.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury, was Lord Chancellor and a leading member of the cabal, but when Charles II recalled the declaration of indulgence in the face of hostility from parliament, he sensed a weakness in the king and went into opposition himself. Now the Country-Court polarity re-entered the fray, and Shaftesbury emerged as a leader of the 'country party'.[130] At this point in time, the Country party became properly united with the Dissenting interest. The king continued to clash with parliament over the Dutch war for some time, but he shortly realised that he would not be granted supplies to carry on the war, and backed down as he had done over the declaration of indulgence.[131] The debate pointed to continuity in English 'party' division: 'The question, indeed, with regard to resistance, was a point, which entered into the controversies of the old parties, cavalier and roundhead; as it made an essential part of the present disputes between court and country.'[132] Hume continued to remark that few 'neuters' were to be found, but that those who could remain indifferent adopted sentiments different from either party, for all the reasons we saw in the previous chapter.[133]

By the mid-1670s, '[t]he house of commons was…regularly divided into two parties, the court and the country.'[134] Both sides boasted primarily men who intended the public good, but there was also a smaller number motivated by ambition, and, in the case of the Court party, offices or bribes. Many of the 'disinterested' who had the public good in mind 'fluctuated between the factions'.[135] There is a sense that Hume believed the regular English party framework to have 'arrived' at this point, in a similar structure to that we saw beginning to form in the early 1620s, and which he still thought played an important role in his own time.[136] Hume viewed this as the 'natural' party structure of Britain's (or at this time England's) mixed constitution. The civil war 'parties' –

[129] Clifford, Ashley (later Shaftesbury), Buckingham, Arlington and Lauderdale (ibid, pp. 239-40).
[130] Ibid, p. 276.
[131] Ibid, pp. 281-2.
[132] Ibid, p. 293.
[133] Ibid, pp. 293-4.
[134] Ibid, p. 307.
[135] Ibid, pp. 307-8.
[136] See chapter three.

Roundhead and Cavalier – corresponded to this dichotomy to some extent, because it would be wrong to think that the Court and Country parties were free from religious dimensions. The civil war 'parties' were different, however, because they fought *pro aris et focis.* It can thus be said that Roundhead and Cavalier came in the way of the natural development of the English parties, which Hume on balance had seen as a positive event in the 1620s. Similarly, another fatal party division would now complement and to an extent eclipse Court and Country, namely that of Tory and Whig.

V: Exclusion, Whig and Tory, and Revolution

A great deal of discontent against the king stemmed from Charles II's perceived 'subservience' towards Louis XIV and France. Anti-French sentiments were related to fears of Catholicism and arbitrary power, which were both 'apprehended as the scope of all [the king's] projects'.[137] The general suspicion of and animosity against Catholics 'made the public swallow the grossest absurdities', including the Popish Plot, a fabricated conspiracy to assassinate Charles II contrived by Titus Oates.[138] Despite its absurdity, the plot dominated business in parliament. This can be said to have been a dress rehearsal for the Exclusion Crisis. The Commons introduced and passed a new test, which denominated Catholicism an idolatry. The Duke of York, who was openly Catholic, moved in the upper house an exception to be admitted in his own case, and won by two votes only.[139] As Lord High Treasurer Danby was being impeached by parliament as part of the anti-French and anti-Catholic tide, the king proceeded in December 1678 to prorogue and shortly afterwards dissolve the so-called Cavalier Parliament.

Hume believed that the elections in March 1679 were 'perhaps the first in England, which, since the commencement of the monarchy, [which] had been carried on by a violent contest between the parties'.[140] The Presbyterian *party* was particularly successful and 'the new representatives would, if possible, exceed the old in their refractory opposition to the court, and furious persecution of the catholics.'[141] The king was now opposed by a numerous *party*, which comprised the populace, 'so credulous

[137] Ibid, p. 333.
[138] Ibid, p. 338.
[139] Ibid, p. 349.
[140] Ibid, p. 356.
[141] Ibid, p. 357.

from prejudice, so blinded with religious antipathy', as well as leaders who sought to exploit these sentiments to further their own ambitions.[142] The king sought to stabilise the situation by what we may call a bipartisan approach through the selection of a new privy council of thirty members, half of whom were to be attached to the court and the other half unattached men with credit in both houses of parliament. Shaftesbury once again became a minister of the crown as Lord President of the Council.[143] It was evident that the popular leader only possessed the appearance of court favour, however, and Shaftesbury's main allegiance remained with the Country party. This party soon introduced a bill to exclude the Duke of York entirely from the succession to the crown, rejecting limitations suggested by Charles II.[144] It passed in the lower house by a majority of seventy-nine. At the same time, the same party continued to protest against the bribery and corruption of members of parliament.[145] The struggle against Catholicism and fears over arbitrary government went hand in hand with a Country programme of decreasing the executive influence over the legislative, according to Hume. The king prorogued parliament in the face of the opposition.

The king had managed 'to form a considerable party' at this time.[146] On his restoration, he had initially wanted to abolish the distinction of parties, but when he was faced with a 'general jealousy', he found it necessary 'to court the old cavalier party'.[147] The Exclusion Crisis made the succession to the throne a party question. According to Hume, the royalist party would always carefully guard the succession as a bulwark against encroachments of popular assemblies. Charles II received additional support from the Church of England by making the established clergy and their supporters believe 'that the old scheme for the abolition of prelacy as well as monarchy was revived'.[148] The memory of the civil war attached many impartial people to the crown.

Hume's description of how the 'petitioners' and 'abhorrers' acquired the lasting denominations of Whig and Tory was similar to the one in Rapin's *Histoire*, without the reference to *lait-aigre*, while differing from many more recently published accounts of

[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid, p. 363.
[144] Ibid, p. 365.
[145] Ibid, pp. 365-6.
[146] Ibid, p. 375.
[147] Ibid, p. 376.
[148] Ibid.

the same events.[149] According to Hume, the Court party reproached their antagonists for their affinity with 'the fanatical conventiclers in Scotland, who were known by the name of whigs', while '[t]he country party found a resemblance between the courtiers and the popish banditti in Ireland, to whom the appellation of tory was affixed.'[150] Hume added that 'these foolish terms of reproach…even at present seem not nearer their end than when they were first invented.'[151] Against this background, and after the degree of abuse Hume received from both parties owing to his *History*, it is not surprising that he supported George III's attempt to abolish the distinctions of Whig and Tory.[152]

The two party positions crystallised as the Exclusion Crisis unfolded. The Whig party's case for exclusion rested on the fear that a Catholic successor would make mutual trust between king and people impossible. They argued that when theological principles 'become symbols of faction, and marks of party distinctions, they concur with one of the strongest passions in the human frame, and are capable of carrying men to the greatest extremities.'[153] Interestingly, Hume believed that it was the exclusionists who argued that '[i]n every government…there is somewhere an authority absolute and supreme', which in England was the legislative body, comprising Crown, Lords, and Commons.[154] All government matters, including the succession, should be subject to the same jurisdiction. On the other hand, in Hume's rendition, the Court (or Tory) party argued that '[a]n authority…wholly absolute and uncontroulable is a mere chimera' and, in a Humean fashion, that '[a]ll government is founded on opinion and a sense of duty'.[155] If the popular assembly would 'shock' a fundamental opinion such as that of lineal succession, the obedience they themselves received would be undermined.[156] Importantly, Hume stressed that denying the right to alter the succession did not equal rejecting any limitations to monarchy; in other words, not all Tories believed in arbitrary monarchy.[157]

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[149] [James Ralph], *The History of England during the Reigns of K. William, Q. Anne and K. George I, with an Introductory Review of the Reigns of the Royal Brothers, Charles and James…*(2 vols., London, 1744-46), I, pp. 473-75, 656; North, *Examen: Or, An Enquiry into the Credit and Veracity of a Pretended Complete History* (London, 1740), pp. 320-24; John Oldmixon, *The History of England, during the Reigns of the Royal House of Stuart* (London, 1730), p. 631. (Ralph and North are cited by Hume in other places of the second Stuart volume.)

[150] Hume, *History*, VI, p. 381.

[151] Ibid.

[152] *Letters*, I pp. 336, 368, 385.

[153] Hume, *History*, VI, p. 389.

[154] Ibid, p. 388.

[155] Ibid, p. 389; idem, 'First Principles of Government', *Essays*, p. 32.

[156] Hume, *History*, VI, pp. 389-90.

[157] Ibid, pp. 390-1.

This party division over exclusion came close to civil war, according to Hume.[158] As pro-exclusionist sentiments were as strong in Commons as those against in the Lords, the division can also be likened to a constitutional wrangle between the upper and lower chambers. The king decided to assemble the parliament of March 1681 in Oxford instead of Westminster, as neighbouring London was a hotbed for zealous Country party support. In the event, however, the new Commons consisted of nearly the same members as the old, and proceeded to pursue the same measures, including Exclusion and the impeachment of Danby. The king seized the first opportunity to dissolve parliament. Even if the Court party may have been inferior in numbers, without a parliament the Court held all the aces, and had 'every advantage over a body, dispersed and disunited.'[159] Hume's description of the royalist victory is nearly identical to Rapin's. In the process of defaming one another, both sides 'buried in their factious breasts all regard to truth, honour, and humanity', notably in their representations of the conspirator Edward Fitzharris.[160]

The dissolution of parliament was the end of the great and irregular party struggles of pre-revolutionary England. The king was now master and did not have to dread the Country party.[161] In this period, Hume's strongest praise was unsurprisingly reserved for men like Halifax, the great Trimmer, who 'affected a species of neutrality between the parties'.[162] By contrast, that Charles II acted as the head of a party ('a disagreeable situation for a prince, and always the source of much injustice and oppression'[163]) became clear when he departed from his previous maxim of toleration and allowed his Church friends to persecute their Dissenting 'enemies'.[164] Likewise, when ousting the Country party from its stronghold in London, justice became subservient to the 'factious views' of the 'court and church party' as they began to dominate juries.[165] Most regular opposition ceased at this point, and was overtaken by extra-constitutional schemes such as the Rye-House Plot. The failure of this plot, for which Algernon Sidney was executed, was the final nail in the coffin for the Whig party, or the Country party as Hume more commonly referred to it, in England for the time being. This was reflected in its meagre

[158] Ibid, p. 399.
[159] Ibid, p. 403.
[160] Ibid, pp. 405-7.
[161] Ibid, p. 416.
[162] Ibid, p. 419.
[163] Hume's attitudes towards Halifax, and monarchs being party leaders are identical to Bolingbroke's.
[164] Ibid, pp. 419-20.
[165] Ibid, p. 421.

success at the election of the following House of Commons, at the beginning of James II's reign in 1685.[166]

We do not need to repeat all the familiar ways in which James II managed to alienate a supportive parliament.[167] Hume is clear that if James II only 'had embraced any national party [i.e. the Tories, which combined royalists and the Church], he had been ensured of success'.[168] Unfortunately for the king, the Catholics only made up one hundredth of the nation's population, according to Hume, and this was not a strong enough base. His attempt to court Protestant non-conformists, who were more numerous (one twentieth, according to Hume), failed because they thought that history proved Catholicism to be incompatible with toleration.[169] The outcome is described in the same way as it had been by Rapin: a 'coalition of parties' formed against the king, consisting of Whigs and non-conformists on the one hand, and Tories and the Church of England on the other.[170] This coalition was not to last, however: the Convention Parliament was the scene of Whig-Tory division as the Revolution Settlement was hammered out.

Nevertheless, Hume was convinced that one species of 'party division' died with the Revolution Settlement. By settling fundamental questions in favour of liberty (Hume highlights the Bill of Rights),[171] and by deposing one king and establishing a 'new' family, 'it [the settlement] gave such an ascendant to popular principles, as has put the nature of the English constitution beyond all controversy.'[172] The 'fluctuation and contest' between prerogative and privilege, or king and parliament, which in the seventeenth century had been 'much too violent both for the repose and safety of the people', was now at an end.[173] What would remain would be a more limited tussle between the executive and legislative branches, or rather between parties within the legislature representing these branches, and this form of conflict would be a regular feature of politics. Why did it not threaten civil war as in the seventeenth century? The court remained the executive branch, but since it in the seventeenth century had not yet

[166] Ibid, p. 453.

[167] For a summary, see ibid, p. 468. For a recent revisionist account of these events, see Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT, 2009).

[168] Hume, *History,* VI, p. 487.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid, VI, pp. 502-3. As we have seen, this 'coalition' argument was developed by Rapin and became crucial for Macaulay and others following him. It has recently been put into question by Steve Pincus in *1688,* ch. 10.

[171] Hume, *History,* VI, p. 530.

[172] Ibid, p. 531.

[173] Ibid.

acquired the power of 'influencing' parliaments on a sufficiently large scale, it instead had to resort to 'opposing' them.[174] Hume had in his essays defended this form of 'corruption', or influence, and it can now be seen that he believed this innovation to be one of the crucial differences that separated the eighteenth from the seventeenth century, and made the former more stable than the latter. Pre-revolutionary England was not just a time when the limits of the monarchy had been ill defined, it was also a time when parliament had been 'uncontroullable'.[175] Bolingbroke was right that 'corruption' in the technical sense had increased since the Revolution, but this was what made government stable in the eighteenth century, according to Hume.[176]

Hume closed by remarking that the revolution, which was carried out on Whig principles even if Tories had had at least an equal share in it, paved the way for the ascendency of the Whig party. By contrast, the Tory party became 'obliged to cultivate popularity' in opposition.[177] The Whig dominance may have been beneficial to the state, at least in some particulars, but it had 'proved destructive to the truth of history, and…established many gross falsehoods'.[178] In particular, Whig writers had depicted the seventeenth century as a straightforward battle between liberty and tyranny, rather than the mutually dependent principles of liberty and authority.[179] In the process, they were 'forgetting that a regard to liberty, though a laudable passion, ought commonly to be subordinate to a reverence for established government'.[180] Seen in this context, Hume's dislike of Whiggism, at least vulgar Whiggism, which is completely disproportionate to his aversion to Toryism, becomes comprehensible.[181] The later Hume's loathing of Whiggism, similar to an unhistorical form of English exceptionalism with which he, as a Scot, had little sympathy,[182] became more acute after the hostile reception of his Stuart volumes.[183] In later editions, Hume named Rapin, Locke, Sidney and Hoadly in a footnote

[174] Ibid, p. 532.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Other historians bemoaned the post-revolutionary developments of 'purchasing majorities' and 'managing parties', including [Ralph], *The History of England,* II, p. 1024.
[177] Hume, *History,* VI. p. 533. Compare with Hume's remark that the Tories had become quasi-republicans in chapter three.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Hume, 'Origin of Government', *Essays,* pp. 40-1.
[180] Hume, *History,* VI, p. 533.
[181] *Letters,* I, pp. 313, 317, 379, 415, 502, II, 150.
[182] As is well-documented, Hume grew increasingly impatient with English nationalism, especially when it took an anti-Scottish turn in the 1760s (*Letters,* I, pp. 378, 470, 491, 492, 497-8, 517; *Further Letters,* p. 64).
[183] *Further Letters,* pp. 39. 44.

as examples of '[c]ompositions the most despicable, both for style and matter, [which have] been extolled, and propagated, and read; as if they had equalled the most celebrated remains of antiquity.'[184] Hume's standard excuse for delaying and in the end not writing a continuation of his *History* beyond the Glorious Revolution was party rage and in particular that important Whigs would not give him access to the necessary papers.[185] As set out in the introduction to the present chapter, none of this should lead us to the conclusion that the *History* represented a move towards 'philosophic Toryism'.[186] His intention was indeed to provide a more intellectually robust defence of the Revolution Settlement.[187]

To conclude this summary of Hume's *History*, the work dealt with party at two levels: it not only adumbrated the development of 'party' in the seventeenth century, but also wanted to show how partisanship and in particular Whiggism in history writing had corrupted our understanding of the past. By giving a fair hearing to both sides of the question, Hume hoped to correct the second defect and put the record straight. This intention had in some ways been identical to Rapin's, but Hume believed that the Frenchman's belief in the myth of the ancient constitution hindered him from properly understanding the issues at play in the seventeenth century. As Hume sought to correct the 'mistakes' of Rapin, many of his readers believed that he went too far in the other direction and Hume was specifically criticised for lacking the impartiality he aspired to, for example by William Rose.[188] Indeed, in the nineteenth century, Hume was often accused of being dishonest and wilfully misleading his readers, notably by John Stuart Mill.[189] Hume's motivation was often singled out as being fame and fortune rather than intellectual. At the same time, the endurance of the *History* is remarkable and Hume remained the writer whom nineteenth-century Whig historians felt that they needed to

[184] Hume, *History,* VI, p. 533.

[185] *Letters*, I, pp. 352, 359, 381-2; II, pp. 98, 162. In the end, Hume is reported to have said that he was 'too old, too fat, too lazy and too rich' to continue his *History;* see E.C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume* (1954), (Oxford, 2nd ed. 1980), p. 556.

[186] This was the argument of Giarrizzo's *David Hume Politico e Storico* and repeated in Trevor-Roper's review of that work; see *History and the Enlightenment* (New Haven, CT, 2010), pp. 220-28.

[187] Duncan Forbes, 'Politics and History in David Hume', *HJ,* 6 (1963), pp. 280-323.

[188] See Rose's review in *Early Responses*, VII, pp. 160-72. On the continent, however, Hume was almost universally celebrated for his impartiality as a history writer, as documented in Laurence L. Bongie, *David Hume: Prophet of the Counter-Revolution* (1965), (Indianapolis, IN, second ed. 1998), p. 12.

[189] Mill, review of George Brodie's *History of the British Empire* (1822), *Westminster Review*, October 1824, in *Early Responses*, VIII, pp. 292-98.

refute.[190] In the twentieth century, the work increasingly regained reputation as a masterpiece, a process which has continued into the twenty-first century.[191]

VI: Lessons from history

One of the things Hume tried to work out in his historical enterprise was how parliamentary opposition had arisen in England. The party terms that dominate the Stuart volumes are Court and Country, which essentially mean parties of government and opposition, or executive and legislature. Like Rapin, Hume could perhaps be criticised for applying the eighteenth-century language of party to the first half of the seventeenth century, when, as he recognised, this terminology was absent. Hume was seeking to understand the *longue durée* of the rise of party, however, and for that story the beginning of the seventeenth century was arguably indispensable. Moreover, the ideological polarisation of the early Stuart period had continued into the eighteenth century, albeit in a less straightforward fashion, as we saw in the previous chapter.[192] Simultaneously, the *History* served as a contrast. England's irregular constitution had continuously given rise to a Country party, or an opposition party, and monarchs constantly felt obliged to form a Court party as a counterweight. But as long as parliament was discontinuous, the history of party was disjointed. As a result of annual sessions of parliament, party competition had become more regular in the eighteenth century.

As we have seen, these parties were not purely constitutional but had religious dimensions. Indeed, Hume believed that they would never have materialised were it not for the Episcopalian-Puritan split within the Protestant church. One of his guiding principles was that religion, faction, and interest were mutually supportive.[193] The party struggle throughout the Stuart era centred on the questions of popery, the direction of the church, the balance of the constitution, and arbitrary monarchy. In other words, they touched on religion as well as politics, and to try and disentangle the one from the other is difficult and indeed unhelpful for the period. In this respect, we are led to disagree with

[190] J.W. Burrow, *A Liberal Descent: Victorian Historians and the English Past* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 26.

[191] Although still primarily read by historians, Hume's *History* has in recent years received more attention from philosophers, political theorists, and social scientists; see Andrew Sable, *Hume's Politics: Coordination and Crisis in the History of England* (Princeton, NJ, 2012); Jennifer Herdt, *Religion and Faction in Hume's Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1997).

[192] This was also Rapin's take (see chapter one).

[193] Hume, *History*, V, p. 347.

the suggestion of Hume's most recent biographer that the Scotsman believed that 'party zeal replaced religious zeal as the engine of politics' after 1660.[194] As we have seen, the two had been continuously intertwined and indeed inseparable.

In all this, Hume was in broad agreement with Rapin. However, the Frenchman had also tried to show how the English parties could be split into religious and political categories, with each category containing extremists as well as moderates. According to Hume, separation between political and religious motivations made little sense for public figures in the seventeenth century. They were almost always confounded, often with disastrous consequences, as moderation was ignored when religious principles were at stake.[195] It has powerfully been argued that Hume's controversial thought on religion was driven by the threat posed by religious fanaticism to society (not just in an abstract but in a specific sense) rather than epistemological concerns.[196] This threat had been extreme in the seventeenth century, but it was still relevant in the eighteenth century, particularly in his native Scotland. In the seventeenth century, the Country opposition party had often aimed at limited government, but their 'extreme violence', fanaticism, and the spirit of persecution had 'disgrace[d] the cause of liberty'.[197] It should then not surprise us that Hume had earlier said that religious Whigs were much worse than religious Tories.[198]

Hume wanted to investigate why such parties had a tendency to put the nation in danger. The fanaticism of religious principle was closely connected with this, but it also had to do with party mentality itself. As he had previously pointed out in his essays, honour as a check on behaviour was often removed when people acted in concert.[199] For Hume, the concept of party or faction, terms he continued to use interchangeably, was intertwined with civil war. This idea was not uncommon in the period. Emer de Vattel defined civil war as an event '[w]hen a *party* is formed in a state, who no longer obey the sovereign, and are possessed of sufficient strength to oppose him, – or when, in a republic,

[194] Harris, *Hume*, p. 346. In fact, it is doubtful whether this could be said even of 1750, to Hume's dismay.

[195] Hume, *History*, IV, p. 221. This is also something Hume often bemoaned in philosophical quarrels (Hume to Price, 18 March 1767, *New Letters*, p. 234).

[196] Herdt, *Religion and Faction*, p. 9. On this reading, Hume's wider philosophical project is strongly related to his political aspiration 'to render disagreement about religious matters innocuous by showing that no religious premises are required for reasoning about human nature, morality, politics, or history' (p. 15).

[197] Hume, *History*, VI, p. 361.

[198] [Hume], *A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart* (London, 1748), pp. 33-4.

[199] Hume, 'First Principles of Government', *Essays*, p. 33; idem, 'Independency of Parliament', *Essays*, p. 43.

the nation is divided into two opposite *factions*, and both sides take up arms'.[200] Moreover, in the words of a leading historian of Jacobitism, politics in the early eighteenth century still had a 'civil war edge', as was demonstrated by the frequent practice by new ministries of impeaching their predecessors.[201] This was not completely absent in mid-century: Tory support for the short-lived Pitt-Devonshire coalition came with the expectation that Pitt would carry out 'strict inquiries into recent misfortunes' of the Newcastle ministry.[202] Even if Hume realised that the more controlled parliamentary 'conflict' of his own day was different from the two sides that had fought in the civil war, he had good reasons to think that they were not entirely unrelated. While there is certainly some truth in the statement that all of Hume's historical writings were guided by 'the question as to how [the] rare and fortunate state of affairs had come about in England',[203] it is important to recognise that Hume was far from starry-eyed about the British constitution. Indeed, he was as concerned with seeking to diagnose oddities and potential weaknesses in the Hanoverian regime.[204]

Yet Hume agreed with Montesquieu that parties were a reflection of a mixed, or free, government. As he put it,

> In every mixed government, such as that of England, the bulk of the nation will always incline to preserve the entire frame of the constitution; but according to the various prejudices, interests, and dispositions of men, some will ever attach themselves with more passion to the regal, others to the popular part of the government.[205]

As Forbes argued, the point of Hume's *History* was to go beyond the rights and wrongs of the protagonists, king and parliament.[206] Instead, Forbes believed that Hume tried to show that the parties could be traced to the constitution, as he had done in 'Of the Parties of Great Britain'.[207] This is of course correct since having a parliament was a prerequisite for parties. However, it could equally be claimed, as by Nicholas Phillipson, that the Court and Country parties gave birth to the *mixed* constitution,[208] which was not conceived until

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[200] Vattel, *The Law of Nations* (1758), (Indianapolis, IN, 2008), p. 427.
[201] Daniel Szechi, *1715: The Great Jacobite Rebellion* (New Haven, CT, 2006), p. 34.
[202] Marie Peters, *Pitt and Popularity: The Patriot Minister and London Opinion during the Seven Years' War* (Oxford, 1980), p. 64.
[203] Meinecke, *Historism*, p. 163.
[204] Another prominent example of this is Hume's essay 'Of Public Credit' (1752).
[205] Hume, *History*, VI, pp. 375-6.
[206] Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics*, p. 299.
[207] Ibid, p. 284.
[208] Phillipson, *David Hume*, p. 80.

the Petition of Right of 1628, and not properly defined until the Glorious Revolution. As no reader of Hume's *History* can fail to notice, unintended consequences and historical irony are its main themes.[209] That is why there is no all-out condemnation of 'party' as such in Hume's *History*, only of dishonest and dangerous behaviour associated with party. Indeed, there is even praise in volume five. The non-utopian observer of politics knew that parties would remain as long as Britain retained its parliament. All that a philosophically minded historian could do was to seek to understand them in order to mollify their worst extremes. As a historian, Hume disliked partisanship, especially the myths partisan historians sought to sustain.[210] As political thinker, however, he had to accept them.

The seventeenth century presented a continuous conflict between authority and liberty, embodied by 'Court' and 'Country'. The question of 'party' was at the heart of Hume's enterprise. Indeed, it could be said to be the 'organic connection' between *Staat* and *Religion* which Meinecke thought was missing in the *History*.[211] Ironically, it has been said that Hume's historical work was a reflection of the decline in eighteenth-century party strife, and contributed to a new 'establishment conservatism',[212] which generated the 'radicalism' of Catherine Macaulay's seventeenth-century history.[213] As we have seen, however, Hume would not have recognised a decline in party strife when he conceived of his historical project in the 1740s,[214] and when he started writing it in the early 1750s. Towards the end of the decade, however, after the publication of both Stuart volumes, he did see encouraging signs of such an event when coalitions became the order of the day. We will now turn to the period of the Pitt-Newcastle coalition.

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[209] Sable, *Hume's Politics*, p. 14.

[210] This he held in common with Rapin and Guthrie. For Hume's dislike of party spirit among men of letters, see *Letters*, I, pp. 173, 360. This is a key theme in Harris, *Hume*.

[211] Meinecke, *Historism*, p. 183.

[212] The question about Hume's alleged 'conservatism' is an age-old debate and arguably pointless since there was no such movement or concept in the eighteenth century.

[213] Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, p. 203. For their disagreement, see *New Letters*, pp. 80-2. See also Bridget Hill, *The Republican Virago: Life and Times of Catherine Macaulay, Historian* (Oxford, 1992).

[214] Hume wrote a 'Memoranda for my History of England' in July 1745 or 1746; see E.C. Mossner, 'An Apology for David Hume, Historian', *PMLA*, 56 (1941), pp. 657-90. He referred to 'my historical Projects' in a letter to Kames in January 1747, *New Letters*, p. 23.

Chapter 6:
Political Transformations during the Seven Years' War: Hume and Burke

I

Hume's essay 'Of the Coalition of Parties' (1758) has rightly been considered an 'apologia' for the first volume of his *History*.[1] The essay opened with a restatement of the now familiar Humean view that it 'may not be practicable, perhaps not desirable,' to abolish all distinctions of parties in a free, or mixed, government.[2] For Hume, '[t]he only dangerous parties are such as entertain opposite views with regard to the essentials of government', be it the succession to the crown as in the case of the Jacobites, or 'the more considerable privileges belonging to the several members of the constitution', as with the great parties of the seventeenth century, whose fate he had narrated in the *History*.[3] On such questions there could be no compromise or accommodation, and there was no room for such parties, since that type of party strife could easily turn into armed conflict. Recent tendencies to coalition government were indicative that such fundamental conflicts had come to an end. To promote such an 'agreeable prospect', nothing could be better than to encourage moderation by 'persuad[ing] each that its antagonists may possibly be sometimes in the right, and to keep a balance in the praise and blame, which we bestow on either side.'[4] This had been Hume's intention in his essays on the original contract and passive obedience discussed in chapter four, and he was now confirming that he had intended to promote the same political agenda in his history of the Stuarts. The rest of the essay was a summary of the argument in his *History of Great Britain*, and some anticipations of his Tudor volumes (particularly appendix III), which he was working on at this time. 'The rule of government is the present established practice of the age', not some 'ancient constitution', of which people had little or no understanding, he concluded.[5]

[1] Duncan Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 265.
[2] Hume, 'Coalition of Parties', *Essays*, p. 493.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid, p. 494.
[5] Ibid, p. 498.

George III's end to Tory proscription, which will be dealt with in the following chapter, was preceded by another shock to the Whig establishment: a coalition of parties in government. This is best described as a wide-ranging Whig coalition, however, and offices were not given to Tories, even if many nominal Tories supported the coalition.[6] The unexpected death in 1754 of Henry Pelham, First Lord of the Treasury since 1743, ushered in a period of relative ministerial instability.[7] As the leader of the ministry, Pelham had been the head of a system which Hardwicke saw as designed to 'preserve and cement the Whig party', a project Hardwicke was anxious to continue after his death.[8] This is the time when the period of personal and family connections properly came to the fore in parliamentary politics. They had not been unimportant earlier, but for the first time they started to eclipse party politics. Namier's generalisations about eighteenth-century politics now become relevant, even if they do not entirely supplant the entrenched Tory-Whig framework.

Pelham was first succeeded by his brother, the Duke of Newcastle. Newcastle was promoted at the expense of his two main opponents: Henry Fox and William Pitt the Elder. Fox was made Secretary of State as a consolation prize, which left Pitt deeply offended. Pitt then went into opposition in alliance with Leicester House (i.e. the Prince of Wales's connection), and it has been argued that he would likely have remained in opposition if it had not been for two foreign policy developments: the threat of invasion and the loss of Minorca in 1756.[9] Tension between Newcastle and Fox precipitated the resignation of the latter, and Pitt's refusal to serve alongside Newcastle led to the fall of the ministry. In the formation of a new administration with the independent Whig Devonshire, Pitt was hoping for Tory assistance.[10] Pitt was a nominal Whig, but he championed policies which united the disparate elements of the opposition, of which the Tories remained the largest single component, including support for the militia and blue-

[6] Brian Hill, *The Early Parties and Politics in Britain, 1660-1832* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 103-4.

[7] These events are narrated in J.C.D. Clark, *The Dynamics of Change: The Crisis of the 1750s and English Party Systems* (Cambridge, 1982).

[8] Hardwicke to Pitt, 2 April 1754, *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham* (4 vols., London, 1840), I, pp. 91-2.

[9] Richard Middleton, *Bells of Victory: The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry and Conduct of the Seven Years' War 1757-1762* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 4-5.

[10] Marie Peters, *Pitt and Popularity: The Patriot Minister and London Opinion During the Seven Years War* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 1-79; Middleton, *The Bells of Victory*, pp. 6-7; Clark, *Dynamics of Change*, pp. 295-300.

water strategy, and opposition to the standing army and foreign mercenaries.[11] This had been the key contrast between Whig and Tory visions of foreign policy since the Glorious Revolution.[12] What is more, Pitt's anti-Hanoverian rhetoric in opposition would have appealed to many Tories, although Pitt himself was eager to dissociate himself from Jacobitism. The English Tories themselves, while anti-Hanoverian, had decisively given up Jacobitism after the abandoned Elibank Plot in the early 1750s, when Charles Stuart managed to alienate many English diehard Jacobites, including William King.[13]

After the demise of Jacobitism, the main expressions of Toryism became a form of 'city radicalism'.[14] Parliament still boasted around one hundred Tory members, but they were rudderless and ill-disciplined.[15] By studying the London newspapers in general and the *Monitor* in particular, Marie Peters has argued that the 'London-West Indians' William and Richard Beckford managed to transform Toryism, in its City as well as parliamentary forms, into support for Pitt. On this reading, all strands of Toryism merged into a Patriot platform.[16] It needs to be acknowledged, however, that we do not yet have a comprehensive study about the exact relationship between metropolitan politics and Toryism at this point in time.[17] The Devonshire-Pitt coalition proved short-lived, partly because the Tories were too fickle a base.[18] The main lesson appears to have been that Newcastle was necessary for any working government as a manager and disposer of patronage, of which Pitt had little knowledge and interest.[19] He was also needed in order

[11] In the event, Pitt's success in the war can to a large degree be attributed to his realisation that the 'popular' maritime strategy had to be complemented with a continental one. The increased costs led to his downfall in 1761, however. See Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (London, 1988), p. 146.

[12] Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT, 2009), ch. 11.

[13] King, *Anecdotes*, pp. 195-214.

[14] Nicholas Rogers, *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, 1989), esp. ch. 3; Marie Peters, 'The *Monitor* on the Constitution, 1755-1765: New Light on the Ideological Origins of English Radicalism', *English Historical Review*, 86 (1971), pp. 706-27; Lewis Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (London, 1961), p. 184.

[15] Hill, *The Early Parties*, p. 106.

[16] Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, p. 25. We have to note, however, that while Beckford co-operated with Tories against establishment Whigs, his most recent biographer has argued that he is better labelled as an 'independent Whig'; see Perry Gauci, *William Beckford: First Prime Minister of the London Empire* (New Haven, CT, 2013), pp. 57-8.

[17] Connections can be identified, and we know that there was a great deal of policy overlap between the 'independent' City patriotism of the Beckfords, and eighteenth-century Toryism, e.g. support for the militia and blue-water strategy (Gauci, *William Beckford*, p. 68).

[18] As Henry Fox wrote to the diplomat Sir Charles Hanbury Williams in December 1756, 'Pitt is single, imperious, proud, enthusiastick; has engaged the Torys, who instead of strength are weakness'. BL Stowe MS 263, f. 13.

[19] Richard Middleton, 'The Duke of Newcastle and the Conduct of Patronage during the Seven Years' War, 1757-63', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 12 (1989), pp. 175-86.

to ensure Whig support; as T. B. Macaulay put it in the following quotation which has stood the test of time, '[t]he great Whig families, which, during several generations, had been trained in the discipline of party warfare, and were accustomed to stand together in a firm phalanx, acknowledged him [Newcastle] as their captain.'[20]

The Newcastle-Pitt coalition consisted broadly of two constellations: the Newcastle-Hardwicke Whig connection (the so-called Old Corps) on the one hand, and the Pitt-Bute 'coalition' on the other, representing the Grenville family and Leicester House respectively. These constellations joined forces against a Court faction (in the neutral sense of the term), comprising the king and his close supporters, including Henry Fox and Bedford.[21] Newcastle-Hardwicke had the most supporters in parliament and were necessary to any workable solution, but Newcastle's reluctance to work with Fox along with the unpopularity of Fox's patron, Cumberland, impeded George II's favoured solution.[22] One of the king's top priorities was to find a ministry that would protect the Hanoverian interest – something Hume had written about in 'The Protestant Succession' (1752).[23] It has been argued that one of Pitt's main political achievements was to shift focus from the Protestant Succession to the national interest.[24] The appointment and reappointment of Pitt also demonstrates that eighteenth-century monarchs did not have a completely free hand in terms of government formation.[25] The ministry still had to maintain the confidence of parliament, in particular the House of Commons.[26] At the same time, in government Pitt proved willing and capable of supporting continental warfare and the Protestant interest in Europe, in addition to his commitment to commercial and colonial interest beyond Europe. The king's policy could never have been run roughshod over.

[20] T.B. Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays, contributed to the Edinburgh Review* (3 vols., London 1849), III, p. 531.

[21] Middleton, *The Bells of Victory*, p. 15.

[22] Peters, *Pitt and Popularity,* pp. 80-1.

[23] Middleton, *The Bells of Victory*, p. 18. For the Hanoverian aspect in British politics, see essays in *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714-1837,* ed. Brendan Simms (Cambridge, 2007).

[24] Jeremy Black, *Pitt the Elder* (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 2.

[25] C.f. Namier, 'The King and his Ministers' (1734), in *Crossroads to Power: Essays on England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1962), pp. 77-93.

[26] This is why all 'prime ministers' with longevity in the eighteenth century sat in the lower house, including Walpole, Pelham, Lord North, and William Pitt the Younger. In Egmont's 1749-51 plans for a new administration after the future accession of Frederick, Pelham was top of the 'List of those who must if possible be kept out of the House of Commons', with the comment that he was 'to be obliged (if he can be made) to go up to the House of Lords.' *Egmont Papers,* p. 169.

As we have seen, Hume welcomed the development of coalition government. He lived in Edinburgh at the time, but appears to have kept up to speed with events in London, probably thanks to his several friends involved in London politics. On the forming of the Pitt-Newcastle coalition, which succeeded the short-lived Pitt-Devonshire coalition, Hume wrote his friend Gilbert Elliot of Minto MP to congratulate him on his reappointment as Lord of the Admiralty. In the letter, Hume expressed his '[w]ishes, that, both for your Sake and the Public's your Ministry, & that of your Friends, may be more durable than it was before.'[27] Hume described the ministry as consisting of a 'strange motley Composition', no doubt referring to the differences between Pitt and Newcastle, the patriot minister and the 'arch-corrupter'.[28] Although he supported the coalition, Hume appears to have been far from satisfied with its actual workings, writing of a 'sudden & total Failure of Capacity & true Spirit among the Great' at this time.[29]

The Newcastle-Pitt coalition was an alliance that put the Old Corps of Whigs back into power together with Pitt, who saw himself as a Whig, albeit an independently minded one who was the son of a Tory MP and had a history of co-operation with Tories.[30] Many Tories supported the coalition because they disliked Fox and Cumberland even more than Newcastle.[31] Moreover, the string of victories in 1759 helped to reconcile people of different political persuasions; William King commented that '[a] continual success in the conduct of our public affairs, and a series of victories, may justly be alleged as one of the principal causes of uniting many of those (however they have been distinguished by party) who are real lovers of their country.'[32]

We have reasons to think that Hume in his essay was thinking about a 'coalition' of Whig and Tories rather than simply a coalition of various Whigs. Just like his *History* and his essays discussed in chapter four, 'Of the Coalition of Parties' was an attempt to defend the present establishment on moderate principles, ones which Tories could

[27] *Letters,* I, p. 253.

[28] Ibid. Waldegrave put the matter more strongly: 'The Duke of Newcastle hated Pitt as much as Pitt despised the Duke of Newcastle' (*Waldegrave Memoirs,* pp. 205-6).

[29] Hume to William Strahan, 28 October 1757, *Further Letters,* p. 44. As the editor of the volume acknowledges, this may refer to Cumberland's resignation in October in the wake of the capture of Berlin, as well as divisions within the Pitt-Newcastle coalition.

[30] Peters, *Pitt and Popularity,* p. 42; Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy,* pp. 251, 266, 271. Pitt said in parliament in 1760 that 'I am neither a Whig not a Tory' (Black, *Pitt the Elder,* p. 203). This is matched by espousals of Whiggism, however, especially in the first half of the 1760s; see Richard Pares, *George III and the Politicians* (1953), (Oxford, 1970), pp. 55-6.

[31] Peters, *Pitt and Popularity,* pp. 87, 109.

[32] King, *Anecdotes,* p. 195. King attributed the decline of Jacobitism principally to other factors, however, a subject we will return to in the following chapter.

accept.[33] He was convinded that the 'spirit of civil liberty' had arisen from the religious fanaticism of the Puritans, who had been the main enemies of what became the Tory party in the late seventeenth century. It had 'purge[d] itself from that pollution', according to Hume.[34] It now embodied a spirit of 'toleration' rather than 'persecution', with which Hume had on one occasion associated 'religious Whiggism' in the late 1740s.[35] The key essay here is 'Superstition and Enthusiasm', where he had contended that enthusiasm is more violent when it first arises, but becomes milder than superstition over time. Also, with the 'high claims of [royal] prerogative' retrenched, and the constitution settled as described at the end of the second Stuart volume, 'a due respect to monarchy, to nobility, and to all ancient institutions' was still possible.[36] Hume clinched the argument by saying that 'the very principle, which made the strength of their party [i.e. the monarchical principle, perhaps even passive obedience, for the Tories], and from which it derived its chief authority, has now deserted them, and gone over to their antagonists.'[37] The constitution had been settled in favour of liberty, a liberty supported by the monarchy, and if the Tories threatened this settlement by seeking to restore the Stuarts, they would be the factious innovators.

We can thus appreciate a consistent intention in Hume's entire oeuvre on parties: the attempt to describe how the Tory party had gone from being the party of order to the party of opposition and innovation, while clinging onto principles incompatible with their situation, and how the Whig party had gone in the opposite direction. He consistently tried to give a fair hearing to both parties, and if he was often much harder on the Whigs, it was simply because he wanted to convert Tories and Scottish Jacobites into supporters of the Revolution Settlement. The paradox was that this settlement could only be protected at the time on the Tory principle of passive obedience,[38] but in the past, in 1688-9, on the Whig principle of resistance. In other words, one had to defend resistance in a limited sense in order to ensure passive obedience to the present system of politics.

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[33] Hume, 'Coalition of Parties', *Essays*, pp. 500-1.

[34] Ibid, p. 501.

[35] [Hume], *A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart* (London, 1748), pp. 33-4.

[36] Hume, 'Coalition of Parties', *Essays*, p. 501.

[37] Ibid.

[38] And it was more common than is sometimes thought for Whigs to do exactly this; see Gerd Mischler, 'English Political Sermons 1714-42: A Case Study in the Theory of the "Divine Right of Governors" and the Ideology of Order', *British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 24 (2001), pp. 33-61.

Once coalition had become practicable, Hume continued to recommend the measure, in opposition to the Old Corps' insistence on single-party government. For example, he would later applaud a speech by his fellow Scot Lord Bute during the Rockingham ministry of 1765-66, which called for a ministry 'chosen from among all Parties, without Regard to former Attachments'.[39] Hume was not alone. Although Chatham's coalition experiment failed in 1766, it remained common well into the nineteenth century to speak of a coalition of all parties as 'obviously desirable'.[40]

Finally, while we have repeatedly seen that Hume consistently accepted party as a feature of the British government, he never offered an unapologetic defence of its existence. Admittedly, it was not his ideal solution. In 'Of the Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth' (1752), Hume stated in yet another classic paradox that the main dangers of a senate were twofold: (1) its combination, and (2) its division. His solution to the first conundrum was to make the suffrage more limited by ensuring that senators were elected 'by men of fortune and education' rather than the 'rabble', diminish their power, and institute a 'court of competitors' that would function as its 'rival'.[41] His solution to the second problem was to keep the senate small (only one-hundred members), make them more dependent on the people (as distinguished from the rabble) by having annual elections, and give them the 'power of expelling any factious member'.[42] He repeated that '[t]he chief support of the BRITISH government is the opposition of interests; but that, though in the main serviceable, breeds endless factions.'[43] His 'perfect commonwealth' was designed to preserve the opposition of interests without having factions. At the same time, Hume was abundantly clear that such a utopian project could not be implemented in any state with an existing constitution. Accordingly, all that could be done was to mitigate the worst effects of party. Hume's philosophical politics would undoubtedly influence an Irishman, who, before himself becoming a partisan proponent of party, started out as a commentator on politics and a sceptical defender of party in a Humean mould. We will now turn to the young Edmund Burke.

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[39] Hume to the Earl of Hertford, 20 March 1766, *Further Letters,* p. 66. Hume was Deputy Secretary of State for the Northern Department under Hertford's brother, Henry Seymour Conway. Conway stayed on as Secretary of State in the Chatham administration, taking office in July 1766 with the aim to do exactly as Hume proscribed.

[40] This point is stressed in Pares, *George III and the Politicians,* p. 117.

[41] Hume, 'Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth' (1752), *Essays,* pp. 523-4. Hume increased the property qualification of the franchise each time he edited the essay.

[42] Ibid, p. 524.

[43] Ibid, p. 525.

II

Edmund Burke's first essay on party was written in this very context, in 1757.[44] The essay was a defence of party, written before Burke had entered the world of politics and long before he became an MP in December 1765.[45] At this time he was a man of letters trying to make his way in London. He was acquainted with Hume, who admired Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) and introduced Burke to Adam Smith.[46] Burke edited the *Annual Register* between 1758 and 1765, a publication which, as Butterfield has stressed, far from taking an extreme Whig stance on George III's accession, often wrote in favour of the new king, and aimed at what we can call 'Humean' impartiality with regards to party.[47] In an unpublished essay on party, Burke described in familiar and conventional terms how 'the Whigs became friends to Royalty which they never had been before…and the Tories became Enemies to [Hanover] because it was inconsistent with their Principles to have the new [royal family].'[48] Jacobitism had 'kept Life in both Partys' ever since but was now entirely 'annihilated'.[49] Interestingly, the future Whig said that '[t]heir resisting Principle & their Practice of Submission has left the notion of Whiggistry [sic] as a party no better than a jest.'[50]

What Burke had to say about party in general in this early essay is of even more interest. 'Party' in Burke's understanding required a mixed constitution, since it needed to have the aggrandisement of one part of the constitution as its object. In unmixed constitutions, there could only be 'factions', such as the Green and Blue factions in late Roman Empire, or those of York and Lancaster in the Wars of the Roses. Parties in mixed constitutions were 'absolutely necessary' because they keep matters even as each part of the constitution would check one another. Whereas factions were 'Cabals fomented by

[44] This essay was discovered and published by Richard Bourke in 'Party, Parliament and Conquest in Newly Ascribed Burke Manuscripts', *HJ,* 52 (2012), pp. 619–52. The essay on party will be referred to as '[On Parties]'.

[45] Bourke's discovery of the essay forces us to reconsider the previously established interpretation that Burke developed his idea of party in the second half of the 1760s, for which see Frank O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party in England: The Rockingham Whigs, 1760-82* (London, 1975), p. 176; Carl B. Cone, *Burke and the Nature of Politics: The Age of the American Revolution* (Lexington, KY, 1957), p. 196.

[46] Burke to Smith, 10 September 1759, in *Burke Correspondence*, I, p. 129-30. Burke would refer to his acquaintance with Hume in his later works, and become a long-standing friend of Smith.

[47] Herbert Butterfield, *George III and the Historians* (1957), (London, 1988), pp. 46-50.

[48] Burke, '[On Parties]', p. 644.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid, p. 645.

Ambition swelled up by popular madness & nothing more', parties were constitutional and necessary to maintain the balance of the mixed constitution, according to Burke. As he put it, 'Party is always useful, factions always pernicious', adding that this fact had 'hardly been enough considered.'[51] Voltaire had written in the *Encyclopédie* the previous year that 'Le terme de parti par lui-même n'a rien d'odieux, celui de faction l'est toûjours', and his entry on 'faction' included many of the well-known historical examples that recurred in Burke's essay.[52] However, by pointing to the distinction between mixed and unmixed governments, Burke's discussion went well beyond Voltaire's brief entry. More specifically, Burke argued that those who believed that the loss of parties represented an improvement were entirely mistaken, because free, or mixed, governments were inseparable from parties.[53]

Since the parties of the seventeenth century were defunct, Britain had 'no Party properly so called' but 'mere factions: without any Design[,] with out any principle[,] but only a junction of People intreaguing [sic] for their own Interest.'[54] The parties at the present, Burke argued, presumably with reference to the personal connections associated with Pitt, Fox and Newcastle, were not much better than those of Marius and Sulla, or Caesar and Pompey. In the 'antient parties', with the exceptions of some Tories,[55] everyone knew what principle of government they espoused and what their goals were. That had now become entirely blurred, Burke complained.[56]

Although Burke had a lot in common with Hume, the emphasis of his essay is different, because while they both believed that the existence of parties was an inescapable part of a free government, the former bemoaned the decline of principle whereas the latter believed that it was a prerequisite for more stable politics. Instead of

[51] Ibid. This early statement from Burke calls into question the tendency among historians in particular to argue that Burke viewed party as a temporary solution rather than a permanent feature of politics; see F.P. Lock, *Edmund Burke* (2 vols., Oxford, 1998-2006), I, p. 295; C. B Macpherson, *Burke* (Oxford, 1980), p. 23; Frank O'Gorman, *Edmund Burke: His Political Philosophy* (London, 1973), p. 32; idem, *The Rise of Party*, p. 269; Archibald S. Foord, *His Majesty's Opposition, 1714-1830* (Oxford, 1964), p. 318. By contrast, political theorists and one of his most recent biographers have been more willing to recognise the timeless value of party in Burke's philosophy; see Nancy Rosenblum, *On the Side of the Angels* (Princeton, NJ, 2008), pp. 5, 119-126; Russell Muirhead, *The Promise of Party in a Polarized Age* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), p. 6; David Bromwich, *The Intellectual Life of Edmund Burke: From the Sublime and Beautiful to American Independence* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), esp. pp. 173-189.

[52] *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une societé de gens de lettres,* ed. Diderot and D'Alembert (28 vols., Paris, 1751-77), VI, p. 360.

[53] Burke, '[On Parties]', p. 646.

[54] Ibid, p. 645.

[55] Burke may here be referring to the ambivalence of the Tories with regards to Jacobitism.

[56] Burke, [On Parties], p. 646.

paving the way for stability, Burke argued that experience proved that if a nation was divided – and he stressed that Britain remained divided, despite the decline of party – without any real principle at stake, it 'came to a speedy & often terrible Destruction.'[57] The reference was undoubtedly to the conflict between Caesar and Pompey and their partisans, already cited twice in the short essay. He now referred approvingly to the contention between nobility and plebs in free ancient states in Greece and Italy. In a Machiavellian argument, perhaps transmitted to him via Montesquieu whom he had studied carefully,[58] Burke argued that even if this conflict often endangered these states, it had helped to preserve the vigour of their constitutions.[59] This was a paraphrase of what Hume had said about the Court and Country parties in his first Stuart volume.

Conspicuously, the parties that were lacking according to Burke were indeed proper Court and Country parties. Burke's *Annual Register* would later, with Hume, applaud George III's attempt to extinguish the Whig and Tory names.[60] It would have been impossible for Burke to wish back a clearer Whig-Tory polarity, which would have implied a revival of Jacobitism. For Burke, Court and Country should be constitutional parties rather than parties of interest. He lamented that the Court party currently was no more than 'a Combination of the great Officers of the State become so by popular Influence & Authority', the officers under them and those expecting office, in other words, the ministry and its backers.[61] The Country party, on the other hand, consisted of those who had been turned out and wanted to regain office, and a small, 'pitiful' Jacobite rump. Whereas this essay cannot be precisely dated, internal evidence suggests strongly that it may have been written during and perhaps towards the end of the short-lived Pitt-Devonshire ministry,[62] as it argued that people currently 'are not grown great at Court by court favour but by popular influence…They are those great Demagogue[s]…To ascertain the Degree of Power any man has in great Britain, you must enquire, how many Boroughs he can influence, How is he versed in the Business of the house? Of what Powers of Oratory?'[63] To make sure that no one could miss that he was referring to Pitt

[57] Ibid.

[58] Burke considered *Discorsi* and *Considérations* together in his second letter on a *Regicide Peace*; see *Select Works of Edmund Burke* (3 vols., Indianapolis, IN, 1999), III, p. 175.

[59] Burke, [On Parties], p. 646.

[60] Butterfield, *George III and the Historians*, p. 48.

[61] Burke, [On Parties], p. 647.

[62] This ministry was formed in November 1756. Pitt resigned the following April, and Devonshire in June.

[63] Ibid, p. 646.

and Newcastle, he added 'Point me out the first Man in any of these particulars & I will shew you our first Minister [Pitt] or one that must be so shortly [Newcastle].'[64]

The effect of this situation, a Court ministry dependent on popularity, was that Britain had grown 'into a perfect Democracy', without any counterweight.[65] George II had earlier complained in an interview with Hardwicke that 'Ministers are the king, in this country.'[66] Waldegrave wrote in his memoirs that George II during the Seven Years' War 'behaved to Pitt, as to a Prince who had conquer'd him'.[67] In Burke's mind, however, the minister was far from absolute and had become obliged to court and 'flatter those to whom he is to owe his Support', meaning the people, in opposition to the 'safety of the nation', the authority of the king, and even the king's own inclinations.[68] This was a scathing criticism of Pitt's reliance on popularity,[69] a new form of personal faction, as opposed to party connection. Although Burke appears here to be most concerned with the popular element of the constitution becoming too dominant by absorbing the Court, his real aim was to condemn the unaccountable power that would undermine representative and deliberative government.[70] Later in his career, he would continuously attack popularity in alliance with the Court, a combination that inevitably upset the balance of the constitution, for example after the rise of William Pitt the Younger.[71]

The vocabulary of Court-Country was still associated with Bolingbroke, even if Hume had made this terminology his own in his non-partisan analysis of politics. Burke was a keen reader, albeit a fierce critic, of Bolingbroke. His first publication, *A Vindication of Natural Society*, published in 1756 but written years earlier, was a satire of Bolingbroke, in which the Irishman took aim at the Englishman's deism, politics, and

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[64] Ibid. Like Hume, Burke was later to celebrate the coalition between Pitt and Newcastle (Bourke, *Empire and Revolution,* p. 203).

[65] Burke, [On Parties], pp. 646-7. By sharp contrast, a Whig pamphlet five years later would criticise the new minister Bute for not possessing popularity; see *An Address to the Cocoa-Tree from a Whig* (London, 1762), esp. p. 5.

[66] William Coxe, *Memoirs of the Administration of the Right Honourable Henry Pelham, Collected from the Family Papers, and Other Authentic Documents* (2 vols., London, 1829), I, p. 202.

[67] *Waldegrave Memoirs*, p. 212.

[68] Burke, [On Parties], p. 647.

[69] This is the main theme of Marie Peters' study *Pitt and Popularity*. As one of Pitt's biographers has pointed out, however, the point about popularity has to be taken with a pinch of salt; Pitt was dependent on patronage, always represented safe borough seats and never ran for any of the county seats with a high number of voters (Black, *Pitt the Elder,* esp. ch. 1). In any case, Pitt was associated with 'popularity' in his own lifetime, and Black acknowledges that it mattered for him (p. 139). See also [James Ralph], *The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade, Stated* (London, 1758), who said that 'Popularity, and Power are at present united' (p. 69).

[70] Bourke, 'Party, Parliament and Conquest', p. 632.

[71] Bourke, *Empire and Revolution,* pp. 442-4.

bombastic writing style. Hume had earlier remarked of Bolingbroke that 'such an elevated stile has much better grace in a speaker than in a writer'.[72] The immediate occasion for Burke's satire, which captured his target's manner of writing so closely that some thought it was an actual production of Bolingbroke, was the posthumous publication of Bolingbroke's collected *Works* in 1754, which became a scandal on account of containing previously unpublished writings on religion. Interestingly for our present purposes, Burke caricatured Bolingbroke as an anti-party writer, but in order to do that he needed to make *his* Bolingbroke revise his expressed admiration for mixed governments.[73] As we have seen, the *real* Bolingbroke regarded parties and turbulence as a price worth paying for having a mixed constitution. Burke paraphrased Bolingbroke's attacks on party in the *Patriot King:* 'the Spirit which actuates all Parties is the same; the Spirit of Ambition, of Self-Interest, of Oppression, and Treachery.'[74] As we saw in chapter two, this is a one-sided reading of Bolingbroke, which does not take his other writings into account.

Burke's refutation of Bolingbroke says much about the persistent fame of the latter as a political thinker, although his posthumously published views on religion would give him a great deal of notoriety. The text is a *reductio ad absurdum,* and, naturally, it is a better guide to Burke's thought than Bolingbroke's. Even though the *Vindication* is a difficult text since Burke never overtly states his own opinions in it, it is fairly evident that he intended Bolingbroke's alleged simplistic condemnation of parties to be contrasted with the author's own view. It is also a clear indication that Burke saw himself as joining in a long-standing conversation about party in British political discourse, a discourse he would shape in the following decades. Crucially, Burke wrote his famous works on party, notably *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770), as an unapologetic partisan and member of the Rockingham Whig cadre in parliament. His *Thoughts* was an explicit attack on the 'political school' of John 'Estimate' Brown, the eccentric Anglican who enjoyed a great deal of literary fame in the early, unsuccessful stage of the Seven Years' War, and to whose work we will now turn

[72] Hume, 'Of Eloquence', *Essays*, p. 108.
[73] Edmund Burke, *A Vindication of Natural Society* (1756), in *Pre-Revolutionary Writings* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 42, 45.
[74] Ibid, p. 44.

Chapter 7:
'Not Men, But Measures': John Brown and Free Government without Faction

I: The *Estimate*

An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times (2 vols., 1757-8) by John Brown (1715-66) is a neglected text, which is odd seeing how popular it was in its own time, at least initially. The first volume went through numerous editions in its first year and was followed by a second volume, intended as a clarification and elaboration of the original argument.[1] According to an early biographical sketch, the *Estimate* was 'almost universally read, and made an uncommon impression upon the minds of great numbers of persons.'[2] The success was so great that Brown's friend William Warburton, who was disparaging about the performance, was worried that it had 'turned his head'.[3] It was written in a declinist voice, following hard on the heels of Britain's defeat to France in 1756 at the Battle of Minorca. The *Estimate* should be read in the context of a temporary crisis in Britain's commercial politics, and can usefully be compared with Adam Ferguson's *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia* (1756), John Shebbeare's *Letters to the People of England* (1755-8), and E. W. Montagu's *Reflections on the Rise and Fall of the Antient Republicks* (1759).[4] It lost much of its urgency after the *annus mirabilis* of 1759. As Brown's title made clear, his primary target was the 'ruling Character of the present time', described as 'vain, *luxurious,* and *selfish* EFFEMINACY'.[5] He was convinced that Britain's initial bad fortunes in war against France could to a large extent be related to a general decline in manners and principles.

[1] Brown's modifications can be traced in an annotated copy of the first volume, held at TCD, Ireland, MS 1448. I am grateful to the Board of TCD for letting me consult this material.

[2] Andrew Kippis, *Biographia Brittanica…*(5 vols., London, 1778–1793), II (1780), p. 656. It was also met with plenty of hostile comments; see, e.g., [James Ralph], *The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade, Stated* (London, 1758), pp. 13-4.

[3] *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick* (2 vols., London, 1831), I, p. 86.

[4] For context, see Iain McDaniel, *Adam Ferguson in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Roman Past and Europe's Future* (Cambridge, MA, 2013), p. 163; Robert Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2002), ch. 2.

[5] Brown, *Estimate*, I, p. 67. Brown's argument and language have been called 'misogynistic' in Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 187, but this accusation underplays that 'virtue' in its Latin form was derived from the qualities of the *vir,* i.e. the man, and for Latinist writers 'effeminacy' simply represented the opposite of virtue.

This chapter will situate the *Estimate* in the context of the debate about party in the eighteenth century in general and the beginning of the Seven Years' War in particular.

According to Harvey Mansfield, Brown was a 'disciple' of Bolingbroke, who, according to Mansfield, had a single intent: 'to be a party against parties'.[6] The evidence for Brown being a member of 'The Bolingbroke Party' is scanty, however, and rests chiefly on taking Burke's polemical arguments from thirteen years later at face value and reading them back in time. What is more, we cannot even be sure that Burke made this connection between Bolingbroke and Brown, let alone that one existed. Burke referred to the political writings of Brown in the *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontent* (1770) as belonging to a political school seeking to recommend the court system to the public and forming a party known as the king's men.[7] On Mansfield's reading, this was the political school of Bolingbroke, and it was deeply anti-aristocratic, in contrast to Burke's idea of aristocratic party connection.[8] Even if this is one potential reading of Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King,* and a connection others have made, we have to remember that Bolingbroke for Burke was first and foremost a dangerous religious thinker, and he may have, for good reasons, separated Bolingbroke's project from Brown's, whilst being critical of both. In contrast to Bolingbroke's freethinking, Brown was ordained and connected with major Anglican figures.[9] In the explicit connection he made between religion and virtue, Brown was leaning on the authority of the 'excellent and learned Prelate' Bishop Berkeley, who had said that 'a Believer [rather] than an Infidel, have a better Chance for being Patriots.'[10]

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[6] Harvey Mansfield, *Statesmanship and Party Government: A Study of Burke and Bolingbroke* (Chicago, IL, 1965), pp. 86, 98. Mansfield's discussion of Brown is included in a chapter entitled 'The Bolingbroke Party'.

[7] Burke, *Present Discontents,* p. 133. By contrast, when Burke reviewed Brown's *Estimate* in the late 1750s, he referred to Brown's remarks on the spirit of union as 'just and fine', pointing to the inevitable difference between Burke as a man of letters and Rockinghamite mouthpiece discussed in the previous chapter; see *The Annual Register, or a View of the History and Politics and Literature for the Year 1758* (London, 8th ed., 1791), p. 447.

[8] On Burke's idea of aristocratic party, see Richard Bourke, *Empire and Revolution: The Political Life of Edmund Burke* (Princeton, NJ, 2015), pp. 752, 781.

[9] Brown's Anglicanism is evident in his writings on education. He saw Anglicanism as a tolerant religion but did not think that further toleration of Dissenters was required; see James E. Crimmins, 'Legislating Virtue: John Brown's Scheme for National Education', *Man and Nature,* 9 (1990), pp. 69-90.

[10] Brown, *Thoughts on Civil Liberty* (London, 1765), pp. 10-11; [Berkeley], *Maxims concerning Patriotism by a Lady* (Dublin, 1750), p. 3. Brown's early sermons, in the wake of the 'Forty-five' which he had resisted, centred on 'the mutual connection between religious truth and civil freedom' (Kippis, *Biographia Britannica,* pp. 653-4).

It is also clear that Brown himself conceived of his project in opposition to the political writings of Bolingbroke as well as those of Hume, whom he bundled together and criticised for not paying enough attention to manners and principles.[11] Even though he noted that Bolingbroke was 'esteemed a capital Writer in Politics', he is likely to have seen Bolingbroke and Hume as representing comparable and equally impious interpretations of politics.[12] Brown's friend Warburton had defended revealed religion against the onslaughts from Bolingbroke and Hume in 1754 and 1757 respectively, in the latter case together with his disciple Richard Hurd.[13] In the *Estimate,* Brown singled out Hume as particularly pernicious as one of the 'two Champions of Luxury and Effeminacy',[14] but he would later direct sharp criticism against Bolingbroke for going beyond other religious freethinkers and attack 'not only *revealed* but *natural* Religion', and against Hume for following in his footsteps.[15]

Leaving religion to the side, he believed that both Bolingbroke and Hume had failed to look beyond political forms and institutions. In the margins of the *Estimate,* he scribbled that 'modern Writers…seem to think there is only one way by which a state can be destroy'd, by the Loss of Liberty: indeed, their own Writings tend so strongly to bring out Destruction from another Quarter [decline in principles and religion], that in Charity one would believe they did not see their Tendency.'[16] At the heart of Brown's enterprise was the maxim that 'salutary Principles and Manners will of themselves secure the Duration of a State, with very ill-modelled Laws: Whereas the best Laws can never secure the Duration of a State, where Manners and Principles are corrupted.'[17] Only the second half of the 'penetrating' Machiavelli's maxim that good customs depended on good laws and good laws on good customs was true, and the first half was 'a vulgar Error'.[18] In other

[11] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 21.

[12] Indeed, this becomes evident when he lists Hume and Bolingbroke together with Shaftesbury, Tindal, and Thomas Morgan as examples of '*Writers* of such Books as tend to overturn the fundamental Principles of Religion', indeed had led to 'Scenes of Licentiousness…[including] Pick-pockets, Prostitutes, Thieves, highwaymen, and Murderers' (ibid, pp. 86, 88).

[13] Brian Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1998), ch. 5.

[14] Ibid, p. 174. The other was Mandeville, the criticism of whom he elaborated in *Civil Liberty*, esp. pp. 16-17.

[15] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, pp. 101-3.

[16] TCD MS 1448, n.f.

[17] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 20.

[18] Ibid, p. 22; Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy* (Chicago, IL, 1998), Bk. 1, ch. 18, p. 49. Brown excused the ruthless side of Machiavelli by saying that he 'only talked the Language of his Time and Nation' (pp. 46-7). In the marginal notes to the first volume of the *Estimate,* Brown made plenty more references to Machiavelli, and he wrote among other things that Machiavelli was at least the equal of Montesquieu, 'and seem to have been his Original'. While controversial, Brown was not the only

words, moral and political conditions were closely related, an insight which he may have derived from Sir William Temple, whom he frequently cited.[19] Brown's focus on manners was also indebted to Montesquieu, which he acknowledged.[20]

Mansfield's argument that Bolingbroke and Brown were united in their antagonism towards aristocracy is questionable, and does not take Bolingbroke's *Spirit of Patriotism* into account. Anti-aristocratic traits are more easily identified in Brown's writings, but still need qualification.[21] Brown was clear that a community derived its characteristics from its 'higher Ranks and leading Members', who could be a source of strength as well as weakness.[22] It remains true, however, that he thought that the upper echelons of society had grown effeminate and corrupt, and this was precisely what he wanted to correct with his intervention.[23] If the higher ranks improved, the lower ones would follow. At the same time, Brown believed that public appointments should be made on merit 'without regard to Wealth, Family, Parliamentary Interest, or Connexion', and this was a crucial part of his enterprise.[24] What is more, his tone became more anti-aristocratic after the partially hostile reception of the *Estimate.*[25] Before concluding that Brown was in favour of more popular politics, we have to acknowledge that he would later castigate the 'corrupt' Athenians for instituting an unmixed democracy where 'the Dregs of the Community' ruled.[26] As will be seen below, Brown separated 'the people' from 'the populace'. For now, it is enough to conclude that Brown viewed 'ranks', to use eighteenth-century parlance, as essential, even though he was critical of the current state of 'the great'.

Anglican clergyman to study Machiavelli closely. Thomas Carte had taken notes on various chapters in Machiavelli's *Discorsi,* especially in book one, where he had especially highlighted chapter 12: 'of the importance of Religion to a State' (Carte MS 240, Bodleian, f. 197).

[19] This has been suggested in James E. Crimmins, '"The Study of True Politics": John Brown on Manners and Liberty', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century,* 241 (1986), pp. 65-86.

[20] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 67.

[21] In his notes, Brown argued, in contrast with Hume's 'Of the Independency of Parliament', that power was only 'in appearance…centering [sic] in the lower House, [but] in reality centring in the other [i.e. the Lords]' as 'The Great Nobility are swallowing up the House of Commons.' According to Brown, this was 'destroy[ing] all honest ambition in the young gentry.' TCD MS 1448, n.f.

[22] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 17.

[23] For this reason, he did argue that 'the united Voice of a People' was 'the surest Test of Truth in all essential Matters on which their own Welfare depends' (ibid, p. 249).

[24] Ibid, p. 258.

[25] He commented on the reception in the following way: ''Tis certain, that in Point of *Opinion* he hath a great *Majority* in his Favour; but he never expected to find that *Majority* among those Ranks, where the *ruling Errors* are supposed to *lie.*' Brown, *An Explanatory Defence of the Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times: Being an Appendix to that Work* (London, 1758), p. 45.

[26] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, pp. 63-4.

There is no patriot king in Brown's *Estimate*, but instead an exhortation to a great minister,[27] undoubtedly a nod to William Pitt who had recently risen to power.[28] In *Thoughts on Civil Liberty: On Licentiousness, and Faction* (1765), which will be discussed below, Brown put more emphasis on the 'Conduct of the Prince'. It was written after Pitt had fallen from power and before his return to office as the Earl of Chatham.[29] Remaining with the *Estimate,* like the patriot king, the great minister is encouraged to do away with parliamentary corruption and party distinctions.[30] Brown clarified that he sought to address 'upright Men of all Parties', and fully embraced the Pittite 'not Men, but Measures' slogan.[31] There is some commonality and lines of continuity between Bolingbroke and Pitt, and they had both been associated with the opposition to Walpole in the 1730s, although Bolingbroke had more or less retired when Pitt entered the fray as one of 'Cobham's cubs'. However, the suggestion that there is but 'a small difference' between Bolingbroke's 'patriot king' and Brown's 'great minister' is exaggerated.[32] Yet it is true that they both represent a sharp contrast with Burke's enterprise. Rather than sneering at Pitt's popularity, Brown hails the minister who is supported by 'the united Voice of an uncorrupt People' rather than party connection (and 'Humean' corruption).[33]

As Brown himself noted at the beginning of the second volume of the *Estimate*, some accused him of Toryism as well as republicanism after the first volume, and it is obvious that he viewed both labels as insults. His outlook was naturally more Anglican than Bolingbroke's,[34] and he also went well beyond Bolingbroke in his analysis of commerce, in dialogue with Montesquieu.[35] Although we may be sceptical of Brown belonging to Bolingbroke's 'political school' or 'party', and indeed if anything as

[27] Brown, *Estimate*, I, p. 221; vol. II, part II, section XIX.

[28] The more optimistic conclusion of the *Explanatory Defence,* written after the second volume of the *Estimate,* can to a great degree be attributed to the fact that this 'great minister' was now believed to have been 'found' (p. 82).

[29] Also written after Pitt's failure to patronise Brown, as pointed out in Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, p. 660.

[30] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 252.

[31] Brown, *Explanatory Defence*, p. 80. For Pitt and this slogan, see Michael C. McGee, '"Not Men, but Measures": The Origins and Import of an Ideological Principle', *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 141-54. It should be recognised, however, that Pitt was often more prepared to compromise about measures than men, especially in 1756; see Jeremy Black, *Pitt the Elder* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 124-6.

[32] Mansfield, *Statesmanship and Party Government,* p. 97. The same connection has also been made in Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975), (Princeton, NJ, 2003), pp. 484-5.

[33] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 253.

[34] Brown's complaints about luxury combined with the decline of religiosity were comparable to those of Thomas Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1758-68; see Robert Ingram, *Religion, Reform and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 165.

[35] In short, he criticised Montesquieu's theory of *doux commerce* (for lack of a better term).

coherent as a Bolingbrokean party can be identified in this period, there is no doubt that Bolingbroke remained an influential writer in the late 1750s; nor is there any doubt that Brown 'used' him to a certain degree. Brown was appalled by Bolingbroke's lack of religion, as well as his neglect of the importance of manners for politics, but this did stop Brown from citing him for historical background. As he put it, Bolingbroke 'was a *great Historian,* tho' but a *poor Reasoner'.*[36] Bolingbroke's impact can be further teased out. For instance, on several occasions, Brown's key words are the same as Bolingbroke's. Notably, at the beginning of the first volume of the *Estimate*, Brown employs the Bolingbrokean terminology of 'the spirit of liberty',[37] a spirit which is incompatible with effeminacy and lack of principle.

Brown also echoed Bolingbroke when he spoke of a 'national Spirit of *Union*'. Such a union was naturally strong in absolute monarchies, where 'the *Prince* directs and draws every thing to one Point', and naturally weak in free countries, meaning those with mixed constitutions, 'unless supported by the generous Principles of Religion, Honour, or public Spirit'.[38] A national union required that partial views and private interest would be sacrificed to general welfare.[39] For these reasons, Brown disputed the view of 'the celebrated MONTESQUIEU', otherwise one of his favourite authors, 'that *Factions* are not only natural, but necessary, to *free* Governments', citing from the Frenchman's history of Rome, but as we know he could also have quoted from *The Spirit of Laws.*[40] The mistake Montesquieu had made was to offer this as a general rule 'without Restriction'. In its place, Brown suggested a distinction along the lines of Bolingbroke's distinction between party and faction, and in the second volume of the *Estimate* he actually cited letter two of Bolingbroke's *Remarks on the History of England* in this context.[41] When division in a free state stemmed from 'the Variety and *Freedom* of *Opinion* only; or from the contested Rights and Privileges of the different Ranks or Orders of a State, not from the detached and selfish Views of Individuals, a Republic is then in

[36] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 149. The Bolingbroke text he most frequently cited approvingly was *Remarks on the History of England,* particularly in his marginal notes; see TCD MS 1448, n.f.

[37] This phrase is from Brown's favourite work by Bolingbroke: the *Remarks.*

[38] Brown, *Estimate*, I, pp. 102-3.

[39] Ibid, pp. 103-4.

[40] Ibid, pp. 104-5. In the second volume, Brown acknowledged that his opinion regarding Montesquieu had been 'criticised, and shewn in some Sense to be *erroneous*, because too *general*', and that the Frenchman had borrowed this argument from Machiavelli's *Discourses*; see Brown, *Estimate,* II, p. 181 and the introduction to the present thesis.

[41] Brown, *Estimate*, II, pp. 185-6.

its *Strength,* and gathers Warmth and Fire from these Collisions.'[42] This was the case at an early stage of the history of the Roman republic. However, when 'Factions run high from selfish Ambition, Revenge, or Avarice, a Republic is then on the very Eve of its Destruction', referring to the later periods of contest between Marius and Sulla, Pompey and Caesar, and Antony and Augustus.[43]

Brown then moved from the Roman to the British context, and once again he touched on themes that had been at the heart of Bolingbroke's political writings. Two consequences of the Glorious Revolution – annual sessions of parliament and annual supplies – made parliament an arena for place-hunters as the monarch needed to offer jobs to members in exchange for the granting of supplies. As a result 'the great Chain of political Self-Interest was at length formed; and extended from the *lowest Cobbler* in a *Burrough* to the *King's first Minister.*'[44] 'Faction' in Britain was 'established, not on *Ambition,* but on *Avarice*', although Brown would elsewhere stress the negative impact of the former as well.[45] Unlike Hume, Brown did not think that this was a stable foundation for a political system: the chain of self-interest was no better than a rope of sand, and instead of cohesion, it only created antipathy and repulsion between the parts of the constitution.

Brown was more eager than Bolingbroke to ascribe the system of corruption to the general decline in manners, as opposed to placing all blame on Walpole. Drawing on Machiavelli's maxim that an ill disposed citizen can do no great harm but in an ill-disposed city, he concluded that 'Bribery in the Minister supposes a corrupt People.'[46] Alluding to Walpole, Brown offered a partial defence of this 'noted Minister', arguing that he may have feared the virtue of the nation in opposing bad measures, but as often the lack of virtue in supporting good ones.[47] This more ambivalent attitude towards Walpole set Brown apart from Bolingbroke, and Brown was censured by the Tory-Jacobite William King on this basis.[48] In his marginal notes to the copy of the *Estimate,*

[42] Ibid, I, p. 105.

[43] Ibid, p. 106. A similar distinction is found in Ferguson's *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (3 vols., 1783).

[44] Brown, *Estimate*, I, p. 111.

[45] Ibid, p. 122.

[46] Ibid, p. 114.

[47] Ibid, pp. 114-5.

[48] King, *Anecdotes*, p. 108. Brown ended up between a rock and a hard place, however, as his attempt at a balanced assessment is said to have upset one of his important backers, the Court Whig Hardwicke (Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, p. 660).

Brown was bolder in his criticism of Walpole, scribbling that 'mr. Hume, in his Char[acter] of S[i]r R. W[alpole] says, in his time that Liberty declined, and Learning went to Ruin. He should have said, Principles declined, and Religion went to Ruin.'[49] More straightforward public condemnation of Walpole was to be found in Edward Montagu's contemporary *Reflections.*[50]

Brown's main intention was not to rekindle a debate about Walpole's legacy, but to point out that the 'political System of Self-Interest is at length compleated; and a Foundation laid in our Principles of Manners for *endless Dissentions* in the State.'[51] The greatest danger of this state of affairs was not a bloody civil war, as had been the case in Athens and Rome, and indeed England in the seventeenth century. As the British had grown effeminate, the spirit of arms and honour was no longer strong enough to produce such an outcome.[52] The main threat was rather that Britain became an easy prey for a foreign invasion, as division made consistency, vigour and expedition in government impossible, in contrast with a 'united Enemy'.[53] The prospect that France would invade Britain was indeed a genuine fear at this point in time, before the year of victories in 1759.

Brown was naturally eager to emphasise that although the Williamite Revolution had paved the way for the rise of this form of dissension, he was not against the revolution. 'Principle of [self-interested] *Faction* was a *natural* Defect, arising from a *noble Change* in the Constitution: Evils infinitely greater were taken away', he argued.[54] To suggest anything else risked accusations of Jacobitism, which Brown was eager to avoid.[55] This could have serious consequences at the time; Shebbeare was sentenced to three years in prison and had to stand in the pillory at Charing Cross following the publication of his anti-Hanoverian *Sixth Letter to the People of England* in 1757.[56] While Brown intended to diagnose the flaws of post-revolutionary Britain, or rather explain how manners had been negatively affected, it would be wrong to assume that his argument was an apology

[49] TCD MS 1448, n.f.

[50] E. W. Montagu, *Reflections on the Rise and Fall of the Ancient Republicks: Adapted to the Present State of Great Britain* (1759), (Indianapolis, IN, 2015), p. 178.

[51] Brown, *Estimate*, I, p. 121. Indeed, in the second volume of the *Estimate,* Brown highlighted that he was not a simple detractor of Walpole; his views of Walpole were '*different* from those of both his *Friends* and *Enemies*' (*Estimate*, II, p. 205). It is clear that Brown saw his discussion of Walpole as being diametrically different from Bolingbroke's partisan complaints.

[52] Ibid, I, p. 125.

[53] Ibid, p. 126.

[54] Ibid, II, p. 194.

[55] Brown had in fact 'distinguished himself by his zeal for government, and acted as a volunteer at the siege of Carlisle' during the 'Forty-five' (Kippis, *Biographia Brittanica*, p. 653).

[56] Harris, *Politics and the Nation,* pp. 89-90.

for the pre-revolutionary system of government, which he viewed as completely arbitrary. As he clarified in an explanatory publication, all he wanted to show was that 'our Constitution, excellent in its Nature, was liable to an Abuse [parliamentary influence], which arose from its Excellence.'[57]

In the second volume of the *Estimate,* Brown signalled that he was not restricted to Bolingbroke's distinction between faction and party and wanted to show that 'there is another Source of Faction, of which we have had most fatal Instances in our own Country, distinct from both that of public Spirit and selfish Interest'.[58] Brown was referring to faction stemming from '*erroneous Conscience'*, moving from the Bolingbrokean paradigm to a more Humean analysis of party systems. Brown was not referring to just any kind of conscience, but particularly the idea that a certain person or race of men – that is, a certain royal family – had an '*unalienable Right* of governing', making explicit references to the conflict between Lancaster and York, as well as Jacobitism, in other words, what Hume would have categorised as a party (or faction) based on affection. This type of party had lost much of its force in more recent times, Brown argued, reflecting the real decline of particularly English Jacobitism since the early 1750s. For that reason, his main target remained the 'certain Party of Men…who look no farther than themselves, and are watching to plunder the Public for their own private Emolument.'[59]

Brown concluded the second volume by delineating the ideal character of a political writer, the first characteristic of which was impartiality.[60] Such a writer (who 'hath never yet existed; nor, probably, will ever appear, in our own Country') 'would chuse an untrodden Path of Politics, where no Party-man ever dared to enter.'[61] This section is a reminder that Hume was not alone in being obsessed with 'party' as an impediment to intellectual freedom and clear political thinking. The Tory-Whig framework may have started to disintegrate in the sphere of high politics, but 'party' remained at the heart of political debate in the late 1750s.

Brown's main contention was that the politics of parliamentary influence and party connection put the wrong sorts of people in power. This was fundamentally a

[57] Brown, *Explanatory Defence,* p. 8.
[58] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 187.
[59] Brown, *Explanatory Defence,* p. 58.
[60] Predictably, he was yet accused of 'blameable Partiality', which he laughed away in his appendix (ibid, pp. 34-5).
[61] Brown, *Estimate*, II, p. 260.

challenge to Humean politics, and he was answered by Hume's fellow Scot Robert Wallace. Wallace's partial defence of the politics of party was essentially the same as Hume's, but couched in more Whiggish and indeed nationalistic terms. No form of government was without inconvenience and a limited form of government had to tolerate 'parties and factions', which would still be infinitely better than an absolute monarchy, Wallace concluded.[62] Brown agreed, but he became even readier to question the idea that 'faction' was inevitable under a mixed constitution after the accession of George III, a context to which we will now turn, before returning finally to Brown's attempt to adumbrate the factionless free state.

II: The Accession of George III

Notwithstanding Tory support for the governments in the late 1750s, the only person who could really shake things up in eighteenth-century politics was the monarch.[63] As long as George II was determined not to employ Tories, distrust between them and the political establishment subsisted. Incredibly few Tories had gained office since the onset of Whig ascendency, even if they were hopeful at the beginning of George I's reign and on the accession of George II in 1727.[64] One of the most radical actions of George III was to employ nominal Tories and people with such background into his household.[65] The demise of Jacobitism as a potent political force had begun earlier; the abandoned Elibank Plot has already been alluded to. Moreover, Pitt had managed to convert one of the last strongholds, the Scottish Highlands, by recruiting forces there during the Seven Years' War.[66] The accession of George III, the first Hanoverian monarch who was Anglican and born in England, was symbolically important, although the conversion was more or less complete already at that stage. William King described the Tory Lord Gower's appointment as Lord Privy Seal in 1742 as a 'defection' and 'a great blow to the Tory

[62] Wallace, *Characteristics of the Present Political State of Great Britain* (London, 1758), pp. 79-81.

[63] As Geoffrey Holmes stressed, top politicians in the eighteenth century needed 'skill in managing parliament and skill in managing the sovereign.' See *The Great Ministry* (Printed for private circulation, 2005), p. 4.

[64] Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy* (Cambridge, 1982), esp. ch. 2.

[65] I.e. Lord Litchfield, Lord Bruce, Lord Oxford, William Northey, George Pitt, and Norborne Berkely (*Egmont Diaries*, p. 226).

[66] *A Full and Free Inquiry into the Merits of the Peace; With some Strictures on the Spirit of Party* (London, 1765), pp. 143-4. See also Frank Brady, *Boswell's Political Career* (New Haven, CT, 1965), p. 29. As Brady remarks, however, many retained their 'feeling for the Stuarts', Boswell among them.

party',[67] but he himself would make his peace with Hanoverian Britain after the accession of George III.[68] His enthusiasm for the Stuart cause had waned much earlier, however, and in his memoirs he attributed the decline of the Jacobite cause to the unattractive personality of Prince Charles Stuart, with whom he had a series of meetings in the early 1750s.[69] There is little doubt, however, that the accession of George III had an impact on Tory opinion. Shebbeare's *History of the Excellence and Decline of the Constitution…And the Restoration thereof in the Reign of Amaurath the Third, surnamed The Legislator* (2 vols., 1762), published five years after the author's imprisonment for Jacobite propaganda, has been described as a sign of 'Tory rapprochement with the Court.'[70]

It has been argued that George III ascended the throne as a man on a mission, determined to effect a 'drastic house-cleaning'.[71] It is clear that he was determined not to be enslaved to the Whig magnates as he *believed* his grandfather and great-grandfather had been. Waldegrave commented in his memoirs: 'The Spirit of Party or Faction which in former Reigns has caused so much disorder, and so much Malevolence, seems to be at its last gasp. Every Barrier is removed, the Road to Preferment lies open to every political adventurer.'[72] The idea to abolish party distinctions in the sense of Whig and Tory was not new but one that can be traced back to Bolingbroke's attempt to form a coherent Country party platform in the 1730s, if not earlier. Prince Frederick had made the same promise to opposition leaders in 1747.[73] Moreover, historians as far back as Bisset have noted a correlation between Pitt and George III in this regard.[74] This principle had been at the heart of George III's education when he was Prince of Wales. The pernicious influence of 'faction' is a key part of a prospectus for the prince's instruction from 1755-56, found among Bute's family papers.[75] This document, as described by James Lee

[67] King, *Anecdotes*, p. 45. Colley dates Gower's real defection to 1745 as the Tories wanted someone on the inside in 1742 (*In Defiance of Oligarchy*, pp. 240-41).

[68] David Greenwood, *William King: Tory and Jacobite* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 300-1.

[69] King, *Anecdotes*, pp. 195-214.

[70] Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, p. 94.

[71] James Lee McKelvey, *George III and Lord Bute: The Leicester House Years* (Durham, NC, 1973), p. xi.

[72] He continued: 'This widening of the Bottom must undoubtedly be agreeable to the tories, whose attachment to their rightfull sovereign has seldom been equivocal, and who may find more solid satisfaction in the service of the Crown, than they have felt for some years past in the service of their Country.' *Waldegrave Memoirs*, p. 224.

[73] *Egmont Papers*, p. 90; see also pp. 117, 119.

[74] Herbert Butterfield, *George III and the Historians* (1957), (London, 1988), p. 220.

[75] McKelvey, *George III and Bute*, pp. 85-7.

McKelvey, bears all the hallmarks of Bolingbroke's political thought, with the replacement of a 'national party' by the Court Whig faction at its core.

Among the papers of George III, a document entitled 'Some Short Notes Concerning the Education of a Prince' can be found, probably written by his then tutor John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute.[76] This document also has many resemblances with Bolingbroke's writings, notably the suggestions that 'useful' history began at the end of the fifteenth century, with emphasis on the shift of 'Property and Power' from the great lords to the inferior ranks in the reign of Henry VII.[77] This latter idea could of course be derived from multiple sources, from Harrington to Hume, but the short exposition that followed about the new system of balance of power in Europe, and competition between the House of Austria on the one hand, and the houses of Valois and Bourbon on the other, is reminiscent of Bolingbroke's *Letters on the Use and Study of History*, composed in 1735 but published for the first time in 1752, the year after the author's death. The document also contains a subtle criticism of the post-1688-9 Whig continental vision of British foreign policy. Britain had a special role in maintaining the balance of power in Europe, and this had been neglected in the seventeenth century, especially from the Pyrenees Treaty of 1659 onwards.[78] Since the revolution, however, the document states that Britain has fallen 'into another extreme, and have sacrificed ourselves beyond all proportion, not only to the common cause, but to the private Interest of an ally, [i.e.] the House of Austria', undoubtedly a reference to the Wars of the Spanish (1701-14) and Austrian Succession (1740-8).[79] Similarly, Bolingbroke had written that under William III, England (and Holland), buttressed by the Whigs, supported Austria against France and Spain with little concern of 'any national interest…either then, or afterwards.'[80]

George III's decision to employ Tories stemmed from his determination to pay no heed to party distinctions when awarding jobs and favours. Even if he may not have read

[76] RA GEO/ADD/32/1731.

[77] Bolingbroke, *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, *Works*, II, pp. 360-1.

[78] RA GEO/ADD/32/1731, f. 9. This is also singled out as a turning point in Bolingbroke, *Study and Use of History*, p. 95.

[79] RA GEO/ADD/32/1731, f. 9.

[80] Bolingbroke, *Study and Use of History*, *Works*, II, p. 442. Bolingbroke's text was of course written in part to justify the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), in which he played a key role as Secretary of State and chief negotiator. It is one of the clearest statements of the Tory vision of foreign policy, critical of continental engagements.

the *Patriot King* himself,[81] it would not be an exaggeration to say that Bolingbrokean principles with regards to politics had exerted a degree influence on his education. Horace Walpole infamously remarked that 'none but the friends and pupils of the late Lord Bolingbroke [were] entrusted with the education of a prince', referring to figures such as Andrew Stone and William Murray.[82] We should certainly not take Walpole at face value, especially not his accusations that the Hanoverian prince was educated in Jacobite principles. At the same time, however, we have to recognise that Bolingbroke and his writings had been central to opposition politics, with which Leicester House had also long been associated. For one thing, he had given advice to George III's father when he had been leader of the opposition, perhaps as late as 1750, the year before they both died.[83] Moreover, the 'drastic house-cleaning' which George III and Bute managed to carry out to an extent on his accession was similar to the one which had been planned for his father by Egmont, and which Bolingbroke had recommended in the *Patriot King.*[84] It may be 'entirely imaginary' that George III was educated in Bolingbroke's 'arbitrary principles of government', as Walpole's editor John Brooke notes; but only because such principles had little to do with Bolingbroke's political thought.[85] Without evidence of direct influence, it is enough for us to acknowledge that George III shared some of Bolingbroke's key claims, the extinction of Whig and Tory being one of the most important. His supporters were also eager to associate him with Bolingbroke's ideal. In 1762, Bute's propaganda organ, the *Auditor,* published a piece entitled the 'Patriot Prince'.[86]

The accession sounded the death knell of the old Tory party in many ways, as it lost its identity as an oppositional Country party.[87] Former Jacobites went in all directions: Old Corps of Whigs (Peter Legh), the king's men (the Earl of Westmoreland) and even

[81] Butterfield, *George III and the Historians,* pp. 231-7. Indeed, in the newly released papers by the Royal Collection Trust, we find no evidence of George III having studied any of Bolingbroke's texts, at least not directly, as he had Montesquieu and Hume.

[82] Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II,* ed. John Brooke (3 vols., New Haven, CT, 1985), p. 205. This was extremely problematic for Walpole, who saw Bolingbroke as a straightforward Jacobite. However, while Murray had a Jacobite family background, and Scott was appointed on Bolingbroke's recommendation and other connections can be established, John Brooke, the editor of the *Memoirs*, has disputed Walpole's charge that they were all 'disciples' of Bolingbroke (p. 193 n7).

[83] *Egmont Papers,* p. 174.

[84] Ibid, pp. 106, 114-16.

[85] Walpole, *Memoirs of George II*, p. 193 n7.

[86] Butterfield, *George III and the Historians,* p. 58.

[87] Hume, *Letters*, I, pp. 336, 368, 385.

the supporters of John Wilkes (John Pugh Pryse).[88] The leading words in Hume's correspondence on British politics in the 1760s, especially in 1766-69 when he was under-secretary for the Northern Department and based in London, are 'confusion' and 'change'.[89] The party framework he had known and started to analyse in 1741 was disintegrating, and Hume welcomed this development. He knew that even if Whig and Tory were losing their former meanings, this did not mean that 'party' *per se* vanished. For one thing, even if the old two-party framework disappeared after 1760, party terminology was revived soon after.[90]

Importantly for Brown, George III's accession made it safe to criticise the legacy of the Old Corps of Whigs. Since the new Hanoverian king was himself a critic, such censure could no longer be dismissed as Jacobitism. Indeed, even anti-Hanoverian sentiment became more acceptable as they were shared by the king to some degree.[91] Having owed his church promotions in 1750s to the Whig establishment, in particular to Bishop Osbaldeston, Brown was now able to go further than in his previous publications in his attacks on the post-revolutionary, and particularly post-1714, Whig state.

III: Brown and the Faction-Free State

Brown returned to the subject of faction with his *Thoughts of Civil Liberty, on Licentiousness and Faction,* published in 1765, one year before he committed suicide. According to *Biographia Britannica* of 1780, the book was written at the beginning of 1765, and was 'little more than a party pamphlet; intended to censure…the persons who at the time opposed the measures of the administration', i.e. the Rockingham Whigs, who were to replace Grenville's ministry in the summer.[92] According to Warburton's judgement in February 1765, it was simply 'the old *Estimate* new turned'.[93] The work was not unambitious, however, as Brown now tried to do what many political writers had held to be impossible, including the principal ones discussed in this thesis, namely to demonstrate how a free state could exist without dissension. The basic idea behind

[88] Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester, 1994), p. 131.
[89] Hume, *Letters,* II, pp. 144-5.
[90] This is even noted in a recent Namierite study which seeks to play down the importance of party; see P.D.G. Thomas, *George III: King and Politicians* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 30-1.
[91] Tim Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002), p. 322.
[92] Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, p. 661.
[93] *Letters from the Reverend Dr Warburton to the Hon. Charles York* (London, 1812), p. 59.

Thoughts on Civil Liberty was that a free state could perish by two means: external or internal violence – in other words, foreign war or domestic faction.[94] Most of Brown's contemporaries agreed with this, but many, at least by 1765, would all the same contend that party division had to be permissible in a free state. In demonstrating the danger of internal violence, Brown followed Montagu's lead of analysing the central ancient republics, namely Sparta, Athens, and Rome.[95] Brown's main source was also the same as Montagu's: Plutarch's *Lives.* As in the *Estimate,* Brown's concern remained to show how the politics of parliamentary influence as well as party were equally pernicious and mutually supportive.

Brown singled out Sparta, a republic where '*Manners* and *Principles*, all point[ed] to the *same* End, the *Strength* and *Duration* of the *State*'.[96] Interestingly for our present purposes, he argued that the long duration of Sparta afforded evidence against Machiavelli's and Montesquieu's political maxim that divisions are necessary in a free state. On the contrary, Brown pointed out that 'intestine Divisions were unknown' for at least five-hundred years of Sparta's history, and once they appeared they led to the fall of that republic.[97] This was thus a 'mistaken Maxim (adopted by almost all political Writers)'.[98] It was founded on the supposition that freedom of opinion necessarily entailed division. Brown believed that Sparta demonstrated that 'Opinion may be *free,* yet still *united',* ensured by 'early and rigorous Education'.[99] He had made it clear at the outset of the text that he understood freedom of thought differently from freethinkers such as Mandeville and the authors of *Cato's Letters* (Trenchard and Gordon), the latter of whom he otherwise held in higher regard.[100] Civil liberty was derived from self-restraint and from giving up 'Every natural Desire, which might in any respect be inconsistent with the general Weal'.[101] Licentiousness and faction had led to the ruin of both Athens and Rome, Brown was certain. This time he made no mention of Montesquieu's and Machiavelli's positive treatment of division in the early history of Rome, which he had

[94] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 9.
[95] Montagu also looked at Thebes and Carthage.
[96] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 50.
[97] Ibid, pp. 55, 58.
[98] Ibid, pp. 55-6.
[99] Ibid, p. 56.
[100] Ibid, pp. 16-19. Mandeville and *Cato's Letters* had made common cause against charity schools, designed to educate the poor, in the 1720s; Mandeville because they made the poor unfit for manual labour, and Trenchard and Gordon because they were hotbeds of Jacobitism and High Church sentiments. See Maurice Goldsmith, *Private Vices, Public Benefits: Bernard Mandeville's Social and Political Thought* (Christchurch, revised ed. 2001), pp. 97-8, passim.
[101] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, pp. 13.

approvingly cited in the *Estimate*. Instead, he wholeheartedly embraced Montesquieu's other conclusion that over-expansion combined with the increased dominance of Epicureanism (i.e. loss of manners and principles) were instrumental in bringing about the downfall of Rome.[102]

Like Montagu, Brown included a section about '*How far these Facts can properly be apply'd to the political State of* Great-Britain'. As Brown had already written in the *Estimate* but now made more explicit, 'Party-rage' was one of the negative upshots of the by and large excellent Revolution of 1688-9.[103] Brown took a particular swipe at 'the Dissentions that disgraced the Reigns of King WILLIAM and Queen Anne', known in modern historiography as the 'Rage of Party'.[104] That conflictual situation was 'essentially contradictory to the Principles of Freedom', but he repeatedly stressed that it was 'inevitable' because of the state of the manners and principles of those times.[105]

The accession of George I did not put an end to party rage. While 'the Advocates of Liberty [i.e. the Whigs] now assumed the Reins of Power…The slavish Principle of absolute *Non-Resistance,* and an *independent Hierarchy,* were still prevalent in Part, especially among the *Clergy.*'[106] In other words, the Tory-Whig battle continued. The Whigs fought a press campaign against the remnants of seventeenth-century Toryism, but unfortunately religion was destroyed in the general onslaught on superstition. He singled out Trenchard and Gordon's anti-clerical *Cato's Letters* and *Independent Whig*, as well as the anti-Christian message he perceived in Shaftesbury and Mandeville,[107] as examples of this unhappy development. Such publications 'tended…to relax those Principles [religious institutions and prejudice] by which alone Freedom, either civil or religious, can be sustained.'[108] We can now understand how Brown believed that party rage had led to the sorry moral state of Britain in mid-century. The Whigs in power sought to 'sweep away *false Principles,* [but] imprudently struck at *all Principles.*'[109]

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[102] Ferguson would later adopt the same thesis in his history of Rome.
[103] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, pp. 92, 88.
[104] Ibid, 93.
[105] Ibid, pp. 92, 89, 94.
[106] Ibid, pp. 94-5.
[107] Brown recognised that Shaftesbury's and Mandeville's systems were 'diametrically opposite' in the sense that the former held human nature to be excellent and the latter deprived, but they were both similar in the sense that they '*disgraced* CHRISTIANITY' (*Civil Liberty*, pp. 100-1). For Brown's criticism of Shaftesbury in particular, see Crimmins, 'John Brown and the Theological Tradition of Utilitarian Ethics', *History of Political Thought*, 4 (1983), 523-550.
[108] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 96.
[109] Ibid, p. 103.

When Britain's degeneration led to crisis in 1757, the year Brown published the *Estimate,* 'NECESSITY gave a *temporary Union* to all Parties, and a *temporary Restoration* to the *State.*'[110] But as soon as the danger ceased, faction arose again, Brown lamented. It now arose on 'Foundations widely different from Those in the Reigns of WILLIAM and ANNE', when dissension was 'chiefly founded in *false Principles*'.[111] Toryism, Jacobitism and 'bigoted' Dissent were all founded on 'mistaken Interpretations of Scripture', which were '*now* held in general Derision'.[112] Only very few among the aged clergy held 'despotic' principles and bishops had long been 'appointed by the Patrons of Liberty' and had become 'the *Friends* of Freedom'.[113] By contrast, the dissension of the 1760s, was founded 'on a *Want of Principle*', which was the dominant characteristic of the time, according to Brown.[114]

Competition for offices led in particular the higher ranks of society into 'the Extremes of selfish Views, Ambition, Party-Rage, Licentiousness, and Faction'.[115] The uneducated populace in the cities, 'like the *Athenian Populace* of old', were 'liable to the *Seduction* of artful Men' and risked becoming 'the ready *Tools* of every unprincipled *Leader*'.[116] Distinguished from both these groups were those he called '*The* PEOPLE *of* GREAT BRITAIN', i.e. 'Those who send Representatives for the Counties to Parliament', including the landed gentry, the Country clergy, the more prominent merchants and traders, and the freeholders or yeomen.[117] As was common in the eighteenth century, the people were distinguished from the populace, the political class from the dregs. This middle order would be alarmed by the '*factious Clamours* of the *Capital*' but only 'rowzed into *Action*…on *singular* and *important* Emergencies'.[118] Brown's fear of the populace and the potential of demagogues from the upper ranks rising on their shoulders was shared by many of the Scottish literati, including Hume and Ferguson around this time, and this became particularly prominent after the outbreak of the 'Wilkes and Liberty' discontent.

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[110] Ibid, p. 105.
[111] Ibid, p. 106.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid, pp. 106-7. Of the diminution of Toryism among the clergy, see Jeremy Gregory, *Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828: Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese* (Oxford, 2000).
[114] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 106.
[115] Ibid, p. 111.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid, pp. 87-8.
[118] Ibid, p. 114.

This new type of factionalism was even more pernicious than the one based on 'false principles', since it was less detectable. The reason for this was that people who held false opinions naturally held them because they believed them to be true, and were consequently not ashamed of them. By contrast, faction founded on lack of principle implied 'moral depravity' and would 'naturally attempt to *veil* itself'.[119] Brown emphasised that he was not against disagreement in politics. In all states, there were certain subjects and measures which were 'debatable', on which 'even the Friends of Liberty may sometimes differ'.[120] As Berkeley, whom Brown admired and cited, had written, 'honest Men may differ.'[121] The problem, however, was that 'The factious Man is apt to mistake himself for a Patriot.'[122] Brown's 'friend of liberty' would have no selfish ambitions and be 'rational, honest, equitable, in the Prosecution of his Wishes'. His (Brown uses the masculine possessive pronoun) first and foremost concern would be to protect the 'just Balance of divided Power', that is the integrity of the mixed constitution. When pursuing his goal, he will 'be attached to Measures, without respecting Men'.[123] Opposition had to be constitutional; a friend of liberty would 'not attempt to inflame an ignorant Populace against their legal Governors'.[124] Finally, he would respect other viewpoints and not seek to 'defame the private Characters of the Individuals who differ from him in Opinion.'[125]

On the other hand, a person motivated by the spirit of faction would be 'irrational, dishonest, iniquitous'.[126] Rather than upholding the mixed constitution, 'The Leaders of Faction (being naturally of the higher Ranks) would aim to establish an *aristocratic Power;* and *inslave* both *Prince* and *People* to their own Avarice and Ambition.'[127] Brown may here have alluded to the practice of 'storming the closet', whereby a powerful clique threatened a monarch with mass resignation to make him or her assent to their policies. This equalled 'usurp[ing] the *legal Prerogatives* of the *Crown*'.[128] Such people were

[119] Ibid, pp. 115-16.
[120] Ibid, p. 116.
[121] [Berkeley], *Maxims concerning Patriotism,* p. 7. Berkeley's pamphlet and assumption that there are honest men in politics was a response to Hume's 'That Politics may be Reduced to a Science', in which Hume said that we must suppose that everyone in politics is a knave. Berkeley responded: 'He who saith there is no such Thing as an honest Man, you may be sure is himself a Knave' (p. 5).
[122] Ibid, p. 7.
[123] Brown, *Civil Liberty,* p. 119.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid, p. 120.
[126] Ibid, p. 117.
[127] Ibid, p. 121.
[128] Ibid.

'attached to Men, to the Neglect of Measures', to the degree that they unconditionally backed each other in all public debates, even 'If the *Sovereign* had aimed to unite all *honest Men of all Parties*'.[129] As we have seen, this had been George III's mission.

The attachment to the same party in and out of government regardless of changing circumstances would inevitably lead to inconsistency and contradictory behaviour. Brown was careful to avoid 'particularities', but we can nevertheless identify examples he must have had in mind. Even if he does not mention any specific cases, it is clear from Brown's language that he was not thinking, at least not primarily, of Bolingbroke's favourite example of how the Whig party had become more authoritarian in power. Rather he had in mind the Tories, who in opposition could be said to have condemned influence and dependence 'as a *despotic* Measure in the *Servants* of the *Crown*, which They themselves *formerly* exercised when in *Power*, and still *continue* to exercise towards their *private Dependents*'.[130] In other words, the Tories' transformation into a Country party was as opportunistic as the Whigs' becoming a Court party.

The Whigs were not spared from Brown's criticism, however. Brown was clearly thinking of events at the time of his writing, and perhaps also the Bolingbroke-Walpole conflict, when he said that it was the mark of faction to 'attempt to revive Animosities which Time had bury'd'.[131] There had been a time, he wrote, 'when All who presumed to *dissent* in any Degree from those in Power, were indiscriminately and unjustly branded with the Name of *Jacobite* or *Tory*'.[132] As we saw in chapter two, this had been a favourite Whig tactic when the Walpole press sought to discredit Bolingbroke in particular, but also other members of the opposition. The same people (the Newcastle and Rockingham Whigs) now bestowed the same appellations 'as freely round, on All those who *assent* to Those in Power'.[133] The words of 'Jacobite' and 'Tory' had lost their meaning, according to Brown, and to use them in order to discredit political adversaries was clearly factious. Brown was here referring to a new tendency to brand supporters of George III as Tories and even Jacobites,[134] as the new monarch sought to break the Whigs' power monopoly.

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[129] Ibid, p. 124. This language is reminiscent of Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, but also of John Toland.

[130] Ibid, pp. 126-7.

[131] Ibid, p. 132.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid, pp. 132-3.

[134] This was particularly true in the case of Bute, a Scot whose surname was Stuart. Pitt was among those who called the Bute-led ministry after May 1762 a 'Tory government' (Black, *Pitt the Elder*, p. 236).

The idea that there was a nascent Toryism in the early reign of George III was once taken for granted but disproved by historians in the twentieth century.[135] This should not blind us to the fact that many with undisputable Whig pedigrees continued to label their enemies Tories. In the 1760s, 'Tory' reverted back to the way it had been understood at its inception, that is someone who was a firm supporter of the royal prerogative. It was rare that people referred to themselves as Tories in this new setting, however, with some notable exceptions, including Samuel Johnson and James Boswell. More than ever before, the term had now become an insult, which is reflected in Brown's writings.

Brown concluded his *Thoughts on Civil Liberty* with a series of proposals for 'checking the Growth of Licentiousness and Faction'. First and foremost, the monarch had to be steadfast and never yield to the demands of the leaders of factions. Secondly, the minister had to be equally firm in 'discouraging…the Inroads of *Venality* and *Corruption.*'[136] Brown had already written at length on this topic, as discussed in the previous section, but he now framed his views in opposition to Soame Jenyns's *Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (1757).[137] Jenyns argued that a decrease in arbitrary power necessitated an increase in corruption in order to govern people successfully, who were naturally and incurably wicked.[138] In other words, people had to be either 'beat or bribed into obedience'.[139] In lieu of this type of corruption, supported in even more cynical terms by Jenyns than it had been by Hume, Brown prescribed 'Virtue and Religion, upright Manners and Principles'.[140]

More surprisingly, Brown suggested 'some legal Limitation of Property' to reduce inequality between the rich and the poor, which led to the dependence of the latter on the former.[141] As a good Harringtonian, he viewed as self-evident that power followed property, and that excessive property controlled by a few individuals meant excessive power and influence in the same hands. Harrington's maxim was a commonplace

[135] Ian Christie, *Myth and Reality in Late Eighteenth-Century British Politics and Other Papers* (London, 1970), pp. 196-215.

[136] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 142.

[137] Jenyns was a parliamentarian and typical establishment Whig, who attained a seat with the aid of Hardwicke. His *Free Enquiry* was castigated by Samuel Johnson. Years later, Jenyns would compose one of the more practical schemes for abolishing party contest in the shape of annual administrations chosen by lot; see *A Scheme for the Coalition of Parties, Humbly Submitted to the Publick* (1772). This was, of course, a satire.

[138] *Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (London, 3rd ed., 1758), p. 139.

[139] Ibid, pp. 133-4.

[140] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 147.

[141] Ibid, p. 150.

observation in the eighteenth century, embraced by Bolingbroke and at least to a certain degree by Hume, yet very few drew the same conclusion as Brown at a time when property rights were seen as sacred and redistribution as a recipe for social upheaval. For this reason, Brown remarked that he spoke 'not of the Probability, but the Expediency of such a Measure'.[142]

No one had written as evocatively about inequality in the period as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and it may well have been the case that Brown was reacting to the writings of the Genevan citizen, even though he did not cite him directly.[143] Interestingly for our present purposes, Rousseau's writings were among the most anti-party in the period with the idea of a total ban on 'partial associations' in the *Social Contract* (1762).[144] Brown also shared Rousseau's concern about the sizes of states, as he drew attention to the fact that Rome had perished from over-extension in order to point out that colonies could be a burden to the mother country. This was only if they became too much of a distraction, however, and generally speaking Brown supported the Chathamite and Beckfordite vision of a '[British] Empire of the Seas'.[145] The conjecture about Rousseau's impact on Brown also has to be weighted with another possible speculation that Rousseau was one of '*two* authors now said to be living in these Kingdoms with impunity; who, in a better policed State, would…[have] felt the full Weight of that public Punishment and Infamy, which is due to the Enemies of Mankind.'[146]

Be that as it may, Brown was at one with Rousseau in admiring the unity and strength of Sparta, and in considering the importance of 'civil religion'. In short, Brown believed that 'National virtue never was maintained, but by national Religion'.[147] The most important remedy as he saw it was improved education, which would centre on two

[142] Ibid.

[143] We have to remember, though, that even Rousseau saw private property as fundamental; see Rousseau, 'Discourse on Political Economy' (1755), in *The Social Contract and other later Political Writings* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 4.

[144] Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, in ibid, p. 60.

[145] Brown, *Civil Liberty*, p. 151.

[146] Ibid, p. 155 (footnote). Rousseau was fleeing persecution in France and Geneva at the time, taking refuge under the protection of Hume in England in 1765. The two fell out, leading to the notorious and public quarrel between the two philosophers. It is not implausible that Brown is referring to Rousseau's *Émile* (1762), in that case 'The Professions of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar', when he wrote that one of the two authors had 'writ a Volume of execrable *Memoirs*, for the Corruption of Youth and Innocence'. The word *Memoirs* directs one's thoughts to the *Confessions*, which Rousseau had started writing around this time, but it is unlikely that Brown would have known about this at the beginning of 1765.

[147] Ibid, p. 154.

mutually reinforcing principles: patriotism and Anglicanism. Brown concluded the text with an exhortation to all ranks and *parties* to unite, summarising some of the main points discussed in this section, and putting particular emphasis on the danger of the factious and tumultuous populace in the cities. Brown's thought was quintessentially Anglican in the sense that he associated party division with sectarianism and viewed schism as a threat to the unified church-state.[148] In his idolising of Sparta, the faction-less state, Brown's Anglican vision was not entirely dissimilar to Rousseau's republicanism with its emphasis on civic education, civil religion, and patriotism.[149] The contrast with Hume, for whom Sparta's austere regime was simply against 'the common bent of mankind', could not have been starker.[150]

IV: Conclusion: The Triumph of Party?

In the 1760s – decried by Brown for the lack of values combined with increased factionalism and job-hunting – an alternative vision of party emerged: Burke's party of principle. With political life being essentially purged of Jacobitism, an unapologetic case for party was now possible. As was shown in the previous chapter, Burke had already laid the foundation for a defence of party in the 1750s, before entering politics. This defence was grounded in a critique of self-seeking and personal factions reliant on popularity, in other words, criticisms Brown would have agreed with. Political *principles* had to be resuscitated in order for Whiggism, in its new Rockinghamite guise, to have a reason for opposition other than replacing the government. Nearly all frontmen in politics, including Lord North, now called themselves Whig, although many of them have later been mislabelled as Tories. This was to a large degree the work of 'Wilkite' journalists, who have been credited with revitalising the Whig and Tory labels in the first half of the 1760s.[151] Crucially, issue forty-five of Wilkes's *North Briton* (1762-3) attacked George III's Scottish favourite Bute, as an old Tory and, by implication, a quasi-Jacobite. The

[148] J.C.D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty: Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World* (Cambridge, 1994), ch. 2.

[149] He directly influenced the French republican Abbé de Mably; see Michael Sonenscher, *Before the Deluge: Public Debt, Inequality, and the Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution* (Princeton, NJ, 2007), p. 248.

[150] Hume, 'Of Commerce' (1752), *Essays*, pp. 259-60.

[151] Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 212. This was more widespread than Wilkite journalism, however; see *A Letter From the Cocoa-Tree to the Country-Gentlemen* (London, 1762), esp. p. 13; *An Address to the Cocoa-Tree from a Whig* (London, 1762), passim. For criticism of the revival of the Whig and Tory names, see [Jenyns], *Free Enquiry*, pp. 148-52.

spectre of Bute,[152] and later the threat of a system of secret influence, rallied the Rockingham Whigs, who turned their attention to what they viewed as a new form of Toryism, centred on increasing the personal power of the monarchy.[153]

While the existence of a 'double cabinet' has been exposed as a fallacy which misled many generations of scholars,[154] it should not surprise us that George III's accession produced this reaction.[155] Having an ideological enemy was necessary in order for a new party of principle to be made relevant. At a time when pedigree and tradition were all-important, this party had to present itself as anything but new and as being involved in a perennial struggle between liberty and authority in the British constitution.[156] Burke was not the only Whig to interpret the 1760s as a clash between traditional Toryism and Old Whiggism. This was also the approach in Horace Walpole's *Memoirs,* though 'loaded with the author's after-thoughts', as Butterfield pointed out.[157] Nor can it be said that Burke was wholly disingenuous; the Rockinghams could have achieved office in 1767 if they had been prepared to compromise their principles.[158]

The present chapter has demonstrated that there was a rhetorically powerful alternative to this narrative: Brown's attack on self-interested factions. Burke may well have formulated his, and his party's, mature defence of party as set out in the *Present Discontents* (1770) in opposition to Brown, although there had been similarities in their critiques of faction in the 1750s. In the 1760s, however, the two visions were irreconcilable. Burke viewed men and measures as interlinked and believed that a party had to seek office and negotiate with the monarch as a *corps.* This was diametrically opposite to the 'not men, but measures' slogan, at the heart of Brown's writings and the Pittite patriot platform. As we saw in chapter two, however, it is doubtful whether the

[152] Bute was not a member of parliament between 1741 and 1761, and was widely regarded by the political class as a court creature; see Richard Pares, *George III and the Politicians* (1953), (Oxford, 1970), p. 100.

[153] Frank O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party in England: The Rockingham Whigs, 1760-82* (London, 1975), passim.

[154] John Brewer, 'Party and the Double Cabinet: Two Facets of Burke's Thoughts', *HJ,* 14 (1971), pp. 479-501; Christie, *Myth and Reality,* ch. 1.

[155] For Burke's obsession with the court system, see Bourke, *Empire and Revolution,* pp. 348-50, 360.

[156] Namier believed that the rise of this party could be traced to a definitive moment in 1762, but O'Gorman has demonstrated its links with the Pelhamite Whigs; Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (London, 1930), p. 484*;* O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party,* p. 46.

[157] Butterfield, *George III and the Historians,* pp. 111, 115. As Butterfield highlighted, Walpole's letters from 1760 tell a different story.

[158] O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party,* p. 210.

Pittite way of conceiving opposition should be traced back to Bolingbroke, at least directly, since Bolingbroke, unlike Pitt, advocated general and concerted opposition, and stressed the connection between men and measures. While Pitt's tendency to inflame the passion of the populace and insistence on only taking office on specific conditions would not have been to Brown's liking, his political writings are undoubtedly closely linked to the figure of Pitt the Elder. The Chatham administration which replaced the Rockinghams in 1766 had as its goal 'to dissolve all factions & to see the best of all partys in Employment', an aspiration on which George III and Chatham saw eye to eye.[159] The experiment proved short-lived, however. Only a year after taking office, the Chatham administration, afflicted by its figurehead's illness, had to concede that the only road to political stability was to negotiate with the opposition as parties rather individuals.[160]

[159] Memorandum by the King, [July 1766?], in *The Correspondence of King George III*, ed. Sir John Fortescue (6 vols., London, 1927), I, p. 175. O'Gorman has demonstrated that the memorandum is misdated by Fortescue as August 1765; see O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party*, pp. 178, 548 (note 92).

[160] Duke of Grafton and Lord Northington to the King, 2 July 1767, in *Correspondence of George III*, I, p. 495; O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party*, p. 206.

Conclusion:
The 'Short' Eighteenth Century

The way John Brown framed his argument about unity demonstrates the limitations of the common characterisation of the eighteenth-century debate on party as one of *universal* condemnation before Edmund Burke realised the necessity of political parties.[1] There is a sense that partial acceptance of party had become the established political wisdom by the time of his writing, even if most writers would qualify their case. A typical case in point would be the pamphleteer who, writing at the time of Brown's *Estimate,* said that 'Parties, which in Time of publick Tranquility are useful, and perhaps essential to our Constitution, are as destructive when we are threatened by a foreign Enemy.'[2] Brown himself believed that it was a 'mistaken Maxim (adopted by almost all political Writers)' that internal division had to be tolerated in a free state. While he referred directly to Machiavelli and Montesquieu, all the major thinkers in this study – Rapin, Bolingbroke, and Hume – could have been mentioned. In opposition to this idea, and by pointing to the example of Sparta in antiquity, Brown tried to show that a state could both be free, in his particular understanding of liberty, and unified at the same time. In each case, however, 'party' had to be examined and discussed; rarely was it taken for granted.

This dissertation has shown that the question of 'party', which once dominated political history, deserves to be moved from the background to the centre-stage of the history of eighteenth-century British political thought. Much emphasis has been placed on Hume's extensive writings about party, and this needs to be justified. Hume's 'general theory' of party may seem imprecise and inconsistent in certain places, but he was himself the first to acknowledge that political theory cannot always be reconciled with historical contingency and the unaccountability of political principles. In other words, his broad intention was to deny the feasibility of theory divorced from history. Hume believed that exact certainty was impossible in politics as in all moral subjects, and indeed in epistemology more generally.[3] This became even more evident since politics in this period was mixed with religion, which tended to make it more capricious. If human beings

[1] See, e.g., Nancy Rosenblum, *On the Side of the Angels* (Princeton, NJ, 2008), part one.
[2] *Party Spirit in Time of Public Danger Considered* (London, 1756), p. 11.
[3] John Passmore, *Hume's Intentions* (Woking, revised ed. 1968), pp. 7-8.

had been *only* motivated by Epicurean self-interest, and were not prone to be seduced by speculative principles and enthusiasm, human affairs would have made much more sense.[4] Alas, most were not and such a scenario played no part in Hume's political thought.

Experience was thus the main guide when thinking about politics, which is why history was fundamental for Hume's enquiries. It has been shown that Hume changed his emphasis in some important instances, but we should not let the 'mythology of coherence' mislead us into searching for absolute consistency.[5] Acquisition of new data and changing circumstances had to lead to refined conclusions – a realisation which is the strength and not the weakness of Hume as a politico-historical thinker. However, if not offering a grand theory of party, his works on the subject are unified by the intention to demonstrate the danger of principles, or ideology, political as well religious. These had the potential to undermine moderation and thus lead to political instability and even implosion. This story fits neatly with Pocock's characterisation of 'Enlightenment' as the shared intellectual enterprise convinced of the necessity of not repeating the wars of religion.[6] Moreover, the way of thinking about party as such, as well as in its specific guises, in terms of pros and cons can be seen as a typical enlightenment way of approaching the subject – part of the Baylean *reigne de la critique*.[7] This was an approach which Hume perfected, and to a surprising degree had in common with Rapin, Bayle's fellow Huguenot. While it is familiar that Hume differed from Rapin in extending the criticism to the British constitution itself, and their differences should not be underplayed, this thesis has pointed especially to the early Hume's reliance on Rapin's writings on party, which has been underestimated in the existing literature.

Hume believed that he was living in 'the historical age' and 'the historical nation'.[8] This study has reflected the prominence of histories of England as the crucial idiom of political discourse in the early to mid-Hanoverian period. These politically

[4] See Pocock, 'Enthusiasm: The Anti-Self of Enlightenment', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 60 (1997), pp. 7-28. C.f. John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2005), esp. pp. 316-24.

[5] Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics. Volume I: Regarding Method* (2002), (Cambridge, 2011), esp. pp. 67-8.

[6] Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* (6 vols., Cambridge, 1999-2015), I, pp. 1-10.

[7] Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (1959), (Sinzheim, 2013), pp. 89-90. As we have seen, however, Hume and Bayle disagreed about the question of religious motivation. Rapin's position on self-interest was closer to Bayle's, although he, like Hume, distinguished between the main motivation for party leaders and the rank and file.

[8] Hume to William Strahan, August 1770, *Letters*, II, p. 230.

minded historians were searching for the origins of party in British politics. The era of Rapin, Bolingbroke, Thomas Carte, and Hume, publishing his final volume of the *History of England* at the end of 1761, was followed by the golden age of conjectural history as practised by Rousseau and 'universalist history' embodied by Montesquieu and Adam Smith. The great historical works in the second half of the century were written on feudalism and Rome, with the exception of the Edinburgh historian Robert Henry, and the all-too-often underestimated radical Catherine Macaulay.[9] Philip Hicks has suggested that William Robertson, Burke, and Edward Gibbon did not proceed as historians of England partly because of Hume's prior achievement.[10] Although we have to stress that the party terminology to large degree remained, we can also conclude that the disintegration of the Whig-Tory political framework in the 1750s and around the time of George III's accession in 1760 meant that seventeenth-century England disappeared as the main period of historical interest and debate. The newly dominant political questions revolved around how to hold together a unified empire and avoid revolutions.[11] Eventually, the re-emergence of a new two-party framework in the nineteenth century rekindled the interest in constitutional history and seventeenth-century England, which can be seen in T. B. Macaulay's *History of England from the Accession of James the Second* (1848).[12]

The works of Mandeville, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Smith were intended to answer such fundamental questions in political philosophy as the nature of human sociability, the basis of political authority, the advantages and disadvantages of international trade and commerce, and the differences between the ancients and the moderns, especially with regard to liberty and luxury.[13] All these questions also interested

[9] The French revolutionaries certainly took her seriously, as did many in Britain; see Laurence L. Bongie, *David Hume: Prophet of the Counter-Revolution* (1965), (Indianapolis, IN, second ed. 1998), esp. pp. 132-40.

[10] Philip Hicks, *Neoclassical History and English Culture: From Clarendon to Hume* (Basingstoke, 1996), p. 209.

[11] See Richard Bourke, *Empire and Revolution: The Political Life of Edmund Burke* (Princeton, NJ, 2015); Richard Whatmore, *Against War and Empire* (New Haven, CT, 2012), esp. part three. For imperial discourse in an earlier period, see David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000).

[12] George Wingrove Cooke, *The History of Party; from the Rise of the Whig and Tory Factions, in the Reign of Charles 2…to the Passing of the Reform Bill* (3 vols., London, 1836-7). See also J.W. Burrow, *A Liberal Descent: Victorian Historians and the English Past* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 14-15.

[13] These and related questions have been prominent in research in the history of political thought in the last decade or so; see, e.g., Istvan Hont, *Politics in Commercial Society: Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith* (Cambridge, MA. 2015); Robin Douglass, *Rousseau and Hobbes: Nature, Free Will, and the Passions* (Oxford, 2015); Christopher Brooke, *Philosophic Pride: Stoicism and Political Thought*

Hume, who arguably did more than anyone, including Montesquieu, to shape these debates, particularly in what has become known as the Scottish Enlightenment.[14] However, Hume can also be seen as belonging to an earlier tradition of historical and political enquiry, dealing with one of the most basic questions in politics, namely that of internecine division. The most important genre for such enquiries was narrative history.

Although Hume came to dislike his predecessor Rapin's rhetoric, and to disagree with him on the Stuart kings and in particular the transition from Elizabeth to James I, the French Huguenot was in many respects the architect of how the seventeenth-century party framework was understood in the eighteenth century. For this reason, Rapin was crucial for Bolingbroke (who adopted the rhetoric wholesale) as well as Hume. Others had written about party in the seventeenth century and its relevance for the eighteenth century before Rapin, but none had matched the lucidity of his *Dissertation sur les Whigs et les Torys.* It could even be said that Rapin's achievement was to show that Whig and Tory represented a continuation of the Reformation in Britain, stemming from the division within Protestantism in England and Scotland. This is not an entirely implausible conclusion, as modern historians are becoming increasingly engaged with the afterlife of the Reformation and its impact well into the eighteenth century.[15] It was not out of antiquarian concerns that Bishop Burnet wrote the *History of the Reformation* in three volumes between 1679 and 1715. On the back of this, the influential thesis that political economy in the eighteenth century, significant as it was, supplanted constitutional, religious and dynastic discourse as the dominant language of politics cannot be sustained.[16] From the prism of party, it can even be argued that no context is more central than the 'long Reformation' for understanding eighteenth-century British politics.

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from Lipsius to Rousseau (Oxford, 2012); Isaac Nakhimovsky, *The Closed Commercial State: Perpetual Peace and Commercial Society from Rousseau to Fichte* (Princeton, NJ, 2011).

[14] Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade* (Cambridge, MA, 2005); Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Commercial Society in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2013).

[15] Robert Ingram, *Reformation without End: Religion, Politics and the Past in Post-Revolutionary England* (Manchester, forthcoming 2018); William J. Bulman and Robert G. Ingram (eds.), *God in the Enlightenment* (New York, NY, 2016), esp. introduction; Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence* (New Haven, CT, 2014); Thomas Ahnert, *The Moral Culture of the Scottish Enlightenment, 1690-1805* (New Haven, CT, 2014), p. 81; Nicholas Tyacke (ed.), *England's Long Reformation, 1500-1800* (London, 1998).

[16] C.f. Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* (1977), (Princeton, 2013), p. 37. It should be noted, however, that the volume of legislation concerning economic life expanded massively in the eighteenth century, but in particular after 1760; see Julian Hoppit, *Britain's Political Economies: Parliament and Economic Life, 1660-1800* (Cambridge, 2017), esp. chs. 2 and 3.

As much as Rapin – himself a victim of the continental counter-Reformation – and Hume emphasised the significance of religion for party strife, so did Bolingbroke seek to play it down. What Bolingbroke promoted instead of Whig and Tory were constitutional parties, those of 'Court' and 'Country', representing the executive and legislature, but also the parties of government and opposition. This was a key dimension of British politics and not a figment of his imagination, although it was frequently overridden by Whig and Tory. The Country party had a recognisable ideology consisting of a body of arguments used to legitimise opposition, most of which centred on attacking corruption and executive power. It is far from clear whether the same can be said of the 'Court party', since Court policy was the result of negotiations between the leaders of the ruling party and the monarch. Bolingbroke was drawing on his own parliamentary career, the beginning of which he spent in close alliance with Robert Harley, the one-time paradigmatic Country politician. In fact, the Tory party in general increasingly came to adopt Country party rhetoric and the language of ancient constitutionalism after the Hanoverian succession. Bolingbroke was part of a long-standing political tradition, which was predominantly Tory, as much as he was a borrower of Whig and 'neo-Harringtonian' arguments, or an innovator. Be that as it may, his impact, as has been shown, was monumental.

The need Bolingbroke felt to argue against the relevance of Whig and Tory becomes fully understandable when his works are considered in their particular contexts, as a partisan case against Walpole, and an attempt to unify Tories and discontented Whigs against the Court Whigs. Although Bolingbroke never managed to break the Whig ascendency, it is clear that he left a mark in the sphere of political ideas as he made the most sustained defence of a concerted opposition party to date. His immediate impression was perhaps even more specific. In 1742, even such Anglican Jacobites as Reverend Carte pledged that the Tories were 'as determined to support dissenters in the enjoyment of the Toleration indulged to consciences truly scrupulous, as we are the Church in her establishment.'[17] This policy was incidentally one which had been favoured not only by Rapin but also by the religious sceptic Hume, who was much more worried about violent

[17] Carte MS 230, Bodleian, ff. 201-2. Only seven years earlier, Carte's friend Hearne had defended the right of the clergy to refuse to bury the corpses of Dissenters by referring to the Church of England Canon Law, promulgated by the Convocations of Canterbury and York in 1664 and 1669 respectively (*Hearne's Recollections,* pp. 425-6).

competition among sects than the potential oppressive nature of a state-church.[18] As a philosophical exercise, Hume speculated about 'a society of atheists', like Bayle and Mandeville had done.[19] For all his heterodoxy and many attacks on religion, however, Hume's political position in favour of a strong state-church combined with toleration was mainstream, and motivated by his overriding 'Hobbesian' obsession with the need to avoid civil and religious strife. This may be part of his realisation that he could not write as if his contemporaries were unbelievers when religion dominated and pervaded eighteenth-century life.[20] The fact that his most relentless criticism of Christianity – the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* – was held back for twenty-five years before it was posthumously published, to the dismay of most of his friends, supports this interpretation.[21] In any event, in his *History* Hume prescribed an establishment Whig solution to the Reformation problem of the direction of the reformed English church, and its relationship to the state.[22] As the quotation by Carte suggests, even Tories, following Bolingbroke, began to come round to this view, paving the way for a lessening of sectarian strife.[23]

How far and to whom toleration should be extended remained widely contested, however, and church politics certainly retained its importance. The debate over the Jewish Naturalisation Act 1753, repealed the following year, has been dubbed 'a doctrinal issue in the old Whig and Tory tradition.'[24] William Warburton went as far as describing church politics as 'warfare upon earth' in 1763.[25] Notwithstanding these words, and events such as the Subscription Controversy,[26] domestic religious strife saw a reduction in bloodshed

[18] Hume, *History*, III, pp. 135-6, IV, p. 354

[19] Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment,* esp. pp. 308-16. However, in his philosophical onslaught on religion, Hume was of course not mainstream but 'the oddity of the age', in the words of Robert Ingram, *Religion, Reform and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 112. See also Brian Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 167-71, 210-12.

[20] Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment,* p. 374.

[21] For a recent account of the publication of the *Dialogues*, see Dennis Rasmussen, *The Infidel and the Professor: David Hume, Adam Smith, and the Friendship that Shaped Modern Thought* (Princeton, NJ, 2017), ch. 10.

[22] For the origin of this debate, see Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London, 1988). For the eighteenth century, see Ingram, *Religion, Reform and Modernity,* ch. 6.

[23] Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 71-98. Cf. J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832* (Cambridge, second ed. 2000).

[24] Thomas Perry, *Public Opinion: Propaganda and Politics in Eighteenth-century England: A Study of the Jew Bill of 1753* (Cambridge, MA, 1962), p. 178.

[25] Warburton, *Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate to one of his Friends* (London, second ed. 1809), p. 346.

[26] Young, *Religion and Enlightenment,* ch. 2.

compared with the previous century – at least temporarily before Catholic relief divided the nation later in the century and the beginning of the next. In the international sphere, religious tension, if anything, increased after a relatively peaceful period between 1713 and 1739. The fundamental division in Europe remained Protestantism versus Catholicism. After the Anglo-French alliance between 1716 and 1731, Britain's rival was once again what it had always been in the eyes of many: Catholic France. Rhetoric about universal monarchy, and balance of power and trade complemented rather than eclipsed religious discourse.[27] The Catholic faith of the Stuart royal family was the greatest handicap of the Jacobite movement, and made it an unpalatable, although still for a long time possible, option for many Tories. The final disintegration of the Jacobite cause in England in the early 1750s, together with Pitt's victories in 1759 and the accession of George III, reduced the Tory party to a rump of Country gentlemen which ceased to be a unified parliamentary block. Although the Country party tradition had been associated with the Tories since the beginning of the century, Toryism went through numerous changes from its inception in 1680. The term was used after 1760, usually as an accusation, even if some, notably Johnson and Boswell, took pride in the name and associated it simply with royalism.[28]

Although the followers of Newcastle and later Rockingham were sometimes known as *the* Whig party – certainly according to themselves – nearly all politicians of note called themselves Whig after 1760, including the often mislabelled Lord North and William Pitt the Younger. As Butterfield noted, 'Whiggism' came to acquire a meaning as generic as 'liberal' in the modern world.[29] On the narrow, and at least for pre-1760 misleading,[30] definition of a propensity to reform, 'the Whigs' were only in power for ten years between 1760 and 1837.[31] While an enquiry into the entire histories of Toryism and Whiggism falls outside of the scope of the present study, it has confirmed that what

[27] Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660-1760* (Cambridge, 2007), esp. pp. 192-219; Hannah Smith, *Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714-60* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 21-32. For a Catholic perspective, see Johannes Burkhardt, *Abschied vom Religionskrieg: Der Siebenjährige Krieg und die päpstliche Diplomatie* (Tübingen, 1985).

[28] *To the Hebrides: Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and James Boswell's Journal of a Tour of the Hebrides* (1775 and 1785), (Edinburgh, 2007), p. 227. For Tory as an insult, see, e.g., *Fallacy Detected in a letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London, 1775), p. 34.

[29] Herbert Butterfield, *George III and the Historians* (1957), (London, 1988), pp. 222-3.

[30] A better way of thinking about Whiggism is John Oldmixon's definition in his dedication to Sarah Marlborough: 'By the Whig Cause…I understand nothing more than the *Protestant Religion*, the *Liberty* of *Englishmen*, and the *Liberties* of *Europe*.' *Memories of the Press, Historical and Political, for Thirty Years Past, from 1710 to 1740* (London, 1742), n.p.

[31] Leslie Mitchell, *The Whig World, 1760-1837* (London, 2005), ch. 1.

Raymond Geuss, using Nietzsche's genealogy, said of liberalism is perhaps the best way to approach eighteenth-century parties: '(a) it has no definition, (b) it tends to rewrite its own past, sometimes anachronistically, (c) it is open to very significant modification in the future.'[32] As Koselleck pointed out, future directions often change in unison with shifting interpretations of the past.[33]

Just as Hume thought that widespread religious scepticism was a pipe dream, he believed that it would be equally misguided to think that 'party' was going to disappear, considering human beings' propensity to disagree about speculative principles and become enthusiastic partisans. This is presumably why he kept his essays on party beyond the disintegration of the Tory-Whig polarity. In the long run he was of course proved right, since the genesis of the nineteenth-century two-party system is often traced to the 1760s and the rise of the Rockingham Whigs.[34] However, Hume's writings lost a degree of relevance after the increase of personal factionalism and the end of the Whig-Tory dichotomy, which had been heavily informed by Jacobitism, in the 1750s and around the time of George III's accession.[35] This event made way for Burke's famous theory of party, a form of enlarged partisanship concerned with putting *principle* back into British politics, in implicit repudiation of George III and Chatham, and explicitly against John Brown and his political school wedded to 'not men, but measures'.[36] Although Burke's early writings on party, embedded in the Hanoverian context of Jacobitism and steeped in enlightenment criticism, have been dealt with in chapter six, how his later writings on party fit together with this earlier period, and how the second age of party relates to the first more generally, is a question for a different enquiry. This study has demonstrated that, notwithstanding the persistence of anti-Catholicism,[37] the important political discontinuities, domestic and international, around 1760 make it difficult to treat the British 'long eighteenth century' as a unit of historical enquiry.[38]

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[32] Geuss, *History and Illusion in Politics* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 69.

[33] Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (1979), (New York, NY, 2005), p. 51.

[34] Frank O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two-Party System, 1760-1832* (London, 1982).

[35] However, the party terminology of Whig and Tory survived; see Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman*, pp. 133-8.

[36] Towards the end of his life, however, he saw a new form of factionalism in the shape of fanatic Jacobinism and atheism.

[37] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Avon, 1992), esp. ch. 1.

[38] But see Clark, *English Society 1660-1832*; Frank O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997) for arguments in favour of the 'long eighteenth century'.

Finally, looking at party in the eighteenth century, through the prism of Hume in particular, teaches us about political behaviour in a *real* context.[39] This will lead us to reject or at least become sceptical of universalist or timeless moral approaches to political philosophy, as embodied by John Rawls and many of his disciples.[40] When human beings act politically, they do not act exclusively on maxims.[41] Political calculations are based on a combination of interest, principles, and feasibility. Context will always be the decisive factor when we act, since we do not act in a vacuum but on the basis of predictions about the future.[42] The question of consistency is a non-issue. If people were only motivated by power and self-interest, the world would probably be a more predictable and comprehensible place. However, people are *also* motivated by moral commitments, political ideology, religion, passions and emotions (including affection for or identification with leaders), and this is what tends to make them fanatical, violent, and sometimes prepared to tear down the fabric of society. Political parties, as well as other political groups, are expressions of this mixture, and in them individual self-interest is bound up with party interest. What is more, because of the human mixture of gregarious and antagonistic dispositions, conflict between parties or groups with separate interests *and* principles will be exaggerated rather than moderated.

Morality may be about individuals, but politics is about party. No one has been more astute in analysing this than Hume. He did not suggest that we know of any superior way of reaching political decisions than through party competition, or that we should search for one. But his work does serve to question the value of uncompromising partisanship, if not in politics then at least in intellectual endeavours.[43] As Hume

[39] On the importance of real history in contemporary political philosophy, see Bernard Williams, *In the Beginning Was the Deed: Realism and Moralism in Political Argument* (Princeton, NJ, 2005); Raymond Geuss, *Philosophy and Real Politics* (Princeton, NJ, 2008); Paul Sagar, 'Istvan Hont and Political Theory', European Journal of Political Theory (forthcoming). For associations between Hume and Realist political theory, see Andrew Sable, *Hume's Politics* (Princeton, NJ, 2012) and Frederick Whelan, *Hume and Machiavelli: Political Realism and Liberal Thought* (Lanham, MD, 2004).

[40] To his credit, Rawls acknowledged the local nature of his system in *Political Liberalism* (New York, NY, 1993).

[41] Raymond Geuss, *Politics and the Imagination* (Princeton, NJ, 2010), esp. pp. 31-42.

[42] Richard Bourke, 'Theory and Practice: The Revolution in Political Judgement', in *Political Judgement: Essays for John Dunn,* ed. Bourke and Geuss (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 73-109.

[43] For a similar 'Humean' conclusion, see Richard Bourke, 'What is Conservatism? History, Ideology and Party', *European Journal of Political Theory* (forthcoming).

prescribed and practised, 'helping to elaborate the national ideology'[44] can hardly be a criterion of sound history writing and political thought.

[44] To borrow the illocution of Raymond Geuss, *Outside Ethics* (Princeton, NJ, 2005), p. 34, against Rawls.

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