

The Development of a Tory Ideology and Identity 1760-1832

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Abstract

This thesis examines the ideas which underpinned early nineteenth century Toryism and their development in the late eighteenth century. It argues that a distinct, coherent, refined Tory identity emerged from the Tory splits between 1827 and 1830. This was preceded by a process of renegotiation and consolidation in Tory ideology and identity from 1760 onwards. The period between the accession of George III, in 1760, and the passage of the First Reform Act, in 1832, witnessed consistent and sustained crises regarding the constitution established in Church and state. The outbreak of revolutions in America and France reinvigorated debates regarding the nature and location of political sovereignty as well as the relationship between the crown and parliament. Lengthy wars against each nation were followed by severe economic depressions, the apparent proliferation of domestic political radicalism, and intermittent, but determined, demands for parliamentary reform. In addition, there were persistent attempts to alter the religious basis of the constitution to accommodate both Protestant pluralism and, from 1801, predominantly Catholic Ireland. This thesis contends that the debates surrounding these issues contributed to the rehabilitation and renegotiation of late-seventeenth-century and early-eighteenth-century Tory ideas. It also contends that, in moments of crisis and reaction, old Toryism converged with the conservative elements of an increasingly fractured Whig tradition in defence of the constitutional *status quo*. This convergence, apparent in the opening decades of George III's reign, was consolidated in the context of the French Revolution. Consequently, after 1812, a broad, but loose, ideological consensus emerged, labelled as Tory, underpinned by anti-populism, commitment to the preservation of Christian orthodoxy, and the establishment of the Church of England. However, below this broad ideological umbrella, differences persisted which created tensions, contributing to the divisions between 1827 and 1830, and, through them, the refinement of Tory identity.

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	4
Abbreviations.....	5
Introduction.....	6
- Background.....	7
- Methodology and Sources.....	19
- Terminology	26
Part One: The Constitution in the State	
Chapter One: The Crown, Parliament, and the People.....	29
- The Roots of Opposition Whiggery and Tory Revival.....	31
- The Origin of Sovereignty and the Limits of Obedience.....	36
- The Constitution Established by Law.....	57
- Radicalism and Reform in the Nineteenth Century.....	76
- Conclusion.....	98
Chapter Two: Political Economy and the Movement towards Free Trade.....	100
- Pitt and Economic Liberalisation in the Eighteenth Century.....	104
- Liberal Toryism and the Movement towards Free Trade.....	111
- The Defence of Protection.....	128
- Conclusion.....	143
Part Two: The Constitution in the Church	
Chapter Three: Attitudes to Protestant Pluralism.....	145
- The Religious Basis of Party Identity.....	145
- Rebellion.....	153
- Rationalism.....	166
- Enthusiasm.....	188
- Repeal.....	207
- Conclusion.....	210
Chapter Four: Catholicism.....	213
- Catholicism and the Extent of Consensus.....	215
- Pro-Catholicism.....	228
- Anti-Catholicism.....	234
- Tory Splits and the Passage of Emancipation.....	252
- Conclusion.....	258
Conclusion to Thesis.....	261
Bibliography.....	267

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Abbreviations

<i>AJ</i>	<i>The Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine</i> (1798-1821)
<i>BEM</i>	<i>Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine</i> (1817-1902)
<i>BC</i>	<i>The British Critic</i> (1793-1826) and <i>The British Critic, Quarterly Theological Review and Ecclesiastical Record</i> (1827-1837)
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>PH</i>	William Cobbett (ed.), <i>Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from The Norman Conquest in 1066 to the year 1803</i> , 36 vols. (London, 1806- 20)
<i>PD</i>	T.C Hansard (ed.), <i>The Parliamentary Debates: forming a continuation of the work entitled "The Parliamentary History of England from the earliest period to the year 1803"</i> , 41 vols. (London, 1803-1820)
<i>PD, NS</i>	T.C Hansard (ed.), <i>The Parliamentary Debates: forming a continuation of the work entitled "The Parliamentary History of England from the earliest period to the year 1803"</i> , New Series, 41 vols. (London, 1820-1830)
<i>PD, Series 3</i>	T.C Hansard (ed.), <i>The Parliamentary Debates: forming a continuation of the work entitled "The Parliamentary History of England from the earliest period to the year 1803"</i> , Series 3, 356 vols. (London, 1830- 1891)
<i>QR</i>	<i>The Quarterly Review</i> (1809-1906)

Introduction

This thesis examines the ideas which underpinned early nineteenth-century Toryism and their development in the late eighteenth century. It argues that a distinct, coherent, refined Tory identity emerged from the Tory splits between 1827 and 1830. This was preceded by a process of renegotiation and consolidation in Tory ideology and identity from 1760 onwards. The period between the accession of George III, in 1760, and the passage of the First Reform Act, in 1832, witnessed consistent and sustained crises regarding the constitution established in Church and state. The outbreak of revolutions in America and France reinvigorated debates regarding the nature and location of political sovereignty as well as the relationship between the crown and parliament. Lengthy wars against each nation were followed by severe economic depressions, the apparent proliferation of domestic political radicalism, and intermittent, but determined, demands for parliamentary reform. In addition, there were persistent attempts to alter the religious basis of the constitution to accommodate both Protestant pluralism and, from 1801, predominantly Catholic Ireland. This thesis contends that the debates surrounding these issues contributed to the rehabilitation and renegotiation of late-seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century Tory ideas. It also contends that, in moments of crisis and reaction, old Toryism converged with the conservative elements of an increasingly fractured Whig tradition in defence of the constitutional *status quo*. This convergence, apparent in the opening decades of George III's reign, was consolidated in the context of the French Revolution. Consequently, after 1812, a broad, but loose ideological consensus emerged which was labelled as Tory. It was underpinned by anti-populism, commitment to the preservation of Christian orthodoxy, and the establishment of the Church of England.

However, below this broad ideological umbrella, differences persisted. Importantly, these ideological differences, and the splits which they engendered, played a central role in the development of Tory identity. Fissures amongst Tories were encouraged by the introduction of free trade and the growing prominence of political economy, the continued proliferation of Protestant pluralism and, most importantly, the question of Catholic emancipation. Debates on these issues facilitated the construction of a 'liberal' political other, characterised by pragmatism, conciliation and concession, from which Toryism was increasingly distinguished. This process of refinement culminated in high-

political divisions and Ultra-Tory rebellion between 1827 and 1830. In 1827, when the Liberal-Tory, pro-Catholic George Canning assumed the premiership, six cabinet ministers resigned, all but one citing Canning's pro-Catholic sentiments as motivation. Subsequently, disagreement over economic policy between the High Tory Charles Herries and the Liberal Tory William Huskisson led to the collapse of Frederick Robinson, Viscount Goderich's ministry in January 1828, before parliament had convened.¹ Canning and Huskisson, both Liberal Tories and pro-Catholics, were actively excluded from Tory identity, an identity which was increasingly underpinned by commitment to protectionism and defence of the Protestant constitution. Finally, passage of Catholic emancipation in 1829, coupled with failure to repeal the Liberal-Tory economic reforms introduced during Liverpool's administration (1812-1827), secured the fall of Wellington's ministry in November 1830.² As the Tory *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* remarked, the 'defeat of the Duke's ministry is no defeat of Tory principles. It was not worthy of the name of a Tory Ministry.'³ Given its abandonment of the Protestant constitution and its acquiescence in existing Liberal-Tory economic legislation, Wellington's administration was deemed to no longer be acting on Tory principles; principles which had been identified and polished only through the recognition and articulation of what they were not.

Background

The trajectory of the Tory party from the early to mid-eighteenth century has generated a degree of consensus amongst historians: wounded by the ideological divisions engendered by the Hanoverian succession and relegated to the benches of opposition, it was in decline in this period. Linda Colley's *In Defiance of Oligarchy*, though it provides a re-examination of Tory survival in the wake of the Hanoverian succession, conceives the party as disbanding with the relief of proscription in 1760.⁴ Similarly, Frank O'Gorman, Ian Christie, and Richard Pares recognise the decline and dispersal of the old Tory grouping so that, by the 1760s, as a party, the Tories were obsolete, the fierce party dichotomy which had dominated Anne's reign replaced by the proliferation

¹ Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad, and Dangerous People? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006) pp. 377-378.

² See below pp. 141-143, 254-258.

³ *BEM*, 28:174 (Dec 1830), p. 987.

⁴ Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 291.

of various Whig connexions.⁵ As one contemporary was to note, in 1776: ‘The distinction of Whig and Tory no longer exists in England...it is now the Butean party, the Bedford party, the Chatham party, the Rockingham party, the Shelburne party, etc. etc. among whom the present contest is for power’.⁶

Using the collapse of the old Tory party as his spring-board, J.C. D. Clark has proclaimed that ‘the history of the Tory party in parliament between the early 1760s and the late 1820s may be simply written: it did not exist’.⁷ Turning, in particular, to the period between Pitt’s death in 1801 and the divisions over Catholic Emancipation in 1829, Clark posits that historians have assumed that ‘because there was an organised whig party, a tory party existed also. It did not.’⁸ This criticism resonates with the cautionary statement which opens Keith Feiling’s *The Second Tory Party 1714-1832*, that ‘no Tory party existed, in the modern sense of party’, in the early decades of the nineteenth century.⁹ Faced with the development of party on the opposition benches, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century Pitt’s ministry did adopt some rudimentary techniques of party organisation. Thus, as Britain entered the nineteenth century, all the basic instruments of party management— party whips, party meetings, the party chest— were in use.¹⁰ Yet, as Feiling’s and Clark’s contentions indicate, their development and deployment by nineteenth-century Tory ministries should not be exaggerated. The pressure placed on backbenchers to bring them into line with the priorities of the cabinet was limited and they were frequently uninformed regarding issues raised by the cabinet in Parliament. Party meetings were infrequent. When they were held, they served the purpose of informing members of decisions already taken by the cabinet, not to consult wider Tory opinion and, consequently, they could at times be

⁵ Frank O’Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two Party System 1760-1832* (London, 1982), p. 2, 45; I. R. Christie, ‘Party in politics in the age of Lord North’s administration’, *Parliamentary History*, 6 (1987), p. 47; Richard Pares, *King George III and the Politicians* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 71-72.

⁶ *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1776, quoted in Paul Langford, ‘Old Whigs, Old Tories, and the American revolution’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 8:2 (1980), pp. 107-108.

⁷ J.C.D Clark, ‘A General Theory of Party, Opposition and Government, 1688-1832’, *Historical Journal*, 23:2 (1980), p. 305.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁹ Keith Feiling, *The Second Tory Party, 1714-1832* (London, 1938), p. 5.

¹⁰ A. Aspinall, ‘English party organization in the early nineteenth century’, *English Historical Review*, 41 (1926), pp. 389-411. Eighteenth century tactics included organised propaganda, letters of attendance, and electoral planning. Also see F. O’Gorman, ‘Pitt and the Tory reaction to French revolution, 1789-1815’ in H.T Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke, 1989), p. 23.

strikingly ineffective at cultivating support.¹¹ Government party managers such as the patronage secretary, Charles Arbuthnot, deployed correspondence as a means of whipping up support. Yet these letters would not be regularly circulated to all Tory backbenchers, only to a few influential individuals who could exert pressure on others to support a proposal and, as with party meetings, advice was not sought, merely intelligence of cabinet decisions given.¹² Thus Tory majorities were not effectively organised, nor strictly disciplined, and Cookson's analysis that the 'cabinet invariably led, and hoped that the rest, unorganized, leaderless and loyal to a degree, would follow' is accurate.¹³

A Tory party resting on the foundation of an efficient, well organised party machine did not exist. Yet, as Feiling points out, 'a continuous tradition and some elementary framework of party, and a descent of political ideas', necessarily preceded its emergence in the 1830s.¹⁴ Indeed, Clark's contention that the history of the Tory party did not exist prior to this decade should be treated with caution. Clark's dismissal is built on the contention that the years 1757 to 1827 comprised a single-party system characterised by fluidity, factionalism, and supra-party government.¹⁵ This interpretation, though, is drawn into question by the work of several scholars. Stephen Lee has demonstrated that in opposition to the Ministry of All the Talents (February 1806-March 1807) the old adherents of the anti-party, conservative Whig, William Pitt, increasingly behaved like a party, adopting a degree of organisational unity before assuming office in 1807.¹⁶ In addition, Richard Pares has highlighted that, while between 1801 and 1812 five separate administrations held office, with as many as four or five independent groups moving in parliament, nineteenth-century right-wing protagonists gradually abandoned factional politics, 'melting into the two great

¹¹ W.R. Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism*, 2nd ed., (London, 1967), pp. 102-103. A meeting held at Liverpool's residence, Fife House, in April 1818 regarding proposed financial grants to the Royal Dukes had cabinet ministers and approximately eighty government supporters drawn from the 'country gentlemen' present. Yet no opinion regarding the matter was invited. The meeting merely summarised the cabinet's plans for the following day's business to which a majority of the ministerial supporters present at the meeting were actually opposed; defeat followed. See Aspinall, 'English party organization', p. 393.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 394.

¹³ J.E. Cookson, *Lord Liverpool's administration: the crucial years, 1815-1822* (Edinburgh, 1975), p. 39.

¹⁴ Feiling, *The Second Tory Party*, p. 5.

¹⁵ Clark, 'A General Theory of Party', pp. 307-308.

¹⁶ Stephen Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism* (London, 2008), pp. 21-42.

parties'.¹⁷ In 1812 Sidmouth's family connection re-joined the Pittites in the ministerial fold, the alliance becoming more concrete when Sidmouth obtained the position of Home Secretary under Lord Liverpool. Furthermore, in 1813 Canning announced 'the dissolution and dismissal' of his party and then, in 1821, the Grenvillites, the last substantial faction, imploded.

The attrition of these independent factions has led historians to highlight Liverpool's administration (1812-1827) as a key period of consolidation in which the semblance of a two-party system emerged. For Pares, after 1812, there was a 'consolidation of the country's patriotic and Conservative forces in the revived tory party' creating 'a bloc so powerful, and (in spite of the friction over Catholic Emancipation and Canning's personal ambition) so well united that the king's power to divide or desert it began to be questioned'. This introduced 'a *tendency* to a two-party system', though, as divisions between 1827 and 1830 would demonstrate, its 'permanence was not beyond question'.¹⁸ Similarly, Lee acknowledges that the period following Pitt's fall witnessed the re-emergence of political confusion. Nonetheless, he contends that this soon gave way to a new party system 'characterised by a permanent party of government (the Tories) and a permanent party of opposition (the Whigs)'; a system destroyed only by political conflict over Catholic Emancipation in 1827 and 1829.¹⁹ Finally, Douglas Simes notes that one of the 'most striking features of the early nineteenth-century party system in Britain was the high degree of internal instability inherent in the parties which composed it', a view which appears to resemble Clark's emphasis on factionalism. However, even Simes composes his argument regarding the nature of Ultra Toryism upon the acknowledged assumption that an 'ideologically, broad based parliamentary party, initially denominated Tory, and subsequently Conservative, dominated British politics for most of the early nineteenth century' within which there were intra-party divisions.²⁰

¹⁷ Pares, *King George III and the Politicians*, p. 191.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191, 185. Also see Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad, and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), p. 199; O'Gorman, 'Pitt and the Tory reaction to French revolution, 1789-1815', p. 27.

¹⁹ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 16-17.

²⁰ D. G. S. Simes, 'A long and difficult association: the Ultra Tories and "the Great Apostate"', in C.M. Woolgar (ed.), *Wellington Studies III* (Southampton, 1999), p. 56, 59.

The crux of the debate regarding the existence of a Tory party in the early nineteenth century hinges on the extent to which a distinct, coherent political identity existed on the ‘right’, rooted in ideological consensus. Clark acknowledges an ‘organizational unity’ amongst Pitt’s followers in the wake of their leader’s death; he also notes that Liverpool’s administration began to ‘take on in its last years much of the appearance of a Tory party ministry’, though this statement is left undeveloped.²¹ Despite these admissions, though, Clark contends that Liverpool’s government, like those of Pitt the Younger and Lord North in the late eighteenth century, ran ‘on an ethic of administrative expertise rather than polarised party ideologies’ and should therefore be characterised as a non-party administration.²² Thus he envisages no structural change being introduced by the ideological reaction to American and French Revolutions, economic instability and political radicalism in the years 1815-1820, or the varied threats to the Church of England posed by religious pluralism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Clark’s perspective has been disputed by the works of Frank O’Gorman and Derek Beales. O’Gorman concurs that ‘a bureaucratically organized Tory party, entirely separate from executive and ministerial structure, was not to appear until after the fall of Wellington’.²³ Nonetheless, both he and Beales highlight political polarisation, the emergence of consistent voting patterns, and the revival of party labels during Liverpool’s administration.²⁴ These features, O’Gorman argues, reflected MPs’ identification not only with the ‘executive tradition but also with the political and ideological objectives which were now sustained by that tradition.’ Liverpool’s ministry, ‘far from repeating the structure of North’s ministry — represented the reunion of the Pittite factions’ and emulated the ideological hallmarks of this ministry.²⁵ Thus, O’Gorman, unlike Clark, considers ideological polarisation and political conflict

²¹ Clark ‘A General Theory of Party’, p. 309, 325.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 325.

²³ Frank O’Gorman and Peter Fraser, ‘Party Politics in the Early Nineteenth Century (1812-1832)’, *English Historical Review*, 102: 402 (Jan., 1987), p. 70; O’Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two Party System*, pp. 116-117.

²⁴ O’Gorman and Fraser, ‘Party Politics in the Early Nineteenth Century’, pp.66-68; D. Beales, ‘Parliamentary Parties and the “Independent” Member, 1810-1860’, in Robert Robson (ed.), *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain* (London, 1967), pp. 14-16. See also H.T Dickinson, ‘The impact of the French Revolution and the French Wars, 1789-1815’ in H.T Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution*, (Basingstoke, 1989), p. 7.

²⁵ O’Gorman and Fraser, ‘Party Politics in the Early Nineteenth Century’, p. 71, 69-70.

in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to have had a direct impact on the structure of parliamentary politics. They endowed Liverpool's administration with a distinct, coherent ideological identity which contemporaries labelled 'Tory'.²⁶ Importantly, they engendered consistent support for Liverpool's administration on the basis of its ideological character, and 'a conscious repudiation of the politics and ideology of the opposition.'²⁷ This study engages with this debate by discerning how far a distinct Tory identity existed, rooted in ideological consensus, in the early nineteenth century. It also investigates the relationship of nineteenth-century Tory identity to ideological developments in the late eighteenth century. In particular, it questions the extent to which old Tory ideas persisted, how far they were renegotiated to suit new political contexts, as well as the relationship between Toryism and the conservative elements of the Whig tradition.

For O'Gorman and Pares, Tory identity in the early nineteenth century emerged from Whig divisions in the 1790s, and was characterised by the ideology articulated in the works of conservative Whigs, particularly Edmund Burke.²⁸ These scholars join a cluster of historians who have conceptualised the emergence of a 'new' Toryism from conservative Whiggery: David Wilkinson also highlights the 'reactionary philosophy' of the conservative Whigs articulated by Burke, alongside the 'financial and administrative expertise of Pitt' as important ideological foundations of nineteenth-century Toryism before turning to Portland's administration in 1807, deemed 'the first in a series of Tory ministries'.²⁹ Harvey has dedicated particular attention to William Pitt's defence of the prerogative; J.E. Cookson emphasised Pitt's authoritarian disposition towards Dissenters' campaigns to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts from 1787.³⁰ Paul Langford, meanwhile, though he notes that the 'conservative consensus' of the 1790s provided 'the essential basis for the nineteenth-century two party system', highlights the American colonial dispute in the 1770s as facilitating two important

²⁶ Ibid., p. 70.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 71.

²⁸ Ibid., pp.69-70. Also see O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two Party System*, p.50; Gregory Claeys, *The French Revolution debate in Britain: the origins of modern politics* (Basingstoke, 2007); John Gascoigne, 'The unity of church and state challenged: responses to Hooker from the restoration to the nineteenth-century age of reform', *Journal of Religious History*, 21 (1997), p. 67.

²⁹ David Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland: Politics and Party in the Age of George III* (Basingstoke, 2003) p. 142.

³⁰ A.D Harvey, *Britain in the Early Nineteenth Century* (London, 1978), pp. 2-4; J. E. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace: anti-war liberalism in England, 1793-1815* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 16.

preconditions for this development: ‘the weakening of the old Whig tradition, and the forming of a new authoritarian viewpoint.’³¹ The American crisis emphasised ideological fractures in the Whig position, facilitating the emergence of an authoritarian disposition amongst Whig ministers with which Old Tories concurred. Indeed, Langford contends that an old Tory tradition lingered amongst the country gentlemen whose loyalties were redirected towards the court, encouraged by the coercive policies adopted by Lord North’s administration towards the American colonists in the 1770s.³² Meanwhile, J.A.W. Gunn, Peter Nockles, Nigel Aston, and James Bradley have highlighted the survival of old Tory ideas in the late eighteenth century, particularly within a High Church context; these scholars have also indicated that there was a convergence between old Tory ideas and those of conservative Whiggery, highlighting attacks on subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and reactions to the revolutions in America and France in particular.³³ However, the focus of most of these studies has been confined to particular crises, limiting their exploration of the relationship between subsequent moments of crisis and reaction, the different ideological strains merged within them, or how this amalgamation related to the development of Tory identity in the nineteenth century. There are, however, two key exceptions which, by examining ideological developments over a prolonged period, resemble the approach of this work: James Sack’s *From Jacobite to Conservative* and J.C.D Clark’s *English Society*. Detailed discussions of the varied historiographical foundations of this thesis are undertaken in the distinct chapters. Consequently, here it will suffice to note only the main areas of overlap and divergence between this thesis and those of Clark and Sack. Both Sack and Clark chart the integration of conservative Whig and old Tory ideas and the emergence of a broad ideological consensus between 1760 and 1832, though they differ regarding how best to label the ideology they depict. Clark’s *English Society* posits the ‘confluence of Whig and Tory positions’ after 1760, suggesting that the

³¹ Langford, ‘Old Whigs, Old Tories, and the American revolution’, p. 106.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.

³³ J.A.W. Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property: the process of self-recognition in eighteenth-century political thought* (Kingston, ON, 1983), pp. 190-191; James Bradley, ‘The Anglican Pulpit, the Social Order, and the Resurgence of Toryism during the American Revolution’, *Albion*, 21:3 (autumn, 1989), pp. 361-388; Peter Nockles, *The Oxford movement in context: Anglican high churchmanship 1760-1857* (Cambridge, 1994); *Idem*, ‘Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833: the “Orthodox”- some problems of definition and identity’ in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor, *The Church of England c.1689-1833: from toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 334-359; Nigel Aston, ‘Horne and Heterodoxy: The defence of Anglican beliefs in the late Enlightenment’, *English Historical Review*, 108:429 (October 1993), pp. 918-919.

ideological consensus which emerged highlighted ‘the conservative aspect of the Whig tradition’ which ‘from 1760 on, absorbed its [Tory] rival.’ Thus, while Clark denies the existence of a ‘Tory’ revival, or a Tory party prior to 1829, as Sack points out, this ‘does not by any means imply that he fails to see a growth in ... right-wing attitudes during the period’.³⁴ Indeed, the convergence of Tories and Whigs under George III, in Clark’s view, was accompanied by renewed emphasis on the monarchical nature of the state, the constitutional importance of the Church of England, and a determination to preserve the orthodox, Christian nature of the polity.³⁵ Meanwhile, Sack adopts the terms ‘right’ and ‘right-wing’, generally, as politically neutral alternatives to Tory and conservative, though he, unlike Clark, is willing to countenance the concept of a Tory revival in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.³⁶

Sack and Clark do, however, concur in many respects, and some of the broad conclusions advanced by this study add to this consensus. For both Sack and Clark, commitment to the preservation of religious orthodoxy and the Church of England forms a fundamental element of the ideological consensus they depict.³⁷ This is a conclusion with which this thesis concurs fully: the defence of orthodox Christianity provided a centripetal force for old Tories and conservative Whigs, churchmen and statesmen, throughout the period 1760-1832. The attacks on subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles in the late 1760s and early 1770s promoted an authoritarian attitude towards rational Christianity which was only strengthened by the atheistic character of the French Revolution, and by the emergence of post-war radicalism. Consequently, convergence between old Tories and conservative Whigs was promoted in a bid to defend the Christian nature of the polity. This encouraged the emergence of a broad Tory identity in the opening decades of the nineteenth century which was characterised by its commitment to the preservation and promotion of orthodox Christianity.

³⁴ James Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain, c. 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 48.

³⁵ J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832: ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancient regime*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 232-318.

³⁶ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative* p. 7, 48. A discussion of the terminology adopted in this study is reserved for the following section. Also see the discussion regarding the terms Tory and Whig, pp. 29-31, and High Church, p. 152.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50, 257; Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed.

In many respects, however, this project seeks to complement and modify the conclusions of these historians. It highlights not only overarching ideological consensus, but also ideological differences and their impact on the development of Tory ideology and identity, which neither Clark nor Sack explore fully. Regarding the nineteenth century, both studies are dominated by what are referred to in this work as ‘Ultra Tory’ viewpoints. Thus both lack coverage, markedly, of Liberal Tory views encompassed within ‘right wing’ or ‘establishment’ ideology. For Sack, this is largely the product of his focus on the ‘right-wing press’, which was increasingly dominated by Ultra perspectives.³⁸ For Clark, meanwhile, the homogeneity of the ‘establishment’ ideology which he presents, and his reluctance to address or explain ideological tensions within it, complements his picture of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century society as an *ancien regime*, as stable in 1828, when repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts initiated a constitutional revolution, as it was in 1760. This thesis complicates the ideological picture which Clark and Sack paint by investigating the impact of ideological tensions and divisions between varied viewpoints on the political right.

While Clark does not completely neglect social and economic change, his vision of England is both patriarchal and aristocratic. Clark dismisses the concept of an eighteenth-century ‘Industrial Revolution’. This concept has been overstated by historians, in his opinion, and Britain remained a largely pre-industrial society. Indeed, Clark claims that, ‘until the political crisis over the Corn Laws in the 1840s there was little sense of an “old society” being threatened... by a new social form whose emblem was manufacturing industry.’³⁹ However, this contention should be treated with caution. Indeed, Joanna Innes, in her constructive critique of Clark, points out that it is teleological to contend, as Clark does, that just because the eighteenth-century economy was not ‘industrial’, it was necessarily ‘pre-industrial’. Rather, Innes draws attention to historiographical consensus that eighteenth century society comprised a mixture of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ elements, with historians differing regarding the balance

³⁸ D.G.S. Simes, “‘The Champions of the Protestant Cause will not lightly abandon it’: the Ultra Tory press and the Wellington administration”, in C.M. Woolgar (ed.), *Wellington Studies IV*, (Southampton, 2008), p. 303.

³⁹ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed. p. 446.

between these elements, and the pace and extent of change.⁴⁰ Chapter two suggests that the debates and conflicts which emerged within Toryism regarding the doctrines and political economy were precisely a product of this intermixture of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ elements: they were debates focused on the pace, extent and means of implementing economic change. Indeed, Bernard Semmel has suggested that the significance accorded to the doctrines of political economy in the late eighteenth century and, in particular, the early nineteenth century, arose precisely because a duel was being fought out between competing societies: ‘the English middle classes, the men of a dynamic capitalism who wished to complete the transformation of Great Britain from an agricultural to an industrial country, and the upholders of the traditional agrarian order.’⁴¹ Semmel’s vision of a clear cut divide between agriculturalists and middle-class industrialists is simplistic: many landowners also had industrial interests, and it was by no means axiomatic that ‘men of dynamic capitalism’ viewed laissez-faire policies as the key to modernisation and improvement.⁴² Nonetheless, Semmel’s concept of competing societies is useful: it was conflict between the view of society as an aristocratic political order upheld by the landed interest and the determination to undertake commercial and industrial expansion and improvement which underpinned Tory divisions regarding the movement towards free trade. Tory divisions regarding economic policy are ignored by Clark. Despite his recognition that the political economist David Ricardo, in particular, contributed expropriation of the landlord to radical discourse, economic debates in the early nineteenth century are overlooked by his study.⁴³

Sack, meanwhile, does acknowledge persistent debate on the ‘right’ regarding the doctrines of political economy. The sympathy of ‘well-placed loyalist politicians’, including Pitt, Burke, and Canning, for the doctrines of laissez-faire, and the disgust of the ‘right-wing’ press towards William Huskisson, the leading parliamentary exponent of these doctrines, are noted.⁴⁴ However, Sack’s study does not incorporate examination of Liberal Tory justifications of these policies, leaving his picture of ‘right-

⁴⁰ Joanna Innes, ‘Jonathan Clark, Social History and England’s “Ancien Regime”’, *Past & Present*, 115 (May, 1987), p. 177.

⁴¹ Bernard Semmel, *The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism Classical Political Economy: the Empire of Free Trade and Imperialism, 1750-1850* (London, 1970), p. 7.

⁴² Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p. 6.

⁴³ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., pp. 499-500.

⁴⁴ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative* p. 182, 184-186.

wing' ideology incomplete. This study examines these justifications in chapter two, particularly their 'Tory', or conservative, nature, arguing that they derived from a determination to stem political discontent and overarching constitutional change.⁴⁵ Consequently, it develops the suggestions of Stephen Lee, Frank Fetter, and Anna Gambles, in particular, that economic debates should be conceived as inextricably linked to wider political and constitutional discussions.⁴⁶ This is a connection which Sack rejects. Instead he erects a dichotomy between constitutional and economic debates which obscures an important element of Tory economic arguments: constitutional preservation.⁴⁷ This thesis suggests that the wider political ramifications of laissez-faire economic policy formed an important element of Tory divisions in the nineteenth century, and that differences regarding economic policy contributed both to Tory splits, particularly in 1829 and 1830, and, through them, the consolidation of Tory identity.

Moreover, this study adds complexity to the debates regarding the religious element of the constitution outlined by Clark and Sack. Beneath broad concurrence regarding the importance of preserving orthodox Christianity and the establishment of the Church of England, this project highlights important ideological differences. James Sack, though he acknowledges the problematical relationship between the right and Evangelicalism, dedicates little attention, surprisingly, to rational Christianity, particularly its role in the revival of High Churchmanship and the promotion of consensus regarding the need to defend Christian orthodoxy. Sack also omits close analysis of the ideological spectrum between old Tories and conservative Whigs, churchmen and statesmen, which the problem of Protestant pluralism evoked in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Meanwhile, Clark presents a largely homogeneous establishment ideology which asserted the importance of the Church of England, secured Anglican hegemony, and maintained Britain as a confessional state until, in 1828 and 1829, its constitutional bulwarks were dismantled, almost needlessly, by Peel and Wellington. Yet Clark's view obscures the wider intellectual climate in which religious pluralism was debated. Modifying Clark's thesis, Robert Hole assigns greater emphasis to the change from

⁴⁵ See below pp. 111-128.

⁴⁶ F. Fetter, 'Economic Controversy in the British Reviews, 1802-1850', *Economica*, New Series, 32 (1965), p. 430; Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p. 151; Anna Gambles, *Protection and Politics: Conservative Economic Discourse, 1815-1852* (London, 1999).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

arguments rooted in political obligation to those focused on social control in the 1790s. The ‘transition from a political philosophy of obligation to a social theory of restraint in which all Christians shared’, in Hole’s view, undermined the intellectual foundations of Anglican hegemony.⁴⁸ Moreover, this development, in Hole’s perspective, ensured that between 1828 and 1832, ‘the arguments employed in parliament in the debates on Repeal, Emancipation and Reform were not, in general, either arguments of basic principles and rights, or religious arguments. They were, rather, secular and pragmatic.’⁴⁹ This vision sits uneasily next to Clark’s emphasis on the intellectual strength of Anglican hegemony, and Clark’s rebuff of Hole’s thesis, which asserts, with little elaboration, that Hole’s evidence is not persuasive, avoids constructive debate.⁵⁰

This thesis adopts a middle course between Clark’s confessional state and Hole’s emphasis on the secularisation of argument and the importance of pragmatism in parliamentary debates. It contends that, within ‘establishment’ ideology, differences persisted between old Tories and conservative Whigs, churchmen and statesmen. These differences, although present in the late eighteenth century, were obscured by consensus, particularly in the context of the French Revolution. However, changing political and religious circumstances in the early nineteenth century, both domestically and abroad, promoted disagreements. In relation to Protestant pluralism, the proliferation of evangelicalism, in particular, exacerbated differences regarding the nature and authority of the Church of England, the principle of toleration, and the weighting given to political expediency. These fissures contributed significantly to the development of a Tory identity committed not simply to Christian, but Anglican orthodoxy, and the preservation of Anglican hegemony in a legislative and educational capacity.

Nowhere were Tory divisions clearer, though, than in discussions of Catholic emancipation. This thesis concurs with both Clark and Sack that anti-Catholicism

⁴⁸ Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 268-269.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

⁵⁰ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., p. 239 n. 16.

emerged as the distinctive characteristic of Toryism from the splits of 1827 and 1829.⁵¹ Yet this project adds depth to the ideological picture painted by these scholars by examining the arguments of both pro- and anti-Catholic Tories. In this respect, it diverges from both Clark and Sack whose focus rests almost entirely on the perspective of anti-Catholic Ultra Tories. By considering both pro- and anti-Catholic Tories, this thesis reveals similarities, the crux of ideological differences regarding Emancipation, and the wider ideological climate in which Emancipation was passed. Indeed, it is an important contention of this study that Emancipation was not a shot out of the blue, nor an unnecessary ‘betrayal’ by Peel and Wellington, as Clark contends. Rather, the behaviour of these politicians, when conceptualised in relation to long running debates on the Catholic question among Tories, appear necessary in the context of Irish unrest, consistent with the pragmatic perspective adopted by conservative Whig statesmen towards Anglican hegemony throughout the late eighteenth century, and concordant with the broader ideological climate in the early nineteenth century.

Methodology and Sources

This study charts the development of Tory ideological identity by analysing both ideological consensus and ideological differences. It adopts a conceptualisation of identity similar to that proposed by Stuart Hall in his *Questions of Cultural Identity* which it is necessary to quote at length. Hall suggests that

Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being.⁵²

While Hall is referring, specifically, to cultural identities, his definition can be used to conceptualise political identities too. Toryism certainly invoked a specific historic meaning, related to the dynastic and religious conflicts of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Yet, this thesis posits that Tory identity was not fixed or confined

⁵¹ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 217-252; Clark, ‘A General Theory of Party’, p. 314. Also see Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p.173; Simes, ‘A long and difficult association’, p. 63.

⁵² Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London, 1996), p. 4.

to this historic meaning. Rather, Toryism underwent a complex process of renegotiation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the integration and divergence of varied ideological strands performing a key role in this evolution. As Hall continues,

identities are never unified...never singular but multiply constructed
across different often antagonistic discourses, practices and positions.
They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the
process of change and transformation....⁵³

The broad Tory identity which emerged after 1812 was far from unified, but comprised a spectrum of ‘different [,] often antagonistic discourses’, on issues ranging from the legislative status of Protestant and Catholic Nonconformists to economic policy. Many of these different discourses had found points of overarching consensus in moments of acute political crisis, such as the French Revolution. However, they also diverged when faced with new political circumstances, such as Britain’s union with Ireland. Importantly, this thesis posits that the differences which underlay the broad, loose ‘Tory’ consensus, which emerged under Lord Liverpool, contributed to the refinement and consolidation of Tory identity. As Hall proceeds to note in his conceptualisation of non-essential, non-unified cultural identities:

Above all, and directly contrary to the form in which they are
constantly invoked, identities are constructed through, not outside,
difference....it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation
to what it is not...that the ‘positive’ meaning of any term— and thus
its ‘identity’— can be constructed.⁵⁴

Throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it was the recognition and articulation of difference, particularly in the nineteenth century, which facilitated the development of the refined, coherent Tory identity which emerged after 1830. In short, only through the exacerbation of ideological fissures, which culminated in the divisions in 1827 and 1829, were the key characteristics of Tory identity polished and distinguished.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

This thesis will attempt to pick apart the various ideological strands which contributed towards the development of Tory identity, highlighting where they converged and diverged. To do so, it concentrates on the political language used by a variety of published sources, that is, the public political discourse articulated both within and outside parliament. By focusing on the public political discourse which underpinned the development of Toryism, this project emulates the approach to understanding political movements adopted by Gareth Stedman Jones in his important essay, 'Rethinking Chartism'. Here, Stedman Jones avoided collapsing Chartism 'into questions of its assumed substance', freeing language and politics from 'a priori social inferences...to establish a far closer and more precise relationship between ideology and activity.' The language in which Chartism was expressed, Stedman Jones argued, was inextricably linked to its form. Chartism was a political movement, and a political movement 'is not simply a manifestation of distress and pain'. Rather, 'its existence is distinguished by a shared conviction articulating a political solution to distress and a political diagnosis of its causes.'⁵⁵ Adopting a similar approach, this project examines the political language of various political actors and publications on the right in a bid to establish how far shared political diagnoses and shared political solutions existed, how far differences persisted, and the role of both in the development of Tory identity.

On a broader level, this thesis concurs with the works of Quentin Skinner, Herbert Butterfield, and historians who have amalgamated the approaches of these two scholars, particularly H.T. Dickinson, regarding the importance of political ideas to explanations of political behaviour in general.⁵⁶ All challenge Sir Lewis Namier's contention that political principles are advanced only *ex post facto* to invest political behaviour with an 'appearance of logic and rationality' and therefore do not require attention in the explanation of political actions.⁵⁷ All note that political arguments, in some, though not all cases, can articulate the genuine motives behind political action and should not be

⁵⁵ Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Re-thinking Chartism', in *Languages of Class: studies in English working class history, 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 95-96.

⁵⁶ H.T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1977), p. 2.

⁵⁷ Lewis Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (London, 1930), p.147; Quentin Skinner, 'Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action', *Political Theory*, 2:3 (Aug., 1974), pp. 291-292.

dismissed outright.⁵⁸ Moreover, even if Namier's premise is accepted, and political arguments are articulated by some political actors merely as an attempt, *ex post facto*, to invest political actions with the appearance of rationality, this is still no reason to dismiss the study of these arguments. Indeed, Skinner has highlighted that political actors can only maintain forms of political behaviour which they are able to justify and, for this reason, even if political principles do not constitute the primary motivation of political action, they are capable of influencing it.⁵⁹ H.T Dickinson elaborates on this point: politicians must 'be able to describe and evaluate their apparently selfish and untoward actions by using ideas and terms which are acceptable and approved by others.' Consequently, as Skinner points out, the range of political actions open to political agents were 'limited by the range of recognized political principles which they could plausibly hope to suggest as favourable descriptions (and thus as justifications) for their actions.'⁶⁰ In this respect, the political rhetoric selected to legitimate political action reveals both how political agents and their contemporaries viewed particular political ideas and forms of behaviours; which they endorsed, which they rejected, and which they sought to accommodate.⁶¹ By examining the terms selected by political actors, this study discerns how far old Tory ideas continued to be considered plausible legitimisations, and in what ways they were renegotiated to suit new political contexts. Moreover, by studying the political terms selected by political actors to alter or to reaffirm existent paradigms of acceptable political behaviour, this work analyses how far ideological consensus existed between old Toryism and conservative Whiggery, as well as the basis and extent of persistent ideological differences.

This thesis is primarily concerned with ideas circulated in the public domain. While manuscript sources offer an authentic insight into the genuine thoughts of political actors, it was in published materials that political arguments were developed at greatest length and with most substance. The prose presented in periodical reviews, pamphlets, sermons, charges and parliamentary speeches, because it was intended for public

⁵⁸ Herbert Butterfield, *George III and the historians* (London, 1988), p.222; Skinner, 'Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action', p. 290.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁶⁰ Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, pp.3-4; Quentin Skinner, 'The principles and practice of opposition: the case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole', in N. McKendrick (ed.), *Historical Perspectives: studies in English thought and society in honour of J.H. Plumb*, (London, 1974), pp. 127-8.

⁶¹ Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, p. 4.

consumption, offered polished arguments designed to re-affirm or alter the parameters of legitimate political behaviour. In this respect, published political discourse was used to set the limits of acceptable political action. The high volume of published materials, and the word constraint of a thesis, required effective sampling of these primary sources. This thesis dedicates particular attention to the publications of individuals who provided archetypal examples of conservative Whiggery, old Toryism, Liberal Toryism, Ultra Toryism, and High Churchmanship, the definitions for which are provided below. It also focuses on individuals who cut across these different categories and therefore highlight the complexity and difficulty of categorisation itself. The selection of particular individuals will be justified in each chapter, and the relationship of their ideas to the categories noted here forms an element of the argument in each chapter. In addition to the pamphlets, sermons, charges and parliamentary speeches of individuals, this thesis draws heavily from four leading periodical reviews: the *British Critic* (1793-1843), the *Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine* (1798-1821), the *Quarterly Review* (1809-1967) and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1817-1902).

By the nineteenth century, monthly and quarterly periodical reviews and magazines dominated extra-parliamentary political debate. Unlike newspapers, reviews and magazines provided their writers with the time and word lengths to develop substantial reflections on political events: a writer in a periodical could outline alternative views on an issue, carefully constructing the opposing perspective before critiquing it in depth; he could draw on precedents, cite established authorities in detail and elaborate arguments or evidence which supported his case. A writer in a periodical could also use a series to develop his argument over several issues.⁶² Reviewing a range of literature, discussing a variety of topics, and publishing with relative regularity, reviews and magazines commanded a larger print run than pamphlets. Nicholson estimates a standard first print run for pamphlets in the late eighteenth century of approximately 500 copies, with subsequent editions of controversial works reaching circulations of between 1500-5000.⁶³ As reviews were not subject to the stamp tax, it is difficult to establish precise circulation

⁶² M. Milne, *The Politics of Blackwood's 1817-1846: A study of the political, economic and social articles in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, and of selected contributors*. (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, 1984) pp. 404-405.

⁶³ E. Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators: The Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth-Century England', *History*, 81:261, (1996), p. 11.

figures, yet Morris Milne estimates that, during the period 1817-1846, *Blackwood's* had an average monthly print run of approximately 6000-7500; the *Quarterly* of approximately 9,200. These figures have been corroborated by Gambles, Bennet and Shattock, and indicate the importance of reviews and magazines as a medium of extra-parliamentary discussion.⁶⁴

The periodical reviews used in this thesis were explicitly partisan and, in conjunction, enable examination of a spectrum of Tory ideas on a variety of issues, rendering them indispensable as a source material. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* and the *British Critic* emerged in the highly charged atmosphere of the 1790s and both adopted a discourse levelled against political and religious reform.⁶⁵ The *British Critic* was published by the High-Church, Tory brothers Francis and Charles Rivington and was financed, in part, by secret service funds.⁶⁶ Initially the product of the High-Church 'Society for the Reformation of Principles', established by reverend William Jones of Nayland in 1792, the *British Critic* was purchased in 1811 by Joshua Watson and Henry Norris, key members of the Hackney Phalanx.⁶⁷ The *Anti-Jacobin Review* emerged under the editorship of the staunchly pro-ministerial John Richards Green, otherwise known as John Gifford. A common denominator among several of its writers was government patronage in the form of pensions, civil service posts, or Secret Service subsidies. Beneficiaries included the clergyman Jonathan Boucher, who received an annual pension of £100, and the barrister John Bowles who enjoyed subsidies from the Treasury.⁶⁸ Clergymen dominated its list of contributors, comprising over half of the

⁶⁴ M. Milne, *The Politics of Blackwood's, 1817-1846*, pp. 33-35; Anna Gambles, *Protection and Politics: Conservative Economic Discourse, 1815-1852* (London, 1999) p.12; S. Bennet, 'Revolutions in thought: serial publication and the mass market for reading' in J. Shattock and M. Wolff (eds.), *The Victorian periodical press: samplings and soundings* (Leicester 1982) pp. 225-57; J. Shattock, *Politics and Reviewers, the Edinburgh and the Quarterly in the Early Victorian Age* (Leicester 1989) pp. 11-12.

⁶⁵ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 18.

⁶⁶ Emily Lorraine de Montluzin, 'Attributions of Authorship in the "British Critic" During the Editorial Regime of Robert Nares, 1793-1813', *Studies in Bibliography*, 51 (1998), p. 242.

⁶⁷ E. A. Varley, *The Last of the Prince Bishops: William Van Mildert and the High Church Movement in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1992) p.48. On the Hackney Phalanx, an influential group of High Churchmen living in Hackney, see Mark Smith, 'Hackney Phalanx (act.1800-1830)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, online edn., Jan 2008, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/theme/52465>, accessed 24 March 2016]

⁶⁸ E. L. Montluzin, *The Anti-Jacobins, 1798-1800: the Early Contributors to the Anti-Jacobin Review*, (Basingstoke, 1988) p. 33, 68 n.2.

Anti-Jacobin's writers.⁶⁹ Indeed, as the nineteenth century progressed, both publications were increasingly High Church in outlook: the *Anti-Jacobin Review* became the *Anti-Jacobin Review and True Churchman's Magazine* while, in 1824, *The British Critic* merged with the *Quarterly Theological Review*.⁷⁰

The *Quarterly Review* was launched in 1809, essentially as a response to the Whig-orientated *Edinburgh Review* established in 1802: it was, as Jonathan Cutmore notes, 'lock, stock and barrel a political engine... driven first and foremost by concerns about politics and politicians'.⁷¹ Established by a consortium of political and literary men, including the notable Liberal Tory, George Canning, the *Quarterly Review* was published by John Murray and edited by the highly interventionist William Gifford.⁷² Its contributors included prominent politicians such as Canning, his Liberal-Tory companion William Huskisson, the Second Secretary to the Admiralty, John Barrow, the Tory writer, MP and Barrow's superior at the Admiralty, John Wilson Croker, as well as literary talents like Robert Southey. In addition to the talent of its writers, the *Quarterly's* success hinged on its prestigious reputation, a reputation gained, in part, by the access which it acquired to privileged information from government figures and senior members of the civil service. Yet, despite its connections to the government, the *Quarterly* supported Tory administrations only inconsistently.⁷³ The review often adopted an ambiguous stance on issues of conflict amongst Tories, such as the debate regarding the Corn Laws or Catholic Emancipation, with its pages containing varied right-wing views.⁷⁴ Its wavering was largely the product of its links with the pro-Catholic, Liberal Tory Canning, and persistent tensions between Murray and Gifford.⁷⁵

The final publication utilised by this study, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, was established in 1817. Despite its Scottish roots, *Blackwood's* reached a national audience

⁶⁹ Clergymen were the largest single group of contributors, comprising 37 in total, over half of the *Anti-Jacobin's* contributors. Ibid., p. 30.

⁷⁰ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 19.

⁷¹ J. Cutmore, *Contributors to the Quarterly Review: a history, 1809-25* (London, 2008), p.23.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 5- 21.

⁷³ J. Cutmore, 'Introduction' in J. Cutmore (ed.), *Conservatism and the Quarterly Review: a critical analysis* (London, 2007) pp. 4-9, Idem., *Contributors to the Quarterly Review*, pp. 63-79.

⁷⁴ See below p. 101, 253; Cutmore, 'Introduction', pp. 4-8.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

and, by 1820, it claimed to have the largest circulation of any periodical in Britain.⁷⁶ Its tone has been described by Milne as ‘confident to the point of arrogance, partisan to the point of bellicosity, personal to the point of defamation, and witty to the point of hilarity’, characteristics which contrasted the solemn and sober tone of the *Quarterly*.⁷⁷ *Blackwood’s* also lacked the disdain towards orthodox, non-Anglican denominations present in the High-Church, right-wing reviews, perhaps because it was based in Scotland, where Presbyterianism, not Episcopalianism, was the established religion. Nonetheless, it was staunchly anti-Catholic, increasingly Protectionist, and conservative on parliamentary reform with its chief political writer, David Robinson, espousing a vitriolic brand of Ultra-Toryism. The views articulated within it were certainly considered important strains of right-wing political discourse by political actors, with copies regularly sent to Liverpool, Sidmouth and Canning. Wellington also ordered a full set when he became Prime Minister in 1828.⁷⁸ As Anna Gambles has noted, these political connections, like those identified in relation to the other reviews, demonstrate that the periodical press was viewed by contemporary political actors as ‘an influential and integral participant in a partisan political world’.⁷⁹ Consequently, periodicals are an indispensable source for delineating the development of political discourse in the early-nineteenth century, for not only did they dominate extra-parliamentary discussion, they were also valued by and connected to political actors within parliament.

Terminology

Terminology presents a significant difficulty in any discussion of high politics in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. There were a small number of figures who continued to openly identify as Tories in George III’s reign. Meanwhile, others who had previously been associated with the old Tory party were reluctant to perpetuate this distinction. Nonetheless, those figures who identified self-consciously as Tories, derived from an old Tory party lineage, or persistently used old Tory ideas, will be labelled as ‘old Tories’ by this thesis. What constituted ‘old Tory’ ideas will be justified in the distinct chapters. Appropriation of the label ‘Whig’ was more common in the late

⁷⁶ *BEM*, 8, (Oct, 1820) pp. 80-81.

⁷⁷ M. Milne, ‘The “veiled editor” unveiled: William Blackwood and his magazine, *Publishing History*, 16 (1984), p. 92.

⁷⁸ Milne, ‘The “veiled editor” unveiled’, p. 101.

⁷⁹ Gambles, *The Politics of Protection*, p. 16.

eighteenth century. Indeed, William Pitt noted, in 1779, that the label of Whig was ‘hardly a distinction, as everyone alike pretends to it’.⁸⁰ However, the American and French Revolutions, domestic radicalism and persistent attempts to alter the religious basis of the constitution fractured the Whig tradition. This facilitated the emergence of ‘conservative Whig’ dispositions which, this thesis suggests, converged with old Toryism in certain respects. This convergence promoted the development of a new, broad Tory ideology in the nineteenth century which comprised elements of both ideological traditions. The label of ‘conservative Whig’, whether applied to individuals or to ideas, will be justified in the text.

After 1812, as broad party alignments re-emerged, the term Tory will be used, often qualified by the terms ‘Liberal’, ‘Ultra’ or ‘High Church’. The negative, historical connotations associated with Toryism, specifically its association with the defence of Stuart absolutism and supposed sympathy for Catholicism, ensured persistent reluctance amongst some right-wing protagonists to self-consciously appropriate it as a label. Lord Eldon and the Duke of Newcastle, two archetypal Ultra Tories, preferred the term Whig given their commitment to the Protestant cause and the association between Toryism and Jacobitism.⁸¹ Some historians have also rejected the term. Clark repudiates use of the term ‘Tory’ prior to 1830. While acknowledging, like O’Gorman, that contemporaries adopted the term ‘Tory’, ‘especially after 1815’, Clark claims this was ‘partly for the convenience of having a term opposite to “whig”’. The term Tory had ‘lost its detailed and specific implications’ of adherence to Stuart absolutism by the late eighteenth century, becoming ‘an empty category, for new meanings to be read into’. This occurred only in the years 1827-1832 when high-political crises over Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform ‘created both a tory party and the need among the politicians *and* public to apply to it a party name’.⁸² This thesis does not agree with Clark’s conclusion. Rather, it adopts the perspective of Stephen Lee that what ‘happened in 1827 ... was not the sudden re-emergence of words like “Tory”’, but that ‘words like “Tory” [gained] a more precise meaning’.⁸³ It is a central contention of this

⁸⁰ Pitt to Westmoreland, 26 July 1779, quoted in William Hague, *William Pitt the Younger* (London, 2004), p. 37.

⁸¹ Hilton, *A mad, bad, and Dangerous People?* p. 196.

⁸² Clark, ‘A General Theory of Party’, p. 314.

⁸³ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p. 173.

thesis that the nature of Tory identity was under development throughout the period 1760-1832. The revival and broad application of the 'Tory' label, particularly in the nineteenth century, should be viewed as part of this development. The term was not devoid of meaning and used merely as a contradistinction from Whig, as Clark suggests; its meaning was being renegotiated and refined, reflecting the process underway in Tory identity more broadly.⁸⁴ This process will receive comment throughout the text below.

⁸⁴ Lee makes a similar suggestion. See *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Part One: The Constitution in the State

Chapter One: The Crown, Parliament, and the People.

Old Tory ideology emerged following the Exclusion Bill crisis in 1679. Expounded most famously by Robert Filmer in his *Patriarcha* (1680), the doctrine of divine right projected a patriarchal understanding of the origin of government derived from the divine institution of Adam over Eve and was used to support an interpretation of political authority which located arbitrary, absolute, and unlimited power in the monarch alone.⁸⁵ The monarch might wish to consult advisors or parliament before making laws, yet it was not necessary for him to do so and the king's authority could not be challenged by parliament or the will of the people.⁸⁶ Indefeasible hereditary succession provided the means through which the right to exercise this absolute authority was transmitted; it maintained a clear and inviolable line of rule instituted by God and descended through Adam. The indefeasible hereditary right of a king was the distinguishing mark that his authority was legitimate for it demonstrated he was God's anointed. Recognising the monarch's divine institution was integral for maintaining passive obedience and non-resistance amongst subjects and, consequently, ensuring order within society; whatever action the king engaged in was irresistible and to oppose him was to sin; the responsibility to judge and punish his transgressions rested only with God, by whom he had been appointed.⁸⁷

These four components, comprising the divine, patriarchal origin of political society, indefeasible hereditary succession, passive obedience and non-resistance, when used individually, will hereafter be referred to as old Tory ideas; if used in conjunction, they will be referred to as the 'ideology of divine right'. Where Tory 'idioms' are referred to in this chapter, this denotes the use of phraseology from which an old Tory idea could be inferred, but where this idea is not explicitly stated or renounced. An example of a Tory idiom includes reference to the king as God's 'vice-regent' without an accompanying statement or renunciation of patriarchalism or indefeasible hereditary

⁸⁵ For Filmer's argument see R. Filmer, *Patriarcha and other Political Works of Sir Robert Filmer*, ed. Peter Laslett (Oxford, 1949).

⁸⁶ H.T. Dickinson, 'The Eighteenth-Century Debate on the Sovereignty of Parliament', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 26 (December, 1976), p. 191

⁸⁷ The best outline of this ideology is provided by H.T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1977), pp. 13-57.

succession. ‘Tory idioms’ are also unaccompanied by an explicit renunciation that Tory ideas could, or should, be inferred. Where particular Tory ideas have been explicitly renounced or renegotiated this will be discussed in the text.

The Glorious Revolution posed a fundamental challenge to the ideology of divine right. The settlement of the crown on William and Mary, at best, signified a deviation in the principle of hereditary succession which called the legitimacy of the new rulers into question, thereby jeopardising the concept that subjects should submit to their authority. The transition of the crown to the Hanoverian dynasty, in 1714, undermined the indefeasible, hereditary element of divine right ideology once again and encouraged Tories who maintained all four components towards Jacobitism. In Jacobite ideology, it was the indefeasible hereditary nature of regal authority which demanded non-resistance and passive obedience on behalf of subjects because it ensured the legitimate right to wield authority. Where a monarch derived his title from an alternative foundation, passive obedience was owed only to the king who held a legitimate, hereditary claim and subjects’ duty transformed into resistance against the monarch who ruled illegitimately. Consequently, the Jacobite uprisings in 1715 and 1745 were justified by commitment to indefeasible hereditary right as the integral component in the ideology of divine right.⁸⁸

The ideology of divine right became increasingly controversial under the rule of George I and George II, engendering suspicion regarding the commitment of Tories to the Hanoverian regime. However, the accession of George III, the first unequivocally Anglican monarch of the Hanoverian dynasty, and the birth of a reign which would witness relatively sustained periods of political crisis, provided a climate for the renegotiation of Tory identity.⁸⁹ The period witnessed the resumption and development of Lockean notions of natural rights in arguments aimed at legitimising the concept of

⁸⁸ F.J. McLynn, ‘The Ideology of Jacobitism on the Eve of the Rising of 1745- Part 1’, *History of European Ideas*, 6:1 (1985), p. 10.

⁸⁹ J.A.W. Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property: the process of self-recognition in eighteenth-century political thought* (Kingston. ON, 1983), p. 168. As Gunn proceeds to note, this revival was essentially reactionary: ‘The same factors that account for the incorrect impression that Filmer had long ceased to be relevant also apply to the status of Locke. He had become an authority for the dominant political assumptions without subjection of his views on the origins of political authority to much scrutiny’. The progress of the American rebellion thrust these ideas back into the spotlight. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

popular sovereignty; revived focus upon the meaning of the Glorious Revolution, which presented an undeniably awkward precedent of popular political intermediation in an age of revolutions; moments of profound instability spawned by economic depression and mounting pressure for a more representative House of Commons. These threats to the established constitution also encouraged emphasis on the conservative elements of the Whig tradition. Conservative Whiggery considered regal limitation to have been instituted by the Glorious Revolution, without adopting the radical inference of elective monarchy and a legitimate right to sporadic popular political intermediation. Central to this chapter is the relationship between conservative Whig and old Tory ideology, as are the ways in which the ideas underpinning both were renegotiated to suit a new political climate, and the extent to which they were integrated to form the basis of a new Tory identity, distinct from Opposition Whiggery.

The Roots of Opposition Whiggery and Tory revival

Notions of an abuse of regal power and a desire to protect liberty from the powers of an overbearing executive informed a gradually cohering Opposition Whig identity. This identity was articulated in renowned works such as Burke's *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontent* (1770) and, in the nineteenth century, by Henry Brougham's controversial 'State of Parties' (1818), published in *The Edinburgh Review*.⁹⁰ It was in terms of a Whig tradition, struggling against a perceived revival of arbitrary power, that opposition was legitimised. Solutions to political grievances were frequently framed through Whig principles, even during the turbulent years which accompanied the French Revolution and domestic, Pittite repression, much to the Foxites' disadvantage.⁹¹ Even after George III's death, in 1820, the Opposition Whig tradition continued to adhere to these general terms of political determination: Lord John

⁹⁰ Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontent* (London, 1770); for Brougham's article see *The Edinburgh Review*, 30: 59, (June, 1818) pp. 181-206.

⁹¹ Frank O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two Party System 1760-1832* (London, 1982), pp. 3-44. Also, for a brief overview see John Prest, 'Between Crown and People: Whig politics in the Age of Fox and Grey', *Historical Journal*, 37:3 (Sep., 1994), pp. 705-708. This review article highlights the persistence of 'a Foxite tradition in politics' which remained focused on the power and influence of the crown. Prest criticises modern scholars for underestimating 'the extent to which the influence of the crown was one of the hardest of the hard facts of contemporary politics' rather than a 'tarnished legacy from the past... which diverted the opposition from facing the hard facts of contemporary politics'.

Russell, following the termination of George III's reign, focused on the advancements of an authoritarian political state facilitated by the increasing power of the crown:

We have seen...that the influence of the Crown has increased to an alarming extent, and that the recurrence of periods of popular ferment, instead of checking this influence as it was wont to do in old times is made the occasion of passing new laws, clipping away something every time from the established liberties of the nation.⁹²

Thus even against the backdrop of popular discontent it was the Crown, not the people, which Whigs contended posed the primary constitutional danger. This provided a clear distinction between Opposition Whiggery and the rhetoric which underpinned cohering Tory identity.

Given the relatively persistent Opposition Whig anxiety regarding executive encroachment on Parliament, and on the liberties of subjects generally, J.C.D. Clark suggests that 'the central thread running through political conflicts from the reign of George III to that of William IV was not (as had been the case from William III to George II) the nature of the dynastic title, but the exercise of the royal prerogative.'⁹³ Indeed, controversy in relation to the prerogative was introduced by George III personally. This controversy was reflected in the varied discussions in historiography dedicated to the question of George III's exertion of regal authority, from the tyrannical ambitions of a monarch determined to subvert the constitutional role of parliament portrayed by Thomas Erskine May and the other Whig historians of the Victorian era, to the understanding of a continuity in constitutional practice between George III and the first two Hanoverian monarchs emphasised by Sir Lewis Namier.⁹⁴ Thanks to

⁹² John Russell, *An Essay on the History of English Government and Constitution, from the Reign of Henry VIII to the present time* (London, 1821), quoted in J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832: ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien regime*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, 2000), p. 253.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

⁹⁴ Thomas Erskine May, *The Constitutional History of England since the Accession of George the Third, 1760-1860*, 2 vols. (London, 1861-1863). For Lewis Namier's perspective on George III see 'King George III: a study in personality', *History Today*, 3:9 (1953), pp. 610-621 and *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, 2nd ed., (London, 1957). For an overview of historiography on George III see E.A. Reitan, *George III: Tyrant or Constitutional Monarch?* (Boston, 1964).

Namier's intricate research the former perspective has found little credence amongst modern scholars: George III was not a tyrant dedicated to subverting the role of parliament; nor is there evidence of a secret plot being exercised 'behind the curtain' to cultivate an executive power excused from responsibility. Namier's work, though, does not tell the whole story, premised, as it is, upon a denial of the importance of political ideas. The case of whether or not the reign of George III actually experienced a concentrated effort to increase the royal prerogative might have been closed, yet the reality of George's ambitions are to some extent irrelevant next to the rather obvious propagation of this idea in wider political discourse of the period.

As Bradley notes astutely, 'politics has as much to do with the perception of reality, indeed, often more, than reality itself; what people thought was happening influenced both their attitudes and their behaviours and these were shaped above all by sermons, pamphlets, and newspapers'.⁹⁵ Amongst scholars examining these materials there has been the emergence of a subtle sympathy for the Whig 'myth' of a revived Toryism in the early decades of the new King's reign. For Margaret Avery, despite the denial of a new Toryism advanced by scholars, such as Christie, who have continued to present sophisticated studies of individual realignments in Westminster,

[the] awkward fact remains that many contemporaries thought this to be the case...and even a fairly cursory examination of government propaganda makes it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ministries of the 1760s and 1770s presented a strongly Tory image to the reading public.⁹⁶

J.A.W. Gunn too, in his study of High-Church political tracts concludes that 'Exaggerated claims by displaced Whig politicians that there was a Tory revival at the accession of George III were perhaps not without foundation'.⁹⁷ Even J.C.D Clark,

⁹⁵ James Bradley, 'The Anglican Pulpit, the Social Order, and the Resurgence of Toryism during the American Revolution', *Albion*, 21:3 (autumn, 1989), p. 382.

⁹⁶ Margaret Avery, 'Toryism in the age of the American Revolution: John Lind and John Shebbeare', *Historical Studies*, 18:70 (1978), pp. 24-25. For Christie's argument see I. R. Christie, 'Party in politics in the age of Lord North administration', *Parliamentary History*, 6 (1987), pp. 47-68.

⁹⁷ Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property*, p. 168.

while he insists that the ‘mainstream defence of George III cannot be called a “High Tory” one’, but rather involved a highlighting of the conservative elements of the Whig tradition, acknowledges that ‘some elements of early eighteenth-century Toryism had indeed flowed into that channel in the 1760s’.⁹⁸ Consequently, the ‘case for the State by 1800’ comprised ‘Whig theory ...adapted to a new political situation by an integration with the doctrines of its opponents’.⁹⁹ The research of Gunn and Clark provides a fundamental basis for this chapter. It seeks to elaborate, and, in some respects, challenge their work by examining which old Tory doctrines were preserved, how far they were integrated with conservative Whiggery and, importantly, and on what grounds this integrated ideology facilitated the development of a new Tory identity.

Perhaps the most important discussion of a Tory revival comes from James Sack in his comprehensive *From Jacobite to Conservative*. Like Avery, Sack acknowledges the futility of trying to identify continuity in parliamentary alignments, accepting the analysis offered by Christie and dismissing the thesis of B.W. Hill that a relatively stable two-party alignment persisted from 1760 to 1832.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, Sack proposes that ‘if Hill’s discussion regarding the survival of the Tory party after 1760 had been translated from the mundane arena of Westminster...to the more sublime world of ideological and theoretical considerations...he might have had a stronger case’.¹⁰¹ Subsequently, Sack provides an investigation of the patronage network associated with Bute, Jenkinson and Mansfield, that is, those with a Tory legacy and those likely to be tarred with the Tory brush by disgruntled Whigs.¹⁰² The list provides a stepping stone into a nexus of some of the most infamous names associated with reactionary ideology in the latter half of the eighteenth century, including the staunch royalist George Horne,¹⁰³ his fellow Hutchinsonian William Jones of Nayland,¹⁰⁴ and

⁹⁸ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., p. 301.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁰⁰ James Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain, c. 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 48, 76; B.W. Hill, *British parliamentary parties, 1742-1832: from the fall of Walpole to the first Reform Act* (London, 1985), preface.

¹⁰¹ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 48.

¹⁰² Bute was George III’s controversial first minister who was widely suspected by contemporaries as harbouring designs for regal expansion; Jenkinson was from ‘an old Tory Oxfordshire family’ and was denigrated by Horace Walpole for his subservience to the monarch while Mansfield was an ex-Jacobite. *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

¹⁰³ George Horne (1730–1792) was a High Churchman, intellectual follower of John Hutchinson, and was also strongly influenced by the writings of Nonjurors, particularly Chares Leslie. Ordained in 1753 by the Bishop of Oxford, Horne served as chaplain in ordinary to George III from 1771 to 1781. He also

the barrister John Reeves.¹⁰⁵ Horne was the cousin of William Stevens who was treasurer of Queen Anne's Bounty, editor to William Jones, with whom he instigated organisations including the 'Society for the Reformation of Principles' (1792). This society, in turn, inspired the creation of the High-Church periodical, the *British Critic* (1793), and facilitated subsequent publications of *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of Infidelity, Enthusiasm, and Disloyalty*, a collection of High-Church, Tory tracts, originally issued in 1780. Stevens also chaired the longer lived 'Club of Nobody's Friends' (1800- present).¹⁰⁶ His companions included Jonathan Boucher, a returned American Loyalist with a reactionary disposition, John Bowles whose literary efforts against revolutionary France earned him a place on the Treasury payroll, and the 'arch-Tory' James Richards Green, editor of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, to which Stevens, Jones, Reeves, Boucher and Bowles all contributed, alongside a host of other reactionaries.¹⁰⁷ Though Sack's predominant focus on the newspaper and periodical press limits detailed examination of the writings of many of these figures he is, nonetheless, astute when he identifies in the political thought they propagated 'something beyond Court or high-Whiggery, something leading to the creation of a new

held the vice-chancellorship of the University of Oxford from 1776 until 1780 and was promoted to the bishopric at Norwich in 1790. See Nigel Aston, 'Horne, George (1730–1792)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/13789>, accessed 24 Sept 2015].

¹⁰⁴ William Jones (1726–1800) matriculated at the University of Oxford, befriending both George Horne and Charles Jenkinson, later first earl of Liverpool. With the former he shared favour for Hutchinson's writings and those of prominent Nonjurors. He became perpetual curate of Nayland, Suffolk, in 1777, and later served as Chaplain to George Horne following his promotion to the see at Norwich. See G. M. Ditchfield, 'Jones, William (1726–1800)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/15106>, accessed 24 Sept 2015].

¹⁰⁵ John Reeves, (1752–1829) was called to the bar in 1779 and held a number of civil appointments from 1780 onwards. In November 1792, Reeves established the Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers at the Crown and Anchor tavern and adopted the chairmanship himself. He was awarded for his efforts with the Savoy Manor Stewardship (1794–1802) and despite provoking controversy in 1795, which will be discussed below, Reeves was later promoted to King's printer, in 1800. Philip Schofield, 'Reeves, John (1752–1829)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/23306>, accessed 24 Sept 2015]; Emily Lorraine De Montluzin, *The Anti-Jacobins 1798-1800: The Early Contributors to the Anti-Jacobin Review* (Basingstoke, 1988), pp. 136-139.

¹⁰⁶ Individuals who attended the Club of Nobody's Friends included Joshua Watson, core member of the Hackney Phalanx, an influential group of High Churchmen resident in Hackney; Jonathan Bowdler, author of *Reform or Ruin: take your choice!* (1797), and the returned American Loyalist, Jonathan Boucher. Geoffrey Rowell, *The club of 'Nobody's Friends' 1800-2000: a memoir on its 200th anniversary* (Edinburgh, 2000), p. 2. For an outline of the intentions of the Society for the Reformation of Principles, and their influence regarding the *British Critic* see 'No I. A proposal for a Reformation for Principles', 'No II. A Sequel to the Proposal for a Reformation of Principles' and 'No. III', in *The Scholar Armed Against Infidelity...2 vols. Vol. I*, (London, 1795).

¹⁰⁷ De Montluzin, *The Anti-Jacobins 1798-1800*, pp. 63-68, 93-95.

ethos involving Church, state, liberty and obligation, which a later generation would term Tory or conservative.’¹⁰⁸

Building on Sack’s suggestion, this thesis argues that, though there might not have been a new Tory ‘party’ in the early decades of George III’s reign, there was the basis of a new, conspicuous, reactionary consensus which would propel its emergence in the early nineteenth century. This consensus consistently identified the people’s usurpation of power to pose the primary threat to the constitution, and asserted that the maintenance of the crown’s power was an integral buttress of political stability. Thus, the following sections contend, first, that when discussing misconceptions regarding the origins of political sovereignty, the relationship between the crown and parliament, or demands for parliamentary reform, emergent Tory rhetoric was consistently anti-populist. Secondly, the following sections contend that old Tory ideas were consciously renegotiated to suit a new political climate: notions of absolute monarchical power and indefeasible hereditary right were abandoned. This encouraged the emergence of a new Tory identity, distinguished from the disloyalty associated with Jacobitism and characterised instead by zealous commitment to the Glorious Revolution. Consequently, convergence between old Toryism and conservative Whiggery was facilitated. This convergence was rooted in the defence of subjects’ obedience, a strong royal prerogative, and resistance to parliamentary reform.

The Origin of Sovereignty and the Limits of Obedience

Questions regarding the origin of political authority, and subjects’ duty in relation to it, were infused with vitality in the early years of George III’s reign. As Gunn notes, throughout the reign of the first two Hanoverian monarchs there had been few publications dealing with the origin of government and thus Lockean notions of an historic social contract and divisions over the meaning of the Glorious Revolution had slipped from the forefront of political discussion.¹⁰⁹ The culmination of the American rebellion in the 1770s, premised upon assumptions of a state of nature and a violated social contract, reinvigorated arguments which stressed the popular basis of political

¹⁰⁸ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 78.

¹⁰⁹ Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property*, p. 173.

sovereignty; so too did the domestic political controversy ignited by John Wilkes' exclusion from parliament which evolved contemporaneously.¹¹⁰ In the theories of liberty derived from notions of popular sovereignty lay an inherent legitimisation of insubordination and, as developments in America demonstrated, resistance.

For churchmen preaching at the Assizes, a context where the law intersected with religion and in which obedience was a frequent topic of sermons, a rather different perspective regarding the roots of the 'Present Discontents' was projected from that of the Rockinghamite opposition in the early decades of George III's reign. The Tory Thomas Barnard, preaching to the Assizes at Londonderry, in 1772, declared that the 'spirit of faction in every part of the British empire is risen to such a pitch, as no nation in a state of professed domestic peace ever yet exhibited an example of'.¹¹¹ Particularly problematic was that complaints were not confined to measures of government, or simply directed towards the specific men in office. Instead the invectives of faction, in Barnard's perception, were directed 'against all government whatsoever... legal liberty is their cry, but absolute independence is the mark at which they aim'. Barnard's complaints of dissension were accompanied by the fear that definitions of liberty were being deployed as a rhetorical weapon by the ill-designing and ambitious to rouse a dissatisfied populace into opposition of authority.¹¹² Barnard was not alone in his anxiety.¹¹³ In his *Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power* (1772), the Methodist leader John Wesley, lamented that notions of popular sovereignty were now 'in vogue' and were 'usually espoused with the fullest and strongest persuasion, as a truth little less than self-evident'. Wesley acknowledged that varied forms of government existed in the world, including monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, but he was primarily concerned with the question of origins: 'the grand question is, not in whom this power is lodged, but from whom it is ultimately derived?' His answer was simple:

¹¹⁰ Ibid., also see Kathleen Wilson 'Inventing Revolution: 1688 and Eighteenth-Century Popular Politics', *Journal of British Studies*, 28:4 (1989), pp. 349-386; H.T. Dickinson, 'The eighteenth century debate on the Glorious Revolution', *History*, 61 (1976), p. 41.

¹¹¹ Barnard described himself as a Tory when writing to James Boswell in 1783. See Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 66.

¹¹² Thomas Barnard, *A sermon preached in the cathedral church at London-Derry, On Sunday, September 13th, 1772. Before the judges of assize and gentlemen of the county there assembled ...* (London-Derry, [1772]), pp. 7-9.

¹¹³ For a similar analysis see Thomas Maddock, *Religion necessary to the being and happiness of society. A sermon preached at the assizes held at Lancaster, September 2, 1770 ...* (London, [1771]), pp. 13-17.

Now I cannot but acknowledge, I believe an old book, commonly called the Bible, to be true. Therefore I believe, *there is no power but from God; Rom, xiii. 1. The powers that be, are ordained of God.* There is no *subordinate power* in any nation, but what is derived from the supreme power therein And there is no supreme power, no power of the sword, of life and death, but what is derived from God, the Sovereign of All. ¹¹⁴

The work was specifically designed to denounce notions of popular sovereignty by attacking the presumption of an original compact between governor and governed from which it was derived.

The theological origins of power formed the cornerstone of conceptualisations of the political state which emphasised the duty of the subject. In an age of revolutions, it was in articulations of the relationship between God, governor and governed that the controversial ideas and idioms associated with old Toryism remained most conspicuous. In his Assize sermon on *The Origin of Civil Government*, preached in 1769 and republished repeatedly in *The Scholar Armed*, George Horne contended that notions of an egalitarian state of nature were absurd: ‘the state of nature was a state of subordination, not one of equality and independence, in which mankind never did, nor ever can exist’.¹¹⁵ Rather, human existence, from the beginning, was characterised by patriarchal subordination: ‘some were born subject to others; and the power of the father, by whatever name it be called, must have been supreme at the first, when there was none superior to it.’¹¹⁶ Horne did not deny that aristocracies and democracies had, subsequently, been derived in some states from the basis of a social compact, but he argued that such forms of government were ‘illegitimate’ and were usually derived from a breaking of ‘allegiance to... natural rulers’: the inference, of course, was that if patriarchal relationships constituted the legitimate origins of the political state,

¹¹⁴ John Wesley, *Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power* (Bristol, 1772), pp. 4-9.

¹¹⁵ George Horne, ‘The Origin of Civil Government’ in *Discourses on several subjects and occasions. By George Horne, D. D. Late Bishop of Norwich, and President of Magdalen College, Oxford*, 2 vols., vol. 2., (Oxford, 1793), p. 328.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

monarchy constituted the only legitimate form of government.¹¹⁷ Although, as Clark suggests, the Assizes provided a context for frequent reminders of the connection between religion and government, particularly the divine nature of the law, most preachers did not delve deeply into a discussion of government's foundations.¹¹⁸ Government and the laws were presented as divinely sanctioned and instituted for the benefit of mankind; the necessity of submission to them was therefore axiomatic. Horne's reversion to patriarchalism reflected the deployment of a specifically Tory idea in order to attack contractarian understandings of government at their source.

Horne's interpretation of the origin of sovereignty was not isolated. Rather, his sermon joined a wave of preachers who deployed the old Tory notion that the origins of political authority were patriarchal to preach obedience to monarchical government, specifically. In 1776, just after the outbreak of the American War, John Coleridge dismissed the idea of a social contract and used scriptural arguments to defend an Adamist theory of monarchy's origin and the 'sacred character of Kings'.¹¹⁹ Through the old Tory idea of patriarchalism, Coleridge preserved the idioms of sacral royalism and subjects' interlocking duty of obedience. 'If royalty is a Divine institution, men ... should obey all lawful commands for conscience-sake.' Christians learnt from Christ that all power was from God and that they should therefore submit to it: 'This is at least the doctrine which we learn from his [Christ's] submissive conduct before Pilate'.¹²⁰ A powerful renunciation of popular sovereignty was also delivered by Horne's cousin, William Stevens. Stevens responded to Richard Watson, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, who, in *The Principles of the Revolution Vindicated* (1776), had preached a lengthy discourse espousing a Lockean theory of social contract.¹²¹ Though a layman, Stevens possessed a deep scriptural knowledge and a High Church zeal; his replies attacked Watson's contention that governors derived their authority from the people and operated on the basis of consent. In propagating such notions Watson had attacked 'the strong holds of *Toryism*, Reason, and Revelation. To establish his favourite principle,

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 317.

¹¹⁸ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., p. 269.

¹¹⁹ John Coleridge, *Government not originally proceeding from human agency, but divine institution...* (London, 1777), p. 6. Baptised 1719- died 1781. John was father of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

¹²¹ On Watson's sermon see J. Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 209.

that *rulers are the ministers of the people*'.¹²² Stevens continued to project a patriarchal understanding of the political state: citing Hooker, he projected an Adamist interpretation of government's origins. When Eve submitted to Adam as her husband, 'From that time, at least, the natural equality and independence of individuals was at an end, and Adam became (Oh dreadful sound to republican ears!) universal monarch by divine right.'¹²³ This basis of political authority rendered Watson's 'Whig principles' as ludicrous as suggesting that 'parents are the appointment of their children, and have no authority over them without their consent first asked and obtained'.¹²⁴ Sovereignty did not derive from the consent of the people, for it was bestowed by God. Thus old Tory notions regarding the origins of political sovereignty persisted after 1760.

Nonetheless, heavy exhortations regarding the divinity of kingship and illegitimacy of resistance in a conspicuous setting could easily ignite controversy. The returned American Loyalist, Myles Cooper, preaching a fast sermon to the University of Oxford in 1776, presented the familiar denunciation of an original contract as having a 'Tendency...subversive of Government'; government was derived from God and thus it was 'difficult indeed to assign any reasons, that will Justify the Rebellion of Subjects against the Sovereign Authority'. Submission was a Christian duty, 'enjoined...under the severest penalty'.¹²⁵ Cooper's sentiments were not dissimilar to those of Horne, upon whose request the sermon was published. However, adopting Tory idioms which sounded suspiciously like a propagation of unqualified non-resistance, the sermon provoked a backlash.¹²⁶ The controversy had much to do with the heightened tensions of the American debate, and growing Whig suspicion of George III. A similar accusation had previously been levied at Thomas Nowell in response to a martyrdom sermon, delivered to a sparsely populated House of Commons, in 1772. Discourses

¹²² William Stevens, *Strictures on a Sermon entitled The Revolution Vindicated, Preached before the University of Cambridge, on October 25th, 1776...*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, 1777), p. 3.

¹²³ Hooker was quoted as arguing that 'To fathers in their private families...nature has given a supreme power; for which cause, we see...even from the first foundation thereof, all men have ever been taken as Lords and lawful Kings in their own houses', *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹²⁴ William Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated, and Constitutional Liberty asserted. In answer to The Reverend Dr. Watson's Accession Sermon, Preached before the University of Cambridge, on October 25th, 1776...* (London, 1777), p. 12.

¹²⁵ Myles Cooper, *A Sermon preached before the University of Oxford on Friday, December 13, 1776...for a general Fast* (Oxford, 1776), p. 12.

¹²⁶ Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property*, p. 174; Paul Langford, 'The English Clergy and the American Revolution', in Eckhart Hellmuth (ed.), *The Transformation of Political Culture, England and Germany in the late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990), p. 284.

reflecting upon the origins of the Civil War had been embedded into British political culture since the Restoration by the tradition of preaching on 30 January, the date of Charles I's execution.¹²⁷ Nowell had provided a vindication of Charles I during which he claimed that only 'in vain' could one look 'for the beginning of these evils [the Civil War] from any real or pretended grievances, from any undue stretches of prerogative, from any abuse of royal power, those favourite topics upon which the enemies of our constitution so vehemently declaim'.¹²⁸ Instead, Nowell laid blame squarely at the door of Dissenters, while simultaneously comparing George III to the royal martyr.¹²⁹ The sermon had actually been delivered to the University of Oxford and published six years earlier without arousing controversy but, amidst the political tensions of the early 1770s, the propagation of such sentiments in parliament provoked criticism. Consequently the vote of thanks, routinely offered in the wake of a sermon's delivery, was later expunged.¹³⁰

The idioms adopted in Nowell's sermon were Tory and provided ammunition for one critic to profess that 'The clergy and the tories are intimately connected in principles and practice' of oppression. Such principles, the writer claimed, were now depended upon by the Brunswick line: 'How else is it, that we see his present majesty compared to the *holy martyr*, to the wretched monarch who suffered and deserved the block?' In many respects the animosity which the sermon provoked was inextricably linked to Whig suspicions regarding the King himself. As the critic proceeded to state, the comparison between the two monarchs was inaccurate: 'Charles quarrelled with his parliament, because they would not concur with him in oppressing the people. George is upon the best terms with his parliament, because it is payed [*sic*].'¹³¹ While the outcries regarding the arguments advanced by Cooper and Nowell were partly the product of alarmism, Whig fears regarding the reconciliation of Toryism with George III were not wholly without foundation. Some of the most ardent Tories were, quite

¹²⁷ H.W. Randal, 'The Rise and Fall of a Martyrology: Sermons on Charles I', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 10:2 (1947), p. 135.

¹²⁸ Thomas Nowell, *A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on Thursday, January XXX, 1772 ...* (London, 1772), p. 15.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12, 23.

¹³⁰ W. R. Ward, *Georgian Oxford: University Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1958), p. 251; Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 129.

¹³¹ [Anon], *Critical remarks on Dr. Nowel's sermon, preached on Thursday, January 30, 1772, before the House of Commons ...* ([London]: 1772), pp. 5-6.

conspicuously, willing to redirect their loyalties, and old Tory doctrine, towards the Hanoverian monarch.

William Stevens was a self-avowed Tory. This identity was adopted precisely because of his views on monarchy, his rejection of popular sovereignty, and, consequently, a subject's right to resist. Stevens remained silent regarding the relationship which had existed between Tory principles and Jacobite disloyalty. Rather, in the context of colonial revolt, he asserted that it was Tory principles which promoted loyalty to the Hanoverian George III:

And who are the best friends to the gracious Prince now on the throne?
 ...They who reverence him as the minister of God, by whom Kings reign,
 and to be obeyed for conscience sake; or they who consider him as the
 creature of the people...at their pleasure he was created, and at their
 pleasure he may be annihilated [?]

Tory arguments regarding the divine nature of sovereignty protected the King from popular revolt. Meanwhile, 'Whig pretensions' of popular sovereignty and a right to resistance encouraged rebellion.¹³² Thus Stevens attempted conspicuously to renegotiate Tory identity by asserting the compatibility of old Tory ideas with loyalty to the Hanoverian regime.

In his response to Watson, Stevens progressed to a discussion of the duties derived from the divine origin of government: non-resistance and passive obedience. Watson had opposed the principle of non-resistance. He grounded his renunciation in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, chapter 13, specifically the Apostle's message that 'Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil, and are the ministers of God to us for Good'. The inference with which Stevens took issue was that, should rulers become a terror to good works, their divine sanction evaporated and resistance was legitimised. The notion of legitimate resistance was not simply irresponsible, it was also inaccurate, in Stevens'

¹³² Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated*, pp. 5-6.

opinion. Watson had tried to make ‘a *Whig* of St. *Paul*.’ Yet scripture taught that ‘God maketh a wicked man to reign for the sins of the people, so that the wickedness of the ruler is no proof that he is not the ordinance of God’. Moreover, Romans 13 had been delivered with the purpose of enjoining Christians ‘to yield subjection to Heathen rulers, as the ordinance of God, even when persecuting them to death for no other crime than their faith in Christ’. It was ridiculous to manipulate such a clear exhortation against resistance into a sanction of disobedience.¹³³

Stevens also took issue with Watson’s accusation that scripture had been perverted to sanction ‘unlimited obedience’. Such a notion was, indeed, a perversion of Christians’ obligations, and Stevens had ‘never heard of any who maintained it.’ Concluding that Watson had meant ‘*passive obedience*... from his using the term as synonymous to *non-resistance*’, Stevens pointed out that there was ‘an essential difference between obeying unlawful commands, implied by *unlimited* obedience, and patient suffering for not obeying them, which is, properly speaking, *passive obedience*.’¹³⁴ Passive obedience, in Stevens’ view, stipulated that even if rulers were to act contrary to the law, subjects, rather than resist, should simply refuse to obey actively and accept the consequent punishments.¹³⁵ In 1776 Stevens had been involved in editing a previously unpublished essay by the Non-Juror and Jacobite Roger North (d. 1734) which provided both an insight into his own intellectual influences and clarity regarding the doctrines to which he adhered.¹³⁶ The terms passive obedience and non-resistance, North had argued, ‘mean one and the same thing, that is, a negation of all active force, whatever the consequence’. Active obedience belonged only to lawful commands, and passive obedience to unlawful commands. Therefore, far from countenancing tyranny, those who propagated the latter were ‘the most express defenders of the laws against unbounded prerogative’ because this doctrine encouraged subjects not to carry out

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 31-33.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12-14.

¹³⁵ Dickinson, *Liberty and property*, p. 15.

¹³⁶ Gunn, *Beyond Liberty and Property*, p. 174. For Roger North see Mary Chan, ‘North, Roger (1651–1734)’, *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/20314, accessed 24 Sept 2015]. *A discourse on the English constitution* was re-circulated in *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of Infidelity, Enthusiasm, and Disloyalty; or, a collection of tracts on the principles of religion, government, and ecclesiastical polity*, published by Stevens and William Jones in 1780, and reissued in 1795 and 1800 when the nation was again faced with a revolutionary crisis, though much closer to home.

illegal commands actively, but obey them passively.¹³⁷ Therefore, Stevens separated the old Tory doctrine of passive obedience from notions of despotism in a bid to retain its utility in a new political context.

Richard Watson was an exception amongst Anglican clergymen. During the War of American Independence this body predominantly, though not uniformly, supported the government's policy and condemned the colonial rebellion.¹³⁸ Difference remained between old Tories and conservative Whigs. Clark suggests that ministerial Whigs had come to accept passive obedience following the accession of William III and that, under George III, they undertook a 'repudiation of a right of resistance'.¹³⁹ Yet, as Bradley has pointed out, Clark offers no evidence to support the argument that Whigs had accepted the doctrine of passive obedience, as opposed to merely preaching Christian submission.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, Hole is correct when he notes that Stevens' defence of this doctrine was an exception, not the norm, even amongst those who continued to claim a Tory identity.¹⁴¹ Moreover, Whig repudiation of resistance should not be overstated. Churchmen of a conservative Whig disposition, despite preaching obedience to government, were often explicit that scripture offered no countenance to the old Tory doctrines of non-resistance and passive obedience. George Campbell, preaching on obedience in 1778, found it 'necessary to premise' his discourse with the statement that he did not 'mean to argue on the slavish, unnatural, and justly exploded, principles of *passive obedience* and *non-resistance*'. Similarly, William Markham, Bishop of Chester and, from 1776, Archbishop of York, preaching a martyrdom sermon to the House of

¹³⁷ Roger North, *A discourse on the English constitution; extracted from a late eminent writer and applicable to the present times*. ed. William Stevens, (London, 1776), pp. 7-9.

¹³⁸ Paul Langford, 'The English Clergy and the American Revolution', pp. 276-277; Bradley, 'The Anglican Pulpit, the Social Order, and the Resurgence of Toryism during the American Revolution', p. 366.

¹³⁹ On the repudiation of resistance see Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., pp.238-239. For Clark's assertion that Whigs accepted passive obedience see *ibid.*, pp. 87-88, 111-112, 119, 134, 144.

¹⁴⁰ Christian submission entailed exalting monarchical power and commanding obedience on utilitarian grounds and was often qualified by the statement that resistance was justified in necessary, extreme circumstances. Clark's reliance on the opinion of Abednego Seller, a nonjuring bishop, that divine right and passive obedience 'were not innovations of clever Stuart policy, but had been the tenets of the Church from its beginnings' does not support the preceding statement that Whigs preached passive obedience in the reigns of William III and Anne, nor the following statement that this 'doctrine was now found on both sides of a schism'. *Ibid.*, p.87. Moreover, Clark claims that defence of divine appointment and hereditary title by Whigs led them to preach 'something like total obedience'. *Ibid.*, p. 112. As Bradley points out, this phrase is 'superficially similar, but vastly different' from passive obedience. Bradley, 'The Anglican Pulpit, the Social Order, and the Resurgence of Toryism during the American Revolution', p. 384 n. 90.

¹⁴¹ Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 21.

Lords in 1774, declared that the Gospel must be ‘strangely perverted to give Support’ to the principle of ‘unlimited obedience’ by which it appears that he, like Watson, meant passive obedience.¹⁴² Therefore, while old Tories and conservative Whigs converged in opposition to the claims of the American colonies, the doctrines they deployed varied.

Conservative Whigs would generally agree with Josiah Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, that subjects retained a ‘Right of resisting in certain cases of *extreme* Necessity’, though what ‘necessity’ entailed was often left unclear.¹⁴³ For Tucker, St Paul’s argument for obedience rested on the condition that a Magistrate was ‘the Minister of God for Good’. Therefore, ‘supposing that these Vicegerents should act contrary to their Commission ... it is very apparent from the Terms of their Commission, That they are no longer entitled to the Obedience of the Subject, as a Point of Duty and Conscience’.¹⁴⁴ This, for Tucker, represented the limit of a subject’s obedience, and it was precisely the argument for which Stevens had attacked Watson. Campbell issued a similar rule: if society should ‘so far degenerate into tyranny, that all the miseries of a civil war consequent on resistance, would be less terrible ... then, and only then, could resistance be said to be either incumbent as a duty, or even lawful’.¹⁴⁵ The circumstances which would legitimate resistance were so extreme that they would likely never be faced. Nonetheless, importantly, this right was still admitted. Thus while Campbell, Tucker and Stevens all opposed the specific case of American resistance, differences persisted between their arguments.

However, both old Tories and conservative Whigs concurred in an essentially anti-populist interpretation of the Glorious Revolution: that constitutional preservation, not deposition and alteration had been the defining characteristic of 1688. The Glorious Revolution had initially rendered Tory rejection of both popular sovereignty and a right to resistance problematic. Yet, Keith Feiling suggests, in the years following the

¹⁴² George Campbell, *The nature, extent, and importance, of the duty of allegiance: a sermon, preached at Aberdeen, December 12, 1776, being the Fast day appointed by the King...* (Aberdeen, [1778]), p. 17; William Markham, *The Bishop of Chester’s Sermon preached before the House of Lords 1774, January 31, 1774* (London, 1774), p. 11.

¹⁴³ Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, pp. 19-21.

¹⁴⁴ Josiah Tucker, *A Treatise Concerning Civil Government* (London, 1781), pp. 409, 420-421.

¹⁴⁵ Campbell, *The nature, extent, and importance, of the duty of allegiance*, pp. 16-17.

Glorious Revolution, Tories accepted the theory that James II had deserted his throne by ‘voluntary, unforced, criminal’ flight as opposed to being deposed.¹⁴⁶ This theory continued to be appropriated by Stevens. The Act of Settlement, instituted by the Convention Parliament in the wake of the Glorious Revolution, stipulated that James II had voluntarily abdicated the throne, leaving it vacant. Therefore, this event set no precedent that subjects could legitimately depose monarchs. Rather, the conductors of the Glorious Revolution had been cautious to preserve ‘our excellent constitution ... in its pristine state of health and vigour’.¹⁴⁷ This interpretation resonated with that of conservative Whigs, including William Markham, who argued that the Glorious Revolution had ‘From Necessity ... altered the Succession, but preserved the entire Frame of our Laws and Polity.’¹⁴⁸ Moreover, Stevens argued that, although the Tories had been painted as ‘enemies to the Revolution’, really it was those, like Watson, who manipulated this event to sanction ‘the power of the people, and the right of deposing Kings’ who were ‘enemies to the Revolution and the Protestant succession’ which it had secured. Thus, by appropriating a conservative interpretation, Stevens attempted to renegotiate the Tory relationship to 1688.

Consensus between conservative Whigs and Tories regarding an anti-populist, pro-monarchical interpretation of 1688 was consolidated in the context of the French Revolution. In 1790, Edmund Burke published his famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. The text addressed Richard Price’s *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, preached before the Revolution Society in 1789 to celebrate the centenary of the Glorious Revolution. Subsequently, in 1791, Burke published *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*. Both works addressed what he considered to be inaccurate understandings of 1688 and its constitutional implications. Burke’s disagreement with those he designated ‘new Whigs’, and radicals like Price, did not hinge on the origins of sovereignty. Although sometimes accused of converting to Toryism, Burke never adopted the patriarchalism of old Tories. In *Reflections*, Burke acknowledged that there was ‘ground enough for the opinion that all the kingdoms of Europe were, at a remote

¹⁴⁶ Keith Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714* (Oxford, 1924), p. 248.

¹⁴⁷ Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁴⁸ Markham, *The Bishop of Chester’s Sermon preached before the House of Lords 1774, January 31, 1774*, p. 18.

period, elective'.¹⁴⁹ Rather, Burke's disagreement with Price focused on the contention that 'in the people the same sovereignty constantly and unalienably resides'.¹⁵⁰ The Revolution Settlement had demonstrated that the people had no power distinct from the legislature.¹⁵¹ The misunderstanding that the people retained political sovereignty, in Burke's opinion, was derived from an inaccurate interpretation of 1688 and promoted the notion that 'the people may lawfully depose kings, not only for misconduct, but without any misconduct at all; that they may set up any new fashion of government for themselves'.¹⁵² In *Reflections*, Burke addressed this claim at length. James II had undertaken a 'design, confirmed by a multitude of illegal and overt acts, to *subvert the Protestant church and state*'. It was because of this specific, defined transgression, and not something so 'loose and indefinite' as '*misconduct*', that the King had been charged with 'having broken the *original contract* between king and people'. By emphasising that James had violated an original contract, rather than simply highlighting the act of abdication, Burke presented an explanation of 1688 which remained Whig. Nonetheless, Burke also urged that the declaration of abdication had been inserted into the Act of Settlement deliberately to avoid misunderstandings regarding the right to depose kings.¹⁵³ Stevens' companion, the self-avowed Tory, William Jones, concurred with the latter point in his *Letter to the Church* (1798). This work urged that notions of popular power had been deliberately 'avoided by the politicians of that day [at the Glorious Revolution]; who well knew, that no Government could be secure if that were once admitted'. Thus both old Tories and conservative Whigs concurred that the Revolution did not set a precedent for legitimate, sporadic popular resistance.¹⁵⁴

Tories and conservative Whigs also agreed that 1688 had protected the principle of hereditary monarchy rather than create an elective monarchy, vulnerable to change at the whim of the people. Although Burke acknowledged the notion that the origins of government were probably elective, he insisted that 'the king of Great Britain is, at this

¹⁴⁹ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France: a critical edition*, ed. J.C.D. Clark, (Stanford, CA, 2001), p. 161.

¹⁵⁰ Idem, 'Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs', *The works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, 6 vols., vol III (London 1854-1861) pp. 44-45.

¹⁵¹ Dickinson, 'The eighteenth century debate on the Glorious Revolution', p. 205; Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 159-185; Burke, 'Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs', pp. 25-86.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

¹⁵³ Idem, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 176-178.

¹⁵⁴ William Jones, *A Letter to Church of England pointing out some popular errors of bad consequence...* (London, 1798), pp. 10-11.

day, king by a fixed rule of succession'.¹⁵⁵ The Revolution had admitted 'a small and a temporary deviation from the strict order of a regular hereditary succession' in the person of William III. Yet 'parliament did not thank God that they had found a fair opportunity to assert a right to choose their own governors, much less to make an election the *only lawful* title to the crown.'¹⁵⁶ Rather than establish a new principle, the Act of Settlement had been careful to enshrine the principle of hereditary succession in 'statute law, operating on the principles of the common law, not changing the substance, but regulating the mode, and describing the persons.'¹⁵⁷ The government pamphleteer, John Bowles, echoed this interpretation in 1800: the Glorious Revolution 'had for its avowed object the preservation of the entire Constitution in Church and State, the fundamental principle of which is hereditary Monarchy'. This was demonstrated by the Bill of Rights which, 'far from laying claim to such a right [of deposition], made the abdication and vacancy of the Throne the very basis of ... proceedings'.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, the Tory, William Jones, praised 'Mr. *Burke*' specifically for having 'very ably and very seasonably taught us, that the Revolution of that time did not alter the hereditary government of this Kingdom'.¹⁵⁹ This event had authorized 'no change, but when the Prince is introducing Popery into the land, and leaves the throne vacant to the next Protestant heir'.¹⁶⁰ The monarchy remained hereditary and thus 1688 had done nothing to introduce the principles of popular sovereignty into the constitution. Rather, it 'left laws and doctrines as sacred as they were beforehand'.¹⁶¹ Therefore a broad consensus developed between old Tory and conservative Whig interpretations of the Glorious Revolution. This facilitated the renegotiation of Tory identity by encouraging a departure from old Tory associations with Jacobite disloyalty. Above all, though, this departure was rooted in Tory abandonment of the doctrine of indefeasible hereditary succession.

¹⁵⁵ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 161.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 169; Idem, 'Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs', p. 56.

¹⁵⁸ John Bowles, *Reflections on the Political and Moral State of Society at the Close of the Eighteenth Century* ... (London, 1800), pp. 55-56.

¹⁵⁹ William Jones, *Letter to John Bull, Esq. from his Second Cousin Thomas Bull* (London, 1793), pp. 5-6.

¹⁶⁰ Idem, *Letter to the Church of England*, p. 10.

¹⁶¹ Idem, *Letter to John Bull*, pp. 5-6.

The break in the line of succession, however minimal or necessary, had undermined the old Tory doctrine of indefeasible hereditary succession. This had the potential to render Tory emphasis on the divine nature of kingship problematic. Gerald Straka has identified the emergence of a modified theory of providential divine right amongst the Anglican clergy in the immediate aftermath of 1688 which aimed to resolve this tension.¹⁶² Straka suggests this theory passed through its ‘final phase’ in 1702, finally being extinguished in the wake of the Act of Settlement (1701), yet both Gunn and Clark point out that this modified version of divine right continued to be deployed long after the Glorious Revolution to defend the claim of the Hanoverians to the throne.¹⁶³ In the context of the late eighteenth century, this theory still retained currency as a means of countering notions of popular sovereignty and resistance. John Coleridge, while defending the patriarchal nature of kingship in 1776, argued that ‘if God made the world, it was disagreeable to his high wisdom to leave the management of it to the disposal of the rude multitude’. Rather, Coleridge argued that God managed ‘the kingdoms of the earth’ and that ‘princes, rise, and decline, regulated by the providence of God’ for, as Daniel. ii. 21. explained, it was God who ‘removeth kings, and setteth up kings’.¹⁶⁴ In 1691, the Tory William Sherlock had relied on the same passage to argue that whether succession derived directly from ‘Divine Entail’ or ‘Human Entail’, that is, as a result of constitutional procedure, ‘all these ways, or any other, that can be thought of, are governed and determined by the Divine Providence.’¹⁶⁵ Coleridge too used the notion of Divine Providence to avoid any inference that a break in the succession altered the divine nature of kingship: it was unnecessary to discuss ‘the succession, which followed either by the will of their father or by primogeniture, or of the violence which might disturb the natural order of Kings’. It was necessary to show only that ‘the order of Royalty came first by God’s ordinance’ for, if this was the case, then it remained a ‘divine institution’.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Gerald Straka, ‘The Final Phase of Divine Right Theory in England, 1688-1702’, *English Historical Review*, 77:305 (1962), pp. 638-658.

¹⁶³ Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property*, p. 153; Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., pp. 105-123.

¹⁶⁴ Coleridge, *Government not originally proceeding from Human Agency, but Divine Institution...*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁶⁵ William Sherlock, *The Case of the Allegiance Due to Sovereign Powers* (1691), pp. 12-13, quoted in Straka, ‘The Final Phase of Divine Right Theory in England’, p. 647.

¹⁶⁶ Coleridge, *Government not originally proceeding from Human Agency, but Divine Institution...*, pp. 8-9.

Through this theory of providential divine right, Tories could abandon the staple of Jacobite ideology, indefeasible hereditary right. William Jones strongly condemned revolution in both America and France and was not afraid to assert the divine nature of monarchical government.¹⁶⁷ In his *Letter to John Bull, from his Second Cousin Thomas Bull*, published in 1793, Jones acknowledged that ‘for the use of any religious argument, it might be objected to *Thomas Bull*, that he revives the Doctrines concerning Government, which (as some would have it) were given up at the Revolution in 1688.’ But this event, Jones insisted, had done nothing to alter the divine nature of regal authority. Although, Jones noted, those who ‘assert any alliance between the Powers of Earth and the Powers of Heaven . . . must expect to be accused of setting up an *indefeasible divine right*’, unlike the divine nature of political authority, the principle of *indefeasible* hereditary succession was not found in the Bible. Rather, the divine right which Thomas Bull had been ‘plainly taught’ entailed only that God ruled kingdoms on earth. Monarchy was providentially sanctioned and, on this basis, its authority remained divine. Thus, even though the principle of indefeasible divine right was false, kings still ruled as ‘*the Lord’s anointed*’ and should be obeyed.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, the doctrine of providential divine right enabled Tories to abandon the principle of indefeasible hereditary succession and its Jacobite associations, facilitating the renegotiation of Tory identity while retaining emphasis on subjects’ obedience.

The doctrine of providential divine right was reiterated by the Whig High Churchman, Samuel Horsley, Bishop of Rochester, in 1793. Following the death of Louis XVI, Horsley delivered one of the few mass attended martyrdom sermons of the period before the House of Lords.¹⁶⁹ As criticism of Nowell and Cooper during the American crisis demonstrated, in contexts of heightened anxiety and intense political division, martyrdom sermons could easily provoke embarrassment and controversy. This specific occasion, though, also provided an opportunity for an explicit outline of orthodox Anglican theory regarding the nature of government and the duty of obedience. The

¹⁶⁷ William Jones, *The Fear of God and the Benefits of Civil Obedience. Two Sermons, preached in the Parish Church of Harwich in the County of Essex on Sunday, June 21, 1778* (London, 1778), pp. 19-23; Idem, *One Penny-worth of Truth from Thomas Bull to his Brother John* (1792).

¹⁶⁸ Idem, *Letter to John Bull*, pp. 5-6 and *One Penny-worth of Truth from Thomas Bull to his Brother John*. For the use of this theory in the early nineteenth century see [Charles Daubeny], *A Word to the Wise, addressed to the Pillars of the Community* (London, 1812), p. 12.

¹⁶⁹ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 129.

‘principle of the private Citizen’s submission’, Horsley claimed, was ‘quite distinct from the principle of the Sovereign’s Public Title’. Consequently, the ‘Divine right of the first Magistrate, in every polity to the Citizen’s obedience’ was ‘not that sort which it were High Treason to claim for the Sovereigns of this Country. It is quite a distinct thing from the pretended Divine right to the inheritance of the Crown.’¹⁷⁰ All political authority was providentially instituted and therefore the divine right of the monarch entailed only a right to subjects’ allegiance and to their obedience.

While the doctrine of providence could be used to refute the tenets of Jacobite ideology, Horsley also used it to refute the radical, populist inferences derived from contract theory. In the case of ‘any violent or necessary revolution’, Horsley argued that people have ‘a right ... of appointing, by the consent of the Majority, for themselves and their posterity, a new head.’ Moreover, it was clear that ‘of all Sovereigns none reign by so fair and just a title, as those who can derive their claim from such public Act of the nation’. But it was no ‘just inference, that the obligation upon the private Citizen to submit himself to the authority thus raised, arises wholly from the Act of the people conferring it’. The ‘Act of the People’ served only as ‘the means, which Providence employs, to advance the new Sovereign to his station.’¹⁷¹ Given this divine sanction, once again, the principle of submission was distinct from the principle of the sovereign’s title. Therefore the obligation of obedience remained and Horsley retained an interpretation of this duty which explicitly left no room for popular resistance. The king was the ‘vice-regent’ of God, ‘accountable for misconduct’ only ‘to his heavenly Master, but intitled [*sic*] to obedience from the Subject’. Consequently, the latter should submit even to ‘the worst actions of Tyrants’ and bear ‘Man’s abuse ... of his delegated authority ... with resignation’.¹⁷² Such a strong expression was a concept difficult to reconcile with the Whig tradition even though, as Clark notes, Horsley’s sermon was rooted in a Whig conceptualisation of society as essentially contractual.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Samuel Horsley, *A Sermon, preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal...on Wednesday, January 30, 1793*, 3rd ed., (London, 1793), p. 12.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 17-18.

¹⁷³ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., p.280; see Horsley, *A Sermon, preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal...on Wednesday, January 30, 1793*, pp. 18-19.

The notion of providential sanction could also enable Tories and conservative Whigs to align regarding the form of government to which obedience was due. In the context of the American Revolution, Horne, Coleridge, and Stevens all relied on a patriarchal understanding of the origins of political authority to argue that monarchy, specifically, was divine. Indeed, Horne, while acknowledging the existence of aristocracies and democracies, had deemed these forms of government ‘illegitimate’, suggesting that monarchy constituted the only legitimate form of government.¹⁷⁴ These discourses were distinct from those of conservative Whigs who preached obedience to government in general, regardless of its form. The notion that all government was divine, regardless of its form, was an important facet of Whig doctrine: it legitimised change in the form of government, and therefore 1688, and sanctioned notions of mixed government, regal limitation and parliamentary authority.¹⁷⁵ In 1781, the conservative Whig, Josiah Tucker, argued that providence had determined only ‘that there shall be a Government of some sort or other’ but ‘left it, for the most Part, to themselves [mankind] to fix on the Form or Mode, and to regulate the several Appendages belonging to it’.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, in 1788, Samuel Hallifax, Bishop of Gloucester, when delivering a martyrdom sermon to the House of Lords, argued that ‘Government...under all its varying forms, is a providential appointment; *there is no power but of God.*’¹⁷⁷ Despite his earlier assertions, in an Accession Day sermon in 1788, Horne was willing to moderate his explanation of the relationship between divinity and government. Horne accepted that, ‘So far as relates to the different modes by which, in different constitutions, rulers become invested with their power’ government was ‘what St. Peter styles it, “an ordinance of man,” regulated by human laws’.¹⁷⁸ Yet, once in force, subjects were bound to submit to it as a religious duty.

Horne’s concession did not mean that he had sacrificed a patriarchal vision of the origin of political authority. In 1789, preaching at Canterbury Cathedral on Peter II.13, Horne admitted that ‘Of government there have been different kinds among men in different

¹⁷⁴ Horne, ‘The Origin of Civil Government’, pp. 317-319.

¹⁷⁵ Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760-1832*, pp. 14-15.

¹⁷⁶ Tucker, *A Treatise Concerning Civil Government*, p. 50.

¹⁷⁷ Samuel Hallifax, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in the Church of Westminster...* (London, 1788), p. 6.

¹⁷⁸ George Horne, ‘The Duty of Praying for Governors’, in *Discourses on several subjects and occasions. By George Horne, D. D. Late Bishop of Norwich, and President of Magdalen College, Oxford.* 4 vols. , Vol. 3, (London, 1795), p. 115.

ages and different countries'. Yet, 'At the beginning, there were only the children of one man, living under the care of their father.' Subsequently, different states had appropriated different forms of government which were no longer deemed 'illegitimate' but instead were united in the British constitution to form a 'happy mixture...so contrived that the parts are a mutual check upon each other: and if there be at any time an error in one, it is corrected by the remaining two.'¹⁷⁹ Indeed, the King's power was understood to be 'so defined and settled, that he can do no wrong, but "by and with the consent and advice of both houses of parliament."' ¹⁸⁰ Horne's rhetorical concession did not necessarily mean that he accepted the variant powers of the constitution to be equal in stature.¹⁸¹ His sermon was not tuned to outline the technical relationship between the different elements of the constitution but emphasise subjects' duty. Nonetheless, acknowledgement that Britain's constitution comprised a mixture of constitutional powers performing mutual checks reflected a departure from seventeenth-century Tory notions of absolute monarchy.

For Horne, regardless of its form, government's authority remained divine. Consequently, Horne could continue to argue that 'Obedience, in short, is enjoined to the civil magistrate, under whatever form of government we happen to live'.¹⁸² Horne denied 'subjects a power of taking arms, and deposing their princes' under any circumstances: while the 'best writers on this side of the question' allowed 'that nothing less can justify it, than "a total subversion of the constitution"', men could never be trusted to 'judge fairly and impartially in their own case'.¹⁸³ Although he who 'beareth the sword' might 'strike it improperly' at times, government had been instituted for man's benefit and to 'dissolve government' in order to 'remedy an occasional inconvenience' would result in 'more mischief...done by the people, thus let loose, in a month, than would have been done by the governor in half a century.'¹⁸⁴ The same argument was maintained by the Tory High Churchman, Charles Daubeny, in 1800.

¹⁷⁹ Idem, 'Submission to Government', in William Jones (ed.), *The works of the right reverend George Horne, D.D. late bishop of Norwich*, vol. III (London, 1818), pp. 386-387.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

¹⁸¹ Idem, 'The Providential Deliverance from the Gunpowder Treason' (n.d), quoted in Gunn, *Beyond Liberty and Property*, p. 169.

¹⁸² Horne, 'Submission to Government', p. 388. Also see Idem, 'The Duty of praying for Governors', p. 115.

¹⁸³ Horne, 'Submission to Government', pp. 391-392.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

Some claimed that the Bible ‘provided for no extreme cases; but laid down only the general principle of obedience to government’. But this was ‘not so much to interpret Scripture, as to explain it away.’ To claim a right to resistance left it to the ‘discretion and disposition of the parties to whom the principle is directed, to determine in what cases, and under what circumstances, it is to be applied.’ Consequently, this right was inherently flawed, for if the legitimate exercise of resistance were ‘to be determined by the resisting party, all causes... [are] tried by a rebel jury’.¹⁸⁵ Thus, despite the abandonment of indefeasible hereditary succession and concessions regarding the form of government, preachers of a Tory lineage continued to reject notions of a right to resistance, even at the end of the eighteenth century.

Importantly, though, both Horne and Daubeny did allow subjects recourse to redress magistrates’ abuse of power. For Horne, obedience explicitly did not ‘extend to the relinquishing those rights which the citizen may legally claim.’ Each constitution provided legal recourse for protesting against illegal actions, and scripture, rather than ‘indicate unconditional submission to power illegally exercised... refers us, for the practice of our duty in particular cases, to the laws and constitution of our country.’¹⁸⁶ Again, Daubeny echoed Horne’s argument: the ‘constitution of this country knows of no right of control over the power of authority, but a *legal* one: consequently, whilst any control is otherwise than *legally* administered, our boasted Constitution, so far as it applies to that case, ceases to exist.’¹⁸⁷ In short, subjects could pursue legal, constitutional means to remedy grievances, rather than resist and risk overturning the government.

A similar notion was developed by Horsley in 1793. Though Horsley had argued that subjects should submit to ‘the worst actions of Tyrants’, he too allowed subjects a power to redress power exercised illegally. In Whiggish fashion, Horsley argued that the monarch was bound by ‘an express contract with the people’. This agreement was not ‘tacit, implied and vague’ as the most radical proponents of Whiggery suggested: ‘it

¹⁸⁵ Charles Daubeny, *A Sermon Occasioned by a Late Desperate Attempt on the Life of his Majesty* (London, 1800), pp. 16-17.

¹⁸⁶ Horne, ‘Submission to Government’, pp. 385-388.

¹⁸⁷ Daubeny, *A Sermon Occasioned by a Late Desperate Attempt on the Life of his Majesty*, p. 18.

is explicit, patent, and precise. It is summarily expressed in the Coronation Oath'. Where the monarch was subject to the rule of law, his coronation oath existed as a mutual agreement of fixed limitations. Moreover, 'transgression of the covenant, on the part of the Monarch, [had become] little less than a moral impossibility' due to both 'the form ... [and] the principles of Government'. In Britain's mixed constitutional arrangement, parliament was 'armed with a power of constitutional resistance, to oppose ... [the] prerogative overstepping its just bounds' thereby taking away 'the pretence for any spontaneous interference of the private Citizen'.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, while the crown remained irresponsible, its ministerial advisors did not, deterring them from becoming 'instruments of despotism'. Thus both Whig and old Tory churchmen converged by acknowledging and elevating the legal means of limiting monarchical government.

Not all Tory discourses, however, were as careful as Horne's and Daubeny's. The French Revolution introduced the combined threat of republicanism and atheism encouraging emphasis on the divine nature of monarchical power, often in terms which obscured the concept that this power existed within legal bounds.¹⁸⁹ Gayle Pendleton, in her systematic examination of conservative propaganda published between 1789 and 1802 has suggested that, 'perhaps over a hundred titles are advocating an element of Filmerism'.¹⁹⁰ The number most likely included John Whitaker's, *The Real Origin of Government*, which entertained no scruples about reverting to the doctrines of *Patriarcha*: these arguments had been 'pressed upon the publick, with great success' some 'eighty or ninety years ago' and, in the 1790s, 'They are much more wanted, as the spirit of republican turbulence is much more predominant'.¹⁹¹ Whitaker dismissed

¹⁸⁸ Horsley, *A Sermon, preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal...on Wednesday, January 30, 1793*, pp. 17-20.

¹⁸⁹ See John Riland, *The Rights of God, Occasioned by Mr. Paine's 'Rights of Man'...* (Birmingham, 1792), pp. 5-6; [William Jones], *One Penny-worth of Truth from Thomas Bull to his Brother John*.

¹⁹⁰ Gayle Pendleton notes that 'In the era of the French Revolution no less than thirty-four pamphlets in forty-one editions preached some form of explicit divine right kingship; thirty-seven pamphlets in forty-five editions urged non-resistance; thirty-five titles in forty-nine editions argued that "A Christian's (or citizen's) duty is to be submissive to magistrates and not to meddle in politics;" and eighteen pamphlets in thirty-nine editions justified obedience to government on an Adamist or paternal basis. Moreover, these sentiments are not occurring over and over in the same thirty-odd titles, so that perhaps over a hundred titles are advocating an element of Filmerism.' See Gayle Trusdel Pendleton, *English Conservative propaganda during the French Revolution, 1789-1802* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Emory University, 1976), pp. 12-13.

¹⁹¹ John Whitaker, *The Real Origin of Government* (London, 1795), Advertisement

notions of an egalitarian state of nature. Humankind had originated with a single pair, Adam and Eve, one of whom was made superior to the other from the beginning. Thus government was clearly ‘the original institution of God’.¹⁹² Having established the divinity of government, Whitaker proceeded to contend that ‘MONARCHY’ was ‘the primary, the natural, the divine form of government for Man’, a fact demonstrated by ‘the personal rule of Adam over Eve’.¹⁹³

The Real Origin of Government received praise from the High-Church *British Critic* when it reviewed the pamphlet in April 1795. The work’s value, it said, lay in its reliance on revelation, its demonstration that government had always been coeval with man’s existence and its consequent denial that ‘Government is a work of mere human invention, that its authority is derived solely from the people, and amenable to them’.¹⁹⁴ However, when it came to notions of the extent of the monarch’s power, the reviewer’s appraisals became more self-conscious:

This able author means, it is evident, no more than...to mark what was most natural and best for man; the original appointment of God for him: not with Sir Robert, to preach up divine hereditary right, or the opinions stated in the third chapter of *Patriarcha* “that kings are not bound to laws,” “that the liberty of Parliaments is not from nature but the grace of the Princes”.¹⁹⁵

Directing praise towards the most definitively Tory of ideologues rendered it necessary to be explicit regarding the doctrines which were supported and those which had been abandoned. ‘Were these his conclusions’, the reviewer assured his readers, ‘we should be far from assenting to them’.¹⁹⁶ The reviewer’s self-consciousness was well founded in this respect: John Reeves’ *Thoughts on English Government* (1795) was condemned by Parliament in November of the same year for inflating royal authority.¹⁹⁷ It was

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

¹⁹⁴ *BC*, 5 (April 1795), p. 414.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 414.

¹⁹⁷ See below, pp. 67- 70.

necessary to acknowledge the legal limits of regal authority if elements of old Tory argument were to be integrated into a regime which still defended its identity as Whig; a regime born from the constitutional struggles of the seventeenth century, and dedicated to the notion that the crown's powers should not exist unbound.

Therefore, the late eighteenth century witnessed not only the rehabilitation but renegotiation of old Tory ideas. By embracing the notion of providential divine right, as opposed to indefeasible divine right, elements of old Tory argument, including the divine, patriarchal origin of government, passive obedience and non-resistance, were preserved; they were also deployed in defence of the Hanoverian George III by individuals who openly identified as Tories. Moreover, there was consensus between old Tories and conservative Whigs regarding the inherent dangers of abstract notions of popular sovereignty and a right to sporadic, popular resistance. In the process, both ideological traditions emphasised a conservative interpretation of the Glorious Revolution as an event which, rather than establishing elective monarchy, had specifically defended the principle of hereditary succession. These ideological developments served as part of a conscious attempt to separate Tory identity from its historical associations with Jacobite disloyalty and reconcile it both with the Glorious Revolution and loyalty to the Hanoverian dynasty.

The Constitution Established by Law

The deployment of Tory ideas regarding the origin of political authority and the obligation of obedience were accompanied by a distancing from the more extreme tenets of indefeasible hereditary right and an unbound prerogative. Yet emphasis on the preservative nature of the Glorious Revolution ensured that outlining the powers which the crown did retain, and its exact relationship to parliament, could still ignite controversy when it came to discussing the constitution established by law. This section will argue that secular discourses which contributed to the development of a distinct Tory identity focused on the integral role of the monarch in Britain's constitutional arrangement. By doing so, these writers sought to protect the existent powers of the crown from popular encroachment. Yet, like the religious discourses discussed previously, secular discourses reconciled this pro-monarchical agenda with the Glorious

Revolution, particularly the concept that the crown's power should not exist unbound. Consequently, the abandonment of old Tory notions of arbitrary, absolute monarchical power enabled Tory identity to be renegotiated and integrated with conservative Whig defences of monarchical power.

In the opinion of David Eastwood, William Blackstone, in his landmark *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765–1769), ‘offered an essentially Tory reading of the history of the Glorious Revolution, denying that the readjustment in the line of succession should be seen as having effectively subordinated the crown to parliament, still less that it intruded any element of popular sovereignty into the constitution’.¹⁹⁸ It was Blackstone's ambiguous reflections on the limits of the prerogative which, J.C.D. Clark suggests, facilitated reconciliation between Tory intelligentsia and the Hanoverian regime.¹⁹⁹ Blackstone was by no means accepted uncritically by all Tory writers in their discussions of the rights of the crown.²⁰⁰ Nonetheless, Eastwood's and Clark's suggestions indicate that, in the late eighteenth century, relative ambiguity persisted regarding what the ideal of Britain's mixed government and balanced constitution actually entailed. As Gunn has suggested, this ambiguity enabled old Tories to defend notions of regal supremacy well into the reign of George III.²⁰¹

The issue of the extent of the royal prerogative within Britain's constitutional arrangement was broached controversially, in 1764, by Timothy Brecknock, lawyer and previously pro-Newcastle newspaper journalist, in *Droit de le Roy*.²⁰² The work comprised a lengthy delineation of the sovereign's hereditary claim to the throne, not unusual in light of the dynastic controversy which had punctuated the reigns of George I and George II. Yet Brecknock was concerned not simply with establishing George III's right to the throne, but also with asserting his right to the ‘same absolute, sovereign and regal power over the subjects of this nation, that his royal predecessors, the kings

¹⁹⁸ David Eastwood, ‘John Reeves and the contested idea of the constitution’, *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16 (1993), p. 198.

¹⁹⁹ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed, pp. 242-250.

²⁰⁰ See below, p. 70.

²⁰¹ Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property*, pp. 191-192.

²⁰² Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 118.

and queens of England, have heretofore claimed and enjoyed'.²⁰³ The argument rested on the conservative notion that James II, conscious of his own violation of the Anglican Coronation Oath, had abdicated the throne in 1688 rather than been deposed. Consequently, Brecknock claimed, 'this realm admits no *inter regnum*'; the crown had merely passed to the next Protestant successor 'by the laws of the realm', its powers intact.²⁰⁴

To support his argument that the prerogative had not been diminished by the Glorious Revolution, Brecknock turned to contemporary constitutional practice. The king contained in himself the whole power to assent and enact legislation presented by the Houses of Parliament; he provided 'the life of our laws... the life of our peace'. The notion that the king's power to enact laws relied upon the assent of parliament, rendering the upper and lower houses 'partners of the sovereignty' in a 'tripartite and co-ordinate government... call[ed] mixt monarchy' were inaccurate. The consent of parliament remained a privilege and this institution did not exercise 'a co-ordinate, co-equal, corival and collateral power with the sovereignty of royalty'. To presume this to be the case was to ignore the stock from which their power derived: 'the power they have is not originally in themselves, but proceeds from the kings [*sic*] grant and favour; they are mere concessions of grace'.²⁰⁵ It was, in essence, a top-down theory of government which continued to postulate a model of monarchical power as the basis from which liberties were derived. Importantly, it rejected Whiggish notions that the crown's power existed within mutually consensual limitations. Consequently, Brecknock's pamphlet ignited controversy and was burned by order of parliament. It is interesting to note, however, that Brecknock, disappointed by Newcastle's failure to advance his career, had perhaps believed that *Droit de le Roy* would serve his ambitions in the new reign.²⁰⁶ Obscuring notions of constitutional balance and inflating the powers of the crown did not, it would seem, need an American revolt for inspiration.

²⁰³ Timothy Brecknock, *Droit de le Roy. Or a Digest of the Rights and Prerogatives of the Imperial Crown of great-Britain* (London, 1764), p. 20.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 31- 33.

²⁰⁶ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 118.

The American crisis, though, facilitated an explicit assertion of regal supremacy from the old Tory hosier and religious writer, William Stevens, in his response to the Whig cleric, Richard Watson.²⁰⁷ Stevens attacked the basic presumption of Watson's theories of constitutional balance. A balanced constitutional arrangement was dismissed by Stevens as 'weakly constructed' and one which, as Tacitus had theorised, represented a 'mixture that ... must inevitably bring on convulsions, and end in dissolution of the body politic'.²⁰⁸ Moreover, it was a theory which was unsupported by English law: 'for by the law, the three estates of the realm are the Lords spiritual, the Lords temporal, and the Commons, the King not being one of the three estates; but distinct from, and superior to them'. For evidence, Stevens relied on the idioms of ritualistic rhetoric which outlined the duty of the subject to the state: 'the office of our church for the 5th of November', in which the prayers for preservation referenced not the 'three estates, King, Lords, and Commons, but... the King and the three estates of the realm of England assembled in Parliament'. Similarly, the prayers read during parliamentary sessions declared 'the High Court of Parliament assembled, not *with*, as co-ordinate, but under our most gracious King, as *subject* to him.' For Stevens, this language provided adequate evidence of regal supremacy. So did the oath of allegiance: 'We do not swear to bear faith and true allegiance to the King and the two houses of Parliament, as our supreme and sovereign Lords, nor is there any treason against the Parliament; but we swear to bear faith and true allegiance to the King, and *him* we are to defend to the utmost of our power'. With this final piece of evidence, Stevens moved towards a dismissal of parliamentary sovereignty. Indeed, he proceeded to argue that the fact that the Commons and Lords took oaths of allegiance to the monarch demonstrated that they were 'not the sovereign authority' but merely 'fellow-subjects', subordinate to the supreme authority in the state, the king.²⁰⁹ Harry Dickinson has argued that, in the decades following the Glorious Revolution, Tories gradually accepted parliament as the irresistible, sovereign power in the state in order to preserve the doctrine of non-resistance.²¹⁰ In the context of the American Revolution, Stevens was willing to emphasise monarchical sovereignty for the same reason.

²⁰⁷ This dispute occurred in 1777. For more details please see above, pp. 39-40, 42- 45

²⁰⁸ William Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated*, p. 11.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

²¹⁰ Dickinson, 'The Eighteenth-Century Debate on the Sovereignty of Parliament', p. 196.

The notion of regal supremacy was fundamental to old Tory incriminations of resistance. Stevens had urged that there was not ‘any treason against the Parliament’, for subjects did not swear allegiance to this body. This argument had been elaborated in 1776 when Stevens edited and re-published the work of the Jacobite and Non-Juror Roger North, entitled *A Discourse on the Constitution*. Its purpose was ‘to shew the public how they are imposed upon’ by ‘absurd interpretations of the constitution’, and ‘to furnish them with a few rational principles concerning the nature of civil power ... and the positive laws of their own country’. North’s text opened with a defence of the Tory doctrine of non-resistance put in simple, legal terms: ‘nothing can justify resistance, but what will amount to a just and legal defence upon an indictment of High-Treason’. It was a constitutional maxim that the king could do no wrong, and ‘the law against compassing the death of the king, hath no exception’.²¹¹ North proceeded to outline the necessity of absolute sovereignty, a power which ‘wherever it is lodged, is and must be uncontrollable and irresistible’. The notion was axiomatic, for a government which was resistible was no government at all.²¹² North’s essay was willing to admit, tentatively, that this irresistible power was lodged ‘in the crown, together with the two houses of parliament when duly assembled ... being what is termed the legislative power, which no subject ought to gainsay or resist’.²¹³ Thus, technically, North acknowledged the notion of parliamentary sovereignty. But, the arrangement between the three bodies, King, Lords and Commons, was not of equal stature in practice. Whether there be ‘a legislative power *in esse* or not, there is always a supreme power which commands all the forces in the state’, and this power was the crown.²¹⁴ The two houses retained a co-authority through the possession of a negative voice on legislative acts and could give rise to new laws through the right of petitioning the crown. Nonetheless, ‘beyond this concurrent power in legislature’ parliament did not ‘claim any proper agency whatsoever in the government’.²¹⁵ It was the crown which gave existence, or agency, to the laws; the power of the crown was the coercive force in the constitution and the supreme power which rebellion challenged.

²¹¹ North, *A discourse on the English constitution*, pp. 3-4.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25-26.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

By the 1770s, the American colonists were moving increasingly towards a rejection of parliamentary sovereignty, placing emphasis instead on allegiance to the crown alone.²¹⁶ This provided the perfect backdrop for the revival of an understanding of legislative power (and resistance to its laws) which emphasised the role of the monarch. North's text argued that it was the King's assent which was the pivot in Britain's constitutional arrangement; he was the basis of the law, not parliament. It was impossible that 'resistance with force' could take place against the legislature,

For laws themselves are but the voice or words of power,
and have authority to create a duty, but no active force to compel
obedience, or to which resistance can be applied ... when the executive
power comes forward with a strong hand, then there is somewhat to
resist ... Therefore resistance or obedience ... relate wholly to the
executive power, without which the legislative is weak and ineffectual.
Now all the rest of the supreme power of the government of England ...
being owned to reside in the crown, makes the crown of England
irresistible with force, upon any pretence whatsoever ... such opposition
being a crime the laws style treason or rebellion.²¹⁷

From this perspective, American rebellion against British law did not constitute the exercise of an historic right of resistance; nor could it be legitimised as a rejection of parliamentary authority. Rather, it entailed resistance to the authority of the crown and, as North's text clarified, this resistance 'the laws style treason'.

The arguments advanced by Stevens and Roger North were out of step with those of ministerial Whigs and conservative discourse more broadly. Conservative condemnations of the American case generally concurred with the Declaratory Act

²¹⁶ Paul Langford, 'Old Whigs, Old Tories, and the American revolution', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 8:2 (1980), p. 110; Bernard Bailyn, *The ideological origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 224-226.

²¹⁷ North, *A discourse on the English constitution*, pp. 26-27.

(1766) in asserting the rights of parliament to counter American complaints.²¹⁸ It was ‘The King and both Houses of Parliament’ which comprised ‘the supreme Legislature of this Country’ and retained ‘a general, unlimited Right to make Laws for binding the People, *in all Cases whatsoever*’.²¹⁹ Thus American assertions that the implementation of legislation devised by this body was tyrannical were unfounded. Moreover, the notion that the American colonists, while accusing the British government of tyranny, had come to support the power of the King as distinct from parliament provided ammunition for Whig supporters of the British government’s policy of coercion. In 1777, William Markham argued that the colonists ‘maintained, that a king of England has the power to discharge any number of his subjects ... from the allegiance that is due to the state’.²²⁰ Meanwhile, in parliament, Lord North pointed out that it was ‘the characteristic of Whiggism to gain as much for the people as possible, while the aim of Toryism was to increase the prerogative’. In the current dispute, it was the ‘administration [which] contended for the right of parliament, while the Americans talked of their belonging to the crown. Their language therefore was that of Toryism’.²²¹ Thus, by defending the sovereignty of parliament and rejecting American attempts to enhance monarchical power, Lord North was able to lay claim to true Whig principles. Nonetheless, despite these differences, the American rebellion encouraged the emergence of a broad, authoritarian consensus between old Tories and conservative Whigs. Indeed, as Langford has argued effectively, the coercive policies adopted by North’s administration, and his decision to pursue armed conflict against the American colonists, won consistent support from old Tories in parliament.²²²

It was not until the prerogative was attacked specifically that conservative Whigs placed emphasis on the importance of monarchical power within Britain’s constitutional arrangement. Conservative Whig discourse advocated the benefits of Britain’s mixed government and balanced constitutional arrangement. As the royal chaplain, Robert Lowth, subsequently bishop of St David’s, Oxford, and London, explained in 1764,

²¹⁸ H.T. Dickinson, ‘Britain’s Imperial Sovereignty: The Ideological Case against the American Colonies’, in H.T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the American Revolution* (Edinburgh, 1998), pp. 64-96.

²¹⁹ Tucker, *A Treatise concerning civil government*, p. 109.

²²⁰ William Markham, *A Sermon Preached before the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* (London, 1777), p. xxii.

²²¹ Lord North, Speech in the House of Commons on 26 October, 1775, quoted in Langford, ‘Old Whigs, Old Tories, and the American revolution’, p. 111.

²²² *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

incorporating ‘a due mixture of the several simple forms of government, those of One, of a Few, and of Many’ enabled the state to ‘retain as far as possible the advantages, and to exclude the inconveniences, peculiar to each ... Every one of the Three Powers is a moderating power, placed between the two others, and ready to exert its force on either hand’.²²³ In 1784, it was to the balanced nature of the constitution that William Pitt turned to defend his appointment and refute Fox’s claim that the House of Commons was the real agent of government, with the right to force a ministry on the King.²²⁴ The British constitution, Pitt urged, was composed of ‘mixed powers’ and rested on a ‘balance amongst the three branches of the legislature’. Should Fox be successful and the King’s prerogative to appoint his ministers be undermined the ‘constitutional independence of the crown’ would be ‘reduced to the very verge of annihilation’, distorting the ‘boasted equipoise of the constitution’.²²⁵ Pitt’s argument lends credence to John Derry’s suggestion that, despite ‘the temptation to call Pitt a Tory... [as a means] to provide a neat and convenient way of giving clarity and consistency to the party differences of the period’, ‘all the major political groupings were Whig’.²²⁶ Pitt’s defence of the prerogative was derived from the Whig tradition, and Pitt always considered himself to be nothing other than Whig. Thus his arguments, rather than signify ministerial reversion to old Tory doctrine, reasserted the fractured nature of the Whig tradition. While, under North, Whig arguments had been used to defend the role of parliament, now the same ideological tradition was used to protect the powers of the crown. As Britain edged into the 1790s, this trend was perpetuated, facilitating a pro-monarchical, anti-populist consensus between old Tories and conservative Whigs. This laid the foundations for the emergence of the broad, anti-populist, authoritarian consensus in the nineteenth century which contemporaries would label ‘Tory’.

²²³ Robert Lowth, *A sermon preached before the Honourable and Right Reverend Richard, Lord Bishop of Durham ... August 15, 1764* (Newcastle, [1764]), pp.9-10. Scott Mandelbrote, ‘Lowth, Robert (1710–1787)’, *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/17104, accessed 24 Sept 2015]

²²⁴ John Derry, *William Pitt* (London, 1962), p.38. For Fox’s view on the subject see E. N. Williams (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (London, 1965), pp. 97-98; Frank O’Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two-Party System*, pp. 14-18.

²²⁵ William Pitt, 20 February, 1784, quoted in Williams (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century Constitution: Documents and Commentary, 1688-1815*, pp. 96-97.

²²⁶ John Derry, *Politics in the Age of Fox, Pitt and Liverpool* (Basingstoke, 2001), p. 43.

The publication of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man part 2* (1792), with its 'keenest vengeance' directed towards the institution of monarchy, followed by the murder of Louis XVI in 1793, pushed the defence of monarchy to the forefront of the conservative agenda. In this context, conservatives continued to adhere to the notions of mixed government and a balanced constitution. Yet emphasis on the integral nature of the prerogative within this constitutional arrangement received wide countenance. John Bowles, barrister and friend of Stevens, in his *A Protest against T. Paine's "Rights of Man"* (1793), referred to the monarchy as one of three branches in a balanced constitution. The blending of these powers had 'caused the happiness and splendour of Great Britain', proving the apprehensions of Tacitus 'unfounded'. Within this arrangement, the crown's powers were 'limited', 'connected', and 'dependent upon, the other powers'.²²⁷ Nonetheless, the monarchy was depicted as integral, for the prerogative was '*the fountain of justice*', 'the spring which puts laws into execution' and therefore gave 'activity and energy to the whole system'.²²⁸ Although conservative Whigs might continue to assert the 'mixed' nature of government and the 'balanced' nature of the constitution, they placed emphasis on the crown as its essence. Rhetorically, this drew them into consensus with Tories who, although conceding regal limitation, continued to highlight the supremacy of the crown.

Ambiguity persisted regarding what the ideal of Britain's mixed government actually entailed in practice, providing those predisposed towards monarchy with a considerable degree of space in which to manoeuvre. In a charge delivered to the Grand Jury, in 1799, Henry Gwillim, Chief Justice of the Isle of Ely, focused upon British constitutional complexities and commenced with a recital of an ostensibly Whig appreciation of the combined '*benefits*' of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy which excluded the evils of each of these forms.²²⁹ In the process, he dismissed the apprehensions of Tacitus, exploited previously by Stevens, that the combination of these three forms was visionary. However, Gwillim quickly reminded his audience that his emphasis lay on the notion of combined '*benefits*' not combined *forms*. As Tacitus

²²⁷ John Bowles, *A Protest against T. Paine's "Rights of Man": An address to the Members of a Book Society ...* (London, 1793), p. 15, 18, 19.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. My italics.

²²⁹ Henry Gwillim, b.1760 (?)- d.1837. Educated at Christ Church, University of Oxford, BA (1779) MA (1783); barrister at Middle Temple from 1787.

had suggested, the latter could not last long: ‘three jarring interests, three powers co-ordinate and co-equal in the state, must soon have terminated in anarchy and confusion’. Rather, the glory of the British constitution, and the ‘ingenuity of its contrivance’, was the combination of the *benefits* of three forms in a singular form, monarchy:

the beauty of our form of government... whilst it unites the benefits of each, it is in itself one and simple: it is a monarchy; the power, and dominion, and sovereignty are lodged in one only: the king reigns, the king is supreme, the whole scheme of government is carried on by the king only, and in the king’s name.

Thus acknowledgment of mixed government did not necessarily entail acceptance that the variant powers of the constitution were equal in stature. For Gwillim, sovereignty continued to reside with the King; he was the fundamental, and thus supreme, element in Britain’s constitution.²³⁰

Gwillim maintained an understanding of the monarch not as an estate but superior to them: ‘the states affect no [e]quality or co-ordination with the sovereign; though they limit his power, they acknowledge his supremacy: the subject is not distracted where to lay his allegiance: he findeth the whole power of the state concentrated in one only.’²³¹ It was the monarchy which was brought to the forefront of authoritarian constitutional defences as the integral component in the workings of government; the crown remained the essence of the constitution without which the whole apparatus of government would cease to exist. Nonetheless, even such strong assertions regarding the status and powers of the crown were coupled with an acknowledgement that its powers did not exist unbound. Gwillim highlighted that the king acted ‘not indeed arbitrarily’ but ‘under certain checks and limitations’. These entailed acting ‘in all cases with the advice of his subjects; in some cases with their consent as well as advice’. In relation to the latter, the king’s ‘powers in matters of legislation is qualified by the consent of his parliament,

²³⁰ Henry Gwillim, ‘A Charge delivered to the Grand Jury, at the Assizes holden at Ely, on Wednesday the 27th of March 1799...’, in Georges Lamoine, (ed.), *Charges to the Grand Jury 1769-1803* (London, 1992), pp. 623-624.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

the constitutional representatives of the three estates in the realm'. It was necessary for Tory notions of regal supremacy to be accompanied by acknowledgement that the powers of the crown did not exist unbound, demonstrating the abandonment of old Tory notions of arbitrary, absolute monarchical power.

Indeed, in the polarised context of the 1790s, zealous defences of monarchical power which obscured the role of parliament could easily ignite controversy. In 1795, the infamous barrister John Reeves published his *Thoughts on English Government*. This publication resulted in his prosecution for seditious libel, highlighting the rhetorical limits which monarchical defences should adopt within a state committed to legacy of the Glorious Revolution and the principle of regal limitation. Reeves was angered by 'departures from original principles' demonstrated by the inaccuracies in constitutional language which 'have broken in some Men's minds, the intirety [*sic*] of Monarchy, and given an impression of the King being a subordinate Officer'. These 'errors and misconceptions', in Reeves' opinion, had 'taken their rise from those two great events, *The Reformation*, and what is called *The Revolution*'.²³² Consequently, he undertook a full scale assault on the latter which entailed a controversial repudiation that 1688 had produced any real constitutional change:

What a disappointment and discomfiture it must be to
those idolizers of the Constitution supposed to be established
at *The Revolution*....if they had lived in those wicked reigns
of Charles II. and James II. they would have enjoyed in theory,
though not in practice (and *theory* of the two, is more considered
by modern Reformers), as good a Constitution as they have had
since, with the single exception of a Protestant King.²³³

²³² John Reeves, *Thoughts on English Government Addressed to the Quiet Good Sense of the People of England in a series of Letters. Letter the Second* (London, 1799), p. 84; Idem, *Thoughts on English Government Addressed to the Quiet Good Sense of the People of England in a series of Letters. Letter the First* (London, 1795), p. 25.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

Turning to the ‘principles of this supposed Revolution’, Reeves pointed out that the statutes issued once William and Mary had ascended the throne ‘stipulated nothing for the people’ other than the points in which James II had broken the law, ‘or what was understood by the generality of men to be the Law of the Land’.²³⁴ Existent laws formed the basis of the constitution and it was here, rather than to fanciful schemes or speculations, that individuals should look to discover its nature: ‘the English Government is real and substantial; we see it and feel it ... we know its movements, because they are regulated by established and known Laws. This is the only Constitution ... *the Constitution of our Government, or the Constitution established by Law*’.²³⁵ Reeves proceeded to explain that this Constitution, in ‘England [,] is a Monarchy’.²³⁶

Reeves’ justification of this position, though, comprised dubious rhetoric. Like Roger North (whose *Discourse* was cited in *Thoughts*), Reeves admitted regal power in enacting laws to be ‘qualified’ by the need to obtain ‘advice and consent’ from parliament assembled. Nevertheless, ‘the Government, and the administration of it in all its parts, may be said to rest wholly and solely on the King’.²³⁷ The King, in his dual capacity as legislator and executive, stood at the centre of this constitution as the living embodiment of the laws themselves.²³⁸ Parliament, like the juries who provided a qualification of the King’s power in an executive capacity, was only an occasional presence; it was the King who provided the active and perpetual force in the constitution; a basis of power which could continue without the other elements, but without which the other elements could not survive:

Those two adjuncts of Parliament and Juries are subsidiary and occasional; but the King’s Power is a substantive one, always visible and active ... the Monarch is the ancient stock from which have sprung those goodly branches of the legislature, the Lords and Commons, that at

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 12.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

²³⁸ A.V. Beedell, ‘John Reeves’s prosecution for a seditious libel, 1795-1796: a study in political cynicism’, *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993), p. 805.

the same time give ornament to the Tree, and afford shelter to those who seek protection under it. But these are still only branches, and derive their origin and their nutriment from their common parent; they may be lopped off, and the Tree is a Tree still ... The Kingly Government may go on, in all its functions, without Lords or Commons ... but without the King *his* Parliament is no more. The King, therefore, alone it is who necessarily subsists, without change or diminution.²³⁹

The phraseology of ‘lopping off’ constitutional branches was controversial and this passage was seized upon by the parliamentary opposition. The primary figure in the Loyalist Association movement, established in 1792, Reeves easily warranted their disgust and they instigated proceedings against him for seditious libel.²⁴⁰

Seizure upon the language of *Thoughts* reflected a deeper anxiety amongst the Opposition Whigs about the ideological mood of the nation and the exertions of executive power. Indeed, their prosecution of Reeves was strategic, coming in the wake of the suspension of Habeas Corpus (1794) and at a critical moment in the passage of Pitt’s ‘Two Acts’ in 1795.²⁴¹ The Whig lawyer, Thomas Erskine, exploited the connection between Reeves’ publication and the bills: ‘if that House, in its intemperance and folly, should carelessly pass these insults on the Revolution’ contained in the pamphlet, ‘the consequences would be dreadful; more especially as they were proceeding with bills founded on principles utterly subversive of everything for which the Revolution was dear to the people.’²⁴² With the bills just about to proceed to the committee stages, the ‘repudiation of Reeves was a political necessity not an optional choice’ for Pitt.²⁴³ Reeves’ position as a Government employee made it

²³⁹ Reeves, *Thoughts on English Government ... Letter the First*, pp. 11-13.

²⁴⁰ Charles Grey declared that he was ‘ready to confess that the conduct of that gentleman, in 1792, did not much recommend him to his good opinion’. See Grey’s Speech in the House of Commons, 23 November 1795, *PH*, vol. 32, col. 615.

²⁴¹ Beedell, ‘John Reeves’s prosecution for a seditious libel’, p. 820.

²⁴² Thomas Erskine, Speech in the House of Commons, November 23 1795, *PH*, vol. 32, col. 622.

²⁴³ Beedell, ‘John Reeves’s prosecution for a seditious libel’, p. 817. Also, see John Barrell’s interpretation of Gillray’s *The Crown & Anchor Libel, burnt by the Public Hangman* (1795) which draws on the notion that Pitt was a co-conspirator in Reeves’ plot to subvert the constitution and only betrayed

difficult for the administration to distance itself from him and although Pitt initially moved that the orders of the day be read, his hands were tied. Only Windham attempted a parliamentary exoneration of the work, without much success. Meanwhile, the majority of government supporters retreated.²⁴⁴

Reeves' prosecution was significant in that it demonstrated the rhetorical boundaries within which the prerogative could be protected. Reeves was eventually acquitted on the grounds that, while the jury found his publication 'very improper', they were not convinced he had been motivated by a desire to subvert parliament.²⁴⁵ Even so, it was only in 1798, once the furore had died down, that the *Anti-Jacobin Review* roused itself to vindicate Reeves' work. Despite the prior controversy, the review protected Reeves' understanding of the constitution. The reviewer attacked Blackstone's ambiguous constitutional reflections which countenanced inaccurate notions of balance: 'we state, without fear of contradiction, that it is ridiculous to talk of *three branches* without a stock'. The King was the supreme power and the power legally exercised in Privy Council disproved the notion that his power could '*only exist in Parliament*'.²⁴⁶ Similarly, in its review of Reeves' work in 1799, the *British Critic* broached the issue of constitutional and unconstitutional principles. Reeves' principles were not unconstitutional, claimed the reviewer, because they were not inconsistent with the law and, though they might not have been called upon until recently, this by no means meant that they were inaccurate.²⁴⁷ Thus although Reeves' language might have been controversial regarding parliament, his interpretation of the constitution as essentially monarchical promoted commendation and concurrence from the Tory reviews.

In 1799, Reeves issued a more moderate espousal of his own views on the importance of the monarch in *Thoughts... Letter the Second*. There were no ambiguous metaphors; no endorsements of 'lopping off' constitutional branches. Reeves claimed this had referred only to the prorogation of parliament and by no means suggested that kingly

Reeves to disguise his own plots against the nation's liberties. John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: figurative treason, fantasies of regicide, 1793-1796* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 639-642.

²⁴⁴ Eastwood, 'John Reeves and the contested idea of the constitution', p. 204.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

²⁴⁶ *AJ*, 1:4 (October 1798), p. 472.

²⁴⁷ *BC*, 14 (December 1799), pp. 616-622.

government should exist alone. Furthermore, while his controversial *Thoughts ...Letter the First* argued that the only thing which had essentially changed in 1688 was the monarch's religion, this latter, moderated work phrased this argument more conventionally: the 'wise and temperate' conductors of the Revolution had specifically 'guarded against any diminution of the Monarchy'; it was the preservation of 'the ancient hereditary Monarchy of this Realm, with its Laws and Government' which represented 'true *Revolution Principles*'.²⁴⁸ Yet, while his argument was moderated, Reeves continued to contend for regal supremacy. He criticised those who spoke of the king's assent 'as if they thought the King ... at best but a third party in a tripartite concern ... very little above a Countersigning officer, to give the final authority'.²⁴⁹ New perspectives on government were assigned to the Puritanism which emerged in the reign of Elizabeth I, gaining strength under James I and Charles I, 'till it succeeded in setting up the two Houses of Parliament against the King, and at last gave origin to the Rebellion of 1641'. At this point, new notions of government had emerged

That they were in effect the makers of the Law; that the King indeed gave his assent; but that he was bound to give it, and had no right to put a veto on a measure once agreed upon by both Houses, and to reject the Laws ... that upon the whole, the Monarchy was a mixt Monarchy, and that the Lords and Commons were ingredients of equal quality with the King in the composition ... these Notions of Equality were the principal grounds of arguments upon which the Parliamentarians justified their exercise of sovereign power, in levying Troops, and carrying on the War against the King, which ultimately led to destroying the whole Constitution After Such an application of it, we need not doubt that such an opinion is entirely anti-monarchical; and has a direct tendency to introduce a Republic.²⁵⁰

Here Reeves exposed his underlying anxiety. The authority of the King was undeniably threatened by a misunderstanding of the government as 'mixed' because it obscured his

²⁴⁸ John Reeves, *Thoughts on English Government ...Letter the Second*, p. 52.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

power in a legislative capacity. This could open the door to a domineering and dangerous House of Commons. In response, Reeves sought to instil an understanding of the royal prerogative as the centre of the constitution which certainly should not be considered as nominal. His perspective, in short, was both anti-populist and pro-prerogative.

Reeves' defence of the powers of the crown, though it cited Hale, Hooker and Coke, amongst others, for support, was not exactly 'scrupulously Whig', as J.C.D. Clark suggests.²⁵¹ Indeed, the protection of the crown's powers was central to John Gifford's *Anti-Jacobin Review's* early, self-conscious appropriation of the term 'Tory', in 1800: 'We are *Tories* and *High-Churchmen*' claimed Gifford, continuing that

As Tories, then, we are strongly attached to the Constitution of our Government, as established by law, and as existing by law at this time ...The rights of the SOVEREIGN and the Rights of *his subjects*, as settled by law, we hold it to be our duty to defend to the utmost of our power.²⁵²

Of course, the capitalisation and italics in this sentence, and the emphasis which they assigned to constitutional roles, were not accidental. More interesting, though, is the work which was being reviewed at the time that this identification was uttered: John Reeves' *Thoughts on English Government...Letter the Fourth*. In this article, Reeves was praised by the *Anti-Jacobin Review* as having 'more deeply studied the nature of our Constitution ... [and having] acquired a more extensive knowledge of its legal operations ... than any of its modern assailants or defendants'.²⁵³ Consistent with his earlier works, this pamphlet argued for the preservation of a strong royal prerogative premised on a constitutional understanding of the legal supremacy of the crown. This was the constitution, Reeves had argued, which was established by law, and, in protecting it, the *Anti-Jacobin Review* was willing to appropriate the epithet of 'Tory'.

²⁵¹ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., p. 313.

²⁵² *AJ*, 5:21 (March 1800), p. 290. Where the identity of an *Anti-Jacobin* reviewer is noted, this information has been taken from De Montluzin, *The Anti-Jacobins 1798-1800* unless stated otherwise.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

In the process, the reviewers acknowledged a departure from the ‘Whig’ position increasingly monopolised by the Whig opposition led by Charles James Fox.

Others were not so comfortable with the ascription of these historic party labels. One reviewer in the *British Critic*, in 1799, suggested that the terms Whig and Tory had ‘certainly departed from their original significations’ and that ‘it would be best to drop the terms.’ Indeed, Tories no longer advocated the ideology of divine right to preserve the absolute position of the king and the acceptance of parliament’s role signified a departure from defending arbitrary exercise of the prerogative. Nonetheless, the notion that revived terminology was contemporaneous with a revival of the general standpoints adopted by the two historic parties was hinted at by the reviewer’s recognition that, ‘at present, their general meaning seems to be, that the one wishes to support, the other to weaken the power of the Crown’.²⁵⁴ Allan Maconochie, Lord Meadowbank, emphasised these dispositions when writing in the *Quarterly Review* in 1809. Meadowbank discussed Whig and Tory identities at the time of the Glorious Revolution:

[there were] a few partisans of absolute power; there were a few republicans...but the great mass of the people...were attached to the constitution of their country. Of these one half saw more danger in the encroachments of the crown than in the influence of demagogues with the people: these were called Whigs: the other half apprehended more from the turbulence of the people, and the ambition of factious leaders, than from the crown: these were called Tories.

Neither party had necessarily conformed to strict principles, though there were those amongst them who, of course, advocated ideological extremes. Rather, in Meadowbank’s opinion, difference functioned on the basis of prejudices or, more precisely, anxieties regarding the constitution: the element perceived to threaten it most; the element considered integral to its preservation. Subsequently, whether Whig or Tory

²⁵⁴ *BC*, 14 (July 1799), p. 96.

sentiments had dominated the nation at large depended on the specific constitutional danger. Under George III, Meadowbank contested that the attempt, in 1784, to usurp the prerogative of choosing ministers had rendered the nation momentarily Tory; so too had the French Revolution.²⁵⁵ In these reviews, a distinct Tory identity, whether the term was comfortably accepted, was not rooted in the specific doctrines of absolutism but the general disposition of defending the rights of the crown. In this respect, although Tory identity continued to correspond with its historical origins, it was not fixed or confined to this historic meaning. Rather, its ideological characteristics were in the process of being renegotiated.²⁵⁶

Amidst the game of ministerial musical chairs which characterised the early nineteenth century, the King's prerogative of choosing ministers was brought to the fore again. The Tory reviews defended the integrity of the crown's power from the perceived encroachments of the opposition, ensuring that different attitudes towards monarchical power remained a point of distinction. In 1804, the collapse of Addington's weak administration was succeeded by the commencement of Pitt's second term in office, though not before a contest between the leading candidates and the crown. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* pointed out that the attempts of Grenville and Windham to 'force' Fox into the cabinet could not be considered 'in any other light than as an invasion of the regal prerogative'. Should these attempts be sanctioned, 'we scruple not to say, that the crown must have been reduced to an absolute cipher, and the constitution of the country ...virtually at an end'.²⁵⁷ Gifford therefore praised Pitt for stepping forth again as the 'champion of the lawful prerogative of the crown, and, *consequently*, the guardian of the people's rights'.²⁵⁸ The italicisation sought to vindicate an action easily characterised by the opposition press as occurring in antithesis to the rights of the people.

²⁵⁵ *QR*, 2: 4 (November 1809), pp. 246-247. The identity of the reviewer is supplied by Jonathan Cutmore, *Contributors to the Quarterly Review: a history, 1809-25* (London, 2008), p. 108.

²⁵⁶ Please see the approach to conceptualising identity outlined in the introduction, pp. 19-21.

²⁵⁷ *AJ*, 17:67 (January 1804), p. xvii.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xx. Gifford is identified as the author in Emily Lorraine De Montluzin, 'The Anti-Jacobin Revisited: Newly Identified Contributions to the Anti-Jacobin Review during the Editorial Regime of John Gifford, 1798-1806', *The Library*, 7th series, 4:3 (2003), p. 295.

In the opposition orientated *Morning Post*, George III's determination to keep Fox out of office was condemned. This publication asserted that 'While the crown struggles for a little portion of its will, the public service suffers, the public strength is impaired, and the glory of the empire is retarded'. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* replied, quite simply, that 'If the word *party* had been substituted for crown, the description had been more accurate, but less *Whiggish*'.²⁵⁹ Indeed, opposition Whig attempts to limit the powers of the crown were frequently painted as self-serving endeavours to advance individual ambitions at the expense of the nation at large. Gifford's response, 'less Whiggish' by inference, turned to the necessity of preserving the integrity of the prerogative. Though the characters of Grenville and Windham were respectable, if Pitt had stood aside and enabled their attempts to be successful it would have set a dangerous precedent. The reasoning behind this argument engendered a full blown panegyric on the importance of the crown's legal rights:

to whom the King delegates the executive offices of the state is a matter ... of little consequence ... of ministers it may truly be said, "a breath may make them as a breath has made." But the King is a permanent being; in the eye of the constitution, he never dies; and it is of primary importance that his rights and prerogatives should remain inviolate and uninvaded, because they are vital parts of the constitution, with which the liberty and happiness of the subject are indissolubly connected and interwoven.

With 'the visionary speculations of wild enthusiasts' still afloat, whose doctrines had succeeded in 'shaking half the thrones of Europe to their bases', for Gifford, it remained essential not to weaken the safeguard of British political liberty vested in the monarch: his power was the preservative of subjects' happiness; it was not nominal but rather the very heart of the constitution.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ *AJ*, 17:67 (January 1804), p. xxii.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xx.

Therefore, in the late eighteenth century, Tories no longer defended absolute, arbitrary monarchical power. They did, however, continue to defend regal supremacy within Britain's constitutional arrangement. This distinguished their arguments from those of conservative Whigs who emphasised notions of mixed government and constitutional balance. Nonetheless, a broad consensus emerged between old Tories and conservative Whigs, enhanced by opposition Whig attempts to limit the powers of the prerogative as well as the anti-monarchical character of the French Revolution. This consensus was both anti-populist and pro-prerogative: it focused on the importance of preserving the crown's powers within Britain's constitutional arrangement and the dangers associated with popular encroachments. This facilitated distinction from Opposition Whiggery and also encouraged revival of the term Tory. This term was not void of meaning and used merely in differentiation from the term 'Whig', increasingly monopolised by the opposition. Rather, it corresponded, generally, with the pro-monarchical character of late seventeenth-century Toryism, but was underpinned by doctrines renegotiated to suit a new political context.

Radicalism and Reform in the Nineteenth Century

Following the close of the Napoleonic war, focus in civil affairs was redirected away from the specific issue of the exercise of the prerogative to the power of the popular branch of the constitution.²⁶¹ Partially, this was the result of a dissipation of controversy regarding the sovereign personally. George III, the figure who had sat at the forefront of monarchical reverence and Whig antipathy during the American and French Revolutions, slipped into the final stages of mental decline from 1811. The Prince Regent, who was crowned George IV in 1821, did not intervene in parliamentary affairs to the same extent as his father. Indeed, despite his contention that Britain remained an *ancien regime* until 1832, even Clark admits that 'the monarchy occupied a less central place in the argument after 1815' and thus his attention is dedicated to defences of the Church. Explaining this shift in focus, Clark suggests that the issues raised by the American and French Revolutions centred on allegiance and sovereignty, not representation and reform: the same was not true of the post-war context.²⁶² With the

²⁶¹ The prerogative remained an issue in relation to religious questions, specifically the question of Catholic emancipation. See Chapter Four, pp. 247-249

²⁶² Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., p. 238.

close of the war the nation was struck by debilitating economic depression and popular patriotic fervour became more difficult to rouse. With the Bourbons restored to power in France and thus no anarchic republic or military despotism with which to contrast the British constitution, the spotlight was settled more securely on the efficiency of the representative system with little room for distraction. In this context, Tories continued to argue that constitutional encroachments were not to be feared from the monarch. Rather, faced with revived popular radicalism and growing demands for parliamentary reform, a broad, Tory consensus converged around the anxiety that popular influence in the constitution had grown to a dangerous extent.

Colley and Clark have pointed out that old Tories were not opposed axiomatically to the concept of parliamentary reform in the eighteenth century; nor were conservative Whigs, including William Pitt, until the French Revolution endowed it with radical, subversive connotations.²⁶³ Similarly, James Sack has noted that prior to 1819, 'it is quite difficult to find any Tory newspaper or journal which explicitly denounced parliamentary reform', concluding that 'when the *crise de regime* commenced in 1828, there were certainly no orthodox Tory or Pittite attitudes towards parliamentary reform'. Nonetheless, Sack notes, as radical agitation in the nineteenth century grew, culminating in 1819 and 1820, definite, outspoken opposition to parliamentary reform on the right became more common.²⁶⁴ This section concurs, arguing that, against the backdrop of radical agitation and widespread demands for parliamentary reform, the emergence of a broad Tory identity was facilitated by determination to protect the constitution from popular encroachment. This manifested itself in an authoritarian disposition towards the suppression of popular radicalism, opposition towards overarching constitutional change and, importantly, distinguished Tory identity from that of the Opposition Whigs.

The Tory reviews harboured few doubts regarding the source of political disaffection or the primary threat to political stability. As radical agitation proliferated, it was insisted repeatedly that subjects' liberties were not in danger from an overbearing prerogative.

²⁶³ Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 170-173; Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., pp. 537-542.

²⁶⁴ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 151-152.

In the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, interpretations of regal limitation and balance were accepted and purported to contribute to the ‘equilibrium’ of Britain’s constitutional arrangement.²⁶⁵ In the current climate, the primary danger was not posed by the crown but ‘modern reformists’ who sought to throw ‘too great a balance into the popular scale’.²⁶⁶ Demagogues, intent to ‘deceive and betray the ignorant’ focused on ‘the old tale...“that our sufferings have their origin in a partial representation in the House of Commons, and in a corrupt Government”’.²⁶⁷ Such claims, though, were wholly false. In the *Quarterly Review*, Robert Southey challenged demands for parliamentary reform by questioning their motivation: ‘Are their [the people’s] liberties threatened? Is Parliament, then, about to be suspended or disused [?]...Do they apprehend that arbitrary power is to be established by ...the bayonets of the Hanoverians?’²⁶⁸ Liberties, far from being placed under threat, had increased. The advent of published parliamentary debates and the development of the press meant that, ‘even in ordinary times, [there was] a preponderance to the popular branch of our constitution’. In the current climate of economic distress and political agitation,

when the main force of the press is brought to bear like a battery against the Temple of our Laws; when the head of the government is systematically insulted for the purpose of bringing him into contempt and hatred; when the established religion is assailed ... when all our existing institutions are openly and fiercely assaulted, and mechanics are breaking stocking-frames in some places, and assembling in others to deliberate upon mending the frame of government,— what wise men, and what good one but must perceive that it is the power of the Democracy which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished?²⁶⁹

If the constitution was threatened with subversion, this threat emanated entirely from the popular branch exceeding its bounds. For evidence that an ‘unconstitutional

²⁶⁵ *AJ*, 51:225 (February 1817), p. 635.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 633.

²⁶⁸ *QR*, 16:31 (October 1816), p. 261.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 272-273.

ascendancy is aimed at by the people', the *Anti-Jacobin Review* noted that one only had to examine the 'dictatorial language' of reformers and observe attempts to make the 'Prince Regent odious in the eyes of the lower classes'. The purpose of these attacks was to 'undermine his authority and sap the foundation of his royal prerogative'. As events in France had so recently demonstrated, this behaviour served only as the prelude to revolution.²⁷⁰ Thus Tory discourse insisted that popular liberties had not diminished but increased and now threatened to erode the power of the crown and subvert the constitution.

In response to the challenge of popular encroachment, Tory arguments, both inside and outside parliament, were increasingly authoritarian, distinguishing them from the rhetoric of opposition Whigs. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* advised readers to 'form a phalanx' against the 'Demon of Discord ... again let loose amongst us'.²⁷¹ Meanwhile, in the *Quarterly Review*, Southey urged that 'Where the danger is imminent, strong remedies must be applied'.²⁷² Strong remedies came, first, in 1817, in the form of the suspension of Habeas Corpus and culminated in 1819 with a series of measures reminiscent of Pittite repression in the 1790s, later entitled the 'Six Acts'.²⁷³ These measures were motivated by a gathering, in August 1819, of some 50,000-60,000 people in St Peter's Field, Manchester, to hear a reformist speech delivered by the radical Henry Hunt. With local magistrates on edge and ambiguous instructions emanating from the Home Secretary, Lord Sidmouth, the meeting soon descended into chaos, violence and tragedy. When the authorities attempted to penetrate the crowd and arrest Hunt, eleven people were killed and over 650 injured.²⁷⁴ Opposition Whig anxiety about popular unrest should not be underestimated. Yet this group favoured concession and conciliation rather than reaction and repression, which they considered

²⁷⁰ *AJ*, 51:225 (February 1817), p. 635-636.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 632.

²⁷² *QR*, 16: 32 (January 1817), p. 513. For Southey's authorship see Cutmore, *Contributors to the Quarterly Review* p. 146.

²⁷³ The 'Six Acts' were, the Training Prevention Act which prevented people from training or drilling; the Seizure of Arms Act which enabled magistrates to search properties for arms; the Seditious Meetings Prevention Act which forbade the holding of public meetings comprising more than fifty people; the Misdemeanours Act which sought to speed up the prosecution process; the Blasphemous and Seditious Libels Act which targeted seditious publications and, finally the Newspaper and Stamp Duties Act.

²⁷⁴ Robert Poole, "'By the Law or the Sword': Peterloo Revisited", *History*, 91:302 (2006), p. 254.

to be anathema to the concept of British liberty.²⁷⁵ Consequently, when an emergency parliament convened in November, distinct, party attitudes were accentuated.

The Whigs called for a parliamentary enquiry into ‘Peterloo’ and presented vehement opposition to the repressive legislation brought forward by the government to suppress radicalism. The persistence of opposition in a moment of such acute crisis was roundly condemned by the Tory press and statesmen. One reviewer in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* complained that ‘the worst of all the features in the present convulsed countenance of the affairs of our country’ was ‘the behaviour not of the Reformers, but of the Whigs’. Problematic was that, though ‘studious in expressing their horror for the madness of the reforming sect’, the Whigs continued in ‘lending themselves to the popular outcry, and increasing, by every means in their power, the difficulties of the born and chosen guardians of the state.’²⁷⁶ In parliament, George Canning highlighted the extent of the current danger and severely criticised those who failed to support the administration’s resolve: ‘he who listens to the doctrines with which the constitution of the country is assailed; with which the majesty of the throne is insulted’ yet ‘doubts whether there be a design among those who speak such language to pull down all authority, to subvert all institutions, and to confound the fair degrees by which a people are a nation’ were deemed to be either ‘reckless’ or ‘indifferent about the preservation of blessings which he is unworthy to enjoy.’²⁷⁷ Thus a broad, authoritarian consensus was promoted by the revival of the radical threat to the civil element of the constitution, enhancing the distinction between Tories and Whigs.

The enlargement of subjects’ liberties was not deplored entirely by Tories. Some liberties, like the publication of parliamentary debates, constituted a valuable addition.²⁷⁸ Moreover, subjects possessed a legitimate right to meet, to petition, or to

²⁷⁵ As Grey noted in 1817, ‘the party principle which distinguishes us as whigs is a principle of moderation and liberality, both in religion and government’. Grey to Holland, 17 January 1817, quoted in Austin Mitchell, *The Whigs in Opposition, 1815-1830* (London, 1967), p. 13.

²⁷⁶ *BEM*, 6:32 (November 1819), p. 211*

²⁷⁷ George Canning, Speech at the Canning Club, 15 March, 1820, in T. Kaye (ed.), *Speeches of the Right Hon. George Canning delivered on public occasions in Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1825), (hereafter *Canning’s Speeches...in Liverpool*), p. 281.

²⁷⁸ *QR*, 22:44 (January 1820), p. 536.

deliberate regarding grievances.²⁷⁹ But large, popular meetings elicited an authoritarian response which enhanced the anti-populist element of Tory ideology. The *Quarterly Review* pointed out that ‘the modern method of calling together large deliberative crowds, as a sort of *outer parliament*’ was unconstitutional. This method defied the regular channels of remonstrance and instead sought to usurp the role of parliament.²⁸⁰ Moreover, mass meetings placed subjects at risk. All within society had the right to protection, not ‘against violence and plunder only ... but against the terror of these calamities’, Canning argued. Consequently, the bringing together of ‘multitudes ... at the will of unauthorised and irresponsible individuals’ not only abused subjects’ existent liberties, it also encroached upon the liberties of others.²⁸¹ Such encroachments existed in antithesis to the Glorious Revolution, an event which had been enacted to oppose the suppression of liberty and the emergence of tyranny. The latter was defined by Canning as ‘irresponsible power’, a definition which was ‘equally true, whether the power be lodged in one or many’. It was to defend the populace from this tyranny that ‘Parliament [had] at length raised its arm’ and introduced authoritarian legislation.²⁸²

Tories concurred that repressive measures, rather than encroaching upon subjects’ liberties, provided a necessary and justified means of protecting them. Canning noted that efforts had been ‘industriously employed to persuade the country, that their liberties have been essentially abridged by the regulation of popular meetings’. Yet the Seditious Meetings Act left ‘untouched all the constitutional modes of assembly which have been known to the nation since it became free’, that was, since 1688.²⁸³ The *Quarterly Review* adopted the same approach. When considering ‘legislative changes, affecting, in any degree, the popular liberties’ the reviewer acknowledged that it was ‘manifestly important to ascertain ... in what manner the law to which they refer, was settled at the period of the Revolution’, and how times had changed. In 1689, the ‘assemblage of immense and disorderly crowds with a mere view to discussion’, as opposed to petition, had not been explicitly forbidden because, ‘at that time, they do not

²⁷⁹ Canning, Speech at the public dinner in honour of his re-election in the music-hall, 18 March, 1820, in *Canning’s Speeches...in Liverpool*, p. 304.

²⁸⁰ *QR*, 22:44 (January 1820), pp. 535.

²⁸¹ Canning, Speech at the public dinner in honour of his re-election in the music-hall, 18 March, 1820, p. 306.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 310-311.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-303.

appear to have been known'.²⁸⁴ Canning also insisted that mass assemblies were not an historic right bestowed by 1688 and in response to the opposition 'that such meetings were never before suppressed, the simple answer is, they were never before systematically attempted to be holden'.²⁸⁵ Thus Tories continued to stress their fidelity to 1688: far from encroaching on the Bill of Rights, the new statutes demonstrated that popular liberties had grown and were now abused.²⁸⁶

The Glorious Revolution remained a pivotal point of reflection regarding the nature of Tory and Whig identities in the nineteenth century. Sack suggests that the nineteenth-century Tory press increasingly distanced itself from the 'historical pre-1760 "Tory party" while fervently or grudgingly accepting a "Tory" appellation' at the same time.²⁸⁷ Above all, this process entailed zealous commitment to the institutions preserved in 1688-89. This renegotiation of Tory identity, the rejection of certain elements of old Toryism, and accommodation of the Glorious Revolution, was already underway, as the two previous sections have demonstrated.²⁸⁸ In the nineteenth century, this process entailed claims of ownership over the historic, 'true' Whig tradition rather than any attempt to vindicate or associate with early eighteenth-century Toryism. In 1817, Southey criticised the Jacobites as a group, like Catholics, who had 'denaturalized themselves at heart' through allegiance to 'a foreign power'.²⁸⁹ Subsequently, *Blackwood's* claimed that 'Toryism, in 1823' was 'the representative of Whiggism in 1688', with the author instigating a categorical separation from the controversial ideas which had underpinned the ideology of divine right: while the 'name of Tory was once obnoxious, from its connexion with the dangerous and exploded doctrines of the Stuarts ... time changes the spirit of titles as well as of men' and in 'its sincere reverence for the Constitution in Church and state, Toryism now stands on the same lofty ground with the spirit of our Glorious Revolution'.²⁹⁰ Another correspondent censured the adoption of the appellation 'Tory' as 'an egregious error'. The 'distinguishing tenets' of Toryism in 1688, including 'belief in the divine right of

²⁸⁴ *QR*, 22:44 (January 1820), p. 536, 535.

²⁸⁵ Canning, Speech at the public dinner in honour of his re-election in the music-hall, 18 March, 1820, p. 303.

²⁸⁶ *QR*, 22:44 (January 1820), p. 533.

²⁸⁷ Sack, *Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 70.

²⁸⁸ See above pp. 42-50, 72-76.

²⁸⁹ *QR*, 16:32 (January 1817), pp. 524-525.

²⁹⁰ *BEM*, 14:78 (July 1823), p. 76.

kings,[and] a horror of opposition to regal authority, however tyrannically used', were 'now extinct'. Consequently, the correspondent hoped that the abhorrent term 'Tory' would vanish too.²⁹¹ These doctrines had indeed been abandoned, and Tory identity renegotiated. Consequently, in the nineteenth century, it was underpinned by authoritarian, anti-populist arguments which defended the powers of the crown from popular encroachment without reverting to absolutism.

The process of renegotiating Tory identity, although already underway, was accelerated in the nineteenth century by heightened tensions regarding the Catholic Question.²⁹² Indeed, the correspondent in *Blackwood's* who suggested that the term 'Tory' should be abandoned proceeded to criticise old Tories for 'look[ing] on the Church of Rome with a partial eye'. Meanwhile, the old Whigs were praised for recognising 'the connection between arbitrary power and Catholicism' and taking 'effectual means to secure the Protestant ascendancy'. Alongside the conscious separation from old Toryism, these discourses, like those discussed in the previous sections, emphasised what had been conserved in 1688. Importantly, in relation to the civil element of the constitution, this meant the monarchy:

Liberty was the great object of their care; but they [the Whigs in 1688] had the good sense to see that the prerogative of the crown was necessary to establish it. They knew that this essential weight was requisite to keep the whole machine in order;— nothing less could restrain the ambition of the aristocracy, and the turbulence of an emancipated people.²⁹³

Identification with a conservative or 'old' Whig ideological lineage meant that protecting the crown's position no longer entailed a defence of arbitrary power, nor even the supremacy of the crown. Rather, the prerogative was defended as an integral institutional weight which, by balancing the constitution, protected the nation from the preponderance of 'an emancipated people'. Thus like the discourses of old Tories and conservative Whigs in the late eighteenth century, nineteenth-century Tories adopted a

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 14:83 (December 1823), pp. 666-668.

²⁹² Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 70.

²⁹³ *BEM*, 14:83 (December 1823), pp. 667.

conservative interpretation of 1688. This enabled them to reject the controversial doctrines of Toryism's past while simultaneously defending the powers of the crown.

Meanwhile, the opposition Whigs continued to be castigated for revering 1688 as a moment of resistance. They 'plume[d] themselves on the Revolution of 1688 apparently for no other reason than because it was a revolution and dethroned a monarch.' Yet, of 'all principles of that period the only one which was of doubtful truth and dangerous application' was the principle of resistance.²⁹⁴ Whigs' perversion of the Glorious Revolution had distorted their understanding of the British constitution and foreign affairs, particularly the French Revolution. Indeed, the journalist David Robinson and the editor of the *Quarterly Review*, William Gifford, echoed Burke by claiming that the French Revolution had given birth to a 'new Whiggism' which was widely depicted as distinct from the historic Whiggism of 1688.²⁹⁵

The apparent revitalisation of radicalism and the intermittent revivals of pressure for parliamentary reform, first in the years 1816-1823 and, later, 1830-1832, served to consolidate political alignments inside Westminster after the close of the war. Excluding the issue of Catholic political rights, which will be discussed in chapter four, Frank O'Gorman notes that in the years 1815-1818, 274 MPs voted exclusively with government, 192 exclusively with Opposition, (71% of MPs) while 78 MPs (12%) voted mostly with one side or the other. Only 114 MPs (17%) remained difficult to assign to either side.²⁹⁶ Similarly, using the examination of 70 division lists the contemporary *Analysis of the British House of Commons as at Present Constituted* (1823), undertaken by John Marshall MP, calculated approximately 453 MPs voting exclusively with either government or opposition (75% of those in attendance) in the parliamentary sessions of 1821, 1822 and 1823: 245 MPs with the government.²⁹⁷ Even those who wavered rallied in support of government when its continuance became

²⁹⁴ *QR*, 28:55 (October 1822), p.210. For authorship of this article see Cutmore, *Contributions to the Quarterly Review*, p. 171.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

²⁹⁶ For specific division lists see Donald Ginter (ed.), *Voting Records of the British House of Commons, 1761- 1820*, vol VI (London, 1995)

²⁹⁷ Frank O'Gorman and Peter Fraser, 'Party Politics in the Early Nineteenth Century (1812-1832)', *English Historical Review*, 102: 402 (January, 1987), p. 68. These figures exclude the issue of Catholic Relief.

seriously threatened.²⁹⁸ In doing so, these MPs demonstrated a commitment both to keeping Lord Liverpool's government in power, and to keeping the opposition Whigs out. In the opinion of *Blackwood's*, the very survival of the nation hinged on the Whigs' exclusion from power: 'A change in administration, in the present state of political parties, would bear no resemblance to similar events in other times' for 'never was the system to be supplanted so deeply interwoven with the actual existence of the country.'²⁹⁹ Similarly, in the *Quarterly Review*, Robinson and Gifford emphasised that the difference between government and opposition transcended the mere partisan boundaries of Whig and Tory: 'In choosing a ministry, they [the electorate] choose the guardians of their lives and fortunes, and they do not ask, which is the Whig, or which is the Tory; but which is the friend of the constitution, the laws, religion, and order'.³⁰⁰ Whig ascendancy would entail not simply a difference in men, or even simply measures, but would jeopardise the survival of Britain's entire political order.

In the context of popular disturbance, the Whigs were frequently criticised as behaving in a naïve, reckless and self-serving manner. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* depicted the Whigs as being 'intent only on strengthening their own power'. In the process, they made 'the prerogative ... the shield for their unconstitutional encroachments' and 'employed the force of popularity, to carry measures repugnant to the interest of their country, but which accorded with their own plans of aggrandizement.'³⁰¹ Not content with attacking the crown's legal rights they encouraged popular ferment in the process, placing the nation at risk. Indeed, there were dangerous similarities between the Whigs and radicals in this respect: both 'have... "the rights of the people" continually in their mouths' and although the two 'differ very widely as to the nature of those rights' both concurred in 'exciting in the people a discontent against the government' and this contributed towards disaffection.³⁰² Importantly, these criticisms of Whigs' flirtations with popular power enhanced distinction between them and Tories' authoritarian anti-populism.

²⁹⁸ Hill, *British parliamentary parties*, p. 195.

²⁹⁹ *BEM*, 3:18 (September 1818), p. 716.

³⁰⁰ *QR*, 28:55 (October 1822), p. 219.

³⁰¹ *AJ*, 55:245 (October 1818), pp. 170-171.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

The tendency of the Whigs to act irresponsibly in the pursuit of power was exhibited, in particular, by the support offered to parliamentary reform. In 1831, *Blackwood's* lamented that 'a large proportion of the middling orders of that important class, who, in 1793, were almost unanimous against the principles of revolution, are now become vehement supporters of the Reform Bill'. The reviewer had few reservations regarding the cause of this shift in opinion: 'The reason is, that, at the former period, they were not infected with the torrent of error, delusion, and sophistry, with which, for the forty succeeding years, the Whigs have incessantly filled the public mind'.³⁰³ Similarly, John Wilson Croker, MP for Aldeburgh, who actually refused to sit in the reformed Parliament, pointed out that demands for reform had subsided in the 1820s and had been revived only when the Whigs had decided to pursue it as a political agenda. There had been no petitions for reform in the parliamentary sessions from 1824-1829 and only 14 in 1830: 'Such, then, was the state of the public mind on this subject up to *that date*', that is, until the Whigs had 'looked about for a political lever to move the Government of the day from its place, and then ... instigated the clamours of the people in favour of reform; and the people ... *responded to their call*'.³⁰⁴ *Blackwood's* and the *Quarterly Review*, to which Croker frequently contributed, concurred that, once in power, the Whigs had dangerously ignited popular sentiments regarding reform to the detriment of the nation.³⁰⁵

Whig support for parliamentary reform was painted as merely another misguided attempt to attack the powers of the crown. In 1820, Canning described parties as engaged in 'violent conflict' regarding whether

Englishmen shall maintain inviolate the happy and tempered
monarchy, under which the country has so long flourished; or,
whether they shall waste their strength in intestine commotions,
provoked under the pretence of improving the constitution, but

³⁰³ *BEM*, 31:189 (January 1832), p. 16.

³⁰⁴ John Wilson Croker, *The Speech of the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker on the Reform Question on Friday, March 4, 1831* (London, 1831), p. 7. For information on Croker see William Thomas, 'Croker, John Wilson (1780–1857)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2011 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/6738>, accessed 24 Sept 2015].

³⁰⁵ *QR*, 45:89 (April 1831), p.279; *Ibid.*, 45:90 (July 1831), p. 508; *Ibid.*, 31:192, (March 1832) p. 428, 467

risking, in their consequences, its utter confusion and overthrow.³⁰⁶

Amidst the debates on the Reform Bill, *Blackwood's* presented a similar analysis. The Whigs, unable to 'get rid of kings in name and person', now sought to destroy the monarch 'in substance and power'. The inevitable consequence of reform would be to render the king's power purely nominal: he was 'not to be a ruler, or even the equal of the citizen; he is to be the executor slave to the latter'. 'I cannot think', the writer noted, continuing the conscious separation from old Tory ideology, 'that because the doctrines of "divine right" and "legitimacy" are erroneous, a King has no rights whatever'.³⁰⁷ Thus Tories continued to defend the crown, even if they did not appeal to the arguments of old Toryism to do so. Indeed, despite this renegotiation, Tory determination to defend the constitution, and the powers of the crown in particular, from popular encroachment encouraged clear distinction between them and Whigs.

Tories consistently argued that overarching remodelling of the electoral system would fail to resolve the real grievances of the nation. In 1816, Southey accused the 'apostles of anarchy' of taking 'advantage of a temporary and partial distress' to inflame the multitude 'to sedition and rebellion'.³⁰⁸ It was no coincidence that demands for political reform tended to coincide with the bouts of debilitating economic depression. Southey pointed out that large war-time expenditure had kept the British economy in activity by facilitating demand and its termination had depressed markets. Moreover, in the midst of conflict foreign nations had learned to produce the commodities previously exported by Britain. These factors were coupled with a poor agricultural season, the cause of which could hardly be attributed to the representative system.³⁰⁹ More attention will be dedicated to economic struggles and the constitutional arguments associated with them in the following chapter. Relevant for this discussion, though, was the broad assertion from Tories, both in parliament and the press, that 'as the constitution of Parliament has not been the cause of existing distress, so no change in that constitution could in the slightest possible degree alleviate that distress, or otherwise benefit the people.'³¹⁰ This

³⁰⁶ George Canning, Speech at the Backbone Club, 15 March, 1820, in *Canning's Speeches...in Liverpool*, p. 284.

³⁰⁷ *BEM*, 30: 187 (November 1831), pp. 705 -706, 712.

³⁰⁸ *QR*, 16:31 (October 1816), p. 226.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 245

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 272

argument was reiterated throughout the debates on reform. When, in 1831, the first Reform Bill was brought forth in parliament the nation was again in the grip of economic crisis, and again Tories denied that parliamentary reform was the solution.³¹¹ The Duke of Wellington went so far as to blame economic depression on the bill itself:

As soon as this Bill was proposed ... those who had previously lived to the full amount of their incomes, began to consider it their interest to contract their expenditure...and it is to those circumstances that I am disposed to attribute the want of commerce and of trade in the country.³¹²

At other points, *Blackwood's* suggested that public discontent could spring from one of two causes: genuine grievances, which could be allayed through constitutional means or 'democratic ambition' which, quite simply, comprised a desire for power without restraint. The current clamour for parliamentary reform was consistently located in the latter category.³¹³

Throughout the debates on reform, Tories highlighted the dangers of increasing popular power within the constitution, reinforcing the anti-populist character of their ideological identity. It was claimed that if the House of Commons became dominated by, and thus responsive to, the popular voice alone, the true interests of the nation would be sacrificed. An MP would pursue popular measures in a bid to consolidate and maintain power for if he adopted 'the language of truth on any question which excites the public mind' he would 'infallibly lose his seat on the next election.' Therefore, 'None will be returned but those who promise submission to the public voice, and basely sacrifice their principles and independence at the altar of popular adulation'.³¹⁴ MPs would be forced to 'submit to become the mere executive instrument of the popular body'. In the process, 'the highest degree of competency for office would cease to be of any value to

³¹¹ John Wilson Croker, *The Speech of the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker on the Question that "The Reform Bill Do Pass"*, Tuesday, 22nd September, 1831 (London, 1832), pp. 605-606.

³¹² Arthur Wellesley, Speech in the House of Lords, 10 April, 1832 in Colonel Gurwood (ed.), *The Speeches of the Duke of Wellington in Parliament* (hereafter *Wellington's Speeches*), 2 vols., vol. I., (London, 1854), pp. 532-533.

³¹³ *BEM*, 29:175 (January 1831), pp. 36-45; *Ibid.*, 29:176 (February 1831), p. 175; *Ibid.*, 30:182 (July 1831) p. 17; *Ibid.*, 31:189 (January 1832), p. 103.

³¹⁴ *BEM*, 29:180 (May 1831), p. 750-51.

the community'.³¹⁵ Influence had enabled talented individuals to enter the Commons, ensuring that government did not descend simply into an oligarchy of the rich. It also enabled MPs to retain their independence and represent the interests of the nation. In a reformed parliament, only candidates willing to 'submit to the degradation' of scrambling for 'votes from a venal rabble' would be appointed.³¹⁶ Reform would also exacerbate rather than reduce corruption. Elections in the large commercial and manufacturing towns frequently exhibited greater corruption than county elections because they were popular. They were characterised by bribery and contest between factions which ultimately produced only mob representatives. In contrast, in the present system, it was representatives who 'have made a direct purchase of their seats' that could, above all, 'be said to be the most independent'.³¹⁷

Importantly, Tory arguments stressed that the popular branch of the constitution already possessed more power in the early nineteenth century than it had at any period in history. Consequently, arguments that reform was necessary to restore popular influence in the Commons and redress encroachments from the other constitutional branches were dismissed. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* asked 'at what age would the restorers have their renovated constitution?' Under Elizabeth I, parliament had trembled; there was little difference under James I and under William and Mary parliament had experienced 'corruption and treason which arrested Marlborough's victories, and betrayed Europe at Utrecht'. Subjects had never been in possession of so much liberty; parliament had never possessed such power.³¹⁸ Indeed, any additional influence reformers might accuse the crown of accumulating was clearly but 'a feather in the scale' when compared to the increase of popular influence.³¹⁹ The war had accelerated commercial growth while simultaneously instigating the sale and division of landed estates. This had served to increase 'the number of voters' while 'the influence of the great land owners... [had] in equal degree been lessened'.³²⁰ In parliament, Canning also denied that there was a 'golden era' to which the power of the Commons could be restored instead concurring with broader Tory opinion that it had become the

³¹⁵ QR, 44:88 (February 1831), p. 582.

³¹⁶ BEM, 29:180 (May 1831), p. 749.

³¹⁷ QR, 16:31 (October 1816), p. 258.

³¹⁸ AJ, 52:229 (June 1817), p. 352.

³¹⁹ Ibid., p. 351.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 352.

‘preponderant element of the Constitution’.³²¹ Therefore any reform would not be restorative but innovative and, by increasing popular influence, it would threaten the constitution with subversion.

There was still a degree of ambiguity about what Britain’s balanced constitution actually entailed. Yet Tory arguments consistently stressed that constitutional balance would be disrupted by increasing popular influence in the House of Commons. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* advanced the familiar notion that the British constitution was a structure in which the ‘three possible forms of government’ had been ‘blended in one harmonious system’. The argument, expressed in terms of balance, might have agitated earlier legal minds, like Reeves’. Exactly what this system entailed in terms of the actual function of the three powers was left unclear beyond the claim that the nation’s ‘safety, welfare, and happiness ... is endangered when any one begins to preponderate’.³²² Gunn has suggested that nineteenth-century writers increasingly came to envision the balanced nature of the constitution to be manifested in the House of Commons.³²³ This was the position adopted by *Blackwood’s* when it was suggested that, ‘Whatever the theory of the constitution may have been, its working, as Delome long ago observed, is, that the three powers balance themselves in the House of Commons.’³²⁴ Reform would inevitably increase popular influence in the Commons which, in Tory eyes, had long been gaining strength. The ‘inevitable result’ of this increase would be ‘the effective exclusion (total or partial) of the influence hitherto exercised within that house by the aristocracy and the crown’, one article in the *Quarterly Review* noted. This would cause the ‘total derangement of that mechanism by which the movements of the parliamentary machine have been hitherto regulated, controlled, and steadied’.³²⁵ Similarly, in parliament, Wellington insisted that if ‘the three branches’ of King, Lords and Commons were separated, each becoming ‘independent of the other, and uncontrolled in its action by any of the existing

³²¹ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 25 April, 1822, in R. Therry (ed.), *The Speeches of the Right Honourable George Canning. With a memoir of his life...in six volumes*, vol. IV, (London, 1828), p. 354.

³²² *AJ*, 52:229 (June 1817), p. 351.

³²³ J.A.W. Gunn, ‘Influence, Parties and the Constitution: Changing Attitudes, 1783-1832’, *The Historical Journal*, 17: 2 (1974), pp. 320-327.

³²⁴ *BEM*, 29:178 (March 1831), p. 435.

³²⁵ *QR*, 44:88 (February 1831), p. 579.

influences', government would be rendered 'impracticable'.³²⁶ Thus monarchical and aristocratical influence in the lower house, rather than corrupt this branch of the legislature, were entirely necessary to maintaining equilibrium in the political state.

It was reiterated that increasing the Commons' power could take place only at the expense of the other constitutional branches. The constitution in Britain, Canning argued in 1818, was 'A MONARCHY, controlled by two assemblies' and not, as reformers presented it, a 'democracy, inlaid (for ornament sake) with a peerage, and topped (by sufferance) with a crown.' The monarchy, 'limited and controlled as it is in our happy constitution', provided 'the safest depository of power' and the 'surest guardian of liberty'.³²⁷ Yet the 'doctrines of the present day' threatened this constitutional model, for 'their tendency is not to make a House of Commons such as, in theory, it has always been defined—a third branch of the legislature', but rather to enable it to 'absorb the legislative and executive powers into one' and 'create an immediate delegation of the whole authority of the people'.³²⁸ In a particularly anxious article in April 1831, the *Quarterly Review* dismissed notions of balanced, independent constitutional elements presented by 'De Lome and other ingenious speculators' as 'an utter chimera'. Instead it insisted, in terms reminiscent of Henry Gwillim in 1799, that combined forms of government were not practical: rather, 'we find that, in *whatever degrees or proportions* these respective powers *have been combined in any known instance* ...[it] has uniformly failed of success'. Consequently, the writer recommended 'caution how we engage rashly in similar experiments', for taking steps to ascertain this kind of constitution, '*a monster [which] could not exist for a month*', was only a stepping stone towards republicanism.³²⁹ In July, with the Reform Bill in the upper House, another article in the *Quarterly Review* sought to remind the Lords that

any increase to the democratic power in the constitution (which has already shown that it has grown out of its old proportion to the other two powers) must inevitably lead, as it goes on increasing, to

³²⁶ Duke of Wellington, Speech in the House of Lords, 4 October, 1831, in *Wellington's Speeches*, vol. I., p. 470.

³²⁷ Canning, Speech at the public dinner, in the music-hall, 29 June, 1818, in *Canning's Speeches...in Liverpool*, pp. 225-226.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

³²⁹ *QR*, 45:89 (April 1831), pp. 300-301.

the gradual weakening, and ultimate extinction, of the aristocratic and monarchical branches of the constitution.³³⁰

Similar messages were also propagated by Croker in his published speeches on the topic.³³¹ For Tories, it was popular encroachment which presented the primary constitutional danger, not the crown, as Whigs claimed, and increasing the popular element of the constitution threatened political ruin.

Indeed, both historical and foreign examples were cited as evidence that aggrandisement of the Commons' power could only take place at the expense of the other constitutional branches. The Civil War had not become defunct as an historical precedent. Despite the gradual abandonment of the 30 January sermons, reflections on this event continued to be underpinned by partisanship. The *British Critic* frequently seized opportunities to offer censure to misrepresentations regarding the trajectory of royal and popular power, their abuses and curtailments. A review of Brodie's *A History of the British Empire* (1823) maintained that one concession of the crown's power had 'only paved the way for the demand of another' and thus Charles I was vindicated: it could not be considered unjust that 'he [the king] should have endeavoured ... to subdue pretensions which appeared so incompatible with the exercise of regal authority. He saw no limits, in short, to the claims which he was called to satisfy'.³³² Far from ascribing responsibility to the martyred monarch, it was an insatiable desire for liberty facilitating a domineering parliament which had fractured the social fabric. *Blackwood's* also recurred to this traditionally Tory precedent. Concession had been 'the principle on which Charles I. acted'. Having yielded to the petition of rights, a concession so great 'that it in truth amounted to a revolution', the king was coerced into agreeing to a host of additional sacrifices in terms of regal power. The example demonstrated the inherent danger of conceding additional power to the Commons:

Having stript [*sic*] the Crown of all its prerogatives, the Commons next insisted for the command of the Militia, which would have given

³³⁰ Ibid., 45:90 (July 1831), p. 540.

³³¹ John Wilson Croker, *The Speech of the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker on the Reform Question on Friday, March 4, 1831*, p. 23.

³³² *BC*, 19 (January 1823) p. 41.

them the exclusive use of the sword; the civil war ensued; the king was beheaded, the peers abolished, and Cromwell enthroned.³³³

This precedent was reiterated in parliament. In 1820, Canning instructed the nation to ‘turn to the history of the transactions in this country in the year 1648’ to see the effects of creating an independent Commons: with representatives chosen entirely by the people and the Commons being declared the supreme authority in the state, ‘In a few weeks the House of Peers was voted useless. We all know what became of the Crown’.³³⁴ In 1831, Wellington delivered the same warning.³³⁵ In the opinion of many Tories, reformers were well aware of these consequences, and it was precisely their intention to enact them.³³⁶

Events in France provided a more recent precedent. In 1831, *Blackwood’s* dedicated an entire essay series to the prevailing topics of the day, the French Revolution and parliamentary reform, immediately associating the two.³³⁷ Frequent reflection on the nature of the French Revolution in 1789 demonstrated that the purpose of this essay series was not simply to establish a parallel with contemporary tumult in France. The Whig administration was often compared to Necker and the French liberal nobility: they had courted popularity to win office, unleashing a spirit which, in Tory opinion, they would now be unable to control.³³⁸ Events in 1793, in particular, served as an important lesson against diminishing the power of the crown in response to popular demands:

Louis XVI...in turbulent times tried the system of concession. The nation demanded the States General—he convoked them: they demanded a popular representation—he anticipated them...doubling the deputies from the Tiers Etat: they demanded the abolition of feudal rights and personal services—he abolished them. He agreed to abandon all the prerogatives of

³³³ *BEM*, 29:180 (May 1831), p. 761.

³³⁴ George Canning, Speech at the public dinner in honour of his re-election in the music-hall, 18 March, 1820, p. 320.

³³⁵ Wellington, Speech in the House of Lords, 4 October, 1831, pp. 472-473.

³³⁶ For an example see Canning, Speech at the public dinner, in the music-hall, 29 June, 1818, p. 224.

³³⁷ Initially titled ‘On the late French Revolution’. This title was dropped in by the third instalment, in March 1831, and replaced with ‘On the French Revolution and Parliamentary Reform’.

³³⁸ *BEM*, 30:184 (August 1831), p. 293.

his crown... His whole life was one uninterrupted series of concessions and reforms, and, in return, he was led to the scaffold.³³⁹

While the conduct of the French in 1793 provided ‘the most decisive proof of the truth’ against concession, Britain offered an alternative example. It was because ‘the non-reforming sovereign George, and the non-reforming administration of Pitt, resisted the demands of popular ambition’ that the British constitution had been ‘saved’ in the 1790s. The lesson to be drawn from both the first French Revolution and the Civil War was clear: it was not simply ‘the mere force of human depravity’ but rather the ‘submissions themselves [which] were the cause of their disasters’ for these ‘excited a spirit which speedily became uncontrollable’.³⁴⁰ Thus Tories argued that popular clamour should be met with resistance, for concession would lead to constitutional ruin. This perspective accentuated the authoritarian, anti-populist nature of Tory identity.

Not all Tories were adverse to the notion of reform, however. ‘Liberal’ Tories, including Canning and Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827, accepted the need to institute minor reform in specific cases where abuse had been demonstrated. These ameliorations were justified on the grounds of conservatism; a means of improvement which could prevent innovation. As Canning explained, reform should occur ‘on the principle of specific punishment for an offence ... not with a view of furthering the radical system, but rather of thwarting it’ through the removal of ‘specific grievances’.³⁴¹ Similarly, in 1821, Lord Liverpool supported a bill moved by the Whig, Lord John Russell, and passed by the Commons, to disfranchise the Cornish borough of Grampound for corruption. While Ultra-Tories, including Lord Eldon, had resisted this modicum of parliamentary reform, Liverpool explained that he supported ‘the present bill, not because he was a parliamentary reformer, but because he was an enemy to all plans for general reform’.³⁴² Importantly, Liverpool proceeded to oppose Russell’s more radical proposal to transfer Grampound’s two seats to the unrepresented town of

³³⁹ Ibid., 29:180 (May 1831), p. 761.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 30:182 (July 1831), p. 30.

³⁴¹ Canning, Speech at the public dinner in honour of his re-election in the music-hall, 18 March, 1820, pp. 321-322.

³⁴² Lord Liverpool, Speech in the House of Lords, 14 May, 1821, quoted in Norman Gash, *Lord Liverpool: the life and political career of Robert Banks Jenkinson, second Earl of Liverpool, 1770-1828* (London, 1984), p. 173.

Leeds on the grounds that this would represent a break with precedent. Instead, Liverpool introduced a successful amendment to transfer the seats to the county of Yorkshire.³⁴³ Both Liverpool and Canning disliked general, innovative and speculative schemes which would broaden the popular basis of the constitution. Canning considered his ‘principles of toryism’ to rest on the ‘declared opposition to the wild theories of undefined reform’ and this was precisely what current plans for parliamentary reform offered.³⁴⁴ They tended ‘not to remedy, but to destroy; not to correct what may be amiss in a system of representation’ but to ‘tend to a system to be founded exclusively on what is called the power of the people’.³⁴⁵ In short, these schemes did not seek to correct abuses in the electoral system but to remodel it completely, increasing the popular basis of the constitution.

Following Canning’s death, in 1827, the principle of conservative amelioration was maintained by the coterie of Liberal Tories who had supported him. However, in 1828, this principle was deployed to justify a change in the electoral system which departed in a significant way from the precedent of Grampound. Corruption in the boroughs of Penryn and East Retford convinced ministers that their franchise should be transferred. Yet conflict emerged over whether this transference should be to the neighbouring hundreds, where the landed classes continued to exercise control, or to large, unrepresented manufacturing towns, specifically Manchester and Birmingham. Initially, a compromise was decided whereby the franchise of Penryn would be transferred to Manchester and the franchise of East Retford to the hundred of Bassetlaw where the Ultra-Tory Duke of Newcastle could dominate it. However, this compromise was thwarted when the House of Lords conducted its own enquiry and concluded that the case against Penryn was not strong enough to warrant disfranchisement.³⁴⁶

Subsequently, Canning’s band of Liberal Tories, now led by William Huskisson, voted against the government regarding East Retford’s franchise, contending that these seats

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 172.

³⁴⁴ George Canning, Speech on the hustings, before the opening of the poll, 8 March, 1820, in *Canning’s Speeches...in Liverpool*, p. 248.

³⁴⁵ Idem, Speech at the public dinner, in the Lyceum Room, 30 August, 1822, in *Canning’s Speeches...in Liverpool*, p. 362.

³⁴⁶ Asa Briggs, *Age of Improvement, 1783-1867* (London, 1959), p.199; William Brady, *William Huskisson and liberal reform. An essay on the changes in economic policy in the twenties of the nineteenth century*, 2nd ed., (London, 1967), p. 15; Terry Jenkins, ‘Penryn’ (2009), *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons, 1820-1832*, ed. D.R. Fisher, <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/constituencies/penryn>> [16/07/2015]

should go to Birmingham instead. Huskisson maintained that this was ‘the best course, not only in reference to general interests, but also the safest and most prudent for those who, like me, wish to guard against the growing danger of abstract and general reform’.³⁴⁷ In his view, the enfranchisement of Birmingham was the only means through which the danger posed by the Birmingham Political Union, formed in 1829 to ‘raise a universal cry for parliamentary reform’, could be neutralised.³⁴⁸

Huskisson’s support for the transfer of East Retford’s franchise to Birmingham was significant in two respects. First, despite his support for this measure, Huskisson continued to declare himself a decided ‘enemy to what is called parliamentary reform on principle; that is, to any general reform in the formation of the House of Commons, which is founded upon the principle of theoretical improvement.’³⁴⁹ Yet his policy was one of concession which, by admitting a growing manufacturing town to the franchise, appeared to sanction a new principle and threaten the dominance of landed property. Consequently, it was out of tune with Tory opinion which continued to defend the dominance of landed property within the constitution. In 1830, Wellington pointed out that the ‘representation of the people at present contains a large body of the property of the country... in which the landed interest has a preponderating influence’, a preponderance of which he approved.³⁵⁰ Should he ever be faced with creating a constitution, Wellington claimed he would attempt to fashion one as close to as possible to that already in existence, ‘in which property, and particularly property in land, should be preponderant’.³⁵¹ The difficulties which emerged in Tory ranks regarding the political status of the landed interest, and the increasing significance of manufacturing and commercial interests in the British economy, are explored in the next chapter. So too is the impact of these fissures on Tory identity. Here, it will suffice to acknowledge that Huskisson’s ‘liberal’ disposition, particularly regarding economic affairs and on the question of Catholic emancipation, ensured that he had been largely expelled from Tory identity by the time of his death in September 1830.

³⁴⁷ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 11 February, 1830, in *The Speeches of the Right Honourable William Huskisson with a biographical memoir...in three volumes* (hereafter *Huskisson’s Speeches*), vol. III, (London, 1831), p. 481.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 487.

³⁴⁹ *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 23 February, 1830, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. III, p. 491.

³⁵⁰ Duke of Wellington, Speech to the House of Lords, 2 November 1830, in *Wellington’s Speeches*, vol. I, p. 388.

³⁵¹ *Idem*, Speech to the House of Lords, 4 October 1831, p. 458.

The second key point also relates to these fissures, for not only did Huskisson vote against the government, headed by Wellington, but he also hastily submitted his resignation. This action resulted in the County Clare by-election and the subsequent election of Daniel O’Connell in July. The result of the by-election held significant ramifications for the question of Catholic Emancipation, eventually securing its passage while Wellington was in office.³⁵² Consequently, by 1830, the administration had lost the support not only of the Liberal Tories surrounding Huskisson, but support of approximately 40 Ultra-Tories too.³⁵³ Some Ultra-Tory publications and politicians advocated varied degrees of parliamentary reform. This support should not be overstated though. Influential Ultras including Richard Vyvyan, Charles Wetherell, and the Duke of Newcastle remained opposed. Where Ultra support did exist, it was not motivated by sympathy for democracy but outrage regarding the government’s increasing liberalism which had resulted in economic ruin and the passage of Catholic Emancipation.³⁵⁴ In November 1830, the government was defeated on proposals relating to a reduction of the civil list by 233 votes to 204 votes, with the Ultras voting 33 to 8 against the government. The administration resigned and the Whigs, under Grey, were finally admitted to power.³⁵⁵ In May 1831, two months after the First Reform Bill had passed the Commons, with parliament dissolved and the Whigs set to triumph at the polls, *Blackwood’s* claimed that it was the ‘fatal divisions of the conservative party [which] have brought the country to its present perilous condition’. It did, though, note that ‘their subsequent union’ in the face of Grey’s measure had ‘nobly atoned’ for these divisions.³⁵⁶

Significant Whig gains in the 1831 election secured passage for the Second Reform Bill: it was won by a majority of 136 votes in the Commons. The battle moved to the

³⁵² See chapter four pp. 252-258.

³⁵³ Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), p. 359.

³⁵⁴ D.C. Moore, ‘The Other Face of Reform’, *Victorian Studies*, 5:1 (Sept 1961), p.18; Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 152, 153; Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), p. 412. Also see the Earl of Winchilsea, Speech in the House of Lords, 4 November, 1830, *PD*, Series 3, vol.1, col. 196.

³⁵⁵ O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 359.

³⁵⁶ *BEM*, 29: 180 (May 1831) p. 762; for details on this election see Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?* p. 421.

Lords where divisions amongst the Bishops provoked riots in London. In May 1832, *Blackwood's* lamented the influence of democratic fervour upon the Peers. While 'six months before' the Lords had 'rejected a Bill essentially the same as that now before them, by a majority of forty one', they 'now accepted it by a majority of nine'. In the face of democratic victory, only one thing could save the nation from destruction:

We want a Tory Government, identified in principle, in feeling,
and in spirit, with the Tory *people*— with a hope of this, the people
would bestir themselves, and would make the babble of the
Revolutionists, about the "resistless demands of the multitude"
for this Reform Bill, *practically* ridiculous in a very short time.³⁵⁷

But the reviewer's hopes were left unfulfilled. The Reform Bill received the royal assent in June 1832.

Conclusion

This chapter has suggested, first, that in relation to the civil element of the constitution, the development of a distinct Tory identity was facilitated by an anxiety, diametrically opposed to that of opposition Whiggery, that the people's usurpation of power presented the primary constitutional danger. Whether reacting to misconceptions regarding the origin of political sovereignty and a right of resistance, the relationship between the legislature and executive, or demands for parliamentary reform, Tories consistently articulated a desire to protect the constitution from popular encroachment. Second, in the late eighteenth century, the renegotiation of old Tory ideology, specifically departure from notions of absolute monarchical power and an indefeasible right to the throne, enabled convergence with conservative Whiggery in defence of subjects' obedience and the royal prerogative. This instigated distinction from the Opposition Whigs and, in the early nineteenth century, encouraged the re-emergence of a new Tory identity. This identity was consciously distinguished from the disloyalty engendered by adherence to the Stuart dynasty and, instead, was underpinned by a zealous commitment to Glorious Revolution. Third, in the early nineteenth century, in

³⁵⁷ *BEM*, 31:194 (May 1832), pp. 852-853, 854.

the face of demands for parliamentary reform, Toryism came to be characterised more by its anti-populist stance than defence of the prerogative specifically. Nonetheless, the need to defend the crown from an overbearing Commons remained an important feature of Tory rhetoric. Finally, although divisions emerged amongst Tories regarding the issue of parliamentary reform, the fissures which eventually crippled Wellington's government were rooted in the divergent responses to Britain's changing economic circumstances and, crucially, the issue of Catholic emancipation. These will receive attention in the following chapters.

Chapter II

Political Economy: the movement towards free trade

The previous chapter argued that, in the late eighteenth century, consensus between old Toryism and conservative Whiggery was promoted by a shared conviction that it was not the crown's but the people's usurpation of power which presented the primary constitutional danger. Consequently, in the early nineteenth century, the development of a new Tory identity, distinct from Opposition Whiggery, was facilitated by an authoritarian, anti-populist consensus until the divisions of 1827-1830. Consensus amongst new Tories prior to 1827, though, was not all-encompassing and rather significant differences emerged in relation to both civil and religious questions. W.R. Brock has characterised these fissures in terms of a dichotomy:

Generally speaking the Tories fell into two divisions ... there were first the old or High Tories, who resisted reform wherever it appeared ... [and, second,] the "liberals" who wished generally for administrative and legal reform, for Catholic Emancipation and for Free Trade, but who would still join in a defence of the Unreformed Parliament.³⁵⁸

Brock's analysis offers a neat compartmentalisation which simplifies a complex political situation. More accurate is Stephen Lee's characterisation of Tory divisions in the early nineteenth century as 'more of a spectrum than a polarisation.'³⁵⁹ At one end of this spectrum were the Ultra Tories, including Lord Redesdale, Edward Knatchbull, Thomas Lethbridge, and Richard Vyvyan, all of whom will receive notice in this chapter; at the other end were individuals including William Huskisson and George Canning, perhaps the two most controversial and archetypal Liberal Tories, who adopted a liberal stance on most issues. Brock has suggested that Lord Liverpool, the subject of his study, 'belonged completely to neither party' and rather 'shared important

³⁵⁸ W.R. Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism*, 2nd ed., (London, 1967), p. 35.

³⁵⁹ Stephen Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism* (London, 2008), p. 139; also on the unhelpful notion of a dichotomy between 'High' and 'Liberal' Tories see Graham D. Goodlad, "'Liberal' and 'High' Tories in the Age of Liverpool", *Modern History Review*, 7:2 (November 1995), p. 11.

opinions with both' enabling him to 'mediate' between the two.³⁶⁰ However, others, including Robert Peel, Thomas Wallace and Viscount Castlereagh also resist neat categorisation, representing instead varied shades of opinion between extremes. Liverpool, Peel and Wallace were relatively liberal on civil issues, particularly economic questions, yet were opposed to Catholic emancipation.³⁶¹ Castlereagh, meanwhile, was pro-Catholic and in his final session as leader in the Commons, in 1822, he endorsed the principles of free trade.³⁶² This spectrum of opinion was also reflected within the press. Regarding the Corn Laws, for example, *Blackwood's*, with the vast majority of its articles authored by the vitriolic, Ultra-Tory David Robinson, adopted a consistently protectionist disposition. Meanwhile, the *Quarterly Review* could vacillate according to the view of particular authors.³⁶³

This chapter considers divisions in relation to civil policy with a discussion of religious issues reserved for part two. Focus will be dedicated to economic policy, specifically the movement towards free trade. Boyd Hilton has suggested that 'Free Trade was not a particularly important source of conflict between Liberal and High Tories before the 1840s, commercial policies being governed more by pragmatic and political considerations than by ideological ones.'³⁶⁴ While this chapter concurs that the implementation of liberal economic policies was dictated by pragmatism, it does not agree that free trade failed to function as an important source of contention prior to the 1840s. The growing body of literature dedicated to the opposition posed to emergent free-trade orthodoxy lends credence to this notion. James Sack, in his study of the right-wing press, highlights that a 'national debate of varying degree of intensity' took place regarding the validity of foreign trade versus protection between the publication of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776) and the abolition of the remaining Navigation

³⁶⁰ W.R. Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism*, p. 35.

³⁶¹ While it was Peel who conceded on this issue in 1829 this will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

³⁶² Norman Gash, 'The Age of Atonement. The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795- 1865 by Boyd Hilton', *English Historical Review*, 104:410 (Jan., 1989), p. 137 See Marquess of Londonderry, Speech in the House of Commons, 15 February 1822, *PD*, NS, vol. 6, cols. 350-400; Idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 29 April, *PD*, NS, vol. 7, cols. 150-198.

³⁶³ For example, compare the perspectives adopting in *QR*, 35: 69 (Jan. 1827), pp. 270-271 and idem, 36:72 (Oct. 1827), pp. 393-394.

³⁶⁴ Boyd Hilton, *Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865* (Oxford, 1988), p. 222.

Acts in 1849.³⁶⁵ Focusing on the nineteenth century, Barry Gordon has suggested that, in the 1820s, there were ‘significant divisions among both Whigs and Tories’ on ‘most issues of social and commercial policy’ with his works revealing substantial conflict regarding Ricardian economic theory in a parliamentary context.³⁶⁶ Meanwhile, Anna Gambles’ *Protection and Politics*, the most comprehensive study of nineteenth-century protectionist attitudes, utilises the periodical press, in particular, to argue that while ‘Tory ministers may have reached for a “liberal” formula ... they were not supported by the bulk of Tory opinion.’³⁶⁷ Indeed, Gambles validates examination of the early divides in Tory opinion regarding economic issues with the suggestion that the ‘seeds of the ideological rupture of 1846 [when the Corn Laws were repealed] may well have germinated in the 1820s’.³⁶⁸ The pursuit of freer trade in relation to corn certainly had a corrosive influence on Tory unity in the early nineteenth century and featured as the most controversial issue of the 1820s next to Catholic Emancipation.³⁶⁹ Meanwhile, the implementation of wider commercial reform through the reduction of import tariffs and alteration of the Navigation Code encouraged dispute, particularly in the wake of the financial crash of 1825.³⁷⁰

This chapter suggests that Tory divisions regarding the doctrines of political economy and the movement towards free trade in the early nineteenth century were essentially political: they were rooted in different visions regarding the means of securing economic prosperity and, with it, political tranquillity; they also entailed competing views regarding the balance of varied economic interests within the state. In this respect, it builds on the work of various scholars who have indicated that Tory economic discourse should be viewed through a political lens. Gambles has highlighted the constitutional nature of nineteenth-century Tory protectionist discourse. By focusing on the ‘Economic criteria of balanced development, entering on the mutual

³⁶⁵ James Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain, c. 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 180.

³⁶⁶ Barry Gordon, *Political Economy in Parliament, 1819-1823* (London, 1976), and idem, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism, 1824-1830* (London, 1979).

³⁶⁷ Anna Gambles, *Protection and Politics: Conservative Economic Discourse, 1815-1852* (London, 1999), p. 37.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ On the divisive nature of the Corn question see Wendy Hinde, *George Canning* (London, 1973), p. 402 and Asa Briggs, *Age of Improvement, 1783-1867* (London, 1959), p. 197. The Catholic question was also a prominent topic throughout the decade, see the discussion of the 1826 election in G.I.T. Machin *The Catholic Question in English Politics, 1820-1830* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 66-69.

³⁷⁰ Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism 1824-1830*, pp. 96-106; Briggs, *Age of Improvement*, p. 192.

consumption of classes and interests in home and colonial markets', Gambles suggests that protectionism 'reinforced and expressed the Conservative aim of achieving social and political stability without conceding constitutional reform.'³⁷¹ Similarly, Douglas Simes, in an examination of the character of Ultra Toryism, has highlighted its pastoral element and commitment to the preservation of protection particularly, though not exclusively, in relation to the land. This agenda, Simes contests, 'went a lot deeper than pocket-book politics ... The Land was seen as a source of nationhood, stability, hierarchy, order, and traditional values'.³⁷²

Meanwhile, various scholars have suggested that Liberal Toryism emerged as an essentially conservative response intended to avert whole-scale reform. Norman Gash, for example, has claimed that 'Liverpool's policy...however liberal and enlightened, was still fundamentally a policy of preserving the essential features of the constitution inherited from the eighteenth century'. In order to achieve this aim, it endeavoured 'to blunt radical attacks on the constitution by demonstrating that the aristocratic system was capable of producing an administration that looked to national needs and worked for national ends'.³⁷³ Similarly, Stephen Lee contends that 'Liberal Toryism in the 1820s...was as much about showing that the political system, by virtue of its ability to initiate reform in such fields as economics or the law, was not itself in need of reform'.³⁷⁴ This chapter concurs with these perspectives and contends that the arguments of both Liberal and Ultra Tories justified the economic policies which they recommended as measures which would prevent political convulsions and overarching constitutional alteration. Moreover, it adds that fundamental differences amongst Tories regarding the political implications of laissez-faire economic policies facilitated deep divisions which helped to consolidate Tory political identity. Association between the doctrines of political economy and wider political and religious reformism enhanced notions of a political 'other' against which the positive characteristics of Toryism could be identified. In relation to economics, this meant protectionism.

³⁷¹ Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, p. 19.

³⁷² D. G. Simes, 'A long and difficult association: the Ultra Tories and "the Great Apostate"', in C.M. Woolgar (ed.), *Wellington Studies III* (Southampton, 1999), p. 68.

³⁷³ Norman Gash, *Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865* (London, 1979), p. 123.

³⁷⁴ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p.151. Also see Goodlad, "'Liberal" and "High" Tories in the Age of Liverpool', p. 10.

Pitt and Economic Liberalisation in the Eighteenth Century

In the late eighteenth century, economic policy provided a consistent source of controversy and conflict amongst Whig statesmen as well as within wider conservative and Tory opinion. There was a relatively strong commitment to free trade amongst leading conservative Whig statesmen, including Pitt and Burke, the two figures often credited by historians as providing the inspiration for Liberal Toryism in the early nineteenth century.³⁷⁵ Ideologically, Pitt's economic views were shaped by Lord Shelburne, as well as Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations* was published in 1776, and the arguments of Josiah Tucker.³⁷⁶ Pitt's ministry generally tended to look to the encouragement of free trade and trade negotiations took place with eight European states between 1784 and 1792; the most significant of these were the commercial negotiations with France which resulted in the Eden Treaty, secured in 1786.³⁷⁷ Moreover, in 1785, Pitt introduced a series of resolutions which would significantly open up Anglo-Irish trade on the condition that the Irish contribute to England's defence expenditure.³⁷⁸ However, this measure was ultimately defeated in the Irish parliament.

Pitt's arguments in favour of both the Irish resolutions, and the commercial negotiations with France, emphasised that abundant European and colonial markets would enhance rather than harm English prosperity.³⁷⁹ In place of an Anglo-Irish relationship characterised by Irish subservience, Pitt sought to establish one underpinned by 'participation and [a] community of benefits' which, 'without tending to aggrandize the one or depress the other, should seek the aggregate interests of the empire.'³⁸⁰ Given Britain's recent loss of the American colonies, this sentiment was ultimately pragmatic. It was also grounded in a strong belief in Britain's manufacturing capacity: Pitt urged

³⁷⁵ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp.150-151; Alexander Brady, *William Huskisson and Liberal Reform: an essay on the changes in economic policy in the twenties of the nineteenth century*, 2nd ed., (London, 1967), p. 4, 6.

³⁷⁶ John Derry, *William Pitt* (London, 1962), p. 46; Bernard Semmel, 'The Hume-Tucker Debate and Pitt's Trade Proposals', *The Economic Journal*, 75:300 (Dec., 1965), pp. 759-770 and idem, *The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism Classical Political Economy: the Empire of Free Trade and Imperialism, 1750-1850* (London, 1970).

³⁷⁷ Eric J. Evans, *William Pitt* (London, 1999), p. 27. These states included France, Spain, Portugal, Russia, Prussia, Holland, Poland and the two Sicilies.

³⁷⁸ William Hague, *William Pitt the Younger* (London, 2004), p. 186.

³⁷⁹ For example, see Pitt speaking in the House of Commons regarding the Irish resolutions, 22 Feb 1785, *PH* vol. 25, col. 324.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, col. 318.

that Britain's 'manufacturers were so superior that ...there could be no danger in admitting the Irish articles to our markets on equal duties'.³⁸¹ Pitt used a similar line of argument in relation to France two years later:

Though France might gain, we must be, comparatively, so much more benefited ...It was in the nature and essence of an agreement between a manufacturing country and a country blessed with peculiar productions, that the advantages must terminate in favour of the former.³⁸²

Thus, in both cases, Pitt argued that England would not be placed under threat by the competition of either Ireland or France given its manufacturing superiority. This argument, as Semmel has demonstrated, was derived from the writings of the conservative Whig churchman, Josiah Tucker, whose tussle with David Hume regarding the beneficiary of trade between a rich and poor nation provided an early example of conservative economic conflict.³⁸³

Like Pitt, Edmund Burke was also an admirer of Adam Smith and a frequent advocate of economic liberalism.³⁸⁴ Burke endorsed the principles of free trade in several of his publications, most notably *Two Letters on the Trade of Ireland*, published in 1778, and *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity*, composed in 1795, and published posthumously in 1800. The former comprised two letters vindicating Burke's support for Lord Nugent's proposals to liberalise Irish trade by insisting that an increase in Ireland's prosperity, rather than deprive England, would be mutually beneficial: 'if Ireland is beneficial to you' Burke instructed his recipients, 'it is so, not from the parts in which it is restrained; but from those in which it is left free, but not unrivalled. The greater its freedom, the greater must be your advantage.'³⁸⁵ Subsequently, in *Thoughts and Details*, Burke addressed the scarcity and consequent high price of corn born from the war with

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, col. 323.

³⁸² Pitt, Speech in the House of Commons, 12 Feb 1787, *PH*, vol. 26, col. 395.

³⁸³ Semmel, 'The Hume-Tucker Debate and Pitt's Trade Proposals', pp. 759-770.

³⁸⁴ Frank O'Gorman, *Edmund Burke: his political philosophy* (London, 1973), p. 45; D. Barrington, 'Edmund Burke as an Economist', *Economica*, New Series, 21:83 (August 1954), pp. 254-255.

³⁸⁵ Edmund Burke, 'Two Letters on the Trade of Ireland', in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. Paul Langford, 9 vols., vol. 9 (Oxford 1981— forthcoming, 2015), p. 517. In other editions of Burke's works, and on the English Short Title Catalogue, this work is entitled *Two Letters to Gentlemen of the City of Bristol*.

revolutionary France. Here, too, he promoted the principles of free trade and denounced state intervention and regulation: ‘an indiscreet tampering with the trade of provisions is the most dangerous’, Burke declared, ‘and it is always the worst in the time when men are most disposed to it: — that is, in the time of scarcity’.³⁸⁶

Despite these profusions in favour of free trade, however, neither Pitt nor Burke can be considered as simply doctrinaire in their approach to economic policy. Rather the determination both exhibited towards the principles of free trade was intimately linked to a pragmatic consideration of circumstance. Pitt’s Irish proposals, for example, were justified not simply on economic grounds but also on the grounds of political expediency. In Pitt’s perspective, ‘the internal poverty and distress of the country [Ireland]’ provided ‘the radical cause of all the discontent that prevails’.³⁸⁷ Consequently, by setting ‘the commercial intercourse of the two countries [England and Ireland], on a firm, liberal, and permanent basis’, Pitt hoped that ‘an end might for ever be put to jealousies and clamour; by which all future pretexts to discontent might be removed’.³⁸⁸ Political considerations also featured in Pitt’s justification of commercial negotiations with France. While the commercial benefits derived from the treaty would increase Britain’s national wealth, ‘enabling her to combat her enemy [France] with more effect’ in the event that hostilities were renewed, ‘It did more than this: by promoting habits of friendly intercourse, and of mutual benefit’. Should Britain and France be ‘mutually benefited by the connexion, and endeared to one another by the result of the common benefits, it gave better chance for the preservation of harmony between them’ rendering ‘it less likely that she [Britain] should have occasion to call forth those resources’ of war.³⁸⁹ Consequently, commercial negotiations with France served two pragmatic concerns: they strengthened Britain’s capacity to endure conflict, while simultaneously reducing the likelihood of military exertion.

Similarly, Burke’s support for loosening Irish restrictions in 1778 was justified with reference to wider political circumstances, specifically the loss of the American

³⁸⁶ *Idem*, *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity, originally presented to the Right Hon. William Pitt in the month of November, 1795* (London, 1800), p. 1.

³⁸⁷ Pitt writing to Thomas Orde, Chief Secretary in 1784, quoted in Hague, *William Pitt the Younger*, p. 186. n. 18.

³⁸⁸ Pitt, Speech in the House of Commons, 22 Feb 1785, *PH*, vol. 25, col. 314.

³⁸⁹ *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 12 Feb 1787, *PH*, vol. 26, cols. 392- 393.

colonies. The ‘resolutions in favour of Ireland are trifling and insignificant, when compared with the concessions to the Americans’, Burke pointed out. He proceeded to implore, ‘At such a juncture...every man, who retains the least spark of regard to the yet remaining security and honour of this country, not to compel others to an imitation of their [the Americans’] conduct’.³⁹⁰ This consideration lends credence to Renee Prendergast’s suggestion that Burke’s economic thought, like his political thought, was characterised by the rejection of ‘constructivist rationalism’ and the ‘view that policy conclusions should be based on the facts of a situation and not deduced from abstract models’.³⁹¹ Rod Preece concurs with this view, arguing that Burke was not a complete devotee of *laissez faire* but an adherent of discriminatory intervention based on a consideration of circumstance.³⁹² Preece acknowledges that Burke’s *Thoughts and Details* (1800) challenges this thesis and comes close to the rationalistic abstractions denounced elsewhere in his writings. The problematical nature of this work lies not in its espousal of economic liberalism, but the lack of any criticism directed ‘towards the excess, abstractions and rationalism of classical liberalism’.³⁹³ Nonetheless, Preece contends that this work does not appear a radical departure in Burke’s economic thinking when considered in the context of his wider writings. Specifically, Preece argues that *Thoughts and Details* should be read in light of Burke’s frequent insistence on the importance of circumstance, that is, his belief that ‘circumstances give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind’.³⁹⁴ In short, the arguments presented in *Thoughts and Details* should be considered as a response to a specific set of circumstances.

The *Thoughts and Details* was composed in response to action undertaken by local magistrates to alleviate food shortages consequent of a bad harvest. In certain cases, such as Speenhamland, the magistrates turned to outdoor relief to subsidise the wages

³⁹⁰ Burke, ‘Two Letters’, p. 509.

³⁹¹ Renee Prendergast, ‘The political economy of Edmund Burke’, in Antoine E. Murphy and Renee Prendergast (eds.), *Contributions to the History of Economic Thought: Essays in honour of R.D.C. Black* (London, 2000), pp. 251-252.

³⁹² Rod Preece, ‘The Political Economy of Edmund Burke’, *Modern Age*, 24:3 (Summer 1980), pp. 266-273.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

³⁹⁴ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France: a critical edition*, ed. J.C.D. Clark, (Stanford, CA, 2001), p. 151.

of labourers in a bid to alleviate distress.³⁹⁵ Yet, for Burke, even if the wage of the labourer fell ‘short of his necessary subsistence, and the calamity of the time is so great as to threaten actual famine’ the state should not intervene. Rather, ‘Whenever it happens that a man can claim nothing according to the rules of commerce ... he passes out of that department, and comes within the jurisdiction of mercy.’³⁹⁶ As Prendergast points out, Burke’s arguments against government intervention should be viewed ‘in the context of a wider social framework in which the rules of morality apply’. For Burke, charity was a duty, and duties were not voluntary; therefore it was beyond the scope of the state to intervene.³⁹⁷ However, Burke’s insistence on governmental non-intervention in the *Thoughts and Details* contrasts with the view which he had adopted in relation to Fox’s East India Bill. Here, Warren Hastings was criticised by Burke for failing to provide adequate action to relieve famine in India. Regarding this apparent discrepancy, Prendergast highlights a difference in circumstance: while, in *Thoughts and Details*, Burke’s advocacy of non-intervention is coupled with a strong commitment to the duty of charity, ‘Burke’s indictment of British India was its destruction of the pre-existing civil society and its failure to construct a new one. In this situation, the jurisdiction of mercy could not be relied on.’³⁹⁸ Consequently, the economic policies advocated in *Thoughts and Details* and the *Two Letters* should be viewed as rooted not in a doctrinaire adherence to the theoretical abstractions of laissez-faire, but an advocacy of free trade in response to, and tailored to, specific circumstances. As will be suggested below, a similar determination to adapt the abstractions of economic theory to existing circumstances formed the crux of Liberal Toryism.

Not all Whig statesmen, nor even all conservative Whigs, were advocates of the early movement towards free trade, however. Although, in the early nineteenth century, the heirs of Fox would become advocates of free trade, in the late eighteenth century the Foxite Whigs opposed both Pitt’s Irish resolutions and commercial negotiations with France, as indeed did Burke. In relation to Ireland, the Foxites gave articulation to the discontent of the manufacturing interests, adopting a line of argument which would,

³⁹⁵ N. Barry, ‘The Political Economy of Edmund Burke’ in Ian Crowe (ed.), *Edmund Burke: His Life and Legacy* (Dublin, 1997), p. 107.

³⁹⁶ Burke, *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity*, pp. 17-18.

³⁹⁷ Prendergast, ‘The political economy of Edmund Burke’, pp. 268-269.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

ironically, later be adopted by Ultra Tories: Pitt's Irish proposals, Fox contended, departed from established policy and attempted to purchase Britain's 'tranquillity at the expense of her trade, her commerce, and her navigation.'³⁹⁹ Fox was joined in this sentiment by his prior companion in office, the conservative Whig, Lord North. North argued that to 'settle all the disputes between the two countries' was a desirable objective, 'but he did not know that it might not be obtained at too heavy an expense, if the property and essential interests of the manufacturers of this country were to be put under contribution in order to defray it'.⁴⁰⁰ Thus both North and Fox questioned the determination to undertake what, in their view, constituted a concession of British interests for the sake of political expediency.

Moreover, Sack has revealed that the Northite *Morning Herald* opposed Pitt's Anglo-French commercial agreement by depicting a French party, committed to deism and free trade, seeking ascendancy and threatening the internal tranquillity of Britain in the process.⁴⁰¹ The association between economic liberalism and wider, dangerous endeavours to advance religious and political freedom were accentuated by Ultra Tories in the early nineteenth century, as will be outlined below.⁴⁰² Towards the end of the eighteenth century, William Jones criticised Adam Smith's doctrine that 'national wealth is national happiness', adding that this kind of conclusion was only to be expected from 'a disciple of *Voltaire*, as he was, who thought little or nothing about another life'.⁴⁰³ Moreover, although it commended Burke's political principles, the *Anti-Jacobin Review* criticised the arguments of his *Thoughts and Details*. In particular, Burke's contention regarding the 'impropriety and impolicy of all legislative interference in regulating the price of provisions', and his depiction of 'freedom, in its most comprehensive and unlimited sense' as 'the very soul of all commerce', were denounced: 'Here practice and theory are certainly at variance' the reviewer claimed, and 'However ingenious ... the speculations of theoretical writers may be ... until the principle which they reprobate shall have been proved, by experience, to be deserving

³⁹⁹ Semmel, 'The Hume-Tucker Debate and Pitt's Trade Proposals', p. 765; Fox speaking in the House of Commons, 22 Feb, 1785, *PH* vol. 25., col. 335.

⁴⁰⁰ Lord North, Speech in the House of Commons, 19 May 1785, *PH*, vol. 25, col. 640.

⁴⁰¹ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 181.

⁴⁰² See below, pp. 132-134.

⁴⁰³ William Jones, *A Letter to John Bull, Esq. From His Second Cousin Thomas Bull* (London, 1793), p. 40.

of reprobation, we shall continue to oppose *fact to argument*.⁴⁰⁴ Thus differences amongst conservative Whig statesmen and the Tory reviews regarding the benefits of free trade were not novel in the early nineteenth century. However, these differences were exacerbated following the close of the Napoleonic War due to the emergence and persistence of widespread economic depression, the implementation of the controversial Corn Law in 1815, and the revival of domestic political radicalism.

Against this backdrop, economic debates were endowed with a greater degree of political and constitutional significance. In *English Society*, published initially in 1985, J.C. D. Clark suggests that religious Dissent, specifically heterodox Dissent, rather than social and economic change, constituted the principal destabilising force within (what he considers to have been) Britain's *ancien regime*. Clark has been commended, and deservedly so, for identifying amongst rational Christians a substantial challenge to the old order, even if his work does little to establish a causal relationship between heterodox theology *per se* and political radicalism.⁴⁰⁵ Yet, as H.T. Dickinson notes, Clark goes 'much too far in claiming that political disaffection was solely the product of heterodox opinions'.⁴⁰⁶ Frank O'Gorman, meanwhile, criticises Clark's 'sceptical and condescending' treatment of post-war radicalism as 'static to the point of caricature'. Clark's depiction of radicalism, O'Gorman notes justly, neglects its economic dimension, specifically the integration of new, industrial strains during the Napoleonic war and in its aftermath.⁴⁰⁷ The criticisms of these historians are directed towards the first edition of *English Society* and the perspective on radicalism offered by the second edition is, admittedly, more sophisticated. It is still depicted as driven essentially by a desire to subvert the church: radicalism is defined by Clark as 'a theoretical critique of revealed religion, an institutional critique of the Church, and a political attack on the Church's main supports: the unreformed parliament, the monarch, and the landlord.'

⁴⁰⁴ *AJ*, 7:29 (November 1800), pp. 283-284.

⁴⁰⁵ Joanna Innes, 'Jonathan Clark, Social History and England's "Ancien Regime"', *Past & Present*, 115 (May, 1987), p. 189.

⁴⁰⁶ H.T. Dickinson, 'English Society, 1688-1832. Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime by J.C.D. Clark', *English Historical Review*, 102:404 (July, 1987), p. 685; also see Innes, 'Jonathan Clark, Social History and England's "Ancien Regime"', pp.165-200. Especially pp. 165-166, 169.

⁴⁰⁷ Frank O'Gorman, 'The Recent Historiography on the Hanoverian Regime...', *Historical Journal*, 29:4 (December 1986), p. 1018; E. Royle and J. Walvin, *English Radicals and Reformers, 1760-1848* (Brighton, 1982), p. 107; Eric J. Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State: Early Industrial Britain 1783-1870*, 3rd ed., (Edinburgh, London, 2001), p. 229.

This picture risks depicting demands for parliamentary reform and critiques of the landlord only as extensions of a pivotal desire to topple the power of the Church of England rather than *raisons d'être* in their own right, which is misleading. Nonetheless, it does incorporate a consideration of political economy, the role of which was ignored by Clark's earlier work. The economist David Ricardo, in particular, is accredited with adding the theme of expropriation of the landlord, and placing this issue in a secular setting.⁴⁰⁸ Yet detailed examination of the responses to these threats is excluded from Clark's work. Thus he fails to acknowledge and explain the emergence of Liberal Toryism, the protectionist dimension of Ultra Toryism, or the role which Britain's changing economy and the intellectual challenges to Britain's aristocratic, landed society played in fracturing 'establishment', or Tory, ideology.

The sections below add complexity to the ideology which Clark outlines by analysing the basis of Tory fissures regarding economic issues and the extent to which they contributed to the consolidation of Tory identity. It suggests that significant differences emerged regarding the economic and political consequences of introducing freer trade. While Liberal Tories urged the conservative nature of gradual amelioration through economic reform, Ultra Tory discourse increasingly associated free trade with political and religious reformism and constitutional subversion. This articulation of difference served to categorise free trade doctrines, and those who advocated them in parliament, as an 'other' from which Toryism was increasingly distinguished. Eventually, these differences contributed to the splits between 1827 and 1830 and, through them, the refinement of a Tory identity underpinned by commitment to economic protection.

Liberal Toryism and the Movement towards Free Trade

Following the close of the Napoleonic war, Lord Liverpool's administration was forced to re-adjust to the economic, ideological and diplomatic changes wrought by 22 years of conflict with France. Increased agricultural production during the war ensured that peace brought with it debilitating agrarian depression. This problem was coupled with a depression in trade, while the suspension of cash payments, implemented by Pitt in 1797, resulted in an inflated currency. These troubles were exacerbated by excessive national debt, heavy taxation, fluctuating food prices, low rents and wages, and frequent

⁴⁰⁸ J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832: ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien regime*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 499-500.

bouts of popular radicalism.⁴⁰⁹ This section reasserts and expands upon the conventional interpretation, articulated by Norman Gash, John Cookson, Alexander Brady, Wendy Hinde and, more recently, Stephen Lee that, in this context, the emergence of Liberal Toryism was driven essentially by the pragmatic and conservative determination to forestall sweeping, innovative change, particularly in relation to the constitution.⁴¹⁰ Indeed, in 1822, the government-sponsored pamphlet, *The State of the Nation*, published to outline the administration's policies in finance, foreign relations, the Home Department, colonies and Board of Trade, acknowledged the necessity of cultivating 'a general persuasion' that the government was engaged in pursuing the public good. It was necessary for the administration to be viewed by the populace as engaged in securing improvement, for only this could 'excite such a spirit of concurrent effort between the people and their governors, as to give manners the effect and authority of laws' and 'bring into disuse any statutes ... required in more turbulent times to repress public disorders'.⁴¹¹ In short, government policy was justified as a means of alleviating distress, conciliating the populace, and quelling political discontent.

This interpretation has been challenged by Boyd Hilton who suggests that the roots of Liberal Toryism were located in a particular form of moderate, post-millenarian evangelicalism.⁴¹² For Hilton, the desire of Liberal Tories to relieve restraints, particularly in economic affairs, was underpinned by the belief that providence operated through 'a "natural" and predictable in-built system of rewards and punishments' with suffering 'the logical consequence of specifically bad behaviour'.⁴¹³ The 'world [was] beset with temptation, and meant for trial and judgement' and therefore 'Governments

⁴⁰⁹ Anne Lane Lingelbach, 'Huskisson and the Board of Trade', *The American Historical Review*, 43:4 (July, 1938), p. 765; Royle and Walvin, *English Radicals and Reformers*, pp. 108-124; Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State*, pp. 229-238.

⁴¹⁰ Norman Gash, *Lord Liverpool: the life and political career of Robert Banks Jenkinson, 1770-1828* (London, 1984), p. 146, 173, 339 and *Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865*, pp. 123-125; J.E. Cookson, *Lord Liverpool's administration: the crucial years, 1815-1822* (Edinburgh, 1975), pp. 1-17, 90-129, 215-28, 340-66; Brady, *William Huskisson*, pp. 5-6; Hinde, *George Canning*, pp. 463-466; Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p. 2, 144.

⁴¹¹ [Anon.], *The State of the Nation at the commencement of the year 1822 considered under the four departments of the Finance – Foreign Relations – Home Department – Colonies, Board of Trade* (London, 1822). For the connection between this publication and the administration see Gash, *Aristocracy and People*, p. 123 n. 2.

⁴¹² Boyd Hilton, *Corn, Cash, Commerce: The Economic Policies of the Tory Governments 1815-1830* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 303-315 and Idem, *The Age of Atonement*.

⁴¹³ Hilton, *The Age of Atonement*, p. 14.

should interfere with men's lives as little as possible'. Instead, individuals should be left to 'operate self-help' and 'work out their own salvation'.⁴¹⁴ In this interpretation, the economy provided 'an area of great spiritual trial and suspense' in which individuals should be left to operate freely.⁴¹⁵

Although this is an enticing thesis, Hilton acknowledges that, while it is 'easy to show that Liberal Tory social and economic policies fitted the evangelical ideology', whether or not there was a causal relationship between the two presents a 'more difficult question'.⁴¹⁶ Indeed, Hilton's thesis falls short in the crucial respect of establishing the influence of evangelical thinking on key ministers. Although Liverpool was undoubtedly religious, Hilton acknowledges that he abhorred Calvinism and sometimes equated evangelicals, broadly speaking, with Calvinists.⁴¹⁷ Norman Gash has drawn attention to Hilton's tendency to 'over-dramatize his evidence' regarding Peel's religiosity.⁴¹⁸ Meanwhile, Stephen Lee has effectively exposed the largely circumstantial nature of Hilton's evidence regarding Canning's religious sentiment. Hilton's suggestion that Canning was offered the leadership of the evangelical parliamentary group, known as the Saints, is derived from a third-hand anecdote while correspondence between Wilberforce, the group's leader, and Canning contains no reference to such a plan. Moreover, Hilton's suggestion that Canning's evangelical sentiments were demonstrated by his attendance of, and emotional response to the preaching of Thomas Chalmers is also questioned: 'Effective preaching can move an atheist to tears under the right circumstances and Canning was a lachrymose man', Lee contends, adding the suggestion that Canning demonstrated little more than conventional piety. Indeed, as Gash has pointed out, L.T. Rede, author of a contemporary biography of Canning, had to defend the statesman from charges of infidelity.⁴¹⁹ Moreover, Lee accurately points out that, 'in Canning's day, attending the sermons of well-known preachers was often seen as a form of entertainment as much as

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁴¹⁸ Gash, 'The Age of Atonement', pp. 138-139.

⁴¹⁹ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 140-141; Gash, 'The Age of Atonement', p. 138. See L.T. Rede, *Memoir of the right honourable George Canning, late premier of England...* (London, 1827).

a religious occasion'.⁴²⁰ Little attempt is made to establish the evangelical roots of William Huskisson's Liberal Toryism beyond mention that he also attended the sermons of Thomas Chalmers. Meanwhile, Thomas Wallace and Frederick Robinson, two Liberal Tories who performed central roles in initiating early reform while at the Board of Trade, are completely overlooked.⁴²¹ Furthermore, of the four Tory ministers whom Hilton identifies as formally Evangelical, only Charles Grant, 'an extreme free trader', offers support to his case. Goulburn was only 'cautiously liberal' and Harrowby was 'hardly a Liberal Tory', with the greatest difficulty presented by Vansittart, whom Hilton acknowledges 'does not fit this thesis'. Hilton suggests that 'we should just accept' that Vansittart was a 'maverick' who 'divorced his political life from religion'.⁴²² However, it is difficult to allow this exception regarding such a devout individual, yet contemplate that Canning, certainly an ambitious political maverick, would be incapable of this kind of separation.

For Lee, looking beyond the paucity of evidence on the evangelical outlook of key Liberal Tories, the problem with Hilton's thesis lies on a more fundamental level. Specifically, Hilton adopts an 'epiphenomenal' approach which, by attempting to 'explain political ideology in terms of something else, be it in terms of materialistic self-interest, of psychology, or of a non-political ideology', eschews an understanding of political argument 'in its own terms'.⁴²³ Harry Dickinson has exposed the failings of this methodology in his shrewd engagement with the Namierite demotion of political ideas to an *ex post facto* disguise of self-interest. Even if the Namierite position holds true, and politicians used ideas only as a disguise of alternative motives, this does not explain why particular ideas were selected and others neglected. It is because any 'particular course of political action' must be 'justified and therefore legitimated in the opinion of the agent and those he seeks to influence' that, for Dickinson, ideas remain important. Considering political argument in this sense adds significance to Norman Gash's recognition that Liberal Tory economic arguments lacked religious rhetoric. Thus, if 'for Tory free-traders religion was the core of the free-trade movement', Gash suggests that they 'seemed unaware of it'.⁴²⁴ Hilton accounts for this omission by

⁴²⁰ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 140-141.

⁴²¹ Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, p. 57

⁴²² *Ibid.*, pp. 226- 227.

⁴²³ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 143- 144.

⁴²⁴ Gash, 'The Age of Atonement', p. 137.

suggesting that Liverpool's administration was ideologically reticent, 'the events of 1789' rendering 'all political theory suspect among the governing classes'. Yet, as Gash has pointed out, 'this is not entirely true'.⁴²⁵ Liberal Tories, like Pitt and Burke beforehand, were perfectly willing to acknowledge the abstract truth of the theories articulated by political economists including Adam Smith and the most controversial of his nineteenth-century adherents, David Ricardo. Yet, importantly, like Pitt and Burke, Liberal Tories recognised that these abstractions should be tailored to existing circumstances. George Canning, for instance, acknowledged that it was necessary to 'deal with the affairs of men on abstract principles, modified however, of course according to the times and circumstances'.⁴²⁶ This lesson was reinforced by the French Revolution, an event which taught Liberal Tories not that all political theory should be treated with suspicion, as Hilton suggests, but rather that it should be moderated and adapted to the needs of society to secure improvement and avoid rash innovation.⁴²⁷

The three key ministerial figures in economic reform, Liverpool, Robinson and Huskisson, all readily admitted their ideological conviction to the principle of free trade.⁴²⁸ As early as 1812, Liverpool declared that it had been 'well said in a foreign country, when it was asked what should be done to make commerce prosper, [that] the answer was *laissez-faire*', adding that 'it was undoubtedly true that the less commerce and manufacturers were meddled with the more they were likely to prosper'.⁴²⁹ Similarly, in 1820, Liverpool asserted 'the soundness of that general principle' of 'unrestricted freedom of trade'. However, he also acknowledged that the 'commercial regulations of the European world' had been 'long established', rendering it 'impossible' to 'act unreservedly on that principle'.⁴³⁰ Robinson, too, was a consistent and doctrinaire free trader, as Hilton notes.⁴³¹ In 1824, he suggested that the growth in

⁴²⁵ Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, p. 220, 226; Gash, 'The Age of Atonement', p. 138.

⁴²⁶ George Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1826, in R. Therry (ed.), *The Speeches of the Right Honourable George Canning. With a memoir of his life...in six volumes* (hereafter Canning's Speeches), vol. V, (London, 1828), p. 525.

⁴²⁷ Gash, 'The Age of Atonement', p. 138. B. Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, p. 3; Cookson, *Lord Liverpool's administration*, p.226; Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p. 150 n. 73; Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February 1826, p. 525.

⁴²⁸ On the significance of these three figures see Briggs, *Age of Improvement*, p. 191; Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 41-43.

⁴²⁹ Lord Liverpool speaking in the House of Lords in 1812, quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

⁴³⁰ *Idem*, Speech in the House of Lords, 26 May 1820, *PD*, NS, vol. I, col. 576.

⁴³¹ See Frederick Robinson, Speech in House of Commons, 28 March, 1816, in *PD*, NS, vol. 33, cols. 696- 698; *Substance of the speech of the Right Hon. Frederick Robinson on moving the resolution to*

the nation's foreign trade and, consequently, its revenue were 'owing to the adoption of that more free and liberal spirit of commercial policy' of which he had 'always been the advocate'.⁴³² Moreover, the following year, Huskisson defended the relief of regulations in the silk trade by urging that 'the means which lead to increased consumption, and which are the foundation, as that consumption is the proof, of our prosperity, will be most effectually promoted by an unrestrained competition'. This competition should take place 'not only between the capital and industry, of different classes in the same country, but also by extending that competition as much as possible to all other countries.'⁴³³ In Huskisson's eyes, competition provided the key to economic improvement and prosperity. Prohibitions destroyed 'the best incentive to excellence, the best stimulus to invention and improvement'. By serving only as 'a premium to mediocrity' they 'condemn[ed] the community to suffer, both in price and quality, all the evils of monopoly' while 'exposing the consumer, as well as the dealer, to rapid and inconvenient fluctuations in price.' Alternatively, foreign competition, Huskisson urged, would encourage manufacturers 'first [to] try to imitate, and by-the-by, perhaps ...surpass your foreign rival.'⁴³⁴ Thus all three ministers shared the belief that freer trade offered the key to economic improvement and prosperity, distinguishing them from Ultra Tories who viewed these ideas as part of broader political and religious attacks on the establishment, as will be discussed below.⁴³⁵

Despite these ideological convictions, Liberal Tories were, above all, pragmatists and the implementation of economic policy was governed primarily by considerations of expediency and circumstance. The reduction of import tariffs was, to an extent, dictated by the demands of the agricultural sector.⁴³⁶ Upon the submission of the London Merchants' petition in favour of free trade in 1820, Liverpool, despite his convictions, announced that the ministry had no intention of embarking upon a rash

bring in two bills for regulating the intercourse between the West Indies, and other parts of the world (London, 1822) Hilton *Corn, Cash, Commerce*, p. 182; Cookson, *Lord Liverpool's administration*, p. 97.

⁴³² *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1824, *PD*, NS, vol.10, col. 306.

⁴³³ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 25 March, 1825, in *The Speeches of the Right Honourable William Huskisson with a biographical memoir...in three volumes* (hereafter *Huskisson's Speeches*), vol. II, (London, 1831), p. 334.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.344. Also see *idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, March 8, 1824, in *Huskisson's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 248-249.

⁴³⁵ See below, pp. 130-143.

⁴³⁶ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 18 April, 1826, in *Huskisson's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 554.

programme of reform. Britain had ‘risen under a very different system’ rendering it ‘utterly impossible ... that we can suddenly adopt the system of free trade’ without ‘unhing[ing] the whole property of the country’, particularly that of the agriculturalist. Liverpool highlighted that the Corn Law, passed in 1815, presented a barrier to unilateral or reciprocal trade agreements and it was currently ‘impossible’ to alter this legislation.⁴³⁷ The Corn Law had been implemented as an ‘expedient to grant an additional protection to the agriculturist’ in order to prevent the ‘convulsion in landed property’ which the transition from war to peace could produce. It was only following the decision that the Corn Law should be altered, in 1822, that reform of the protective tariffs in manufactures was undertaken, their introduction rendered possible by the desire to conciliate landowners to the reduction of agricultural protection.⁴³⁸ Even once the inadequacies of the 1815 Corn Law had been acknowledged, though, the reduction of agricultural protection continued to be dictated by circumstances, particularly glut in the European grain market. It was on these grounds that Huskisson’s Agricultural Report (1821) recommended ‘improvement of the Corn Laws’ only ‘at some future time’.⁴³⁹ Similarly, in 1825, responding to pressure from Ricardo’s adherent Whitmore to reform the Corn Laws, Huskisson advanced the same concern as a practical difficulty which prevented the administration from ‘permanently legislating on the subject at the moment’.⁴⁴⁰ Thus, while Liberal Tories were willing to acknowledge the abstract truth of *laissez-faire* economic theory, they also urged that the introduction of reform upon these principles must be governed by and tailored to existing circumstances. In this sense, Liberal Tories emulated the approach of the conservative Whigs statesmen, Pitt and Burke, outlined in the previous section.

⁴³⁷ The Corn Law of 1815 prohibited importation up to 80s then allowed free importation after that. The revision of this legislation proposed by Castlereagh in 1822 dictated that once the price of corn reached 80s and the ports opened they should continue open, subject to a graduated duty, until the price fell below 70s. Between 70s and 80s duty was to be 12s. with an additional 5s in the first three months of importation. Between 80s and 85s a duty of 5s and above 85s a duty of 1s. For synopsis of resolutions see William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 29 April, 1822, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. II, p.114. This law was not to come into operation till the price of Corn reached 80s and in years from 1822 until the passage of the new Corn Bill in 1827 this did not happen.

⁴³⁸ Gash, *Lord Liverpool*, p. 183.

⁴³⁹ This is quoted by William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 28 April, 1825, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 389-90.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 383-387.

Scholars have come to dismiss the notion that the cabinet changes of 1821-1823 instigated a sharp break in policy or thinking regarding free trade.⁴⁴¹ Instead, some have recognised similarity between the reforms undertaken by Liverpool's administration and those implemented by Pitt in the 1780s.⁴⁴² This was a connection which was emphasised by leading Liberal Tories too, including Canning and Huskisson. Speaking in 1826, Canning sought to defend the administration's pursuit of economic liberalisation against the charge that it was rooted in 'the book of Whig policy'. To do so, he provided a brief historical account of what, in his perspective, had been the relationship between Whigs, Tories, and the principles of free trade, to establish the point that 'freedom of commerce has, in former times, been the doctrine rather of Tories than of Whigs.' Canning cited the Treaty of Utrecht as an historic example of Tory sympathy for free trade. Moreover, he identified Pitt within this Tory tradition, pointing out that it was Pitt who had supported, and Fox who had opposed, commercial negotiations with France in 1786. Therefore Liberal Tory ministers, in Canning's view, had not departed from Pitt's general principles.⁴⁴³

Canning's reference to Pitt is significant for two reasons: in the first instance, it identified Pitt as a Tory. Although Pitt only ever considered himself to be a Whig, rendering the ascription of this term technically inaccurate, through it Canning attempted to claim an identity from which Ultra Tories were increasingly trying to exclude him and his Liberal-Tory counterparts by associating free trade with the broader movements for political and religious reform.⁴⁴⁴ It is also significant because it asserts a relationship between Pitt's approach to economic policy and that of Liverpool's administration. This connection was also noted by Huskisson, in 1827, when defending reforms pertaining to shipping against the charge of innovation: the administration's measures constituted

real and substantive improvements, such as would have been made

⁴⁴¹ For the argument that there was a change in policy and thinking introduced by these changes see Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism*, p. 119; Hilton, *Age of Atonement* pp. 226-229; See Lee's criticism of both in Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism* p. 6, 142.

⁴⁴² Brady, *William Huskisson and liberal reform*. p.6; Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁴³ Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1826, pp. 527-530.

⁴⁴⁴ For Ultra attempts to exclude Liberal Tories from Tory identity see below pp. 133-134, 234-258.

twenty years sooner, but for the general subversion and confusion which grew out of the French war. They are only the following up of those principles of good-will and liberal commercial policy between nations, which Mr. Pitt inculcated, and, as far as possible acted upon, from 1786, till he was forced into war by the progress of the French Revolution.⁴⁴⁵

When viewed from this perspective, the reforms implemented in the 1820s appear more like a reversion to pre-war economic policy than the consequence of a dramatic about face instigated by cabinet changes or an evangelical awakening.

Indeed, when examining why the reforms were implemented after 1821-1823, emphasis has been placed increasingly on the emergence of optimum conditions for the pursuit of economic liberalisation. Lee, for example, remarks that ‘the domestic conditions before and after 1822 were at least as important in influencing the economic and social policies of the Liverpool ministry as changes in personnel.’⁴⁴⁶ By the end of 1822, the mist of economic depression appeared to be lifting, alleviating political discontent. In addition, subsequent revenue surplus under ‘prosperity Robinson’ and political changes in the wider world, specifically the independence movements in South America, rendered the years after 1822 more congenial for change. In 1824, while recommending alteration in the silk trade, Huskisson told parliament that ‘if there be a chance of giving new life and vigour to any branch of industry, which has either been in a state of stagnation or slow in its progress, there are at present, in the situation of the world, circumstances calculated to afford relief which never before existed’.⁴⁴⁷ This was a clear departure from the cautious tone adopted by Liverpool in 1820 when he had urged that ‘to introduce the principles of free trade’ in this branch of manufactures ‘might put an end to it altogether’.⁴⁴⁸ It has been noted above that, even as early as 1812, Liverpool

⁴⁴⁵ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 7 May, 1827, in *Huskisson's Speeches*, vol. III, p. 120.

⁴⁴⁶ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 142-143; also see Gash, *Aristocracy and People*, p. 112; Goodlad, “Liberal” and “High” Tories in the Age of Liverpool’, pp. 9-10; Eric J. Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State*, p. 238; Gordon, *Political Economy in Parliament 1819-1823*, pp. 155-165 and idem, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism, 1824-1830*, pp. 14-17.

⁴⁴⁷ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, March 8, 1824, p. 249.

⁴⁴⁸ Liverpool, Speech in the House of Lords, 26 May, 1820, *PD*, NS vol. I, col. 585.

expressed his ideological commitment to laissez-faire in principle. What had changed by 1824 was not ministers' principles, but the circumstances which enabled their implementation.

Changing circumstance also encouraged reform of the 'flourishing oaks of British policy', the Navigation Acts.⁴⁴⁹ The first significant inroad upon this body of legislation came in the form of the Reciprocity Duties Act (1823). The Navigation Acts had been constructed to give preference to British shipping and, consequently, levied higher duties on cargoes imported in foreign ships. However, the United States of America, dissatisfied with Britain's system, had begun to institute retaliatory duties causing 'embarrassment and inconvenience' to the commerce between the two nations. In a bid to resolve this conflict, vessels from the United States were placed on the same footing as English vessels respecting duties. Witnessing this concession, other nations had also placed retaliatory high duties on British ships rendering maintenance of this system inexpedient.⁴⁵⁰ As Thomas Wallace, Vice-president of the Board of Trade, pointed out,

the system of discriminating duties which this country had adopted had been of advantage, as long as foreign powers were disposed to submit to it; but now, when every country was desirous of affording protection to its own commerce, it was impossible that such a system could continue without producing retaliation.⁴⁵¹

The maintenance of high duties, Huskisson added, would serve only to encourage commercial conflict which 'would be most disastrous to our commercial interests'.⁴⁵² The introduction of this measure was therefore driven largely by pragmatism rather than ideological conviction.

The need to accommodate the independence movements in South America provided further impetus for commercial reform. In 1822, minor amendments in the Navigation Code were introduced, building on Pitt's reform of 1786 by allowing the newly

⁴⁴⁹ Brady, *Huskisson and Liberal Reform*, p. 73.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁴⁵¹ Thomas Wallace, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 June, 1823, *PD*, NS, vol. 9, col. 800.

⁴⁵² William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 4 July, 1823, *PD*, NS, vol. 9, col. 1438.

independent South American states to trade with Britain in their own vessels.⁴⁵³ The old regulations had stipulated that commerce from the Americas be transported in British ships and, by altering this legislation, Liverpool remarked that it was intended that ‘a commercial intercourse would be opened with the independent parts of South America’.⁴⁵⁴ More significant alterations, undertaken in 1825, were also driven by the need to adapt to the newly independent states.⁴⁵⁵ Speaking in 1825 in defence of these alterations Huskisson insisted that he was ‘not anxious to give effect to new principles, where circumstances do not call for their application’. Yet ‘the circumstances and state of the world, in which we have to examine colonial interests, have changed’ and, consequently, ‘it becomes us as practical statesmen, to deal with those interests with a reference to that change’.⁴⁵⁶ Essentially, reshaping the regulation of colonial trade was justified not as a doctrinaire endeavour but a pragmatic accommodation of new circumstances. The ‘almost general revolution in the system of Colonial commerce’ occasioned by the independence movements in South America cast doubt on whether it was ‘politically wise, or practically safe’ to uphold the old system of colonial monopoly.⁴⁵⁷ The danger of restricting colonial commerce had been demonstrated by Britain’s own colonial history. The American Revolution, Huskisson argued, had been born from commercial restraint and the perpetuation of this system would only encourage a similar severance of political connection.⁴⁵⁸ Enabling the colonies to enjoy the benefits of new commercial opportunities provided a means of averting this danger: the alleviation of commercial restraints provided ‘a course which promises, both to those Provinces and the Mother Country, all the commercial benefits of a free trade, together with all the political advantages of our continuing parts of one great Empire’.⁴⁵⁹ In short, the reshaping of Britain’s trading relationship with her colonies would bind them more closely to the empire. Thus, by adapting to changing circumstances, Huskisson’s colonial policy sought to offset more revolutionary change. However, for Ultra Tories, these measures appeared to demonstrate that ministers were

⁴⁵³ See Lord Liverpool, Speech to the House of Lords, 17 June, 1822, *PD*, NS, vol. 8, col. 1120.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, col. 1120.

⁴⁵⁵ While the reforms undertaken by Wallace and Robinson had opened trade between British colonies and states in the western hemisphere which were willing to reciprocate, Huskisson now extended this freedom to the European states. For additional details relating to Huskisson’s reform of the Navigation Code in 1825 see Brady, *William Huskisson*, pp. 124-126.

⁴⁵⁶ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 21 March, 1825, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. II, p. 304.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 306-307.

⁴⁵⁸ Brady, *William Huskisson and Liberal Reform*, p. 124.

⁴⁵⁹ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 21 March, 1825, p. 313.

being lulled towards dangerous liberality by the doctrines of political economists, encouraging Tory fissures.⁴⁶⁰

Liberal Tory ministers insisted that the determination to undertake reform did not render them the blind adherents of political economy. Simultaneously, though, they defended the integration of abstract theory in the formulation of policy as essential to economic growth and the preservation of political stability. In 1826, responding to an attack from John Williams, MP for Lincoln City, which had branded him ‘a perfect metaphysician’, Huskisson insisted that the government’s pursuit of freer trade had not been instigated ‘on the recommendations of visionaries and theorists, but of practical men of business.’⁴⁶¹ Specifically, Huskisson cited the Merchants’ Petition of 1820 to demonstrate that ‘the first impulse [to relieve restrictions] was not given by the Government.’ Rather reform was ‘the result of public opinion, sanctioned by the concurrence of practical men’.⁴⁶² Nonetheless, the theories of political economists did serve an important role in the formulation of government policy. Political economy functioned as the ‘goad which is used to give increased impetus to the machine’ and it was important that ‘those who fill responsible situations’ should not be ‘slow of conviction to important truths’ in this field. Rather than turn away from abstract truths, it was the role of ministers to ‘be cautious in deliberating, before they attempt to give them a practical application’. It was the ‘care of government’ which should serve to ‘regulate the drag, so as not to check the advance, but to maintain a safe and steady progress towards improvement.’⁴⁶³ This message was reiterated by Canning. The opponents of reform represented all attempts to keep the ‘country upon a line with the progress of political knowledge’ as ‘an indication of mischievous intentions’. Yet, Canning urged, rather than blindly indulge abstract theories it was ‘the duty of a British statesman, in internal as well as external affairs, to hold a middle course between extremes’. This entailed

not adopting hasty or ill-advised experiments, or pursuing any

airy and unsubstantial theories; but not rejecting, nevertheless,

⁴⁶⁰ See below pp. 132-134.

⁴⁶¹ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1826, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. II, p. 476.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 477.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 478.

the application of sound and wholesome knowledge to practical affairs, and pressing, with sobriety and caution, into the service of his country any generous and liberal principles, whose excess, indeed, may be dangerous, but whose foundation is in truth.⁴⁶⁴

Rather than ignore the progress of knowledge, or hastily indulge rash, theoretical experiments, Canning presented the ministry's reforms as mediating between the two. By striking a balance between the contending dispositions of abstract innovation and obstinacy the evils of both could be avoided and safe amelioration secured. This was an approach which distinguished Liberal Tories from Ultra Tories, and created fissures between them.

The introduction of freer trade in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors exemplified Liberal Tory attempts to temper abstraction with circumstance and mediate between extremes. The Corn Laws of 1815 prohibited the import of foreign corn up to the price of 80s and allowed free importation thereafter. Revision in form of the 1822 Corn Law attempted to alter this system but never came into operation.⁴⁶⁵ It was noted by the Report of the Agricultural Committee (1821), principally authored by Huskisson, that the system introduced in 1815 was inadequate on the grounds of its failure to moderate between extremes: by implementing 'absolute prohibition up to a certain price, and an unlimited competition beyond that price' this system was 'liable to sudden alterations'. Specifically, the legislation of 1815 threatened 'at one time to reduce prices already low, lower than they would probably have been under a state of free trade, and at another, unnecessarily to enhance the prices already high'.⁴⁶⁶ Similar analyses were delivered in Huskisson's subsequent reflections on Corn Law reform.⁴⁶⁷ When moving for a committee to consider revision of the Corn Laws in 1827 Canning noted that the 'extreme forces' produced by the opposite principles of monopoly and free trade, rather than producing 'a mean power' which enabled them to go on 'amicably together',

⁴⁶⁴ Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1826, pp. 526-527.

⁴⁶⁵ Brady, *William Huskisson*, p. 50.

⁴⁶⁶ Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the depressed state of Agriculture of the United Kingdom, in *PD*, NS, vol 5. appendix p. lxxxii.

⁴⁶⁷ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 29 April, 1822, p.121, resolution 4. Also see idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 28 April 1825, p. 388.

ensured that ‘each [extreme] in its turn prevailed, with its own peculiar mischief’.⁴⁶⁸ The new Corn Bill, introduced in 1827, sought to pursue a middle course between these two extremes.

Although no revision of the existing laws was proposed until 1827, ministers, particularly Huskisson and Liverpool, had grappled with the problem of the Corn Law throughout the 1820s.⁴⁶⁹ Following keen investigation as a member of the Agricultural Committee in 1821, Huskisson had concluded that ‘the safest mode’ to regulate corn imports ‘would be to allow a free trade in corn, subject to a protecting duty.’⁴⁷⁰ Extreme free traders condemned this reserve.⁴⁷¹ Yet, as Brady has suggested, Huskisson’s recommendations demonstrated that, ‘by free trade’, he meant only ‘freedom to import, not freedom from duty.’ While Huskisson sought to ‘sponge from the corn law [*sic*] the prohibitive elements ... Beyond that, he had little wish to go.’⁴⁷² As early as 1814, Huskisson had advocated a sliding scale as providing ‘a middle course which ... steered between the supposed opposite interest of the grower and consumer’ and, as such, was ‘fair to both’.⁴⁷³ This principle came to form the basis of the 1827 Corn Bill, described by Canning as a ‘compromise or settlement’ between those ‘those who insist upon a law of prohibition, on the one hand’ and ‘those who insist upon unlimited importation, on the other hand’.⁴⁷⁴ In short, the bill was justified as providing a middle course between extremes.

The same approach was adopted in relation to manufactures.⁴⁷⁵ For example, the existing duty on woollens, which ranged from 67 to 50 per cent, was reduced to 15 per

⁴⁶⁸ George Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 1 March, 1827, in *Canning’s Speeches*, vol. VI, p. 124.

⁴⁶⁹ For specific details see Brock, *Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 221-227; Brady, *William Huskisson*, pp. 41-73.

⁴⁷⁰ William Huskisson Speech in the House of Commons, 13 May, 1822, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. II, p. 128.

⁴⁷¹ For example, see Thomas McCulloch in the *Edinburgh Review*, (Feb, 1822): ‘instead of recommending, as they ought in consistency to have done, that the restrictions should be abolished, and the trade thrown open, the committee suggest that such a fixed duty should be imposed on the importation of foreign corn... In making this supposition, Mr Huskisson, who framed the report, has doubtless scarified his own better judgement’. This is quoted in Brady, *William Huskisson*, p. 59.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴⁷³ William Huskisson, *A Letter on the Corn Laws...to one of his constituents* (London, 1826), p. 6. This is a reprint of a letter written in 1814.

⁴⁷⁴ Quotes from Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 1 March, 1827, p. 133.

⁴⁷⁵ Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, p. 102.

cent; on linens, existing duties were reduced to 25 per cent.⁴⁷⁶ Similarly, the tariff on silks was reduced to a duty of 30 per cent.⁴⁷⁷ The duties retained on several articles were criticised by extreme free traders as being too high. In relation to woollens, for instance, Henry Parnell claimed there was no justification for the retention of a protective duty given that British woollens had a clear superiority over foreign rivals. Meanwhile, the retention of a 25 per cent duty on linens continued to amount to prohibition, in Parnell's opinion.⁴⁷⁸ Indeed, even protectionist discourse criticised 'the new system' as differing little from the old in certain respects, though for different reasons.⁴⁷⁹ Yet, as Gordon has suggested, while through a moderated version of free trade Huskisson sought to approximate 'the goal of the economists', he aimed to do so only 'progressively.'⁴⁸⁰ The retention of protective duties reflected the broader aim, articulated by both Huskisson and Canning, to temper the abstractions of political economists, mould them to practical application, and, consequently, 'maintain a safe and steady progress towards improvement.'⁴⁸¹

In April 1826, Huskisson outlined the principle, in accordance with his 'view of free trade', which had governed tariff reduction. The retention of protective duties was defended on the ground that they served a practical purpose. Firstly, in the context of significant national debt, these duties offered a valuable revenue. Secondly, they were fundamental to ensuring competition while also preventing foreign monopoly. The government's reforms sought only to place British 'commerce and manufactures in a state in which they could fairly compete with ...other countries.' It was, after all, competition that facilitated improvement. Because it was 'necessary to impose upon our manufacturers and agriculturalists burthens, from which those classes are exempt in other countries', it was 'but fair that a countervailing duty, to the extent of the advantages enjoyed by other countries, should be imposed as a protection'.⁴⁸² Only through the retention of protection would a destructive foreign monopoly be prevented

⁴⁷⁶ Brady, *William Huskisson*, p. 115.

⁴⁷⁷ Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, p. 98.

⁴⁷⁸ Brady, *William Huskisson*, p. 120.

⁴⁷⁹ See *BEM*, 24:143 (September 1828), pp. 373-374, 388.

⁴⁸⁰ Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, p. 102.

⁴⁸¹ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1826, p. 478.

⁴⁸² *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 18 April, 1826, pp. 552-553.

and competition encouraged.⁴⁸³ By providing a middle course between monopoly and free trade, the retention of duties exemplified the gradual approach to reform through which Liberal Tories sought to secure amelioration. This approach, though, served to distinguish Liberal Tories from Ultra Tories who viewed the abstractions of political economists as politically subversive and resisted their introduction in a bid to preserve the existing constitution.⁴⁸⁴

Meanwhile, the determination of Liberal Tory ministers to enact improvement through reform was justified as both a necessary and conservative endeavour. This perspective increasingly distinguished them from Ultra Tories who considered the introduction of freer trade as politically dangerous, as will be discussed in the following section. In 1827, the new Corn Bill was introduced based on Huskisson's sliding scale.⁴⁸⁵

However, when the bill passed to the Lords, an amendment introduced by Wellington wrecked the measure.⁴⁸⁶ Writing in relation to this amendment, Canning lamented that 'the Lords should take so narrow a view of their present situation.' Amidst extreme popular distress, revived by the crash in late 1825, he believed that the Lords 'ought to see that we are on the brink of a great struggle between property and population.' This 'struggle' was 'only to be averted by the mildest and most liberal legislation.'⁴⁸⁷

Reform of existing, defective legislation was necessary to prevent conflict between aristocracy and the people, a convulsion which could lead to the subversion of the former. The previous year Canning had adopted a similar justification in a speech on reform in the silk trade, though the discussion ranged far wider to incorporate the administration's movement towards free trade in general. Intransigence, he warned, was just as dangerous as pursuing rash, impulsive change, for 'They who resist indiscriminately all improvement as innovation may find themselves compelled at last to submit to innovations although they are not improvements.'⁴⁸⁸ Huskisson shared this sentiment: vindicating changes in shipping regulations he urged that it was 'gradual

⁴⁸³ Ibid., p. 553.

⁴⁸⁴ See below pp. 128-143.

⁴⁸⁵ The bill used the price of 60s as a pivot: at 60s a duty of 20s would be imposed; for every 1s drop in price this duty would increase by 2s while for every 1s increase the duty would drop by 2s until it was eventually reduced to zero.

⁴⁸⁶ Brady, *William Huskisson*, p.67; Briggs, *Age of Improvement*, p. 197.

⁴⁸⁷ George Canning, memorandum from 3 June 1827, quoted in A.G. Stapleton, *George Canning and his times*, (London, 1859), p. 350.

⁴⁸⁸ Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 24 February, 1826, p. 527.

melioration which, in every complicated and long-settled state of society' provided 'the best preservative and guarantee against rash and dangerous innovation.'⁴⁸⁹ Thus gradual reform was presented by both statesmen as a necessary means through which to guard against convulsion and reckless, sweeping innovation.

Rhetorically, the rationale offered by Canning and Huskisson for reform echoed that articulated by Edmund Burke in his famous *Reflections*. For Burke, a 'state without the means of some change' was 'without the means of its conservation.' Writing in relation to both the Glorious Revolution in 1688-1689 and the Restoration of Charles II, Burke highlighted that the 'two principles of conservation and correction' had 'operated strongly', preventing the loss 'of that part of the constitution', specifically the monarchy, 'which it [the state] wished most religiously to preserve.'⁴⁹⁰ In this perspective, only through the accommodation of change could overarching, destructive alterations be avoided. Consequently, change was presented as essentially conservative. Indeed, much like Canning's emphasis on adopting a 'middle course between extremes', Burke noted that

in most questions of state, there is a middle. There is something else than the mere alternative of absolute destruction, or unreformed existence.

Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna. This is, in my opinion, a rule of profound sense, and ought never to depart from the mind of an honest reformer.⁴⁹¹

The maxim was a plea for conservation and amelioration. Indeed, Burke continued, it was a 'disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together' which constituted his 'standard of a statesman.'⁴⁹² This was precisely the disposition adopted by Canning and Huskisson. The connection between these statesmen and Burke's disposition towards reform has been identified by various scholars, though it has often been left underdeveloped. It will be elaborated here in chapter four, regarding Tory arguments on Catholicism.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁹ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 7 May, 1827, p. 135.

⁴⁹⁰ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 170.

⁴⁹¹ 'You have obtained Sparta; adorn it' from the 'Adages' of Erasmus

⁴⁹² Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 328.

⁴⁹³ Brady, *William Huskisson*, p. 6; Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, pp. 150-151; Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 249-250; Gash, *Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865*, p. 125.

This section has suggested that Liberal Toryism in the early nineteenth century should be considered as a continuation of Pitt's pre-war economic policies, aided by circumstances, rather than the result of a sudden change in perspective fuelled by evangelicalism. Liberal Toryism was underpinned by a pragmatic, rather than dogmatic, approach to the introduction of free trade. In this respect, Liberal Tories emulated the disposition adopted by the conservative Whigs, Pitt and Burke, in the late eighteenth century: although they believed in the abstract truth of the doctrines of political economy, they tempered the application of these doctrines with a careful consideration of practical circumstances to ensure gradual amelioration. When justifying this approach, Canning and Huskisson, in particular, imitated the rhetoric of Burke, painting reform as essential to the broader, conservative determination to prevent rash innovation. Nonetheless, favourable reception of political economy, and articulation of the belief that the gradual, practical implementation of these abstract theories would ensure economic growth and political stability, distinguished Liberal Tories from Ultra Tories. Indeed, differences regarding the wider economic and, in particular, political consequences of free trade introduced fissures which contributed to Tory divisions between 1827 and 1830 and the refinement of a Tory identity underpinned by commitment to protectionism.

The Defence of Protection

J.C.D. Clark and Barry Gordon have highlighted the political dimension in the works of political economy, particularly the threat which they posed to the landed aristocracy. Clark accredits Ricardo with adding the theme of expropriation of the landlord to radical discourse by 'positing a necessary antagonism between the landlord and the rest of society.' Responses to this dimension of the radical challenge, though, are neglected by Clark. In a similar vein, Gordon, in relation to debates on the Corn Bill in 1827, notes that the majority of aristocrats were 'in no doubt that the campaign against the Corn Laws was not merely an exercise in aid of improving economic well-being. It was also an attack on the alleged abuse of aristocratic privilege.'⁴⁹⁴ This section examines the reaction to the political challenge posed by the doctrines of political economy, particularly, though not exclusively, in relation to the Corn Law. It builds on the works of Frank Fetter and Anna Gambles which have stressed the essentially political nature

⁴⁹⁴ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., pp. 499-500; Gordon *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, p. 56.

of Tory protectionists' economic arguments. Focusing on the *Quarterly Review* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Fetter argues that the discussion of economic questions was characterised by 'the tacit assumption that economic analysis was irrelevant' and a determination to prevent 'the sort of change that would follow from the dropping of old controls of custom and government associated with the dominance of the landed aristocracy.'⁴⁹⁵ In this interpretation, economic questions were considered as intimately intertwined with broader political concerns, specifically the maintenance of a hierarchical and propertied political order. Gambles develops Fetter's suggestions to challenge Norman Gash's conclusion that the Tories were 'a constitutional and religious, not social and economic party'.⁴⁹⁶ This conceptualisation, in her opinion, erects an unhelpful dichotomy between the two spheres. Rather, Gambles highlights that the arguments of Tory protectionists discussed economic questions in a constitutional idiom which framed economic policy as capable of contributing directly to the preservation of the propertied constitution.⁴⁹⁷

This section concurs with Gambles and Fetter that Tory protectionists discussed economic questions in essentially political terms. Specifically, it agrees that economic issues were painted as having a direct impact on private property, the balance of interests in the state, and thus the political structure of society. Protectionist Tories were not immediately opposed to all free-trade economic policies. However, against the backdrop of resurgent political radicalism, severe economic depression, and intellectual attacks on the privileges possessed by the landed aristocracy, they treated the doctrines of political economy with suspicion and were disgruntled by the administration's more far reaching economic policies. By advocating protection as an alternative, Ultra Tories, like Liberal Tories, essentially sought to forestall political convulsions and overarching constitutional change by alleviating economic difficulties and preserving the traditional social and political hierarchy. Thus Tory divisions regarding economic policy were political and constitutional; they also aided the consolidation of Tory identity. By emphasising the social and political dangers of economic liberalism, and associating it with broader political and religious reformism, Ultra Tory discourse enhanced the connection between the advocacy of free trade and 'otherness'. Consequently, Liberal

⁴⁹⁵ F. Fetter, 'Economic Controversy in the British Reviews, 1802-1850', *Economica*, New Series, 32 (1965), p. 430.

⁴⁹⁶ Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Tory ministers' integration of the doctrines of political economy, however tempered, appeared anathema to a Tory identity increasingly associated with economic protectionism, particularly that of the landed interest.

While Liberal Tories sought to reconcile the truths of abstract economic theory with circumstance in pursuit of gradual, conservative amelioration, Ultra Tories were generally suspicious of political economy and its advocates. The speculative nature of political economy was consistently emphasised and its theories painted as analogous with abstractions in the spheres of politics and religion. The *Quarterly Review* complained that '*theorists*' attempted 'the same rational end by the use of the word *freedom*— free laws, free religion, free press, free trade ...and so say we; but we differ as to the just meaning of the word *free*'. While theorists thought of all restraints as inhibiting freedom, the author urged that there existed a necessary 'difference between freedom and license'.⁴⁹⁸ Similarly, the *British Critic* depicted innovators in economic doctrine as paralleling political and religious visionaries: 'to gain the public ear' they all endeavoured to 'say something very new and striking' which suggested 'that our ancestors were arrant fools in the weighty matters of religion, trade, and politics'. In addition, the reviewer warned that, 'Of all the cants which are canted in this canting age, the cant of political economy, we think, bids fair to be very soon the most tormenting'.⁴⁹⁹ Problematic with the new free thinking in relation to economics was its dangerous disregard for history and experience. As *Blackwood's* pointed out, it was under the 'boasted Navigation Laws— the Laws against Combinations— the Restrictive System— the Colonial System— the Corn Laws— the Currency Laws— and the Laws against Usury' that Britain's 'trade, wealth, power, greatness, and happiness, had risen ...to a height unprecedented'.⁵⁰⁰ The doctrines of free trade were part of a 'new, and liberal system' which eroded these pillars of British prosperity. Speculative doctrines were extended to 'change ...[Britain's] creed in trade, politics, philosophy, morals, and religion' and, in the process, 'attacked not only statutes, but principles, and even the structure of society.'⁵⁰¹ Free trade, whether in corn or

⁴⁹⁸ *QR*, 28:56 (January 1823), p. 448.

⁴⁹⁹ *BC*, 12 (December 1819), p. 561.

⁵⁰⁰ *BEM*, 19:113 (June 1826), p. 634. Where authorship of the articles in *Blackwood's* is mentioned, this information has been taken from F. Fetter. 'The Economic Articles in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and their Authors, 1817-1853', *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 7, (June 1960) pp. 85-107, 213-31.

⁵⁰¹ Quote from *BEM*, 19:113 (June 1826), p. 633.

commerce, was viewed as part of a broader ideological attack on traditional modes of thought and the social and political structure they upheld.

Wider Tory opinion was not immediately protectionist, however. Indeed, Sack has suggested that ‘conservative identification with the landed interest (most specifically with the corn laws)’, although ‘unquestionably true’ by 1827 when Huskisson’s new Corn Bill was introduced, was not ‘necessarily true at the beginning of the long economic debate’.⁵⁰² In short, the development of this element of Tory ideology and identity was a process. A number of Tory reviews, including the *British Critic* and *Anti-Jacobin Review*, were initially hostile to the Corn Law in 1815.⁵⁰³ The latter, for example, claimed, in 1816, that

From eagerness to promote the interest of the land-owners, (and be it remembered that four-fifths of the members of both houses are land-owners,) they have adopted measures the effect of which is to serve the few and to injure the many ... the interest of the land-owner is promoted at the expence [*sic*] of the labouring part of the community in particular, and of the whole population in general.⁵⁰⁴

The *Anti-Jacobin Review*’s critique essentially drew the capacity of a parliament, dominated by landowners, to govern in the best interests of the nation into question. This criticism was not unique. In his comprehensive review of the right-wing press, Sack suggests that the Tory press as a whole was initially hostile to the Corn Law of 1815. However by the 1820s, ‘the tide was turning on the issue’.⁵⁰⁵ Indeed, in subsequent years, the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, as well as the *British Critic*, altered its perspective on the Corn Laws as this issue became intertwined with radical challenges to Britain’s traditional political structure.⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰² Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 180.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁵⁰⁴ *AJ*, 50:216 (May 1816), p.419; for the *AJ* rejecting the benefits of high corn prices see, *ibid.*, 48:201 (February 1815), pp. 129-131.

⁵⁰⁵ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 178- 179.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

Similarly, although, by 1827, attacks on free trade in general had become ‘a torrent’ in the Tory press, not all the commercial policies introduced by Liverpool’s administration were automatically castigated.⁵⁰⁷ Even the Ultra-Tory and rigid protectionist David Robinson, who authored the majority of economic articles in *Blackwood’s*, declared himself friendly to the abolition of non-protecting duties and restrictions; he even praised Huskisson, often an object of contempt in *Blackwood’s*, for condensing and simplifying the revenue laws.⁵⁰⁸ Moreover, in 1821, the *Quarterly* admitted that there were ‘some species of commercial intercourse to which the policy of freedom must apply’ including the interchange of raw products from different climates, yet the extension of this system to incorporate manufactures would be an ‘error’.⁵⁰⁹ The author advised that, while the principle of free trade might be beneficial in some respects, it should not be ‘promulgated as undisputed and unconditional truth, and the sole panacea for existing evils.’⁵¹⁰ Moreover, he worried that questions of commercial policy had been treated lately in an ‘abstract’ manner with ‘paradoxical dogmas’ finding support in ‘persons of rank’.⁵¹¹ Indeed, hostility towards the movement towards free trade in both corn and commerce was largely provoked as ministers appeared to be increasingly influenced by the doctrines of political economists to undertake more drastic and sweeping changes.

In 1821, once reform of the Navigation Code had begun in earnest, the same reviewer adopted a more critical and anxious disposition in a subsequent issue of the *Quarterly*. He complained that ‘great innovations are beginning in the principle of the laws which have for centuries governed this kingdom ...the inviolate maintenance of which has been heretofore, generally, deemed to be indispensable to our power and prosperity.’⁵¹² Thus the government’s more sweeping reforms promoted fissures. In *Blackwood’s*, David Robinson was generally more scathing regarding the innovative nature of government policy and the apparent enthrallment of leading ministers to the theories of political economy. The ‘doctrine, that innovations ought to be made voluntary, to avert

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁵⁰⁸ *BEM*, 17:100 (May 1825), p. 551; *ibid.*, 19:111 (April 1826), p. 483.

⁵⁰⁹ *QR*, 24:48 (January 1821), p. 282, 293.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.* Authorship from F. Fetter, ‘The Economic Articles in the *Quarterly Review* and their Authors, 1809-52, II’, *Journal of Political Economy*, 66: 2 (April 1958), p. 159.

⁵¹² *QR*, 28:56 (January 1823), p. 430. Authorship from Fetter, ‘The Economic Articles in the *Quarterly Review* and their Authors’, p. 160.

compulsory ones' was deemed to be 'mighty foolish'. Cited by Liberal Tories as the rationale behind reform this principle did nothing but excite public clamour for change.⁵¹³ Ultra Tory anger was exacerbated by the implementation of the most important commercial measures in 1825, the financial crash of 1825, consequent depression in 1826, and once movement towards the introduction of a new Corn Bill had begun. In 1826, with the nation again in the grip of economic depression, ministers were criticised as having made 'gigantic changes solely upon theory' as the 'servile pupils of the Economists'; Huskisson was depicted as being 'chin deep in experiments', Canning as 'magically transmuted by Political Economy and Philosophy' from a 'man who yesterday could not number his toes ... into a statesman of the first order', while Peel and Liverpool were accused of being 'perfectly agreed in opinion with the violent Whigs and Radicals, in making the most gigantic changes in your [Britain's] laws and systems'.⁵¹⁴ Therefore Liberal Tory ministers who integrated the ideas of political economy were painted as converging with Whigs and Radicals, the political 'others'. This enhanced the antithetical relationship between free trade and Toryism, and emphasised protectionism as an important characteristic of Tory identity.

In parliament, the Tory gentry were perturbed and alienated by attempts to interfere with agricultural protection. In 1827, for example, amidst debates on the introduction of a new Corn Bill, the Ultra Tory Edward Knatchbull, MP for Kent and a leading spokesman for the landed interest in the Commons, expressed 'the great reluctance that he felt in opposing any measure coming from those with whom he generally concurred in opinion and with whom he was in the habit of acting'. The earlier sentiments of Huskisson, Liverpool and Frederick Robinson in favour of autarky and prohibition were praised, and Knatchbull called on the country gentlemen to 'check the progress of an experiment, which threatened to do violence to the best interests of the country'.⁵¹⁵ Thus Ultra Tories, both within and outside parliament, were increasingly critical of, and alienated from, Liberal Tory ministers as the latter adopted more sweeping measures; measures which appeared to be guided by the speculative theories of political economy,

⁵¹³ *BEM*, 19:113 (June 1826), p. 643; Regarding the Liberal Tories, see above pp. 120-124.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.635; *BEM*, 199:111 (April 1826), p. 474, 476; *BEM*, 19:113 (June 1826), p. 636; also see *ibid.*, 26:157 (September 1829), p. 510.

⁵¹⁵ Edward Knatchbull, Speech in the House of Commons, 8 March 1827, *PD*, NS, vol. 16, cols. 1041-1045.

threatened political stability, and were therefore considered anathema to Tory determination to resist innovation.

In contrast to Liberal Tory arguments that economic liberalisation would encourage improvement, Tory protectionists highlighted the social and political consequences of government legislation. They also attacked the maxims of political economy believed to underpin it. Gambles suggests that protectionists engaged in a macroeconomic debate regarding whether national resources should be focused merely on manufacturing and commercial expansion or retaining balance between sectors.⁵¹⁶ While economists, including Ricardo, placed emphasis on the former, for protectionists, maintaining balance between sectors provided ‘an alternative route to a stable economic future for nineteenth-century Britain.’⁵¹⁷ Tory protectionists disputed the concentration of national resources in manufacturing. Instead, they highlighted the maintenance of a thriving agricultural sector as the crux of sustainable, balanced economic growth. Both political economists and statesmen were criticised by Edward Edwards in the *Quarterly Review* for appearing ‘frequently to forget that the reward of manufacturing and commercial industry must depend upon the produce raised by the cultivation of the soil’.⁵¹⁸ Manufacturers and commerce did not create wealth: manufacturers modified the raw produce of agriculture and the merchant exchanged it. On these grounds they represented ‘minor interests of the state’, the mere ‘branches and leaves of the political tree which agriculture forms the root’.⁵¹⁹ Lord Redesdale, one of the leading proponents for the landed interest in the House of Lords, delivered a similar message: ‘the cultivation of the soil’ was deemed ‘the most important trade in every country, as every other trade and manufacture must depend upon it.’ Consequently, the ‘wealth and strength of Great Britain’ was dependent on the cultivation of the soil.⁵²⁰ Writing in 1827, amidst the formulation of a new Corn Bill, Edwards observed that upon the mistaken notion that ‘the prosperity and wealth of this empire owe their origin ...to our manufacturing and commercial industry’ was ‘grounded an attempt to elevate the interests of manufacturers and commerce on the depression, if not the ruin, of those of

⁵¹⁶ Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, p. 34.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵¹⁸ *QR*, 36: 72 (October 1827), pp. 423-424.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 426. Also see *Ibid.*, p. 423.

⁵²⁰ Lord Redesdale’s resolutions in the House of Lords, 29 March 1827, *PD*, NS, vol. 17, col. 120.

agriculture.⁵²¹ Yet this was immensely dangerous. Agriculture was not secondary to commerce and manufactures but the bedrock of the economy. Similarly, in the Commons, Thomas Lethbridge, Tory MP for Somerset, ‘called upon the landed interest to think for themselves’ and ‘consider the manner in which it would affect, not only their own interests, but likewise those of other classes of the community, whose welfare was inseparably connected with their own’.⁵²² Thus agricultural protection was depicted not simply as a limited policy, concerned with the prosperity of one sector, but in the best interest of the whole nation.

Fundamentally, Ultra Tories argued that agriculturalists provided valuable consumers for the products of manufacturers. By maintaining high prices, protection enhanced the purchasing power of agriculturalists and this had a beneficial knock-on effect for other economic interests. As David Robinson explained, although merchants and manufacturers might pay higher prices domestically for corn than those offered abroad, they were rewarded by the ability to charge ‘proportionally high for their own commodities’. Given the mutually dependent nature of the economy, should agricultural income be diminished, and consumption reduced, this would threaten ‘by gluts the price of labour, merchandise, and manufactures.’⁵²³ Jacob’s *Report on the trade in foreign corn, and on the agriculture of the north of Europe* (1826) was interpreted by Robinson as providing conclusive proof of this danger. In the nations surveyed by Jacob, ‘Corn and labour are as cheap as any member of this School [of Ricardo] could desire ... Yet, strange to say! trade and manufacturers do anything rather than flourish’ because ‘the mass of the agriculturalists are unable to buy merchandise and manufacturers.’ Consequently, in Robinson’s opinion, this report placed it ‘beyond question that the prosperity of agriculture is essential, not only for the prosperity, but for the very existence of trade and manufactures’.⁵²⁴ The purchasing power of the agricultural interest was fundamental to sustaining domestic consumption and, with it, other sectors of the economy. By emphasising the political and economic importance of this sector,

⁵²¹ *QR*, 36:72 (October 1827), pp. 391-392.

⁵²² Sir Thomas Lethbridge, Speech in the House of Commons, 2 April, 1827, *PD*, NS, vol. 17, col. 177; This line of argument continued to be applied under Wellington. See the Earl of Falmouth’s response to Wellington’s speech on the new Corn Law in the House of Lords, 31 March 1828, *PD*, NS, vol. 18, col. 1371.

⁵²³ *BEM*, 19:110 (March 1826), pp. 291-292; also see *QR*, 36:72 (October 1827), pp. 420-422; *ibid.*, 37:74 (March 1828), p. 438.

⁵²⁴ *BEM*, 20:116 (August 1826), p. 364, 368.

Ultra Tories were increasingly distanced from Liberal Tories' determination to achieve economic growth and political stability through free trade and the stimulation of manufactures.

Much of protectionist argument relied on an under-consumptionist diagnosis of economic fluctuations and a conviction that freer trade would exacerbate this problem. Consumption must '*constantly* keep pace with production', David Robinson argued, or 'there would be a general glut'. Ricardian economists denied crises of under consumption were possible.⁵²⁵ Rather, they concurred with Say's Law that 'consumption is governed by production, and that if the commodities should be produced, they would of necessity be consumed'. In opposition to this, Robinson argued that while 'means of consumption must flow from ... they must govern, production'.⁵²⁶ If production rose but wages did not, the result would be a glut and economic depression; the destruction of particular interests and, with them labourers' means of consuming, had a similar impact.⁵²⁷ Free trade encouraged both by introducing excessive competition and ruinous cheapness. Building on Say's Law, Ricardo's adherents claimed that competition could not 'possibly reduce profits' and, rather, insisted that 'a low rate of profit' could 'only flow from the cultivation of inferior land and taxation'. In contrast to Ricardian theory, protectionist Tories argued that the competition of capital was the most significant factor in reducing profits.⁵²⁸ An abundance of capital produced an excess of goods and a glut on the market. Consequently, 'Every man has more goods than he can dispose of, therefore farmer undersells farmer, manufacturer undersells manufacturer, and a general fall in prices takes place' reducing profits. Free trade inevitably exacerbated this problem. By introducing foreign capital into the market, it 'greatly reduced price to many Interests, and it binds them to the reduction'.⁵²⁹ Standing on the grand maxim that a country ought to buy where it can buy cheapest, free trade promoted excessive competition. This exacerbated glut, introduced ruinous cheapness, forced the reduction of wages to a level which starved labourers, and destroyed British capital in both manufactures and

⁵²⁵ Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, p. 50.

⁵²⁶ *BEM*, 26:158 (October 1829), pp. 671-672.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 672.

⁵²⁸ Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, p.50; *BEM*, 26:158 (October 1829), p. 671.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, 26:158 (October 1829), pp. 673- 674, 677.

agriculture, creating unemployment.⁵³⁰ Government legislation, by inviting competition, had directly contributed to economic distress in the silk and shipping industries, for example.⁵³¹ This distress inevitably had social and political consequences and thus these measures, deemed speculative, were anathema to the Tory determination to preserve the existing constitution.

The argument deployed by free traders that the ruin of particular domestic interests through the consumption of foreign articles would be compensated for by enhanced foreign consumption of other British items was disputed.⁵³² It was uncertain whether foreigners, enriched by British consumption of their products, would even engage in the reciprocal purchase of British goods. David Robinson noted that this assumption constituted the ‘most perfect fable’ and was clearly contradicted by experience: ‘as we [Britain] got rich, we bought less and less, and now we buy a very few, comparatively trifling articles, of them [continental nations].’⁵³³ Even if other areas of the economy were sustained by foreign consumption, the *Quarterly Review* suggested that ‘the peculiar skill of many trades cannot be turned to any other manufacture’. It would also be difficult to enact ‘a transference of the disengaged people to the seats of retained manufacture’ while the relocation of industry was ‘scarcely practicable’.⁵³⁴ In addition, capital, being in many instances ‘fixed in machinery, buildings, implements ... [was] applicable to no other object, and must be lost.’⁵³⁵ The same problems applied to agriculture. Here, Robinson argued, it was ‘universally expected that the change in the Corn-Laws will considerably reduce the value of land and its produce’. Yet, ‘if agricultural produce be reduced one-fourth— one-fourth, or nearly, of the farmer’s capital will be annihilated’. This would amount to an ‘enormous destruction of property’, in addition to which ‘a large part of the annual profits of both farmers and landlords will be permanently taken away.’⁵³⁶ Thus the movement towards free trade constituted both a social evil and an illegitimate destruction of property. It constituted

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 26:259 (November 1829) pp. 793-794; *ibid.*, 17:100 (May 1825), pp. 555-556, 562; *ibid.*, 24:143 (September 1828), p. 392.

⁵³¹ See *ibid.*, 22:128 (July 1827), p. 4, 7-9; *ibid.*, 20:117 (September 1826), pp. 442-443.

⁵³² *QR*, 24:48 (Jan. 1821), pp. 283-284; *BEM*, 19: 110 (March 1826), p. 295; *ibid.*, 17:100 (May 1825), p. 554, 558.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 17:100 (May 1825), p. 559; *QR*, 24:48 (January 1821), p. 287.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

⁵³⁶ *BEM*, 20:116 (August 1826), p. 373.

nothing less than a direct attack on the economic and political status of the propertied landed interest. These measures therefore held political consequences which, in Ultra eyes, rendered them anathema to the Tory determination to preserve the existing constitution.

By subordinating particular groups and prioritising others, economic liberalisation invited political convulsions which threatened the state with overarching constitutional change. Particularly dangerous was the Ricardian notion that low wages would enhance manufacturing profits. In 1830, Robinson lamented that Ricardo's 'detestable' theory, by making 'high profits the *sine qua non* of national wealth, and low wages that of high profits', offered little benefit to the labouring classes. Rather, it rendered 'the grand principle of civil government to keep the mass of the human race in the lowest stages of indigence and suffering' and, by polarising the interests of capital and labour, had plunged 'the community ...into loss and wretchedness'.⁵³⁷ Importantly, by creating conflict between the interests of capital and labour, this theory introduced an acute political danger.⁵³⁸ Another author in the same review highlighted that should 'the present order of things go on', 'the common people of England' would come to look upon 'the laws and the establishments of the country ...merely as inventions for their oppression— contrivances which it is their interest not to support, but to break down'.⁵³⁹ In this perspective, government legislation was directly responsible for economic hardship and thus social unrest which threatened the unreformed parliament.

Predominantly, though, protectionists focused on the threat which the administration's economic policy posed to the political status of the landed interest. Indeed, as Douglas Simes has highlighted, this constituted a particular, though not exclusive, concern of the Ultra Tories.⁵⁴⁰ In relation to monetary policy, it was argued that by increasing the value of money the legislature had enacted a redistribution of wealth from debtors to creditors. This held consequences for the social and economic structure of society. As

⁵³⁷ *BEM*, 26:157 (September 1829) p. 511.

⁵³⁸ Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, pp. 54-55.

⁵³⁹ *BEM*, 26:154 (July 1829), pp. 468-469. This article also worried that 'If...the Legislature will not take better care of them [the labouring classes], they may be disposed to take legislation into their own hands'. See *Ibid.* p. 469.

⁵⁴⁰ Simes, 'A long and difficult association', pp. 68-70.

Mathias Attwood, the Ultra Tory MP for Callington, pointed out, by raising the value of money, the government ‘had altered the existing condition of all the great classes of society, in relation to each other, and in their own condition’.⁵⁴¹ Peel’s Act (1819) had had an adverse impact on agriculturalists in particular.⁵⁴² The *Quarterly Review* elaborated this argument, explaining that the deflationary nature of this legislation had served to ‘withdraw from land a vast capital which, during the prosperous period of agriculture, had been vested in the improvement of the soil— transferring it from the hands of the class of productive cultivators into the pockets of moneyed and non-producing capitalists’.⁵⁴³ The return to the gold standard had diminished the prosperity and property of agriculturalists, transferring their wealth to another interest in the state. The reduction of agricultural protection served the same end. A freer trade in corn would ‘prove injurious to the owners and occupiers of land in this country’ the *Quarterly Review* argued, because it would ‘in many instances occasion an absolute sacrifice of the capital vested in the soil by the cultivator’. While aware of this, political economists continued to contend that ‘such a measure is justifiable, because it will produce an advantage to the rest of the community’. Yet, regardless of whether freer trade would promote manufacturing growth or not, should government introduce new legislation regarding the Corn Laws, this would constitute ‘the promotion of the advantage of one class of the community at the expense of another’. To promote the manufacturing and commercial interests at the expense of the agriculturalist essentially ‘deprive[d] one man of his property, in order to confer it upon another’.⁵⁴⁴ Thus the government’s economic policies arbitrarily encroached on private property, destabilising the most important interest in the state. These policies therefore held significant political consequences.

Eroding the economic status of the landed interest could have wider constitutional ramifications. Since the Glorious Revolution, landed property had dominated the constitution and was perceived as a vital bulwark of social and political stability. In 1825, Redesdale reminded the Lords that

⁵⁴¹ Mathias Attwood, Speech in the House of Commons, 10 July 1822, *PD*, NS, vol. 7 col. 1617.

⁵⁴² *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 7 May 1822, *PD*, NS, vol. 7 col. 388 Mathias Attwood claimed that Peel’s Act had affected ‘the rights of property’ in a ‘violent measure’, operating in a ‘destructive’ manner ‘on all the private engagements, with which the landed interest was concerned’.

⁵⁴³ *QR*, 39:79 (April 1829), p. 461. *Blackwood’s* concurred, see *BEM*, 27:163 (February 1830), p. 343.

⁵⁴⁴ *QR*, 38:74 (March 1828), pp. 435-436.

The constitution of this country was founded upon, and could never be separated from, the landed interest. To talk, therefore, of a free trade in corn, was at once absurd and dangerous. It was impossible that such a free trade could ever exist, consistently with the safety and prosperity of the kingdom.⁵⁴⁵

Redesdale reiterated this point the following year when presenting his resolutions on the corn trade. There was a crucial link between the landed interest and the political order which a reduction in agricultural protection would endanger: ‘the constitution of the government of the United Kingdom, in all its parts, and the symmetry and security of the whole, are founded and depend upon landed property, and cannot subsist in their present form if the value of such property shall be materially diminished’. Indeed, he proceeded to warn that ‘any material injury to that property, by destroying the just balance of the constitution, must lead to the overthrow of the existing form of government, and the substitution of some new form of government’.⁵⁴⁶ In the pages of *Blackwood’s*, Robinson suggested that this end was precisely the design of the political economists: they ‘care[d] no more for the interests of the merchants and manufacturers than for those of the agriculturalists’ but, rather, sought ‘the promotion of their own wishes as a political faction’. Thus political economists ‘wish[ed] to crush the latter [agriculturalists], merely that they may gain a triumph for Republicanism’.⁵⁴⁷ In this theory, the desolation of agriculture through the implementation of freer trade functioned as part of a wider republican conspiracy to subvert the traditional social and political order.

The movement towards freer trade was also depicted as a threat to Britain’s imperial status and international safety. In 1828 the *Quarterly Review* criticised the notion that allowing manufacturers to become dependent on foreign corn would benefit their situation, or the nation at large. Any interruption to this supply, the reviewer noted, would ‘excite serious disturbances’ and ‘inevitably compromise the tranquillity of the

⁵⁴⁵ Lord Redesdale, Speech in the House of Lords, 31 May 1825, *PD*, NS, vol. 13, col. 958.

⁵⁴⁶ Lord Redesdale, Resolutions in the House of Lords, 29 March 1827, *PD*, NS, vol. 17, col. 127.

⁵⁴⁷ *BEM*, 19:110 (March 1826), p. 288.

country'.⁵⁴⁸ Similarly, in parliament, landowners urged the political necessity of retaining a strong agricultural sector and not relying on foreign nations for food imports. Thomas Gooch, MP for Suffolk, claimed that he 'supported, and would support, some restrictions in the way of importation, to protect, the British corn-grower' because of his belief that, if the 'country could be rendered independent of the powers of the continent for bread', it would 'be so much the better'.⁵⁴⁹ Knatchbull also highlighted self-sufficiency, praising the emphasis laid on its pursuit by Huskisson and Liverpool in their earlier justifications of agricultural protection.⁵⁵⁰ Subsequently, Knatchbull pointed out that a general system of free trade could only be adopted if taxes were dramatically reduced and retrenchment undertaken in relation to the army and navy. This, Knatchbull urged, was 'quite impossible' to undertake 'consistently with the welfare and safety of the country'.⁵⁵¹ Redesdale concurred in this opinion: a general system of free trade could only be founded, in his view, 'upon the establishment of universal and constant peace, and universal and constant goodwill of man to man' and was therefore unrealistic. Mankind was 'divided into various states, under various governments' which were deemed 'particularly jealous of and hostile to the internal and external prosperity of this country, and its extended dominions in the eastern and western world, all of which are objects of the ambition of other nations'. The defence of these interests relied on 'a large armed force, both naval and military... creating a necessity for the continuance of a large portion of those heavy burthens with which this country is charged'. Therefore the introduction of free trade threatened both Britain's capacity for self-sufficiency, its security, and that of its empire.

Ironically, while Ultra arguments focused heavily on the threat posed by free trade to the constitution, divisions regarding economic liberalism encouraged the Ultras' flirtation with parliamentary reform; they also contributed to the Tory split which eventually toppled Wellington's government, in 1830, enabling the Whigs to gain office. Wellington disagreed with Huskisson regarding the 1827 Corn Bill and introduced a wrecking amendment which limited the impact of the 1828 Corn Bill. Wellington's administration did not continue along the path to economic liberalisation.

⁵⁴⁸ *QR*, 37:74 (March 1828), pp. 426-427.

⁵⁴⁹ Thomas Gooch, Speech in the House of Commons, 1 March 1826, *PD*, NS, vol. 14, cols. 1002-1003.

⁵⁵⁰ Knatchbull, Speech in the House of Commons, 8 March 1827, *PD*, NS, vol. 16, cols. 1042-1042.

⁵⁵¹ *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 2 April 1827, *PD*, NS, vol. 17, col. 197.

However, it did not renege upon the liberal economic policies introduced by its predecessors either, despite persistent pressure. In 1828, following the resignation of Huskisson, John Gascoyne, Ultra Tory MP for Liverpool, sought to introduce an inquiry into the state of the shipping industry. His proposal, though, was met with the assertion from Henry Goulburn, Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the administration had no intention of abandoning the principles which had guided the former administration.⁵⁵²

Gordon suggests that the determination of Wellington's government to resist repealing Huskisson's earlier measures might have contributed to the Ultra rebellion in 1830.⁵⁵³ Indeed, speaking of the stand adopted by Wellington's administration against the appeals of the shipowners, John Galt, novelist, ship owner, and contributor to *Blackwood's*, remarked that he was 'really not sure that this did not do more to dissolve the Tory adherency than even that laxity of constitutional principle which afterwards led to the measure of the Catholic Relief Bill.'⁵⁵⁴ Joanna Innes, in her broad critique of Clark's *English Society*, also remarks that 'it is far from clear that religious disgruntlement was the main consideration inspiring the pro-reform votes of those Ultras who *did* cast votes in favour of reform', proceeding to highlight that many had 'long nurtured doubts' regarding the agricultural and monetary policies pursued by successive administrations.⁵⁵⁵ Similarly, Hilton turns to agricultural unrest, specifically the Swing Riots, which entailed the breaking of machines and burning of farm buildings in rural districts. Sixty per cent of all disturbances took place in November 1830 alone, the same month of the Ultra rebellion.⁵⁵⁶ The Earl of Winchilsea turned specifically to agricultural distress in his declaration against ministers on 4 November 1830. The people had grievances, he remarked, and if 'these grievances were not redressed, there would be no security for property, and their Lordships would live to see our excellent institutions overturned.' Thus 'an inquiry should be instituted into the condition of the great body of the agricultural labourers, who were loyal and faithful, but suffering very

⁵⁵² Gordon, *Economic Doctrine and Tory Liberalism*, p. 115.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁴ John Galt quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 115. For more information about John Galt see Paul Henderson Scott, 'Galt, John (1779–1839)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/10316>, accessed 24 Sept 2015]

⁵⁵⁵ Innes, 'Jonathan Clark, Social History and England's "Ancien Regime"', p. 193.

⁵⁵⁶ Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad, and dangerous people? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 416-417.

greatly'. Winchilsea also proceeded to call for moderate parliamentary reform and an exchange of ministers on the grounds that the administration 'must do justice to the people,' for only then would the people be 'ready to support and maintain those laws which were necessary to the security and prosperity of all.' Agricultural distress had exacerbated Tory frustrations and convinced backbenchers that the administration no longer deserved their confidence; Wellington's administration could not continue to hold office 'without endangering all the institutions of the country'.⁵⁵⁷ Consequently, wider Tory opinion supported the abandonment of free trade in both agriculture and commerce, consolidating protectionism as a key characteristic of Tory identity in the process.

Conclusion

The implementation of free trade facilitated deep fissures amongst Tories in the early nineteenth century. The emergence of widespread, debilitating economic depression, the revival of domestic radicalism, rooted in economic discontent, and the implementation of the controversial Corn Law in 1815 endowed Tory discussions of economic policy with wider political significance. The arguments of both Liberal and Ultra Tories justified the economic policies which they recommended as measures which would offset overarching reform and constitutional subversion. However, they adopted alternative attitudes towards the abstractions emanating from political economists, the prominence which should be given to varied economic interests within the state, and offered different visions regarding the best means of securing economic prosperity. Liberal Tories, following the example of Pitt and Burke, sought to temper the abstractions of political economy and accommodate them to existing circumstance in order to secure gradual amelioration and guard against rash innovations. Liberal Tories pursued the reduction of protection and the promotion of competition as a means of securing economic prosperity, justifying these changes as the key to securing political tranquillity. Meanwhile Ultra Tories treated political economists with suspicion: likening political economy to radical free thinking in the spheres of politics and religion, Ultra Tories grew increasingly critical of ministerial reforms apparently grounded upon abstract economic theories. These doctrines jeopardised balanced,

⁵⁵⁷ Earl of Winchilsea, Speech in the House of Lords, 04 November 1830, *PD*, Series 3, vol. 1, cols. 196-199.

sustainable economic growth. They also compromised social and political stability by eroding the economic status of the landed interest, in particular. Consequently, the economic issues which emerged in the early nineteenth century facilitated deep fissures which contributed to the consolidation of Tory identity. Wider Tory opinion was increasingly associated with the land and protectionism while ministers pursued policies tarred with the brush of liberality and dangerous innovation which were deemed anathema to Tory identity and out of step with wider Tory opinion.

Part Two: The Constitution in the Church

Chapter Three: Attitudes to Protestant Pluralism

The Religious Basis of Party Identity

Different attitudes towards the authority of the Church of England, Dissent, and the limits of toleration lay at the heart of Whig and Tory identities in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The Restoration of Charles II in 1660 brought an end to the political and social tumult initiated by the Civil War. Reflecting on the root cause of political turbulence, in 1683, the Tory, William Sherlock, staunch royalist and one of the Church's more vociferous defenders, was resolute regarding its source: 'all our late troubles have been owing to the differences of religion'.⁵⁵⁸ It was religious sectarianism and fanaticism which had facilitated defiance of the law, both human and divine. The religious settlement which evolved under Charles II, particularly the 'Clarendon Code', was the legislative manifestation of this diagnosis. The most significant of these measures, the Corporations Act (1661), required that all officials in municipal corporations receive the Anglican sacrament and take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. The Corporations Act operated in conjunction with the Test Act, implemented in 1673, which applied the same requirements to holders of military and civil offices, and the Test Act of 1678, which required members of parliament to take an oath of Abjuration, denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. Together, this legislation excluded all non-Anglicans from corporations, military and civil offices, and excluded Catholics from sitting in parliament. This penal legislation put into practice the sentiment which underlay the Act of Uniformity (1662), giving formal recognition to the concept that religious unity within the Church of England was essential to the preservation of social stability. However, the introduction of the Toleration Act (1689) in the wake of the Glorious Revolution inevitably weakened the Church's authority. The Act enabled Dissenters who took the oaths of supremacy and allegiance to worship separately in their own meeting houses, as long as they were registered with a bishop and conducted services with the doors unlocked.⁵⁵⁹ Consequently, between 1680 and

⁵⁵⁸ William Sherlock, quoted in J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832: ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien regime*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, 2000), p. 52. For more information on Sherlock see William E. Burns, 'Sherlock, William (1639/40–1707)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/25381>, accessed 24 Sept 2015].

⁵⁵⁹ G.V. Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730: the career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester* (Oxford, 1975), p. 11.

1720, the number of Protestant Dissenters increased from 243,500 to 384,800.⁵⁶⁰ Dissenters could legally opt out of Church services and the jurisdiction of the Established Church was further impeded by the passing of Acts of General Pardon in 1689, 1694 and 1708 by Whig administrations.⁵⁶¹

In the post-Revolutionary context, Protestant pluralism, and the latitudinarian disposition within the Church which encouraged its proliferation, provided old Tories with a common diagnosis of social and political distress. Meanwhile, the promotion of doctrinal orthodoxy coupled with attempts to limit the boundaries of religious freedom, comprised Tories' shared solution.⁵⁶² Fears about the spread of heresy and schism underpinned Tory calls for Convocation's reinstatement under William III.⁵⁶³ Moreover, following the accession of Queen Anne, the Tories brought forth repeated attempts to limit the Dissenting practice of occasionally conforming in order to evade the restrictions imposed by the Corporation Act (1661) and Test Act (1673). These culminated in the passage of the Occasional Conformity Act in 1711. Tories also supported the passage of the Schism Act (1714) to place greater limitations on Dissenting academies.⁵⁶⁴ Fears regarding the growth of Dissent promoted a strong Tory-Anglican alliance in many constituencies and it was High Churchmen within the Church of England and their Nonjuring brethren who formed the Tories' ideological phalanx, particularly in religious disputes.⁵⁶⁵ Nonjurors, honouring the divine sanctity

⁵⁶⁰ Clive D. Field, 'Counting Religion in England and Wales: The Long Eighteenth Century, c.1680- c. 1840', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 63:4 (October 2012), p. 710.

⁵⁶¹ Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State*, p. 15.

⁵⁶² The introduction highlighted Stedman Jones' suggestion that 'A political movement ... is distinguished by a shared conviction articulating a political solution to distress and a political diagnosis of its causes'. See above, p. 20, and Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Re-thinking Chartism', in *Languages of Class: studies in English working class history, 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 96.

⁵⁶³ Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State*, p. 48.

⁵⁶⁴ For details on these measures see John Flaningam, 'The Occasional Conformity Controversy', *Journal of British Studies*, 17:1 (1977), pp. 38-62; Geoffrey Holmes, *British politics in the Age of Anne*, 2nd edition, (London, 1987), pp. 103-104; Ursula Henriques, *Religious toleration in England, 1787-1833* (London, 1961), p.14. On the practice of occasional conformity generally see James Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism: nonconformity in eighteenth-century politics and society* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 69-80.

⁵⁶⁵ By the end of Anne's reign, Geoffrey Holmes estimates 'the association of eighty per cent of the clergy with extreme Toryism'. See Geoffrey Holmes, *Religion and Party in late Stuart England* (London, 1975), p. 21, 29. William Gibson provides support for this conclusion by providing voting figures from several constituencies in the early years of the eighteenth century. In Berkshire in 1702, 119 out of 140 clergy voted Tory; in Essex in 1703, 187 clergy voted Tory and only 14 Whig; while in Bedfordshire in 1705, 69 out of 87 clergymen voted for the Tory candidate. See William Gibson, 'Dissenters, Anglicans and Elections after the Toleration Act, 1689-1710' in R. D. Cornwall and W. Gibson (eds.), *Religion, Politics and Dissent, 1660-1832: Essays in Honour of James E. Bradley* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 131-132; Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State*, p. 20.

of their oath of allegiance to James II, maintained that 1688 constituted usurpation. They declined to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, in 1689, and were thus deprived of their clerical positions within the establishment. However, although Nonjurors and conforming High Churchmen diverged (albeit, in some cases, only ostensibly) over the legitimacy of the post-revolutionary Church and monarchy, they shared anxieties regarding the working of the Toleration Act and the preservation of doctrinal orthodoxy. Moreover, High Churchmen on both sides of the split adhered to the doctrine that the Church and state were both divinely-ordained, distinct societies, neither subject to the other.⁵⁶⁶ Thus the disposition which Tories advocated was fervently anti-erastian, anti-latitudinarian and anti-pluralist.

The association between the Church and Toryism shaped contemporary nomenclature. Holmes suggests that, by the end of William III's reign, in 1702, the Tories had 'firmly appropriated the term "the Church Party"'. Similarly, Mather notes that, in the House of Lords, the terms 'High Church' and 'Tory' were used interchangeably as late as 1736.⁵⁶⁷ Not all Tories were necessarily devout Anglicans, however. Bolingbroke, for instance, was a freethinker and occasional conformist. Nonetheless, he remained conscious of the powerful influence which an anti-pluralist stance could have upon both the electorate and party unity and was willing to exploit it for party gain. In 1717, Bolingbroke acknowledged that pursuit of the Occasional Conformity Act (1711) and the Schism Act (1714) had been 'necessary for our party interest'.⁵⁶⁸ The latter, for example, was an attempt to mitigate Tory divisions regarding the Hanoverian succession.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁶ Richard Sharp, *'Our Church': Nonjurors, High Churchmen and the Church of England* (London, 2000), p. 3, 11-12. See also idem, "'Our Common Mother, the Church of England": Nonjurors, High Churchmen and the Evidence of Subscription Lists' in Paul Monod, Murray Pittock and Daniel Szechi (eds.), *Loyalty and Identity: Jacobites at Home and Abroad* (London, 2010), pp. 167-180; Mark Goldie, 'The Nonjurors, Episcopacy, and the Origins of the Convocation Controversy' in Eveline Cruickshanks (ed.), *Ideology and conspiracy: aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759* (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 16.

⁵⁶⁷ Holmes, *British politics in the Age of Anne*, p. 17; Peter Nockles 'Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833: the "Orthodox"- some problems of definition and identity' in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor (eds.), *The Church of England c.1689-1833: from toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 336; F.C. Mather, *High Church Prophet: Bishop Samuel Horsley and the Caroline Tradition in the Later Georgian Church* (Oxford, 1992), p. 7.

⁵⁶⁸ Bolingbroke, 1717, quoted in Holmes, *Politics in the Age of Anne*, p. 103.

⁵⁶⁹ Daniel Szechi, 'The Tory Party in the House of Commons, 1710-14: a case in structural change and political evolution', *Parliamentary History*, 5 (1986), p. 7.

In contrast to the Tories, Whig candidates in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were supported by Low Churchmen and Dissenters.⁵⁷⁰ It was through promises of religious toleration that Whigs rallied the support of Dissenters for the Exclusion Bill in 1679.⁵⁷¹ Dissenters continued to constitute a significant portion of the party's electoral support in the post-revolutionary context and the Whigs consistently battled to preserve the religious freedoms enshrined by the Toleration Act from Tory prejudice.⁵⁷² In the opening years of the eighteenth century, it was the Whigs, particularly the Whig bishops in the House of Lords, who presented the biggest obstacle to Tory attempts to restrict the practice of occasional conformity; the Whigs also opposed the Schism Bill.⁵⁷³ The Whig ministry of Stanhope and Sunderland (1717-1721), who assumed office under George I, strengthened religious liberty by repealing both the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts in 1719.⁵⁷⁴ Moreover, although Walpole refused to support the repeal of the Test and Corporations Acts in 1736, only a few days later he supported a second bill, the Quaker Tithes Bill, which lent support to Quakers in their refusal to pay Church tithes. Thus the Whigs, generally, supported and protected Protestant pluralism, promoting toleration and adopting a conciliatory disposition towards Dissenters.

Court Whigs' favour for religious toleration, alongside the preservation of an established Church, and their contractual interpretation of 1688, were given ideological justification by William Warburton's *Alliance of Church and State* (1736). Warburton depicted the Church and state as two independent, corporate bodies joined by 'free convention and mutual compact' into an alliance which was mutually supportive.⁵⁷⁵ The Church surrendered its independence and absolute sovereignty, but gained advantages including a public endowment for its clergy and the presence of prelates in parliament.

⁵⁷⁰ Gibson, 'Dissenters, Anglicans and Elections after the Toleration Act, 1689-1710', pp. 132, 142; Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism*, p. 113.

⁵⁷¹ Holmes, *Politics in the Age of Anne*, p. 55.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*, pp.97-115; *idem*, *Religion and Party in late Stuart England*, p.21; John Flaningham, 'The Occasional Conformity Controversy', p. 42; Gibson, 'Dissenters, Anglicans and Elections after the Toleration Act, 1689-1710', p. 132.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁵⁷⁴ The repeals of these measures were, of course, opposed by the Tories. Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the XVIIIth century: the Birbeck lectures in ecclesiastical history delivered at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1931-3* (Cambridge, 1934), p. 315.

⁵⁷⁵ William Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State, or, the Necessity and Equity of an Established Religion and a Test-Law demonstrated* (London, 1736), p. 53.

Moreover, having surrendered the power of independent action, it gained protection from the state. This protection took the form of the Corporation Act (1661), which required Dissenters to take the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, and, importantly, the Anglican sacrament once a year to hold municipal offices. The Test Act (1673) placed the same stipulations on civil and military offices under the crown, ring-fencing the established Church from those who could do it harm by attempting to obstruct the accession of Dissenters to positions of power.⁵⁷⁶ The tests required of Protestant Dissenters did not infringe on religious liberty: they left all individuals freedom of conscience and served the political function of securing peace in the state without persecution.⁵⁷⁷ Therefore, Warburton did not appeal to religious truth, nor did he stigmatise Dissenters as schismatic. Indeed, he specifically claimed that the end to which religion was established in the state was civil utility, not to endorse the true faith.⁵⁷⁸ While Warburton sought to reconcile the Church establishment with the developments of 1688 and 1689, however, Stephen Taylor has cast doubt on the currency of his ideas amongst the lower clergy. Tories, and indeed some Whigs, continued to adhere to the notion that the office of the civil magistrate extended to the care of subjects' souls and thus the propagation of true religion.⁵⁷⁹ Therefore, while Tories and Whigs both defended the preservation of a religious establishment, differences existed regarding whether this establishment was rooted in truth or utility.

Keith Feiling's study of the Tory party after 1714 argued that the Tory-Anglican connection was eroded following the accession of George I. For support, Feiling cited Walpole's ecclesiastical policy, suggesting that the Church was protected, not imperilled, by the Walpolian Regime.⁵⁸⁰ However, Linda Colley and William Gibson have demonstrated that the Tory-Anglican nexus rested primarily with the parochial clergy rather than the bishops who, generally, acquiesced in Walpole's Church

⁵⁷⁶ Unlike Catholics, who were excluded from holding parliamentary office by the Test Act of 1678, there was no formal legislation to prevent Dissenters from becoming MPs. However, the Corporation Act was designed to prevent corporation boroughs, in which the franchise was restricted to members of the corporation, from electing Dissenting MPs.

⁵⁷⁷ For an overview of Warburton's argument see Sykes, *Church and state in England* p.321.

⁵⁷⁸ Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, pp.72-73. John Gascoigne, 'The unity of church and state challenged: responses to Hooker from the restoration to the nineteenth-century age of reform', *Journal of Religious History*, 21 (1997), p. 66.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁰ Keith Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714* (Oxford, 1924), pp. 9-10.

policy.⁵⁸¹ For the clergy, the difficulties facing the Church, including the reluctance of the government, post 1725, to increase the number of churches to match the population, the competition of Dissent, as well as clerical poverty, remained harsh realities and they consistently relied on, and received, Tory support in their endeavours.⁵⁸² Tories opposed the Quakers' Tithe Bill (1736), which transferred the recovery of tithes from ecclesiastical courts to JPs, and the Mortmain Bill (1736), which sought to limit corporate philanthropy and appeared, in particular, to attack Church charities including Queen Anne's Bounty and the S.P.G.⁵⁸³ These bills were parts of successive anti-clerical motions brought by Whigs in the 1730s which, by reviving partisan identities, fractured the 'country' opposition along Whig and Tory lines.⁵⁸⁴ Whig anti-clericalism also fractured the alliance between Walpole and the Church, resulting in the end of Walpole's coalition with his 'ecclesiastical minister', Bishop Edmund Gibson.⁵⁸⁵ Subsequently, Mather notes, there was a noticeable dilution in Churchmanship. In the upper echelons of the Church, latitudinarians gained a stronghold and a conciliatory approach towards Dissent took primacy over High-Church attitudes to doctrine and discipline.⁵⁸⁶ Indeed, there is general concurrence amongst historians that the mid-eighteenth century witnessed the dissipation of religious controversy which, O'Gorman has suggested, contributed to the fading of Tory identity.⁵⁸⁷

However, during the reign of George III, any semblance of religious peace disappeared. Dissenting attempts to secure increased measures of religious toleration, initially in the form of relief from subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles and, subsequently, attempts to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, did much to revive the notion that the Church

⁵⁸¹ Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 106-107; Gibson, 'Dissenters, Anglicans and Elections after the Toleration Act, 1689-1710', p. 142.

⁵⁸² Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy*, p. 116.

⁵⁸³ Taylor suggests that it was intended to do this. S. Taylor 'Sir Robert Walpole, The Church of England, and the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736' *Historical Journal*, 28:1 (1985), p. 54; Mather, *High Church Prophet*, p. 8.

⁵⁸⁴ B.W. Hill, *The growth of parliamentary parties, 1689-1742* (London 1976), p. 213.

⁵⁸⁵ Mather, *High Church Prophet*, p. 8.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-9.

⁵⁸⁷ See Peter Nockles, 'The Waning of Protestant Unity and Waxing of Anti-Catholicism? Archdeacon Daubeny and the reconstruction of 'Anglican' identity in the later Georgian church, c. 1780-c. 1830' in William Gibson and Robert Ingram (eds.), *Religious Identities in Britain, 1660-1832* (Aldershot, 2005), p. 179; John Walsh and Stephen Taylor, 'The Church and Anglicanism in the "long" eighteenth century', in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor (eds.), *The Church of England, c. 1689-c. 1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 29, William Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688-1832: Unity and Accord* (London, 2001); Frank O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two Party System 1760-1832* (London, 1982), p. ix.

was in danger; so too did the outbreak of revolution in America and France alongside the apparent proliferation of domestic radicalism. Against this backdrop, some scholars have indicated the rehabilitation of a distinct Tory identity emerging from conservative Whiggery. Gascoigne notes the significance of Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) in providing 'much of the ideological foundation for the revived Toryism of the early nineteenth century'. Cookson identifies a revived, reactionary, Tory authoritarianism in Pitt's refusal to support the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, in 1787. Similarly, O'Gorman, examining the revival of Toryism between 1790 and 1812, notes that the 'conservative reaction' often attributed to the French Revolution was initiated by the American crisis and endowed with religious emphasis by the attempts to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts. Sack, meanwhile, highlights the authoritarian disposition adopted by the North administration and press towards Dissenters in the 1770s, provoked by the American crisis and domestic attacks on clerical subscription between 1772 and 1774.⁵⁸⁸

Meanwhile there is historiographical consensus, led by Peter Nockles, Nigel Aston, and F.C. Mather, that the late eighteenth century witnessed a 'High Church' revival.⁵⁸⁹ The Oxford-based followers of the philosopher, John Hutchinson, are widely recognised to have been integral to this revival, particularly George Horne, William Jones and William Stevens. The 'Hutchinsonians', although originally comprising Dissenters as well as churchmen, appropriated a distinctly High-Church and anti-plural character following the recruitment of these old Tories. The publication of Bishop Robert Clayton's *Arian Essay on Spirit* (1750), to which Jones responded at the behest of Archbishop Thomas Secker, is highlighted by Mather as a key point of departure in this respect.⁵⁹⁰ Aston concurs, contesting that the controversy provoked by Clayton's publication served as a 'mid-century watershed' which destroyed any superficial theological consensus in the Church. In the ensuing climate, Aston suggests that 'High

⁵⁸⁸ John Gascoigne 'the unity of church and state challenged' p. 67; J. E. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace: anti-war liberalism in England, 1793-1815* (Cambridge: 1982), p. 16; O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two Party System*, p. 45; James Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain, c. 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 199-201; see also H.T. Dickinson, 'Britain's Imperial Sovereignty: The Ideological Case against the American Colonies', in H.T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the American Revolution* (Edinburgh, 1998), pp. 93-94.

⁵⁸⁹ Nigel Aston, 'Horne and Heterodoxy: The Defence of Anglican Beliefs in the Late Enlightenment', *The English Historical Review*, 108:429 (Oct, 1993), pp. 895-919; F.C. Mather, *High Church Prophet*, pp. 44-103.

⁵⁹⁰ Mather, *High Church Prophet*, p. 10.

Church and traditionally Tory sentiments were no longer mistrusted, but became central to the defence of orthodox doctrine and the reining in of human reason'.⁵⁹¹ From this perspective, theological controversy provided the opportunity for a reintegration of old Toryism, specifically its orthodox and anti-plural characteristics, into the political mainstream.

It is important to note at this point that, unlike in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the term 'High Church', when employed below, should not be considered as synonymous with old Toryism. Some of the High Churchmen examined by this study, including George Horne and William Jones, were invariably old Tories. Others, though, including Samuel Horsley and George Pretyman-Tomline, belonged more to the Whig tradition, as has been suggested in chapter one and will be reasserted below.⁵⁹² Rather than any specific political meaning, the churchmen who appropriated a High-Church identity in a positive sense invested it with doctrinal, sacramental, and ecclesiological connotations.⁵⁹³ There is a general consensus amongst historians that High Churchmanship entailed upholding the doctrine of apostolic succession, defending the supremacy of Scripture while emphasising the Prayer Book, Catechism, Creeds, and teachings of the early Fathers as authoritative aids for interpretation. It also included adherence to the doctrine of sacramental grace and, with it, the cultivation of a practical spirituality distinct from 'any subjective conversion experience' driven by 'unruly manifestations of the Holy Spirit.' Finally, High Churchmen 'invariably stressed the importance of a religious establishment but insisted on the duty of the state as divinely ordained rather than merely secular entity, to protect and promote the interests of the Church.' Although High Churchmen might not hold all of these features together, or emphasise some more than others, as Nockles notes, there was 'enough of a consensus for a definition'.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹¹ Nigel Aston, 'The limits of latitudinarianism: English reactions to Bishop Clayton's *An essay on spirit*', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 49 (1998), p. 410, 432-433

⁵⁹² See pp. 50-52, 164-165. Also G.M. Ditchfield, 'Sir George Pretyman-Tomline: ecclesiastical politician and theological polemicist', in William Gibson and Robert Ingram (eds.), *Religious Identities in Britain, 1660-1832* (Aldershot, 2005), p. 287.

⁵⁹³ See Charles Daubeny, *A Guide to the Church, in several discourses...*, 2nd ed., 2 vols, vol. I (London, 1804), p. xliii.

⁵⁹⁴ Quotes from Peter Nockles 'Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833: the "Orthodox"- some problems of definition and identity', pp. 335-336. On consensus regarding the nature of High-Churchmanship see Nigel Aston, 'Horne and Heterodoxy', pp. 895-919; Mather, *High Church*

This chapter examines the basis and extent of consensus between churchmen and statesmen, conservative Whiggery and old Toryism, regarding Protestant pluralism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Specifically, it focuses on Protestant Dissenters' campaigns for civil equality, the threat posed by rational Christianity to the Church's doctrinal authority and the limits of toleration, and the proliferation of evangelicalism both inside and outside the Church of England. It suggests that the emergence of a broad Tory identity in the early nineteenth century was promoted by consensus in the late eighteenth century regarding the necessity of guarding the Church of England and the Test and Corporation Acts as buttresses of civil stability. Moreover, it agrees with J.C.D. Clark's and James Sack's contentions that there was broad concurrence regarding the need to preserve the orthodox, Christian nature of the polity.⁵⁹⁵ However, it also contends that differences persisted between churchmen and statesmen, conservative Whigs and old Tories, regarding the origin and authority of the Church of England, as well as attitudes to Dissenters, liberty of conscience, and the principle of toleration. Consequently, the Tory identity which emerged from eighteenth-century consensus between these varied ideological strands comprised a spectrum of ideas regarding Protestant pluralism. In the nineteenth century, these differences promoted fissures and ensured that, by 1828, hostility to Protestant pluralism was not a centripetal force for Tories, nor a defining characteristic of Tory identity.

Rebellion

In the late eighteenth century, Tory High Churchmen maintained that the Church and state were two parts of the same whole. Chapter one highlighted that old Tories defended the *jure divino* origins of political authority and consequently argued that resistance, far from being a natural right, was a sin.⁵⁹⁶ A similar doctrine was maintained regarding the Church. The Church of England had been divinely instituted and was concerned with man's spiritual welfare and eternal salvation: thus, as William

Prophet, pp.201-209; Peter Nockles, *The Oxford movement in context: Anglican high churchmanship 1760-1857* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 44-103; Ditchfield, 'Sir George Pretyman-Tomline: ecclesiastical politician and theological polemicist', p. 285.

⁵⁹⁵ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed. pp. 232-317; James Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 257.

⁵⁹⁶ See pp. 36-57.

Stevens contended in *A Treatise on the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Church* (1773), it was not ‘a meer [*sic*] voluntary Society’ but ‘one whereof Men are obliged to be Members, as they value their everlasting Happiness’.⁵⁹⁷ Therefore, in the view of Tory High Churchmen, Dissenters did not exercise a legitimate right to liberty of conscience, but had committed the sin of schism.⁵⁹⁸ For this reason, old Tories viewed Dissenters as innately rebellious in both a religious and political sense. As William Jones insisted, in 1798, ‘the same near alliance... hath always subsisted between schism and rebellion’. While civil rebellion was conducted under the specious cry of ‘the power of the people’, in religious affairs this rebellious spirit was ‘called private judgement, and sometimes conscience’. Yet, in both cases, the underlying principle was the same: both constituted a rebellion ‘against the judgement of Authority’, and this authority was God’s.⁵⁹⁹

The belief that religious principles were intimately connected with political conduct was validated, in the eyes of Tories, by history. In Tory rhetoric, the origins of the Civil War were consistently located with Dissenters. George Horne, Vice Chancellor at Oxford and president of Magdalen College, greeted George III’s accession with a martyrdom sermon entitled *The Christian King*. Preached on 30 January 1761, the sermon adopted an unequivocally Tory perspective by declaring that the ‘king [Charles] was perfectly innocent of the war, and all it’s [*sic*] dismal consequences’. Rather, Horne attributed events to a ‘scheme’, or conspiracy, hatched by ‘a coalition of PATRIOTS and PURITANS ... more properly styled a combination of REBELS and SCHISMATICS, both principles being duly mixed and thoroughly incorporated’.⁶⁰⁰ Similarly, Roger Newdigate, MP for the University of Oxford, drew on this connection when he rushed to defend subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles in the early 1770s. He painted Dissenters, specifically Presbyterians, as ‘in all ages the avowed and resolute foe of monarchical government’ while also stressing that the civil and religious

⁵⁹⁷ William Stevens, *A Treatise on the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Church* (London, 1773), p. 10. This publication was adapted from Archbishop Potter’s *A Discourse of Church Government: Wherein the Rights of the Church, and the Supremacy of Christian Princes, are Vindicated and Adjusted* (1711).

⁵⁹⁸ William Jones, *An Essay on the Church* (Gloucester, 1787), pp. 113-114, 122-136. Charles Daubeny, *A Guide to the Church*, p. 54.

⁵⁹⁹ William Jones, *Letter to the Church of England, by an Old Friend and Servant of the Church* (London, 1798), p. 11, 14.

⁶⁰⁰ George Horne, *The Christian King. A Sermon Preached before the University of Oxford... On Friday, January 30, 1761...* (Oxford, 1761), pp. 24-25.

establishments were ‘so linked and incorporated together, that, when the latter falls, the former cannot stand.’⁶⁰¹ Church and state were depicted by such narratives as intimately interlinked; they represented two sides of the same coin and it was only a short step from rebellion against God’s Church to revolt against his king.

The religious dimension present in the American colonial dispute, and conspicuous support offered by British Dissenters to this cause, did little to dispel and much apparently to validate Tory condemnations of Dissent as politically subversive.⁶⁰² In the New England colonies, Protestant Dissenters comprised the majority of the population and their resistance to attempts to establish bishops or ecclesiastical courts was easily linked to their rejection of Britain’s civil authority. In his *Address to the British Government* (1776), Jones insisted that, had an episcopacy been instituted in America, ‘it would have given a seasonable check to the growth of the rebellion, which has since broke out, by ...adding influence to those good principles of obedience and loyalty, which never fail to thrive under episcopal government’.⁶⁰³ Stevens also highlighted the religious root of colonial rebellion. In America, Dissenters had aimed at nothing less ‘than the total extirpation of monarchy and episcopacy’, demonstrating that they were ‘far ...from renouncing the intolerant principles and practices of their ancestors’ in the seventeenth century.⁶⁰⁴ This demonstrated, in Stevens’ perspective, that the legislative restraints introduced after the Restoration remained ‘absolutely necessary for the security of the state’.⁶⁰⁵ Thus both history and political turmoil in the opening decades of George III’s reign only served to confirm to old Tories the schismatic and innately rebellious nature of Dissenters, and the necessity of excluding them from the state as a means of protecting civil order.

⁶⁰¹ Roger Newdigate, Speech in the House of Commons, 3 April 1772, *PH* vol. 17, col. 433 and idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 February, 1772, *PH* vol. 17, cols. 254-255.

⁶⁰² James Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism*.

⁶⁰³ William Jones, ‘An Address to the British Government’, in William Stevens (ed.), *The Theological, Philosophical, and Miscellaneous Works of the Rev. William Jones...in twelve volumes...* vol XII, (London, 1801), p. 358. This sentiment shared in William Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated, and Constitutional Liberty asserted. In answer to The Reverend Dr. Watson’s Accession Sermon, Preached before the University of Cambridge, on October 25th, 1776...*, (London, 1777), p. 66. The religious root of the American Revolution was a consistent theme in Jones’s works. For an example see William Jones, *One Penny-worth of Truth From Thomas Bull to his Brother John* (1792) and idem, *A Letter to John Bull, Esq. From His Second Cousin Thomas Bull*. (London, 1793), p. 8.

⁶⁰⁴ Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated*, p. 63.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

The more aggressive nature of Dissenters and their Latitudinarian allies in the opening decades of George III's reign promoted consensus between High-Church Tories and court Whigs regarding the political dangers of altering the religious element of the constitution. Reconciliation between old, Oxford Toryism and the court was signalled by the appointment of the King's favourite and conservative Whig, Frederick Lord North, to the Chancellorship of the University in 1772.⁶⁰⁶ Following the expulsion of six members of St Edmund's Hall for attending unauthorized prayer meetings, a row erupted regarding the necessity of subscribing to the Thirty-Nine Articles in order to matriculate at the University. North proved a faithful ally in the defence of subscription and thus, when the Chancellorship opened later in the year, North was elected without opposition.⁶⁰⁷ Subsequently, North contested attempts to abolish clerical subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles; his defence was decidedly political in focus. North stressed that Britain enjoyed perfect liberty of conscience; the only condition placed on subjects was loyalty: 'Every person is allowed to go to heaven his own way' for, as long as 'a man acts as a good subject ... nobody questions him about religious concerns'. Rather than any form of religious persecution, the only restraint placed upon subjects was 'that we create no public disturbance', yet this was exactly what the petitioners' cause, if successful, would achieve. It was the 'absurd and monstrous doctrines, which visionaries and fanatics derived from Scripture', and the political turbulence which they had spawned, which constituted the 'original cause of creeds, confessions, subscriptions and penal statutes'. Thus it was the need to preserve civil stability, and the dangerous principles held by Dissenters, which North highlighted. Indeed, he even drew on the traditionally Tory precedent of seventeenth-century discord to emphasise the necessity of retaining doctrinal restraints: 'According to your fifth monarchy men there was no king but Jesus, and others insisted upon the community of goods. Hence all justice, all property ceased.'⁶⁰⁸ Therefore, like the Oxford Tories, Newdigate and Horne, North defended the Anglican establishment by drawing attention to the connection between political disloyalty and religious Dissent.

⁶⁰⁶ J. Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 188.

⁶⁰⁷ See Peter Whiteley, *Lord North: the prime minister who lost America* (London, 1996), p. 125; W. R. Ward, *Georgian Oxford: University Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1958), p. 259.

⁶⁰⁸ Lord North Speech in the House of Commons, 6 February, 1772, *PH* vol. 17, cols. 273-274.

Subsequently, in the context of American rebellion, while it was those who continued to appropriate a Tory identity that articulated the most vitriolic diatribes against Dissenters, this event did much to encourage the rehabilitation of anti-Dissenting sentiments more widely. Sack has noted the authoritarian disposition of Lord North's administration and the antipathy of the Northite press in the 1770s.⁶⁰⁹ Meanwhile, James Bradley suggests that, during the American crisis, the religious basis of political polarisation was a repeated theme in Bristol and Newcastle.⁶¹⁰ Moreover, elsewhere, Bradley has noted the deep insecurity which the American rebellion excited in the British Anglican clergy at large regarding moral, political and social disorder amongst the populace. This anxiety produced the widespread reassertion in political sermons of the period that 'the government in church and state was a genuinely Christian government, guided by a Christian sovereign, on Christian principles', that is, that the civil and ecclesiastical elements of the constitution were intimately interrelated. As Bradley proceeds to point out, this assertion was 'precisely the point that Dissenters and Low-Church Anglicans denied' and, indeed, growing hostility towards these groups was increasingly evident.⁶¹¹ Thus the subscription controversy and the American Revolution promoted conservatism amongst Whigs regarding the connection between Church and state, and the political benefits of the Church establishment, promoting consensus with old Tories.

This consensus became more conspicuous in response to subsequent attempts to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts. In the 1784 election Dissenters voted overwhelmingly for the Cambridge educated Whig, and King's favourite, William Pitt. Pitt's father, the Earl of Chatham, had been a friend of the Dissenting cause and the campaign for repeal, initiated in 1787, was a manifestation of the hope that Pitt the Younger would support

⁶⁰⁹ Sack, *Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 199-200. For an alternative interpretation regarding the disposition of the North administration towards Dissent see G. Ditchfield, 'Ecclesiastical policy under Lord North' in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor, *The Church of England c.1689-1833: from toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 228-246.

⁶¹⁰ Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism*, p. 112.

⁶¹¹ James Bradley, 'The Anglican Pulpit, the Social Order, and the Resurgence of Toryism during the American Revolution', *Albion*, 21:3 (autumn, 1989), pp. 376-377.

efforts to further religious freedom.⁶¹² However, the Dissenters were sorely disappointed. The motion in 1787 was defeated by 176 votes to 98, a victory for the Church decided by Pitt's defection from the Dissenting interest which had secured his election three years earlier.⁶¹³ Pitt's opposition to repealing the Test and Corporation Acts was rooted in pragmatism rather than prejudice. Unlike the old Tories, he did not paint Dissenters as innately rebellious. Rather, Pitt argued that while some Dissenters were loyal, 'no means can be devised of admitting the moderate part of the Dissenters, and excluding the more violent'. Thus 'the bulwark must be kept against all'. Therefore Pitt reiterated the anxiety that constitutional alteration in the Church would spawn disaffection in the state. The Church and state were 'united upon principles of expediency' with Anglican hegemony remaining central to preserving political stability on the basis that it was 'impossible to separate the ecclesiastical and political liberties of this country'.⁶¹⁴ This appeal to political expediency was emulated by North in 1787. Dissenters grounded their argument for civil equality in notions of natural rights which it would be dangerous to sanction: if Dissenters were admitted to power on the principle of right 'the argument may run to all men' and 'If all were to be admitted on the principles of natural right, there would be an end to all rules and order'.⁶¹⁵ Thus there was a broad consensus regarding the importance of upholding the Test and Corporation Acts as a buttress of civil stability.

The political necessity of maintaining a Church establishment, and the importance of the Test and Corporation Acts as a support of that establishment, was also articulated by churchmen, both Whig and Tory. The Whig churchman, Samuel Hallifax, addressed the relationship between Church and state in a martyrdom sermon of 1788, delivered against the backdrop of the campaigns for repeal. Subsequently, in 1790, both the Whig High Churchman, Samuel Horsley, and the Tory High Churchman, George Horne, published responses to the *Case of the Protestant Dissenters with Reference to the*

⁶¹² G.M. Ditchfield, 'The Subscription Issue in British Parliamentary Politics, 1771-1779', *Parliamentary History*, 7 (1988), p. 47; Jennifer Mori, *William Pitt and the French Revolution 1785-1795* (Edinburgh: 1997) p.36; Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., pp. 413-414.

⁶¹³ Henriques, *Religious toleration in England, 1787-1833*, p. 60, 117.

⁶¹⁴ Jennifer Mori, *William Pitt and the French Revolution* p. 37; Pitt quoted in J.C.D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832*, 2nd ed, p. 414.

⁶¹⁵ Frederick North, *The Speeches of Lord North on a motion for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, as delivered in the House of Commons, Wednesday, March 28, 1787, and Friday, May 8, 1789* (London, 1790), p. 8, 10, 19.

Corporation and Test Acts (1787) which had been circulated by London Dissenters to advance the cause of repeal. All three churchmen concurred regarding the political reasons for protecting the Church establishment: it prevented different religious factions within the state from tearing the social fabric apart and destroying political tranquillity.⁶¹⁶ Moreover, all three supported the Test and Corporation Acts as a necessary buttress of the establishment: should Dissenters gain access to political power, they would naturally seek the ascendancy of their own religion, subverting the Church of England in the process.⁶¹⁷ Consequently, a broad consensus emerged between both churchmen and statesmen regarding the political justifications for upholding the Test and Corporation Acts.

Given the broad consensus regarding the connection between Anglican hegemony and political stability, the progression of the French Revolution did nothing to aid Dissenters in their endeavour for repeal. While, in 1789, the motion for repeal was only defeated narrowly by 122 votes to 102, the final motion to abolish the Acts, in 1790, was defeated by 294 votes to 105.⁶¹⁸ As Clark notes, ‘the crucial moment had been missed’.⁶¹⁹ Not surprisingly, old Tories had urged that the question of constitutional alteration be considered in light of events developing in France. Horne contended that, while Britain was ‘reproached with falling so far short of the liberality of sentiment displayed in that kingdom [France]’, the ‘signs of the times, and the principles that are stirring amongst us, are by no means such as encourage us to dismantle our fortification; but rather admonish us to see that they be kept in thorough repair, and doubly manned’.⁶²⁰ Similarly, Pitt opposed attempts to secure Unitarian relief in 1792, arguing that it might convey to the public the misapprehension that the ‘House were becoming indifferent about the established religion... [and] they would think [this] the first step towards a gradual abolition of all establishments and fundamental principles of

⁶¹⁶ Samuel Halifax, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in the Abbey Church of Westminster, on Wednesday, January 30, 1788...* (London, 1788), p. 13; Samuel Horsley, *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters; with reference to the Corporation and Test Acts*, (London, 1790), p. 1, 17; George Horne, *Observations on the Case of the Protestant Dissenters with reference to the Corporation and Test Acts* (Oxford, 1790), p. 4.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.7, 14; Horsley, *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters*, p. 17; Halifax, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal...January 30, 1788*, p. 15.

⁶¹⁸ Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832* 2nd ed., p. 416.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 416.

⁶²⁰ Horne, in *Observations on the Case of the Protestant dissenters with reference to the Corporation and Test Acts*, p. 19.

the constitution.⁶²¹ Moreover, the positive reception of the French Revolution and conspicuous support offered to its principles by leading Dissenters only encouraged suspicion. Indeed, Horsley noted that the writings of many ‘Leaders of the modern Non-conformists ...are used to treat the subject of civil liberty, in a manner that hath given too much reason to suspect, that the principles of a Non-conformist in religion, and a Republican in politics, are inseparably united’.⁶²² Although this statement did not connect religious and political principles explicitly, it came very close, possessing only a subtle shade of rhetorical difference from the emphasis which old Tories gave to the inherent, axiomatic connection between Dissent and republicanism.⁶²³

The French Revolution facilitated disagreements over religious and political liberty which polarised the libertarian and conservative elements of the Whig tradition. At the forefront of the former was Charles James Fox who, believing it ‘utterly impossible to view any species of persecution, whether civil or religious, without horror and detestation’, pressed for greater religious toleration, reviving the traditional Whig-Dissenter connection in the process.⁶²⁴ Meanwhile, Edmund Burke, Fox’s accomplice for many years in attempts to reduce the powers of the crown, abandoned the Dissenters in their hour of need to join the conservative Whigs, Pitt and North, and High Churchmen, in contending that religious liberty extended far enough and that constitutional alteration would result in constitutional ruin. There is a convincing case that Burke’s change of heart towards Dissent was influenced, in part, by personal reasons, specifically Dissenters’ abandonment of the Fox-North coalition in favour of William Pitt in 1784. Yet by far the greatest influence on Burke’s shift to a more conservative view towards the Church establishment was the French Revolution and its reception amongst British Dissenters.⁶²⁵ In 1773, Burke had endorsed a bill for relieving Dissenting ministers and schoolmasters from the need to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles. His argument extolled toleration as ‘the best and surest support that possibly can be given’ to Christianity and claimed that the magistrate was justified in establishing one religion and placing restraints on others only on the grounds that ‘the

⁶²¹ William Pitt, Speech to the House of Commons, 11 May 1792, *PH* vol. 29, col. 1399.

⁶²² Horsley, *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters* p. 29.

⁶²³ For an example of the old Tory perspective on this connection see Horne, *Observations on the Case of the Protestant Dissenters*, p. 10, 14.

⁶²⁴ Fox, Speech in House of Commons, 2 March 1787, *PH*, vol. 28, col. 388.

⁶²⁵ Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, pp. 106-118.

person dissenting does not dissent from the scruples of ill-informed conscience, but from a party ground of dissension, in order to raise a faction in the state.’⁶²⁶

Problematic for Dissenters in the 1790s was that, against the backdrop of the French Revolution, Burke had come to consider them as a faction in the state.

Speaking against the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1790, Burke defended his prior support of the Dissenting interest. Moreover, he noted that had the question of repeal been brought forward ten years earlier he would have voted in its favour.

However, in the current climate, ‘a variety of circumstances made it appear imprudent to meddle with it [the religious element of the constitution]’.⁶²⁷ Foremost amongst these was the political conduct of Dissenters in response to events evolving in France.

Consistent with his speech in 1773, and in concurrence with Fox, who had presented the motion, Burke supported the principle that ‘men were not to be judged merely by their opinions, but by the conduct which they held compared with their opinions’ and thus it was ‘by the conduct of the dissenters that he judged of them, by their acts, their declarations, and their avowed intentions’. Like Horsley, he expressed concern regarding the political dispositions exhibited in the publications of Dissenters, including Samuel Palmer’s *Protestant Dissenter’s Catechism* (1774), Robert Robinson’s *Political Catechism* (1782), and Joseph Priestley’s *Letters to the Rev. E. Burn* (1790). The first of these works was deemed a ‘catechism of anarchy’ while Priestley’s *Letters* declared the intention of laying a ‘train of gunpowder ... to the church establishment, which would soon blow it up’. These works demonstrated that ‘the leading preachers among the dissenters were avowed enemies to the church of England’ and that ‘our establishment appeared to be in much more serious danger than the church of France was in a year or two ago’.⁶²⁸ This concern for civil stability and its buttress, the Church of England, drew Burke into alignment with conservative Whigs and old Tories in the 1790s.

Similarly, it was political dangers which motivated Burke’s opposition to the petition for Unitarian relief in 1792. In relation to this motion, Burke contended that it was the

⁶²⁶ Edmund Burke, ‘Speech on Toleration Bill, 17 March 1773’, in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. Paul Langford, 9 vols., vol.2 (Oxford 1981— forthcoming, 2015) p. 383, 384-385.

⁶²⁷ *Idem*, Speech to the House of Commons, 2 March 1790, *PH* vol. 28, col. 441.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, cols. 435-440.

duty of government to attend to religious opinions only because ‘Factions are formed upon opinions; which factions become in effect bodies corporate in the state’.⁶²⁹ It was political behaviour, not religious pluralism, which the magistrate could legitimately restrict. But Dissenters, particularly the Unitarians, no longer sought merely liberty of conscience outside the establishment, but the destruction of establishment itself.⁶³⁰ Therefore Burke justified his opposition to the Unitarian petition on the basis that those who advocated it were ‘not confined to a *theological* sect, but are also a *political* faction.’ The Unitarians, through proselytism, had formed a faction which sought to overturn the Church. This design was judged to be ‘concurrent with a design to subvert the state’ and rebuild it upon the French model.⁶³¹ Burke entertained anxiety regarding the spread of French principles in Britain and he had come to believe that Dissenters were aiding this cause. Consequently, his opposition to repeal was rooted in immediate political circumstances rather than religious prejudice.

Burke’s speech on the Unitarian petition is sometimes cited as evidence that he had come to adopt a more Tory, High-Church standpoint.⁶³² His claim that ‘in a Christian commonwealth’ the concept of an ‘alliance between church and state’ was ‘an idle and a fanciful speculation’ certainly resonated with the arguments of High Churchmen. So too did his elaboration of this point with the contention that, in a Christian commonwealth like Britain, Church and State did not represent ‘distinct and independent’ things but were ‘one and the same thing, being different integral parts of the same whole’. Nonetheless, it was political expediency and civil stability, not religious truth, which Burke prioritised. It was for this reason that, in the same speech, he declared it ‘not morally true that we are bound to establish in every country that form of religion which in *our* minds is most agreeable to truth, and conduces most to the eternal happiness of mankind’. Regardless of individual opinions concerning religious truth, pragmatism and utility must govern the state: the religious establishment should

⁶²⁹ Idem, ‘On the Petition of the Unitarians’, 11 May, 1792, in *The works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, 6 vols., vol. 6 (London, 1854-1861), p. 116.

⁶³⁰ Ibid., p. 119.

⁶³¹ Ibid., p. 118.

⁶³² M. Fitzpatrick, ‘Edmund Burke, Dissent, and the Church and State’ in G. Pentland (ed.), *Liberty, Property and Popular Politics: England and Scotland, 1688-1815. Essays in Honour of H.T. Dickinson* (forthcoming, December 2015). I am very grateful to Professor Fitzpatrick for sharing his chapter with me prior to publication. For refutation of the notion that Burke was a High Churchman see Nigel Aston, ‘A “lay divine”: Burke, Christianity, and the Preservation of the British State, 1790-1797’ in Nigel Aston (ed.), *Religious Change in Europe 1650-1914* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 185-213.

concur with ‘the great prevailing body of the community’ and the ‘established prejudices’ within it. ‘A great deal depends on the state in which you find men’, Burke surmised.⁶³³ The argument that the religious establishment should concur with the religious opinions of the majority resonated with the position adopted by William Warburton; it also echoed the disposition adopted by the Whig churchmen, Hallifax and Horsley, in 1788 and 1790. For Hallifax, the magistrate was inclined to establish the majority religion because ‘the benefits arising from his protection will thus be extended to the greatest number of citizens that is possible’. Moreover, ‘a greater number, having a greater interest at stake, will prove a more useful ally to him in carrying on the designs of the Government’.⁶³⁴ Similarly, for Horsley, the Church of England was the established religion because of its ‘superiority of strength and numbers’ and because of ‘the advantage of assimilation to the civil constitution’.⁶³⁵ Thus the establishment of the Church of England, specifically, was depicted as pragmatic: it was based in utility rather than truth.

Moreover, while there was a broad consensus between conservative Whigs and old Tories regarding the benefits of defending the religious establishment, subtle differences persisted regarding the principle of toleration and attitudes to Dissent. Old Tories gave little credence to the principle of toleration and they certainly did not extol or encourage it. In 1787, William Jones published his *Essay on the Church*, which outlined the Church of England’s *jure divino* origins and non-voluntary nature to stress the limits of toleration. This was confined to a temporal context and did not hold any spiritual relevance; legislative toleration of Dissent, granted by the Toleration Act, could not absolve the sin of fracturing unity within the Church. While one argument used to validate Dissenters’ ‘schism’ entailed the notion that separation from the Church of England ‘is no more than a Separation from an *human establishment*’, because it was an institution with ‘*no foundation but upon the King and the Parliament*’, Jones reiterated its divine institution and distinct spiritual authority: ‘the Church, in its Priesthood and Sacraments, derives its authority only from Jesus Christ, which the persecution of civil powers cannot reach; much less can their allowance turn

⁶³³ Burke, ‘On the Petition of the Unitarians’, pp. 114-115.

⁶³⁴ Halifax, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal... January 30, 1788*, p. 13.

⁶³⁵ Horsley, *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters*, pp. 19-20.

it into an *human* authority, and render it to none effect'.⁶³⁶ The Church's relationship to civil authority did nothing to alter its relationship to God. The belief that the Toleration Act had somehow sanctioned Dissent from the Church's fold was false and entailed giving 'to the King and Parliament, the privilege of God himself, who only can forgive sin'.⁶³⁷ The Toleration Act might have relaxed the temporal penalties for Trinitarian Dissenters, yet separation from the Church still constituted nothing other than disobedience to God's authority.⁶³⁸

Meanwhile, conservative Whigs tended to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards Dissenters and they praised the principle of toleration. This disposition was more in line with late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century Whiggism. In 1773, although he condemned rational Dissenters, Halifax extended a hand of friendship to Trinitarian Dissenters:

[To those] who from motives of conscience dissent from the Established Worship, and differ from us in points of Discipline rather than Doctrine; the liberty of private judgement, which we vindicate to ourselves, we allow, without restraint ... to them.⁶³⁹

In 1788, Halifax reiterated this disposition when he praised toleration as 'naturally tend[ing] to relax the hatred of sectaries to one another' and 'allay, if not extinguish, religious heats and dissensions'.⁶⁴⁰ George Pretyman-Tomline, Bishop of Lincoln and Pitt's tutor at Cambridge, also adopted a conciliatory tone towards Dissenters, broadly defined, and a Whiggish approach to toleration in his martyrdom sermon to the House of Lords in 1789. Not only did the sermon defend resistance in principle, it also wholeheartedly supported 'the undeniable privilege of every Christian to form his own religious opinions, and to worship God in the manner which appears to him most agreeable to the Scriptures'. Indeed, Pretyman-Tomline proceeded to argue that 'every diminution of this right, every mode of compulsion, and every species of restraint

⁶³⁶ Jones, *An Essay on the Church*, pp. 100-101.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114, 122-127.

⁶³⁹ Samuel Halifax, *Three Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge, occasioned by an attempt to abolish subscription to the XXXIX Articles of religion...* (Cambridge, 1772), p. 4.

⁶⁴⁰ *Idem*, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal... January 30, 1788*, p. 14.

which is not required by the public safety, is ... in the strongest degree repugnant to the spirit of the Gospel.⁶⁴¹ Subsequently, in his response to the Dissenters' *Case*, although Horsley cast suspicion on the political disposition of Dissenters, he still praised religious toleration by noting that persecution on the basis of religious opinions had been 'justly and happily exploded'.⁶⁴²

Similar attitudes were adopted by conservative Whig statesmen. In 1787, Lord North defended the benefits of toleration in Whiggish fashion by claiming that 'if any actual point remained behind, to render the toleration granted to the Dissenters still more complete, it ought to be brought forward'.⁶⁴³ Moreover, despite his conservative stance in the 1790s, Burke continued to place value on the principle of toleration in the absence of political danger. Indeed, in 1792, he even went so far as to claim that if Dissenters ceased 'to give alarm to the government' repeal or modification of the Test and Corporation Acts would be justified.⁶⁴⁴ He also declared toleration 'a part of moral and political prudence' which ought to be 'tender and large'.⁶⁴⁵ Thus while conservative Whigs defended the political necessity of a religious establishment, they also, generally, adopted a more conciliatory attitude towards Trinitarian Dissenters while praising and encouraging toleration. These sentiments remained an important difference from old Tories' emphasis on the temporal limits of toleration as well as the schismatical and inherently rebellious nature of Dissent.

The connection between schism and rebellion which Tories highlighted was based on their conceptualisation of the Church and state as two sides of the same coin: both represented societies which had been divinely instituted and rebellion in either constituted disobedience to God. The consequential emphasis which High-Church Tories placed on the schismatical nature of Dissent maintained a difference from conservative Whig statesmen and churchmen regarding toleration. Nonetheless, consensus was promoted by the argument that the religious establishment, buttressed by

⁶⁴¹ George Pretyman-Tomline, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in the Abbey Church of Westminster, on Friday, January 30, 1789*... (London, 1789), p. 11.

⁶⁴² Horsley, *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters*, p. 24.

⁶⁴³ North, *The Speeches of Lord North on a motion for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts*, p. 5.

⁶⁴⁴ Edmund Burke, 'Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, 1792', in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. 9, p. 609.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 605.

the Test and Corporation Acts, protected civil stability, particularly in the context of the French Revolution. In the opinion of Christopher Wyvill, a latitudinarian minister and an advocate of parliamentary reform, the French Revolution had introduced a political climate in which it was difficult to 'conceive that the measure [repeal] can be brought forward again, with any advantage to the cause of Toleration'. Wyvill had resigned himself to the conservative mood of the nation and his analysis was largely accurate.⁶⁴⁶ With anxieties mounting regarding the progression of the French Revolution and domestic agitation, Fox, the parliamentary leader of the Dissenting cause, and his Whig followers, were increasingly isolated. Consequently, when Fox brought forth the petition to secure Unitarian relief, in 1792, it attracted only 63 supporters.⁶⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the introduction of the petition itself, as Ditchfield has suggested, attested to the growing strength and organisation of heterodox Dissent, specifically Socinianism, in the latter half of the eighteenth century.⁶⁴⁸ The response to religious heterodoxy will be the subject of the following section.

Rationalism

This section argues that the increasingly conspicuous and aggressive nature of rational Christianity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries contributed to the rehabilitation of a distinct Tory identity.⁶⁴⁹ It contends that, in response to attacks on subscription, conservative Whigs, both in Church and state, joined old Tories to defend the right of the Church of England to set the limits of doctrinal comprehension. Moreover, the threat of rationalism promoted a broad consensus regarding the need to defend the integrity of Christianity and the Christian nature of the polity. This consensus was particularly pronounced during the 1790s when France appeared to be under siege from atheistic Jacobinism which also threatened Britain. Nonetheless, it also contends that differences persisted within this consensus regarding the origin and

⁶⁴⁶ Quoted in G.M. Ditchfield, 'The Parliamentary Struggle over the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, 1787-1790', *English Historical Review*, 89 (1974), p. 572.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 566.

⁶⁴⁸ *Idem*, 'Anti-trinitarianism and toleration in late 18th-century British politics: the Unitarian petition of 1792', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 42 (1991), pp. 39-67.

⁶⁴⁹ For the organizational and theological developments of rational Christianity, and its infiltration of older forms of dissent see Ditchfield, 'Anti-trinitarianism and toleration in late 18th-century British politics: the Unitarian petition of 1792', p. 46; G.M. Ditchfield "Incompatible with the very name of Christian" English Catholics and Unitarians in the Age of Milner', *Recusant History*, 25: 1 (2000), p. 53; Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, p. 55.

authority of the Church of England, and in the emphasis placed on the inherent truth of Anglican doctrine as opposed to the expediency of doctrinal comprehension and the importance of upholding religion, broadly defined.

The increasingly aggressive nature of rational Christianity in the late eighteenth century was facilitated by developments within Anglican latitudinarianism.⁶⁵⁰ Although attempts to define latitudinarianism are complex, in a general sense, as Martin Fitzpatrick notes, its basic emphasis rested on ‘the common core of Christianity’. Thus Latitudinarians tended to eschew ‘creeds and dogma’, pushing them to ‘the margins of their concerns’.⁶⁵¹ It was the latitudinarian approach to ecclesiology and doctrine adopted by Benjamin Hoadly, Bishop of Bangor (1716–1721) and, successively, Hereford, Salisbury and Winchester (1721–1761), which had underpinned the infamous Bangorian controversy in 1717, resulting in the closure of Convocation. In his infamous sermon, *The Nature of the Kingdom of Christ* (1717), Hoadly had claimed that Christ, not the Church, was the only legitimate guide in matters of religion: Christ had ‘left behind Him no visible humane [*sic*] authority...no Interpreters upon whom his subjects are absolutely to depend; no Judges over the consciences or religion of his people’.⁶⁵² Thus there was no justification for the episcopacy of the Church of England, or its claim to be the protector of authoritative scriptural interpretation. However, Hoadly had always continued to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith which protected the Church’s doctrinal integrity, considering subscription to mean nothing more than loyalty to the Church of England as established.⁶⁵³ Nonetheless, despite Hoadly’s restraint, as Gascoigne and Andrews have detailed, his critique of the Church’s ecclesiology and scriptural authority laid the foundations for subsequent, more radical attacks upon the establishment.⁶⁵⁴

⁶⁵⁰ Ditchfield, ‘Anti-trinitarianism and toleration in late 18th-century British politics’, p. 46.

⁶⁵¹ Martin Fitzpatrick, ‘Latitudinarianism at the parting of the ways: a suggestion’, in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor (eds.), *The Church of England 1689-c.1833: from Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge 1993), p. 207.

⁶⁵² Benjamin Hoadly, *The Nature of the Kingdom, or Church, of Christ* (1717) quoted in Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State*, p. 214.

⁶⁵³ John Gascoigne, ‘Anglican Latitudinarianism and political radicalism in the eighteenth century’, *History*, 71 (1986), p. 25; Robert M. Andrews, *William Stevens (1732-1807): Lay Activism in late Eighteenth-century Anglican High Churchmanship* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Murdoch University, 2012), pp. 201-202.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 202; Gascoigne, ‘Anglican Latitudinarianism and Political Radicalism’, pp. 22-38.

Under George III, these appeared in the form of attacks upon compulsory subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles. At the forefront of this initiative was Francis Blackburne, Archdeacon of Cleveland, whose text, *The Confessional*, published in 1766, not only identified Hoadly as a key intellectual figure, but pushed his critique into more radical territory.⁶⁵⁵ *The Confessional* posited that scripture alone was central to the Christian faith, and that Christians retained a right to private judgement regarding its interpretation: ‘you cannot assert to it [the Church of England] a right of deciding in controversies of faith and doctrine’ Blackburne claimed, ‘without an unwarrantable interference with those rights of private judgement which are manifestly secured to every individual by the scriptural terms of Christian liberty’.⁶⁵⁶ The work was revolutionary: as Fitzpatrick has pointed out, from its pages it was easy to draw legitimisation for ‘the total separation of church and state; complete liberty of conscience; and universal toleration’.⁶⁵⁷ In short, it could be held to justify the entire programme upon which religious radicals would embark in the latter half of the long eighteenth century. Blackburne, along with his son-in-law, Theophilus Lindsey, pursued the aims outlined in *The Confessional* by forming an association, at the Feathers Tavern in London, in 1771. This association brought forth the Feathers Tavern petition in 1772, and a subsequent petition in 1774.⁶⁵⁸ Outside the Church, the Feathers Tavern petition inspired Dissenting ministers and schoolmasters to petition for relief from subscription in 1772 and 1773. These, like the petitions of the unorthodox Anglican clerics, were unsuccessful; both were defeated in the House of Lords. Although the majority of Dissenters who signed the petitions in 1772 and 1773 were theologically orthodox, the leadership of the campaign was largely heterodox.⁶⁵⁹ Moreover, because they arose contemporaneously, the separate questions of subscription for Anglican clergymen, undergraduates at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and Dissenting clergymen and schoolmasters were generally conflated.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁵ Francis Blackburne, *The Confessional: Or a Full and Free Enquiry into the Right, Utility, Edification, and Success of Establishing Systematical Confessions of Faith in Doctrine in Protestant Churches* (London, 1766)

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

⁶⁵⁷ Fitzpatrick, ‘Latitudinarianism at the parting of the ways’, p. 217.

⁶⁵⁸ Andrews, *William Stevens*, p. 204.

⁶⁵⁹ G.M. Ditchfield ‘“How Narrow will the limits of this Toleration Appear?” Dissenting Petitions to Parliament, 1772-1773’, *Parliamentary History*, 24:1 (2005), p. 92.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

The consequence was that all three movements prompted a growing awareness and anxiety about the growth of heterodoxy, the changing nature of Dissent, and stimulated debate regarding the limits of theological toleration.

Attacks upon the Thirty-Nine Articles promoted a broad consensus amongst old Tories and conservative Whigs, both in the Church and the state, regarding the right of the Church of England to impose limits on doctrinal comprehension. Responding to *The Confessional*, the Tory, William Jones, pointed out that it was the ‘*fundamental position*’ of those who defended subscription that ‘Every particular Church, considered as a society, has a right, as other societies have, to secure its own peace and welfare by all lawful means’.⁶⁶¹ Therefore, ‘if the Church is a society’ then Blackburne’s plan regarding the abolition of subscription was ‘indefensible’.⁶⁶² The whole point of the Articles, William Stevens added, was to ensure that, within the Church of England, ‘teachers may *all speak the same thing, and there be no divisions*’.⁶⁶³ Renegotiating the Articles to sanction a breadth of interpretation was contrary to this purpose and would invite discord. The Church’s status as a society and its right to secure internal ‘peace and welfare’ rendered the imposition of subscription wholly legitimate in the eyes of Tory High Churchmen. This position was echoed by conservative Whigs in parliament. Lord North claimed that it was impossible for a visible Church, as the Church of England was, to subsist without ‘some symbol, some rule of faith’. The ‘consequence of opening the church to sectarists of every denomination’ would be internal strife: ‘One party would embrace the Trinitarian, and the other the anti-trinitarian scheme: and in the mean time peace, love, and charity would be torn to pieces between them’.⁶⁶⁴ Without the imposition of a rule for internal doctrinal coherence the Church establishment would be subverted by religious contention and the result would be social tumult. Therefore North echoed Stevens and Jones that the Church of England maintained a right, as a society, to preserve its internal unity.

⁶⁶¹ William Jones, *Remarks on the Principles and Spirit of a work, entitled the Confessional. Being a Sequel to the Second Edition of a Full Answer to an Essay on Spirit* (London, 1770), p. 17.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁶⁶³ William Stevens, *Cursory Observations on a pamphlet, entitled, an address to the clergy of the Church of England in particular and to all Christians in general...by Francis Wollaston* (London, 1773), p. 31.

⁶⁶⁴ Lord North, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 Feb 1772, *PH* vol. 17, col. 274.

Moreover, there was a broad consensus that to sanction doctrinal heterodoxy would threaten the extirpation of Christianity entirely. Orthodox churchmen, both Whig and Tory, worried considerably about the corrosive impact of rationalism on revelation. There was a ‘wild and dangerous species of liberty, which sometimes takes upon it the name of *conscience*’, Jones warned, which, using ‘this disguise treads under foot the laws of God, and would soon abolish the very name of Christianity’.⁶⁶⁵ Lewis Bagot claimed that the attempts to alter subscription represented ‘Infidelity, by all imaginable Arts endeavouring to sap and undermine the Fundamentals of Christianity itself.’⁶⁶⁶ This anxiety was reiterated in 1783 when, preaching the annual martyrdom sermon before the House of Lords, Bagot worried that ‘Religion is itself, in great measure, out of fashion... [and] A certain Philosophy, indeed ... hath succeeded in its place’.⁶⁶⁷ Although he adopted a conciliatory stance towards Trinitarian Dissenters, the Whig churchman, Samuel Hallifax, refused to countenance heterodoxy. Writing in defence of subscription at the University of Cambridge, he argued that rational Christians were ‘Sectaries of another stamp’; their scepticism regarding the divinity of Christ challenged the ‘chief *corner-stone* of the Christian system’, the doctrine of the atonement. Yet redemption through Christ lay at the heart of Christianity. Consequently, rationalists’ claims, unlike those of Trinitarian Dissenters, could not be reconciled with the principle of toleration. Rational Dissenters had abused ‘the privileges indulged to them by the mildness of our constitution... [and] forfeited that claim to Christian fellowship, which is justly due to their more candid brethren’.⁶⁶⁸ A martyrdom sermon, delivered by Hallifax in 1788, articulated the similar anxiety regarding rationalism. Society had been ‘engulphed, [*sic*] in the giddy vortex of Socinianism’ and it was necessary to ‘guard our common Christian Faith, of which the Church of England is at once the Depository and the Bulwark’, from those who ‘are known to have no just regard to some of its most essential Doctrines’.⁶⁶⁹ Samuel Horsley, in his clerical charge of 1783, concentrated on the elucidation which the Old Testament offered to the Gospel in order to defend ‘the original dignity of the Redeemer’s nature’. The same agenda underlay his subsequent *Tracts in Controversy*

⁶⁶⁵ Jones, *Remarks on the Principles and Spirit of a work, entitled the Confessional*, p. 85.

⁶⁶⁶ Lewis Bagot, *A Defence of the Subscription to the XXXIX Articles, as it is required in the University of Oxford...* (Oxford, 1772), p. 16.

⁶⁶⁷ Idem, *A sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in the abbey church, Westminster, on Thursday, January 30, 1783...* (London, 1783), p. 14.

⁶⁶⁸ Halifax, *Three Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge*, pp. 4-6.

⁶⁶⁹ Idem, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal... January 30, 1788*, pp. 18-19.

with *Dr. Priestley* (1789) and it was to ‘stop the progress of that new species of infidelity, which is propagated by certain sectaries of the present day’ to which he directed attention in his clerical charge delivered in 1790.⁶⁷⁰ Thus Whig and Tory churchmen shared anxieties about the proliferation of heterodoxy and the threat which it posed to Christianity.

This concern was also discernible in parliament, promoting consensus between old Tories and conservative Whigs. Old Tory representatives emphasized that toleration already extended far enough. William Dolben, MP for Northamptonshire, worried that the Dissenter Relief Bill in 1773 sought to introduce an ‘undefined and unlimited toleration’ which would fail to ‘exclude from among the dissenters such heretics ... who acknowledged the Bible as the rule of faith, and yet denied the divinity of Christ’. When the bill for Dissenters’ relief was resubmitted in 1779, the old Tory, William Bagot, MP for Staffordshire, contended that ‘toleration as it now stood was ample, and that, under that toleration, doctrines were disseminated of a very extraordinary nature indeed’. Specifically, Bagot referenced ‘the alarming progress of Atheism’.⁶⁷¹ Meanwhile, Newdigate urged that the ‘present Act of Toleration went far enough’, and that to alter the bounds of toleration would be ‘equally unwise and dangerous to the fundamental principles of the established religion’.⁶⁷² Moreover, while his defences of subscription rested primarily on expediency, the conservative Whig, Lord North, articulated similar concern regarding the threat which relief would pose to Trinitarian Christianity. Defending subscription at the University of Oxford, North remarked that ‘The reforming notions of this age are dangerous in their tendency’, for ‘something more than reformation is intended ... to which if we give way, adieu to religion, adieu to everything dear to us as men and as Christians!’⁶⁷³ In 1773, North absented himself from the debates on Dissenters’ relief and relied on the House of Lords to quash the proposals. However, when the bill was resubmitted in 1779, it was North who introduced a petition from the University of Oxford requesting that a declaration of

⁶⁷⁰ Samuel Horsley, *A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of St Albans...* 2nd ed., (London, 1783), p. 2; idem, *The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of St. David’s to the Clergy of his Diocese, delivered at his primary visitation, in the year 1790* (Gloucester, 1791), p. 5.

⁶⁷¹ William Dolben, Speech in the House of Commons, 3 April 1772, *PH* vol. 17 col. 438; William Bagot, Speech in the House of Commons, 10 March, 1779, *PH* vol. 20 cols. 240-241.

⁶⁷² Roger Newdigate, Speech in the House of Commons, 10 March, 1779, *PH* vol. 20, col. 246.

⁶⁷³ Lord North, Speech in the House of Commons, 23 February, 1773, *PH* vol. 17 col. 757.

Christianity should accompany any relief from subscription to the Church of England's Articles.⁶⁷⁴ This amendment was aimed, in particular, at Socinianism and both Langford and Ditchfield have drawn attention to its importance in securing the bill's passage through the Lords.⁶⁷⁵

In the opinion of Edmund Burke, who would become perhaps the most illustrious conservative Whig, atheism constituted the 'most horrible and cruel blow that can be offered to civil society'.⁶⁷⁶ Given this, he supported the Dissenters' Relief Bill in 1773 on the grounds that toleration was 'a principle favourable to Christianity' and its extension would tie 'all those in affection, who are united in the belief of the great *principles of the Godhead*, that made and sustain the world'.⁶⁷⁷ Burke's reference to the 'great principles of the Godhead' and Ditchfield's revelation that, despite its heterodox leadership, the majority of Dissenters who signed the petition were orthodox suggest that Burke did not see the measure as aiding rational Dissenters specifically.⁶⁷⁸ Indeed, in 1779, Burke voted for the amendment, introduced by North, which excluded more heterodox forms of Dissent.⁶⁷⁹ Burke never detailed the motivation behind this support and it is possible that he viewed the amendment as necessary to secure the bill's passage. Yet, in the same year, Burke declared that he 'could hardly look upon Socinians as Christians' indicating that he had come to view heterodoxy as associated with infidelity or atheism to some extent.⁶⁸⁰ Thus, although, in 1773, Burke voted in favour of extending the limits of toleration, he shared a fear of atheism with his conservative Whig and old Tory counterparts, as well as their determination to defend the Christian nature of the polity.

⁶⁷⁴ P.D.G. Thomas, *Lord North*, (London, 1976), p.148; Henriques, *Religious toleration in England, 1787-1833* pp. 56-57. The amendment ran: 'I, A.B. do solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I am a Christian and a Protestant; and as such that I believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as commonly received in Protestant churches, do contain the revealed will of God, and that I do believe the same as the rule of my Doctrine and Practice'.

⁶⁷⁵ Paul Langford, 'The English Clergy and the American Revolution', in Eckhart Hellmuth (ed.), *The Transformation of Political Culture, England and Germany in the late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990), p. 301; Ditchfield, 'The Subscription Issue in British Parliamentary Politics, 1772-79', pp. 45-80. Those exempt had to declare that they were a 'Christian and Protestant' who believed 'the scriptures of the old and new testaments... [to contain] the whole revealed word of God', *ibid.*, p. 63.

⁶⁷⁶ Burke 'Speech on Toleration Bill, 17 March 1773', p. 388.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 383, 389. My italics.

⁶⁷⁸ Ditchfield 'How Narrow will the limits of this Toleration Appear?', p. 95.

⁶⁷⁹ Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, p. 105.

⁶⁸⁰ T. Lindsey to W. Taylor, 27 March 1779, quoted in F.P Lock, *Edmund Burke*, 3 vols., vol. 2, (Oxford, 2006), p. 412.

The need to buttress the Christian faith was thrown into sharp relief by the outbreak of the French Revolution, and its increasingly atheistic character consolidated the convergence between old Tories and conservative Whigs. There was broad consensus that the roots of the French Revolution were grounded in the erosion of religious principles. Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) provided an early articulation of this theory claiming that, in France, a 'literary cabal had some years ago formed something like a regular plan for the destruction of the Christian Religion'.⁶⁸¹ Subsequently, in 1792, he complained that 'active, proselytising, and persecuting atheism' was 'the disgrace and calamity of our time'; it was also 'capable of subverting a government', as circumstances in France had demonstrated.⁶⁸² William Jones, preaching in 1794, presented a millenarian interpretation of events in France, declaring that 'a direct apostacy [*sic*] hath taken effect', that the 'Christian religion hath been renounced', and the 'restraining power of government...absolutely *taken out of the way* and abolished'.⁶⁸³ This diagnosis received wide propagation following the publication of Barruel's *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* (1797) and Robinson's *Proofs of a Conspiracy against All the Religions and Governments of Europe* (1797). Both cited a conspiracy to eliminate Christianity as a forerunner to the Revolution and this notion was reiterated widely by churchmen of both a Whig and Tory lineage.⁶⁸⁴

The apparently atheistic nature of Jacobinism also promoted broad concurrence regarding the need to guard Christianity in Britain, particularly against rationalism and religious indifference. Burke declared, in 1795, that nothing was 'so fatal to Religion as indifference, which is, at least, half Infidelity'.⁶⁸⁵ Moreover, in 1792, he had warned that to give too much encouragement to 'negative religion' domestically, by which he

⁶⁸¹ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 276.

⁶⁸² Idem, 'Letter to Sire Hercules Langrishe, 1792', p. 609.

⁶⁸³ William Jones, *The Man of Sin*, 3rd ed., (London, 1794), p. 19.

⁶⁸⁴ See the conservative Whig, George Pretyman-Tomline's, *A Charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln at the Triennial visitation of that Diocese in June and July 1800* (London, 1800), pp. 8-10; For Tory perspectives, see William Van Mildert, *An historical view of the rise and progress of Infidelity, with a refutation of the principles and reasonings: in a series of sermons...from the year 1802 to 1805*. 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1820), pp. 334-336; Jonathan Boucher, *A sermon: preached at the assizes held at Guildford, July the 30th, 1798, before the right Honourable Lord Chief Justice Kenyon ...* (London, 1798), pp. 17-18.

⁶⁸⁵ Edmund Burke, 'Letter to William Smith, 29 January 1795' in Edmund Burke, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. Paul Langford, 9 vols., vol. 9 (Oxford 1981— forthcoming, 2015), p. 660.

meant religion which rejected the retention of anything positive in doctrine or discipline, ‘may, by degrees, encourage light and unthinking people to a total indifference to everything positive in matters of doctrine’.⁶⁸⁶ This fear resonated with High Churchmen. In 1797, the Tory High Churchman, William Van Mildert, a close acquaintance of William Stevens, complained of the ‘cold, philosophical scepticism’ which was ‘apparent in our own times’ and his *Cautions Against Innovations in Matters of Religion*, published the following year, warned against ‘refinement’ in religion explicitly.⁶⁸⁷ Turning specifically to rational Christianity, Van Mildert warned that there was an inherent danger in ‘endeavouring to make Christianity more rational than the Scriptures have made it’. It was only a small step from extracting the mysteries of the Gospel to rejecting them completely and attempts to undertake rational refinement of scriptural truth would ‘end in infidelity’.⁶⁸⁸ The Whig High Churchman, George Pretyman-Tomline, cited Barrul and Robinson in 1800, adding that ‘the characteristics of the present times are, confessedly, infidelity, and an unprecedented Indifference to the Religion of Christ among professed believers’.⁶⁸⁹ Despite his previous, conciliatory remarks on toleration, Pretyman-Tomline now found it necessary to remind his audience ‘that “no scripture is of private interpretation”. We are not to suffer the wildness of imagination to lead us astray from the established rules of interpretation’.⁶⁹⁰ Therefore, the French Revolution consolidated consensus between churchmen, both Whig and Tory, as well as conservative Whig statesmen such as Burke. This consensus was focused on the need to support revealed religion against the refinements of ‘negative’ religion, or rationalism, in order to defend the Christian character of the polity.

Concerns for the religious condition of the masses appeared vindicated when, following the close of the Napoleonic War, Britain was struck with an increasing deluge

⁶⁸⁶ Idem, ‘Letter to Sire Hercules Langrishe, 1792’, pp. 608-609.

⁶⁸⁷ William Van Mildert, *The Excellency of the Liturgy, and the Advantage of Being Educated in the Doctrine and Principles of the Church of England...* (London, 1797), p. 10; Van Mildert was elected to Stevens’ Club of Nobody’s Friends in 1802. See E. A. Varley, ‘Mildert, William Van (1765–1836)’, *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2007. [http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/28096, accessed 24 Sept 2015]

⁶⁸⁸ William Van Mildert, *Cautions Against Innovation in Matters of Religion...* (London, 1798), pp. 11-12.

⁶⁸⁹ Pretyman-Tomline, *A Charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln... in June and July 1800*, p. 10.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12. For Pretyman-Tomline’s earlier remarks see p. 161.

of radical activity.⁶⁹¹ There were few doubts amongst early- nineteenth-century Tories that the root cause of civil disobedience lay in the erosion of religious principles. In 1820, the *British Critic*, now firmly under the control of the Hackney Phalanx,⁶⁹² attributed popular antipathy to the ‘the blasphemers and the infidels; who have daringly and openly scattered their poison through the land, and have, to an alarming extent succeeded in tainting the functions of our moral health and our religious purity’.⁶⁹³ Similarly, the *Anti-Jacobin Review* declared that ‘the jacobins in France were either atheists or deists, and so are ours’.⁶⁹⁴ Meanwhile, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* noted in 1819, the year of Peterloo, ‘that it [infidelity] is an element, and a prime element too, of the present condition of the popular mind, as it has been lately exhibited in ways so hostile to the whole principles of the constitution, is certain’.⁶⁹⁵ Concerns that radicals sought to eradicate religion were repeated in parliament too: in 1820, George Canning complained that there was a spirit

seeking to subvert society itself, by separating the elements of which it is composed and setting them in array against each other; and to undermine the foundation of man’s happiness in this world, by destroying his hopes of an hereafter.⁶⁹⁶

As in the 1790s, atheistic Jacobinism still posed a threat to the polity by depriving man of religious restraints. Without a sense of responsibility to a higher power, or hopes of an idyllic afterlife, individuals were rendered ‘fitter agents for crime in this [world]’.⁶⁹⁷

The connection between irreligion and radicalism only appeared to be verified by prominent reformers, such as Richard Carlile and Jeremy Bentham. In 1818, Carlile had republished Paine’s *Age of Reason* and was subsequently tried for blasphemous libel in 1819; the next year similar trials were undertaken in Birmingham, followed by a flurry

⁶⁹¹ For the development of radical insurgency in this period see Ian McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries, and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840* (Oxford, 1993) pp. 97-181.

⁶⁹² A.B. Webster, *Joshua Watson: The Story of a Layman 1771-1855* (London, 1954), p. 29.

⁶⁹³ *BC*, 14, (October 1820), p. 358.

⁶⁹⁴ *AJ*, 55: 249 (February 1819), p. 568.

⁶⁹⁵ *BEM*, 6: 33 (December 1819), p. 330.

⁶⁹⁶ George Canning, Speech at the Canning Club, 15 March, 1820, in T. Kaye (ed.), *Speeches of the Right Hon. George Canning delivered on public occasions in Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1825), p. 280.

⁶⁹⁷ *AJ*, 55: 249, (Feb 1819), p. 569.

of provincial trials.⁶⁹⁸ The notion that Christianity was intimately connected to the law was not a novel concept: Sir Matthew Hale had established this argument as a precedent for blasphemy trials in the late seventeenth century. In 1819, this argument still retained credence, and was deployed against Carlile. Indeed, as Henriques remarks, ‘the conception that religion safeguarded the elementary morality of society’ was turned ‘into a defence of the existing constitution’.⁶⁹⁹ Wider Tory discourse also emphasised the important relationship between defending the Church and preserving political stability. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* urged that the established Church must be protected for its interests were ‘so closely...interwoven’ with those of the state ‘that the question of policy will not now bear discussion. *They must stand or fall together*’.⁷⁰⁰ Similarly, Van Mildert noted in 1821 that those who sought to introduce the ‘evils of popular licentiousness and revolutionary phrenzy’ into Britain had found religion to be so ‘interwoven with all our Civil Institutions’ that ‘the entire fabric of our Constitution, our Laws, and our Government, [were] upholden by its influence on the public mind’. Indeed, Van Mildert suggested that the propagation of blasphemy, infidelity and atheism had been prompted by the recognition ‘that no reasonable hope could be entertained of subverting the one, without undermining the other’.⁷⁰¹ Consequently, the broad consensus which had emerged in the late eighteenth century, concerned with defending the Christian, orthodox nature of the polity was perpetuated.

However, despite this general consensus, a spectrum of ideas existed regarding the origin and nature of the Church of England’s authority and its relationship to the state. The arguments advanced by old Tories continued to defend the Church of England’s *jure divino* origin. It was a divinely instituted and thus involuntary society; the stations within it were divine commissions and those who exercised them retained a spiritual power which had been conferred through adherence to apostolic succession.⁷⁰² During the subscription controversy, this argument was deployed by old Tories to support the point that it was beyond the jurisdiction of Parliament to interfere with the Church’s

⁶⁹⁸ Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1989) pp. 207-208.

⁶⁹⁹ Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, pp. 210-211.

⁷⁰⁰ *AJ*, 55: 249 (Feb 1819), p. 571.

⁷⁰¹ William Van Mildert, *A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Llandaff, at the primary visitation ...* (Oxford: 1821), p. 14.

⁷⁰² Stevens *A Treatise on the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Church*, p. 13; Jones, *Essay on Church*, pp. 22-28.

constitution. The Church's establishment within the state did not 'make the church and a civil society become the same thing', nor did it reduce the Church to 'nothing more than a creature of the state'.⁷⁰³ Rather, William Stevens contended in 1773, the Church constituted 'as distinct a society as ever' with 'distinct authority' and thus 'spiritual powers ... which the state has no ... right to exercise'.⁷⁰⁴ Statesmen had 'no lawful authority' to appoint candidates to offices within the Church. Consequently, they were not 'the proper judges of ... qualifications' for these offices.⁷⁰⁵ It was the 'rulers of the church, who alone have a right to ordain ministers in the church' and who were 'surely the proper persons to examine into the qualifications of the candidates for orders'.⁷⁰⁶ Those who sought to alter the terms of subscription by petitioning Parliament called on the civil power to intervene in spiritual affairs. Yet this intervention would constitute usurpation of the Church's independent spiritual authority.⁷⁰⁷

The question of whether the House of Commons could legitimately interfere with the Church's doctrinal ordinances was raised not only by Tories of a High-Church perspective. Even Richard Watson, the latitudinarian Regius professor at Cambridge and later Bishop of Llandaff, despite his sympathy for the Feathers Tavern petitioners, held reservations about their appeal to the Commons as opposed to the Bishops.⁷⁰⁸ Nonetheless, Tory High Churchmen pursued this line of argument into full blown anti-erastianism by claiming that the Church retained an authority distinct from, and certainly not subordinate to, that of the state. The doctrine of two societies in which this claim was grounded has been referred to by Mark Goldie as 'the bedrock of High Church ideology' in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Indeed, it featured heavily in the works of Nonjurors, including Charles Leslie and George Hickes. These works were studied closely by Stevens and his coterie, and contributed in no small part towards the perpetuity of the High-Church, self-consciously Tory conceptualisation of Church and state which this group advocated.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰³ Stevens, *Cursory Observations* p. 11.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁷⁰⁸ Ditchfield, 'How narrow will the limits of toleration appear?', p. 104.

⁷⁰⁹ Mark Goldie, 'The Nonjurors, Episcopacy, and the Origins of the Convocation Controversy', p. 18; Mather, *High Church Prophet*, p. 11.

At the other end of the conservative ideological spectrum was Edmund Burke. Burke joined old Tories by arguing against the Feathers Tavern petition, contributing to the broad consensus regarding the Church's right to set the limits of comprehension. However, as Dreyer points out, while Burke's response to the Feathers Tavern petition incorporated various views of the Church and its authority, 'none of them was high church in its implications or assumptions.'⁷¹⁰ Rather, Burke's position was both self-consciously Whig and latitudinarian.⁷¹¹ Burke presented the Church initially as a 'body corporate' which 'like every body corporate, may alter her laws without changing her identity' because 'professing fallibility ... she claims, and has always exercised, a right of reforming whatever appeared amiss in her doctrine, her discipline, or her rites'.⁷¹² This right of reforming was claimed on the basis of prudence and resembled the capacity of every other human corporation to adapt; there was no claim to the Church's essential truth or its distinct authority as a divine corporation.⁷¹³ Subsequently, Burke presented the Church as a public institution, charged with performing a public service within the state. Its ministers were, in essence, employed by the state and consequently the state retained the right to 'exact a compliance with whatever doctrines, ceremonies, and forms we establish from those who receive public money'.⁷¹⁴ The complaints of the Feathers Tavern petitioners were not grounded in any difficulty pertaining to the freedom of religious conscience but secular ambition; they complained 'not that there is not toleration... but that diversity in opinion is not rewarded by bishoprics, rectories, and collegiate stalls'. Burke considered positions within the religious establishment to be 'benefits' which were 'artificially created' and, on this basis, 'to annex any condition

⁷¹⁰ F. Dreyer, 'Burke's Religion', *Studies in Burke and his Time*, 17: 3 (1976), p. 203.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-212; J.C.D. Clark, 'Introduction', in Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 23. Aston concurs that Burke cannot be reconciled within the High Church tradition, though he also contests that the term 'latitudinarian' is appropriate given that Burke was not tempted to deviate from theological orthodoxy. See Aston, 'A "lay divine": Burke, Christianity, and the Preservation of the British State, 1790-1797', pp. 185-213.

⁷¹² Edmund Burke, 'On the Acts of Uniformity', 6 February 1772, in *The works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol.6, p. 93. The version of Burke's Speech in 1772 published in this volume of his works is taken from Fragments found amongst his papers. See *PH* 6 Feb 1772, vol 17, col. 275.n*. It differs from that in Langford's volume, cited below in n. 715, which is the same version printed in *PH* vol 17, cols. 275-289. Both versions have been used here to provide a comprehensive view of Burke's thought on this issue.

⁷¹³ Dreyer, 'Burke's Religion', p. 204.

⁷¹⁴ Edmund Burke, 'Speech on Clerical Subscription, 6 February 1772', in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. Paul Langford, 9 vols., vol.2, p. 363.

you please [to them] ...is the most just, natural, and proper thing in the world'.⁷¹⁵ Finally, Burke appealed to a staple of the Whig tradition, John Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689): 'If the church be, as Mr. Locke defines it, a voluntary society, &c., then it is essential to this voluntary society to exclude from her voluntary society any member she thinks fit, or to oppose the entrance of any upon such conditions as she thinks proper'.⁷¹⁶ Thus Burke presented the Church as a voluntary, human corporation with artificially created stations and benefits. Consequently, although Burke joined High-Church Tories, like Stevens, in defending the Church's right to set limits on doctrinal comprehension, his arguments revealed very different views regarding the origin and nature of the Church's authority and its relationship to the state.

The difference between High-Church Tories and conservative Whig statesmen also manifested itself in the weight given to the truth of the Articles themselves. The latter tended to ground their defences of subscription in political expediency rather than truth. Lord North, although a devout Anglican, suggested that the House of Commons could not with 'propriety or decency, enter upon the discussion of orthodoxy ... which is not properly its province'.⁷¹⁷ Consequently, his argument against the Feathers Tavern petition approached the issue from the standpoint of expediency. It was the 'peace of society [which] ought with us [statesmen] to be the first object'. Given this, North argued that it was 'better in a political sense that a few prevarications, that make a trade of religion, should enter the church, than that order and good government should be subverted'.⁷¹⁸ Burke, building on his conceptualisation of the Church as a public corporation performing a public service, articulated a similar position: 'in their closets they [the clergy] may embrace what tenets they please, but for the sake of peace and order, they must inculcate from the pulpit only the religion of the state'.⁷¹⁹ Both North and Burke contended, in essence, that churchmen could believe whatever they pleased, with subscription justified by the expediency of retaining 'order'. Therefore they elevated the political consequences of extending doctrinal comprehension above the

⁷¹⁵ Idem, 'On the Acts of Uniformity', 6 February 1772, p. 99.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., p. 100.

⁷¹⁷ Lord North, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 February 1772, *PH*, vol. 17, col. 272.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid., col. 273.

⁷¹⁹ Edmund Burke, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 February, 1772, *PH*, vol. 17, col. 285.

Articles' truth. In large part, this was a product of the parliamentary forum in which the arguments of Whig statesmen were articulated, and the fact that they were laymen, not theologians. Indeed, there was greater consensus on this point between Tory and Whig churchmen.

The attacks on subscription, taken together, elicited vociferous defences from churchmen regarding the Articles' truth, distinguishing them from the arguments of statesmen. William Jones contended that the Church of England was 'the *witness and keeper of holy writ*' and its doctrines either 'have the authority of the scripture, or they have not'. He, of course, believed that the Church's doctrines did retain the authority of scripture for its legislative power extended 'only to forms ...and matters of discipline: but *doctrines* rest wholly upon the power of God, and the authority of divine revelation.'⁷²⁰ He was joined by others, including Lewis Bagot, the Tory canon of Christ Church who would subsequently become Bishop of Bristol (1782-1783), Norwich (1783-1790) and St Asaph (1790-1802). Responding to attempts to alter subscription at the University of Oxford, Bagot reminded his readers that 'The Whole of the present Clamour against Subscription arose originally, and hath been since carried on, upon a Suggestion that the Articles themselves are false.' In light of this, subscription was to be defended because 'Every Concession to such a Clamour, must be in some Measure a Concession that it proceeds upon just Grounds'. Yet the 'Church, the State, the University all maintain that the Articles are true and agreeable to the Word of God, and nothing hath yet been done to show the contrary'.⁷²¹ Thus Bagot's view of subscription, like Jones's, was grounded in more than mere political expediency: the integrity of the Articles should be defended because of their fidelity to the 'true ...Word of God'. Whig churchmen argued along similar lines. For Samuel Hallifax, rational Christianity threatened to extract mystery from the 'genuine doctrines of Christianity, or, what in all the particulars we have to mention are much the same, the doctrines of the Church of England'.⁷²² The Church of England, in his view, preserved the doctrines of revelation in their purest form, accuracy to the true word of

⁷²⁰ Jones, *Remarks on the Principles and Spirit of a work, entitled the Confessional* p. 13, 103; Stevens concurred. See Stevens, *Cursory Observations*, p. 18, 31-33.

⁷²¹ Lewis Bagot, *A Defence of the Subscription to the XXXIX Articles*, pp. 25-26.

⁷²² Halifax, *Three Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge*, p. 13.

God, and on this basis its primacy and the religious tests which maintained it were to be protected.

Moreover, churchmen considered faith in the Church's doctrines to be integral not just to the preservation of civil stability but also to man's salvation. This point is often neglected by historiographical focus on the connection between heterodoxy and radicalism, and the intellectual attack which rational Dissenters mounted against the Church of England's establishment.⁷²³ Yet, while churchmen were certainly concerned with the links between political radicalism and heterodoxy, their focus lay on the threat which rational Christianity posed to faith and, with it, salvation. William Jones warned against the notion 'that people of all sorts have a *right to judge for themselves in matters of religion*', urging that individuals 'enquire strictly into the meaning of these terms; and ...consider how far they may be justified'. While the idea of a '*Right*' was 'a pleasing thing, and *liberty* ...an old temptation', such abstract ideas would not protect an individual from 'religious mistakes against the superior judgement of God'.⁷²⁴ Conformity to the Church of England, for Jones, was more than merely pragmatic, for it preserved adherence to God's law. Thus, amidst the subscription controversy, Jones censured propagation of the notion that 'articles of faith are but matters of opinion' and as long as individuals 'lead what they call good lives' they 'may reckon themselves secure of the favour of God'.⁷²⁵ This was a dangerous fallacy. Even though an individual's moral conduct concurred with civil laws, if their motivation for obedience was devoid of faith in the truths of revelation then their potential for salvation would be compromised. 'Upon the Christian plan', Jones pointed out, 'however bad carnal wickedness may be, spiritual wickedness is worse no obedience can be acceptable to God without that which is the best of all, the obedience of the understanding'.⁷²⁶ To discard religious truth protected by the Thirty-Nine Articles was a spiritual deviation

⁷²³ J.C. D. Clark, in *English Society*, emphasises the fundamental role which religious heterodoxy played in facilitating radical challenges to the establishment, yet tends to focus on the political rather than theological dimension of reactions to this threat.

⁷²⁴ William Jones, *A Letter to the Common People in Answer to some Popular Arguments against the Trinity...* (London, 1767), p. 11.

⁷²⁵ *Idem*, *A Preservative Against the Publications Dispersed by Modern Socinians*, 3rd ed. (London, 1786) pp. 4-5.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

which rendered temporal morality meaningless.⁷²⁷ Horne reiterated this message against the backdrop of the French Revolution. In his clerical charge, delivered in 1791, Horne warned that emphasis merely on moral practice was exploited by the ‘enemies of Christianity... [to make] a total separation between the works of religion, and its doctrines’.⁷²⁸ Yet, Horne reminded his clergy, ‘we are not to be saved for anything we do, but for that faith in the promises, and that love to God and man, with which it is done.’⁷²⁹ It was not mere morality, but faith, which old Tories emphasised as holding the key to man’s salvation.

The need to defend the integrity of Christianity, and the dangerous impact on man’s potential for salvation which failure to do so could have, was reiterated by Whig churchmen. In 1772, Halifax complained that, because elements of revealed religion existed ‘above the apprehension of human understanding’, rational Christians believed that they were not necessary to salvation.⁷³⁰ Heterodox critiques suggested that the mysteries of the gospel constituted mere ‘Speculative Opinions’ which had ‘no influence over the *political or moral* conduct of Individuals’.⁷³¹ ‘But’, Halifax contended, ‘the truth is, there is no doctrine of Christianity, which ought to be regarded as a matter of Speculation only; or which, when rightly understood, is not intimately connected with Practice.’⁷³² The purpose of Scripture was ‘to make known to us the method, in which Sinners may be assured of Pardon and Salvation’, a method which could ‘only be learnt from the express manifestation of the Will of God, declared in his written word’.⁷³³ In 1790, Horsley articulated a similar concern for the disregard of doctrine when he insisted that moral practice could not be separated from faith. A man could ‘be irreproachable in his moral conduct, and at the same time perfectly irreligious and profane’. Only through knowledge of, and faith in, the doctrines of revelation could an individual ensure they adhered to God’s will. ‘A want of capacity in these subjects,

⁷²⁷ The work struck success: resonating with the mood of growing anxiety regarding heterodoxy it reached its fifth edition by 1799. G.M. Ditchfield “‘The Right of Private Judgement, with the Care of the Public Safety’: The Church of England’s Perceptions of Protestant Dissent in the Late Eighteenth Century”, *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 28 (2012), p. 9.

⁷²⁸ George Horne, *A Charge intended to have been delivered to the clergy of Norwich, at the primary visitation of George, Lord Bishop of that Diocese* (Norwich, 1791), pp. 13-14.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁷³⁰ Halifax, *Three Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge*, p. i.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, p. iii.

⁷³² *Ibid.*

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

is a want of Faith', Horsley added. This amounted to nothing less than 'distrust in God'.⁷³⁴ Thus, rather than a pragmatic concern for political stability within the state, Whig as well as Tory churchmen articulated a deep concern for the integrity of subjects' faith, for this was the key to salvation. This concern distinguished their arguments from the emphasis on political expediency adopted by statesmen.

Moreover, despite broad consensus regarding the need to uphold the Christian nature of the polity, important differences persisted regarding whether this meant defending Christianity, broadly, or Anglicanism, specifically. Edmund Burke adopted High-Church rhetoric when he wrote, in *Reflections*, of 'the consecration of the state, by a state religious establishment'. Yet his defence of the Church in the 1790s remained essentially latitudinarian in outlook.⁷³⁵ Burke emphasised the social role of an established religion generally, as opposed to any connection between morality and Anglicanism, specifically. Burke argued that those who 'administer in the government of men' should hold 'high and worthy notions of their function and destination'; governors should 'not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent existence.' It was 'religious establishments' which ensured that these principles were 'continually revive[d] and enforce[d]'.⁷³⁶ Moreover, a religious establishment was 'necessary also to operate with an wholesome awe upon free citizens'. Individuals freed from the yoke of oppression enjoyed 'some determinate portion of power' and thus

ought to be strongly and awefully [*sic*] impressed with an idea
that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct
in that trust to the one great master, author and founder of society.⁷³⁷

At no point, though, did Burke argue that the religious establishment within a state must necessarily be Anglican. Indeed, these were moral qualities which were assigned to religion generally. Moreover, when it came to discussing which religion should be

⁷³⁴ Samuel Horsley, *The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of St. David's to the Clergy of his Diocese...in the year 1790*, pp. 14-15.

⁷³⁵ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* p. 257. For a similar interpretation see Dreyer, 'Burke's Religion'.

⁷³⁶ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* p. 256.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

established within a state, Burke consistently emphasised the importance of circumstance above truth.⁷³⁸

For High Churchmen, it was not religion broadly defined, but faith in Anglican doctrine, specifically, which formed the crux of subjects' morality, and their key to salvation. In 1790, Samuel Horsley censured those who emphasised moral practice to the exclusion of the essential doctrines of Christianity; morality and practical Christianity were not 'one and the same thing' and to suppose morality separable from faith was 'to suppose the end attainable without the use of means'.⁷³⁹ Pretyman-Tomline echoed this message in 1800, urging his clergy to 'make the Doctrines of Christianity the constant basis of moral instruction, as no other ground can give security to human virtue'.⁷⁴⁰ Tory High Churchmen concurred. In 1792, Daubeny warned against 'the doctrine of the Unitarian teacher' who 'under the name of Christianity, has in fact nothing to present us with, but a meagre system of morality stripped of all the peculiar characteristics of the Gospel dispensation'.⁷⁴¹ It was knowledge of Christian doctrine, including faith in salvation, which directed individuals' civil and moral conduct. A waning of subjects' faith would inevitably spawn moral deviance and civil disaffection for 'faith is the moral cause of obedience', Daubeny urged. Thus it was essential to protect it from 'the sophistry of those, who attempt to persuade us, contrary both to reason and experience, that all religious opinions are matters of indifference to society'.⁷⁴² To obscure faith eroded moral restraints by depriving them of true religious motivation.

The loyalist pamphleteer, John Bowles, explained the connection between faith in orthodox Christianity and morality in detail, in 1807. Only religion could inculcate obedience to lawful authority in the state 'independently of all penalties, and even on

⁷³⁸ Dreyer, 'Burke's Religion', pp. 209-210. Also, see above p. 165.

⁷³⁹ Samuel Horsley, *The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of St. David's to the Clergy of His Diocese...in the year 1790*, pp. 6-10.

⁷⁴⁰ Pretyman-Tomline, *A Charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln... in June and July 1800*, p. 14.

⁷⁴¹ Charles Daubeny, *A Sermon Preached before the Clergy at the visitation; held at Lavington, in the county of Wilts* (London, 1793), p. 18.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

the supposition that they may be evaded'.⁷⁴³ Religion was the basis of obedience because it inculcated a notion of spiritual responsibility which extended beyond temporal obligations, that is, 'a belief that there exists a Being who has an absolute universal right to command, which implies an unlimited obligation to obey, and also that this right has been exercised'. However, to assure compliance, complete knowledge of the laws to which obligation was due was necessary and, on this basis,

when an express revelation of the Divine Will has been made, our first duty, and that which is the basis of every other, is to endeavour, as far as our limited faculties will extend, to obtain a thorough acquaintance with it.... In this view, faith or belief, independently of its being the only spring of obedience, is itself a moral duty, and the want of it is of the very essence, as well as the main source, of vice.⁷⁴⁴

It was faith in Christian doctrine, specifically the interpretation of revelation protected by the Church, which ensured adherence to the uncorrupted communication of God's will. To reject this laid the foundation for vice.

Bowles was writing in relation to the nondenominational school system implemented by Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, from 1809. The French Revolution had encouraged widespread agreement regarding the need to inculcate religious principles into the lower orders, not least as a means of securing subordination, moral principles and thus social control.⁷⁴⁵ However, controversy regarding whether or not religious education should be a denominational affair provoked debate. Lancaster's approach was latitudinarian and sought to inculcate only general Christian principles so that his system could incorporate various Christian denominations.⁷⁴⁶ In Bowles' view, this approach was

⁷⁴³ John Bowles, *A Letter Addressed to Samuel Whitbread, Esq. M.P. in consequence of the unqualified approbation expressed by him in the House of Commons of Mr. Lancaster's system of education*, 2nd ed., (London, 1808), p. 14.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

⁷⁴⁵ Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, pp. 187-190.

⁷⁴⁶ For more details on Lancaster's system see E.A. Varley, *The last of the prince bishops: William Van Mildert and the High Church movement of the early nineteenth century* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 70-71; Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, pp. 13-195.

‘highly objectionable in a religious, a moral, and a political view’.⁷⁴⁷ Lancaster ‘most untheologically’ expected “‘obedience” without the principle by which alone obedience can, in any case, be produced’, Bowles continued: ‘That principle is faith’.⁷⁴⁸ Thus the emphasis on religious truth remained an important difference between those of High Church disposition and conservative, latitudinarian opinion.

The inculcation of nondenominational religious education did much to perpetuate High-Church anxieties that the Church of England remained in danger in the early nineteenth century. The *British Critic* argued that Lancaster’s nondenominational approach, ‘inculcated under the specious appellation of *liberality*’, did nothing more than ‘delude the people into a belief, that preachers and teachers of religion are by no means necessary’ thus undermining the established status of Anglicanism and encouraging religious pluralism.⁷⁴⁹ Moreover, John Bowles urged that to educate the lower orders in principles which did not adhere to those of the Establishment served not only to deprive them of ‘a truly Christian education, but also to endanger the Establishment itself. For the strength and security of all Establishments mainly depend upon the attachment of the community’.⁷⁵⁰ To educate individuals in broadly Christian, as opposed to Anglican principles, was to encourage laxity and indifference towards the Church, jeopardizing its establishment. Furthermore, the *Quarterly* reiterated the view that political stability and the inculcation of specifically Anglican doctrine were interlinked: ‘A state is secure in proportion as the subjects are attached to the laws and institutions of their country’. Consequently, to introduce a system of education devoid of instruction regarding the doctrines of the established religion was ‘palpably absurd’ and it would place both the Church and state in danger.⁷⁵¹ The anxieties of High Churchmen were only exacerbated by the backing which Lancaster received from the radical Whigs associated with the *Edinburgh Review*, including Whitbread and Brougham, and, perhaps more worryingly, George III.⁷⁵²

⁷⁴⁷ John Bowles, *A Letter Addressed to Samuel Whitbread*, p. 6.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁷⁴⁹ *BC*, 39, (January 1812) p. 91.

⁷⁵⁰ John Bowles, *The Claims of the Established Church considered as an Apostolical Interpreter of Holy Scripture* (London, 1815), pp. 99-100.

⁷⁵¹ *QR*, 6:11 (October 1811) p. 289. For further criticisms of the Lancasterian system see *BC*, 39, (January 1812), p. 91.

⁷⁵² Varley, *The last of the prince bishops*, p. 71.

Royal backing of Lancaster's endeavour, as Varley suggests, forced defenders of the Church establishment to acknowledge that there was 'now no question whether the poor should be educated, only how and by whom'.⁷⁵³ Given the dangers of the Lancastrian system, High-Church Tories directed their support towards the 'National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church'. Determined to counteract Lancaster's endeavours, the National Society, which held its inaugural meeting in October 1811, was the product of Bowles acting in consortium with his companions from the Hackney Phalanx, Joshua Watson and Henry Handley Norris.⁷⁵⁴ Founded on the 'rational and salutary principle, that *the national Religion ought to be the basis of all national education*', it adhered strictly to Anglican doctrine and instructed students in both the liturgy and catechism while sanctioning only books published by the S. P. C. K.⁷⁵⁵ By 1815 people in every diocese were consulting the Society and 100,000 children were in its schools.⁷⁵⁶ In the eyes of the *Quarterly's* reviewer, only this denominational approach was suitable to 'furnish the most powerful means of improving the civil, moral, and religious condition of the lower classes'.⁷⁵⁷ It was only strictly denominational religious instruction which could secure the obedience and salvation of the populace.

Thus the increasingly conspicuous, organised, and aggressive nature of rational Christianity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries contributed to the rehabilitation of a distinct Tory identity focused on the preservation of Christian orthodoxy.⁷⁵⁸ Churchmen, both Whig and Tory, cohered in defence of the Church of England's doctrinal authority. They criticised rationalism, and resisted its advances, not merely on the grounds of civil expediency; rather, their publications contended that rationalism threatened subjects' eternal salvation and stressed the inherent truth of the

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 72-73. For information on the Hackney Phalanx see p. 24 n. 67.

⁷⁵⁵ Bowles, *The Claims of the Established Church*, p.100. The full title of the S.P.C.K was the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

⁷⁵⁶ Webster, *Joshua Watson*, pp. 34-36.

⁷⁵⁷ *QR*, 14: 27 (October 1815), p. 42.

⁷⁵⁸ For the organizational and theological developments of rational Christianity, and its infiltration of older forms of dissent see Ditchfield, 'Anti-trinitarianism and toleration in late 18th-century British politics', p.46; Ditchfield 'Incompatible with the very name of Christian', p. 53; Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, p. 55.

Church's doctrine. On this basis their rhetoric differed from that of conservative Whig statesmen who turned primarily to expediency rather than truth. Nonetheless, there was a broad consensus amongst conservative Whigs and Tories, churchmen and statesmen, regarding the threat which rationalism posed to the integrity of Christianity and, indeed, the Christian nature of the polity itself. This consensus, discernible during the debates on subscription in the 1770s, was consolidated during the French Revolution and its immediate aftermath when, as Aston notes, the apparently atheistic character of Jacobinism ensured that the preservation of Christianity 'seemed inextricably bound up with the survival of the state itself'.⁷⁵⁹ There was a broad concurrence that it was the erosion of religious restraints which had facilitated the downfall of France and, when radicalism re-emerged in Britain in the opening decades of the nineteenth century, it was considered to be facilitated by irreligion. However, while High Churchmen, both Tory and Whig, emphasised the importance of faith in Anglicanism, specifically, to the cultivation of subjects' morality, this perspective was not shared by those who, although conservative, remained latitudinarian, like Burke. Indeed, while there was a broad consensus that orthodox Christianity in the state should be preserved and encouraged, whether this role should remain an exclusively Anglican one would encourage debate, particularly amidst the rapid rise of evangelicalism, contributing to the development of a Tory identity focused on the defence not only of Christian, but also of Anglican orthodoxy. This will form the focus of the next section.

Enthusiasm

The intellectual threat posed by the emergence of rational Christianity and infidelity was not the only danger to the Church of England's authority. At the other end of the spectrum of religious deviation was the threat of 'fanaticism' or 'enthusiasm' in religion. As Robert Andrews points out, 'enthusiasm' was a pejorative term used to describe excessive emotionalism in religion, a belief in personal revelation and generally superstitious behaviour.⁷⁶⁰ In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, enthusiasm was used, in particular, to describe evangelical Dissenters, though evangelicals within the Church of England could also be tarred with this brush.⁷⁶¹ Both

⁷⁵⁹ Aston, 'Horne and Heterodoxy', p. 919.

⁷⁶⁰ Andrews, *William Stevens*, p. 9.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

will receive focus in this section which argues, first, that the rapid rise of evangelicalism both within and outside the Church of England consolidated the emergence of High-Church, Tory consensus focused on the theological purity of the Church of England. However, second, it also argues that this changing political context exacerbated the differences in broader Tory ideology regarding the limits of toleration and attitudes to Dissent, promoting fissures.

Enthusiasm was the Church's traditional Protestant enemy, the culprit responsible for the religious and political upheavals of the mid-seventeenth century, and it was this deviation, rather than rationalism, which characteristically received contempt in Tory sermons to commemorate the martyrdom of Charles I.⁷⁶² Yet, while Tories' obsession with the fate of Charles I led them to dwell on Dissenters' enthusiasm, the relationship between High Churchmen and the rise of evangelicalism within the Church of England was complex. Mather suggests that the opening decades of George III's reign witnessed an 'entente between High Churchmanship and Calvinism' while Nockles has pointed out that evangelicals were 'often at one' with High Churchmen in 'exalting doctrinal preaching over merely moral exhortation'.⁷⁶³ Methodists joined High Churchmen in their endeavour to resist attacks on the Thirty-Nine Articles during the early 1770s.⁷⁶⁴ Moreover, Horne, a fierce combatant of religious heterodoxy, disapproved of the expulsion of six Calvinist Methodists from St Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 1768, for praying and preaching in private houses, deemed to be conventicles.⁷⁶⁵ Indeed, Horne and his fellow Hutchinsonians were, at times, suspected of Methodism on the basis of their emotive preaching.⁷⁶⁶ William Jones defended such approaches, in 1769, when he censured Protestants who had 'nothing left of religion but the outward form and appearance' and, allowing 'no doctrine of their religion ...any share in their affections', divested religion of its internal power leaving only an 'empty shell'.⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶² For an example, see Thomas Nowell, *A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on Thursday, January XXX, 1772 ...* (London, 1772), pp. 11-12.

⁷⁶³ Nockles, 'The Waning of Protestant Unity and Waxing of Anti-Catholicism?' p. 183; Mather, *High Church Prophet*, p. 13.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶⁵ See Nigel Aston, 'Horne, George (1730–1792)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/13789>, accessed 24 Sept 2015].

⁷⁶⁶ Nockles, 'The Waning of Protestant Unity and Waxing of Anti-Catholicism?', p. 183.

⁷⁶⁷ William Jones, *A Letter to a Young Gentleman at Oxford, Intended for Holy Orders...* (London, 1769), pp. 35-37.

Furthermore, J.C. D. Clark's suggestion that Methodism constituted another branch of 'Orthodox churchmanship' is accurate when considered in political terms.⁷⁶⁸ John Wesley's political Toryism has been covered well by historians: he denounced contractarian notions of political sovereignty and considered himself to be a 'High Churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance'.⁷⁶⁹ Wesley received approbation from William Jones for taking 'the Christian side, in stating the *origin of power*, against the Republicans in America'.⁷⁷⁰ Moreover, Nockles' suggestion that 'the French Revolution initially helped ... cement Evangelical and Orthodox [churchmen] into a common political bond' is accurate.⁷⁷¹ Hannah More, an evangelical Anglican, was one of the most dedicated ideological combatants of revolutionary France in the 1790s, contributing at least fifty titles to the series of Cheap Repository Tracts published between 1795 and 1798. As Clark notes, her social and political doctrines were indistinguishable from those of High Churchmen.⁷⁷² Similarly, William Wilberforce held a staunchly hierarchical view of society and he supported the repressive measures of Liverpool's administration in 1817-1820.⁷⁷³ However, to focus, as Clark does, only on the political outlook of those who held orthodox, or anti-trinitarian beliefs, obscures deeper theological differences.⁷⁷⁴ These differences engendered important distinctions between High Churchmen and evangelicals both inside and outside the Church of England. As Mark Smith has noted, although these distinctions emerged regarding a range of issues, including interpretations of the liturgies for baptism and burial, they essentially derived from a single, crucial difference: soteriology, the doctrine of salvation.⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁶⁸ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., pp. 235-247; Nockles, 'Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833', p. 339.

⁷⁶⁹ Quoted in Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., p.286. For Wesley's Toryism see Ibid., pp. 285-295; G.M. Ditchfield, *The evangelical revival* (London, 1998), pp. 79-80. The term High Church, in this context, was employed with a largely political meaning.

⁷⁷⁰ William Jones, *Memoirs of the Life, Studies, and Writings of the Right Reverend George Horne, D.D...* (London, 1795), p. 161. See, for example, John Wesley, *Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power* (Bristol, 1772) quoted in chapter one pp. 37-38.

⁷⁷¹ Nockles 'Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833', p. 351.

⁷⁷² Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., p. 299.

⁷⁷³ On Wilberforce's conservatism see Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, pp. 217-219.

⁷⁷⁴ See Nockles' criticism of Clark in Nockles 'Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833', p. 339.

⁷⁷⁵ Mark A. Smith, 'Henry Ryder and the Bath CMS: Evangelical and High Church Controversy in the Later Hanoverian Church', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 62:4 (2011), p. 729.

The growing influence of evangelicalism encouraged consolidation amongst High Churchmen of Whig and Tory lineage. This consensus focused on the exposition and correction of soteriological ‘errors’ derived from evangelical ‘misunderstandings’ of the workings of faith and election to salvation. In the closing decades of the eighteenth century Jones dedicated lengthy sections in his *Essay on the Church* (1787) and composed *Two Letters to a Predestinarian* (1800) to counteract errors regarding the route to salvation. Similarly, Jones’s companion, Charles Daubeny, used his *Guide to the Church* (1798) to address evangelical criticism that, within the Church of England, the gospel was not preached: ‘Had it been said, that *your Gospel* was not preached there, we should readily have pleaded guilty to the charge; but that the *Gospel of Jesus Christ* is preached there, we certainly maintain’, Daubeny quipped.⁷⁷⁶ Their criticisms were echoed by Whig Churchmen including Pretyman-Tomline whose lengthy *Refutation of Calvinism* (1803) was published to demonstrate that ‘the Public Formularies of our Church are strictly consonant to Scripture, and cannot be reconciled with the Calvinistic tenets’ of evangelicals.⁷⁷⁷ Thus High Churchmen from varied ideological backgrounds converged to assert the purity of the Church of England from which Calvinist evangelicalism was painted as a deviation.

Of course, not all evangelicals were Calvinists. Within Methodism, for example, there was a deep divide between the adherents to Calvinist and Arminian doctrines of salvation.⁷⁷⁸ Moreover, a number of prominent, conservative, Anglican evangelicals, including Hannah More and William Wilberforce, were certainly not Calvinist in doctrine.⁷⁷⁹ Nonetheless, it was common for High Churchmen to portray evangelicals, broadly speaking, as Calvinists. An explanation for this, Smith has suggested, can be found in the definition of Calvinism employed by High Churchmen. This definition encompassed not simply the doctrine of unconditional election to salvation, or predestination, but also the doctrine of justification by faith alone which churchmen, including Daubeny, believed was included in the five points of Calvinism.⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷⁶ Daubeny *A Guide to the Church*, p. 73.

⁷⁷⁷ George Pretyman-Tomline, *A Refutation of Calvinism...*, 4th ed., (London, 1811), p. 4.

⁷⁷⁸ For an overview of this controversy see Ditchfield, *The evangelical revival*, pp. 71-73.

⁷⁷⁹ M.G. Jones, *Hannah More* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 98; Smith, ‘Henry Ryder and the Bath CMS’, p. 729.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 730.

While rationalism promoted works at the expense of faith, the principles of enthusiasm, High-Church Tories argued, promoted faith at the expense of works. Thus, like rationalism, enthusiasm distorted Christians' duty by emphasising only one dimension of it, thereby compromising salvation. Misapprehension regarding the eleventh article of faith had led to the erroneous notion amongst evangelicals that faith alone was necessary to their justification. This 'style of preaching' was deemed 'imperfect and dangerous' by Pretyman-Tomline.⁷⁸¹ He stressed that 'Moral works must follow Faith, or a man will not continue justified, or in a justified state', for 'Faith and Works' had been 'joined together in his [Christ's] Gospel'. Consequently, it was urged, 'Let not these two ... be ever separated by his ministers.'⁷⁸² The concept of double justification, which involved an initial justification by grace and a final justification conditional on holiness and the performance of good works, had been cemented into Anglican soteriology by Bishop John Bull in the seventeenth century. This interpretation underlay High-Church emphasis on practical spirituality and holy living and it continued to be defended by clerics from both old Tory and conservative Whig ideological backgrounds against the threat of evangelical errors.⁷⁸³

The doctrine of unconditional election to salvation, or predestination, also threatened man's spiritual welfare by dismissing the necessity of good works. Dating from the Reformation, and derived from a 'misunderstanding' of the seventeenth article of faith, the doctrine of predestination suggested that, within the body of Christians, there were individuals who had been elected by God and assured of salvation. In opposition to this principle, Jones, Daubeny and Pretyman-Tomline upheld the Arminian perspective that Christ had died for the salvation of all Christians.⁷⁸⁴ The error of predestination was depicted by the works of these High Churchmen as inherently dangerous in both a

⁷⁸¹ Quote from Pretyman-Tomline, *A Refutation of Calvinism*, p. 165. On the eleventh article see *ibid.*, p. 153.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 120

⁷⁸³ Smith, 'Henry Ryder and the Bath CMS', p. 730; For an old Tory argument on double justification see Charles Daubeny, *A vindication of the character of the pious and learned bishop Bull from the unqualified accusations brought against it by the archdeacon of Ely in his charge delivered in the year 1826* (London, 1826).

⁷⁸⁴ *Idem.*, *A Guide to the Church*, p. 73; William Jones, 'Two Letters to a Predestinarian', in William Stevens (ed.), *The Theological, Philosophical, and Miscellaneous Works of the Rev. William Jones...in twelve volumes*, vol. 12, p. 350; Pretyman-Tomline, *A Refutation of Calvinism*, pp. 184- 286.

moral and spiritual capacity. Pretyman-Tomline pointed out that the corruption of human nature by the fall of Adam was central to Christian doctrine, for it was on this that ‘the necessity of redemption rests’. To represent man’s nature, as Calvinists did, as ‘utterly incorrigible’ was ‘destructive of every human effort, of all moral virtue’ and ‘tends to produce hopeless melancholy, or hardened profligacy’.⁷⁸⁵ Convinced of their predetermined condemnation, those who were not elected to salvation had nothing to strive for and thus no motivation to conduct good works. With ‘its usual accuracy of judgement’ the Church of England taught against this error by ‘considering men as capable of contributing in some degree to their own moral and religious improvement’.⁷⁸⁶ Regarding those elected to salvation, Jones pointed out that predestination presumed that God ‘distinguishes between the sin and the sinner’, but this was a misconception.⁷⁸⁷ The apostles had taught that God was no respecter of persons. Consequently, predestination compromised salvation by obscuring God’s final judgement ‘which will separate good Christians from bad Christians’.⁷⁸⁸

Importantly, by convincing Christians that their salvation was assured without the need for good works, evangelical soteriology encouraged antinomianism, that is, rejection of the moral and civil law. As Daubeny pointed out, to preach that Christians were assured of salvation regardless of their temporal conduct encouraged individuals to ignore the moral restraints imposed by conscience, leaving them free to commit atrocities.⁷⁸⁹ Indeed, this was a danger inherent in the subscription of enthusiasts generally to the notion of private revelation. In the eyes of William Jones, the concept of private revelation, or immediate inspiration, promoted an essentially subjective interpretation of Christianity: it converted religion into an ‘invisible spirit, which having no visible marks whereby it can be known ... must rest upon the word and authority of its publisher, who is at liberty to make what he pleases of it’.⁷⁹⁰ Because it was essentially subjective, operating without tests of validity or restraint, this principle encouraged moral corruption by convincing believers that all their actions were divinely sanctioned.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 76-78

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 78.

⁷⁸⁷ Jones, ‘Two Letters to a Predestinarian’, p. 342.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 349.

⁷⁸⁹ Daubeny, *A Guide to the Church*, pp. 80-81; idem, *A vindication of the character of the pious and learned bishop Bull...* (London, 1826), p. 33.

⁷⁹⁰ Jones, *A Letter to a Young Gentleman at Oxford*, p. 24.

As Jones noted, ‘supposing himself to have a rule within his own breast’ the enthusiast believed that ‘every step taken by him must tend to the glory of God because he takes it’.⁷⁹¹ Pretyman-Tomline echoed this censure: those who ‘consider[ed] themselves full of divine grace, are too often regardless of the laws of both God and man’. Consequently, ‘they are guilty of the grossest immoralities’.⁷⁹² By distorting religious truth, enthusiasm, like rationalism, perverted man’s temporal morality by leading him into disregard for God’s laws.

Crucially, errors concerning the route to salvation and the workings of faith encouraged enthusiasts to dismiss the episcopal order, external ordinances, and teachings of the Church of England. This was dangerous for, as Jones stressed, both the internal and external elements of Christianity must be adhered to if man was to be saved.⁷⁹³ Daubeny reiterated this point. It was essential that the ‘plan upon which Christ has established his church upon earth ... be conformed to by all who expect to enjoy the privileges annexed to it.’⁷⁹⁴ It was the Church of England, specifically, which retained fidelity to Christ’s plan for man’s salvation, and adherence to its doctrines and discipline was necessary if man was to be redeemed. While those who dissented from the authority of the Church might seek to establish a new spiritual society, and preach without commission obtained from the Church of Christ, ‘no man can ensure to the members of a society of his own framing, those privileges which he has not in his power to confer.’⁷⁹⁵ This was a deviation for which Horne criticised John Wesley, despite the latter’s continued fidelity to the Church of England: ‘For if a Presbyter can consecrate a Bishop, we admit that a man may confer a power, of which he is not himself possessed’.⁷⁹⁶ Thus enthusiasm, like rationalism, promoted the convergence of old Tory and conservative Whig High Churchmen by threatening not simply man’s temporal conduct but his eternal salvation.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid., p. 27.

⁷⁹² Pretyman-Tomline, *A Refutation of Calvinism*, p. 94.

⁷⁹³ Jones, *An Essay on the Church*, p. 47.

⁷⁹⁴ Daubeny, *A Guide to the Church*, p. 6.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 17.

⁷⁹⁶ Horne, *A Charge intended to have been delivered to the clergy of Norwich*, p. 24.

Tensions between High Churchmen and evangelicals were never too far below the surface in the late eighteenth century. Thomas Nowell and Thomas Randolph were instrumental in the expulsion of the six Calvinistic Methodists from St Edmund Hall in 1768, an incident which triggered theological controversy regarding the validity of the doctrines of election and predestination.⁷⁹⁷ Nowell and Randolph, like High Churchmen in the nineteenth century, argued vehemently in favour of an Arminian interpretation of the Thirty-Nine Articles.⁷⁹⁸ However, anxiety regarding evangelicalism grew significantly in the closing decade of the eighteenth century and the opening decades of the nineteenth century. This anxiety was fuelled by the rapid surge in evangelical numbers. The eighteenth century witnessed the birth of an ‘evangelical revival’ which was not confined to a particular denomination. It began and persisted within the Church of England. However, the main beneficiaries of the revival numerically were undoubtedly Dissenters. Dissenting numbers increased from 343,000 in 1760 to 3,144,000 in 1840. Congregationalists’ numbers grew from approximately 225,000 to 725,000 between 1800 and 1840; the number of Baptists increased from 150,000 to 500,000 in the same period. In addition, between these years, the number of Wesleyan Methodists alone grew from approximately 265,000 to 1,150,000 with the Methodist New Connection increasing from 16,000 to 60,000.⁷⁹⁹ These changing circumstances served to consolidate High-Church consensus regarding the need to combat evangelical influence. Simultaneously, though, they exacerbated ideological differences within Toryism more broadly regarding the limits of toleration and attitudes to Dissent.

Fundamental to the increase in Dissenting numbers was the practice of itinerant preaching which was resuscitated on a national scale.⁸⁰⁰ Towards the close of the eighteenth century, and particularly in the opening decades of the nineteenth, the apparent proliferation of itinerant preachers, combined with the progress of the French Revolution and growing suspicions of Jacobinism in Britain, only encouraged High-Church disdain for evangelical Dissenters.⁸⁰¹ Moreover, following Wesley’s death in 1791, the Methodists began to break away from the Church of England, causing the

⁷⁹⁷ Ward, *Georgian Oxford*, pp. 240-242.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 241-242.

⁷⁹⁹ Field, ‘Counting Religion in England and Wales’, p. 710.

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁸⁰¹ Nockles, ‘Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833’, pp. 351-352.

attitude of High Churchmen towards this group to harden. Jones, in his biography of Horne, published in 1795, complained that ‘partly from the loss of their leader, and partly from the confusion of the times’, Methodists had ‘embraced some bad opinions; in consequence of which, with little or no relation to the Church, they will not much longer be distinguished from other dissenters, and may in time be as bad as the worst of them’.⁸⁰² Whig High Churchmen were also increasingly suspicious of evangelical itinerancy. Samuel Horsley’s episcopal charge in 1790 harboured mild anxieties regarding enthusiasm, the ‘great crime’ of which consisted ‘not so much in heterodoxy, as in fanaticism; not in perverse doctrine, but rather in a disorderly zeal for the propagation of the Truth’.⁸⁰³ Yet, by 1800, Horsley considered the greatest threat to the establishment to be posed by those who ‘make great pretensions to an extraordinary measure of the Holy Spirit’s influence; to alienate the minds of the people from the Established Clergy’.⁸⁰⁴ Moreover, Methodists, although noted to be ‘people of real piety’, were considered to be ‘lending aid to the common enemy’, their itinerancy providing a cover for Jacobins to infiltrate the lower orders.⁸⁰⁵ Similarly, in the 1790s, Pretyman-Tomline became alarmed increasingly by the growth of Methodism in his diocese: Methodist meeting houses had risen from 29 between 1785 and 1789 to 103 between 1795 and 1799.⁸⁰⁶ Consequently, in his clerical charge, delivered in 1800, Pretyman-Tomline complained that, ‘besides those who really and openly dissent from our Church, the numbers who profess to believe all its doctrines, and yet renounce its authority, and revile its ministers, are very greatly increased’. His comments referred to ‘miscalled Evangelical Preaching’ specifically, and refuted this approach as ‘absolutely inconsistent with true religion and the well-being of Society’.⁸⁰⁷ Thus, by the turn of the century, High-Church concern regarding itinerancy was reaching fever pitch.

Similar views were echoed by the Tory press and perpetuated into the nineteenth century, accompanied by growing concerns regarding the limits of toleration. John

⁸⁰² Jones, *Memoirs of the Life...of the Right Reverend George Horne*, p. 161.

⁸⁰³ Horsley, *The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of St. David’s to the Clergy of his Diocese... in the year 1790*, p. 33.

⁸⁰⁴ *Idem, The charge of Samuel Lord Bishop of Rochester, to the clergy of his diocese, delivered at his second general visitation, in the year 1800*. (London, 1800), p. 19.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

⁸⁰⁶ Ditchfield, ‘Sir George Pretyman-Tomline’, p. 282.

⁸⁰⁷ Pretyman-Tomline, *A Charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln at the Triennial visitation of that Diocese in June and July 1800*, p. 18.

Gifford's *Anti-Jacobin Review* regularly denounced itinerancy as eroding the Church of England's authority. In 1801, the leaders of Methodist classes were denoted 'inveterate enemies of the establishment', dedicated to seducing the laity away from communion with the Church of England.⁸⁰⁸ Subsequently, in 1809, another article complained that 'innumerable sectarists are daily appearing, all of whom, however discordant may be some of their opinions, unite in a vehement ... attack on the regular clergy'.⁸⁰⁹ By alienating the minds of the laity from the Church and its ministers, they caused 'incalculable mischief' and 'unless some speedy, effectual steps are taken, and some method devised of opposing their attempts', their influence would soon be too great to counteract.⁸¹⁰ In 1811, the progress of 'schismatics' was assigned to abuses of the 'the privileges conferred by the Act of Toleration' which even the 'most torpid spectator' could see 'have increased, are increasing, and ought to be diminished'.⁸¹¹ The *Quarterly Review* also focused on the laxity of toleration, the principles of which prevented the legislature from inflicting punishment 'in any instance' on religious grounds. Consequently, 'full scope and licence' was given to 'every illiterate field-preacher who may start up, to permit the wildest fanatics to practice at their will their low arts in seducing the ignorant and vulgar'.⁸¹² These reviews considered itinerancy to be subversive of the establishment and encouraged by the laxity of toleration. Consequently, their solution entailed the implementation of legislation to deal with the spread of Dissenting preachers adequately.

This solution was proposed in parliament by Henry Addington, Viscount Sidmouth who, in 1811, attempted to amend the Toleration Act. The bill specifically addressed the issue of itinerancy and the poor education of evangelical preachers. Sidmouth noted that individuals, 'however depraved, however ignorant and illiterate', were able to obtain licences to preach, demonstrating that 'abuses existed to a considerable degree in the self-appointment of improper individuals' to preach the word of God.⁸¹³ The bill sought to remedy this abuse and proposed that applicants for Dissenting licences should present testimonials regarding their abilities and characters from six reputable property

⁸⁰⁸ *AJ*, 8:32 (February 1801), p. 158.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 34:138 (December 1809), p. 519.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 519, 521.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*, 38: 151 (January 1811), p. xiii.

⁸¹² *QR*, 2:4, (November 1809), p. 307.

⁸¹³ Viscount Sidmouth, Speech in the House of Lords, 09 May 1811, *PD*, vol. 19, col. 1130.

owners to the Quarter Sessions. To justify this amendment Sidmouth urged that it was necessary to give ‘more attention to the Established Church’. This was a ‘vital part of the constitution’ and, if ‘not better attended to’, the nation would soon find itself in danger of having ‘a nominal Established Church, and a sectarian people’.⁸¹⁴ High-Church opinion outside parliament, not surprisingly, approved of the bill. The *Anti-Jacobin Review*, for example, claimed that ‘if the mode of restraint were effectual, [it] would do more to remedy the evil complained of, than any species of corrective that could be applied’.⁸¹⁵ Despite High-Church approbation, though, the measure was unsuccessful. When it was submitted to Parliament in May, the bill provoked controversy. A deluge of letters for and against it flooded in with opponents deeming the measure an infringement on religious liberty.⁸¹⁶ Moreover, in Parliament, Sidmouth met resistance not just from the opposition benches but also from Perceval, the evangelical Prime Minister, and Lord Liverpool, indicating fissures regarding the legislative status of Dissenters amongst Pitt’s heirs.

In the absence of revolution in France and the threat of republican sedition at home, ministers no longer concurred with High-Church anxieties that the Church was in danger. Liverpool pointed out that the Dissenters, as a body, had engaged in no political controversy with the establishment since the early 1790s; he was also reluctant to revive religious controversy.⁸¹⁷ To add insult to injury, following Liverpool’s assumption of office in 1812, the administration repealed the Conventicle Act (1664) and Five Mile Act (1665).⁸¹⁸ Both were instituted during the Restoration and both concerned Dissenting preaching. The Five Mile Act was intended to prevent Dissenting ministers from coming within five miles of any corporation that returned members to parliament while the Conventicle Act banned religious assemblies of more than five people outside the Church of England. Both pieces of legislation were largely defunct by the

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, col. 1131.

⁸¹⁵ *AJ*, 38: 151 (January 1811), p. xiv.

⁸¹⁶ Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, pp. 195-198.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 197. Lord Liverpool, Speech in the House of Lords, 21 May 1811, *PD*, vol.20, cols. 233-234.

⁸¹⁸ E.R. Norman, *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970: a historical study* (Oxford, 1976), p. 77. William Smith, Dissenter and M. P. for Norwich, also attempted to secure Unitarian Relief in 1812 but, following the advice of Liverpool and the Archbishop of Canterbury, he abandoned the measure. Further consultation and co-operation with the Prime Minister and Archbishop secured Unitarian Relief the following year. For discussion of the repeal of the Conventicle Act and Five Mile Act in 1812, and Unitarian Relief in 1813, see R.W. Davis, *Dissent in Politics, 1780-1830 the political life of William Smith, M.P.* (London, 1971) pp. 148-170, 187-212.

nineteenth century and Liverpool supported their repeal as a conciliatory measure to Dissenters following the outcry against Sidmouth's Bill. Moreover, he used a relatively Whiggish appraisal of toleration in the process: 'an enlarged and liberal toleration' was deemed 'the best security to the established Church — a Church not founded on the exclusion of religious discussion, but in ... courting the investigation of the Scriptures upon which it founded its doctrines'.⁸¹⁹ This appraisal of toleration and scriptural examination contrasted with that of High Churchmen and, indeed, the liberal approach of Liverpool's administration towards Dissenters provoked a hostile response from this group. The different attitudes to toleration and Dissent, while present in the eighteenth century, began to foster conspicuous disagreement amongst Tories regarding Protestant pluralism in the nineteenth century.

Ministers' conciliatory disposition towards Dissenters provoked censure from High Church opinion. Those who had opposed Sidmouth's measure were deemed 'liberalists' by the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, whose 'tender feelings' and 'sensitive sympathy, is reserved for the schismatics and sectaries'.⁸²⁰ Such individuals, Gifford proceeded to vent, did not understand the concept of toleration, the very meaning of which 'implies a state of *restriction*'; restriction, now, had 'long been passed over', instead giving way to '*encouragement*'.⁸²¹ Similar tirades continued to be published, even once the immediate furore over Sidmouth's Bill had subsided. In 1814 it was noted that Methodism had spread 'so very wide' and that Methodists had become 'outrageously audacious, under the fostering encouragement of a *liberal* legislature'.⁸²² Similarly, Charles Daubeny used his work *On the Nature, Progress and Consequences of Schism* (1818) to complain that, although 'certainly not meant to encourage them to raise batteries of offensive hostility against the established Church of their country', the 'liberality of our governors towards Dissenters on some *late* occasions' had done exactly that.⁸²³

⁸¹⁹ Lord Liverpool, Speech in the House of Lords, 30 July, 1812, *PD*, vol. 23, col. 1192.

⁸²⁰ *AJ*, 38:151 (January 1811), p. xv.

⁸²¹ *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

⁸²² *Ibid.*, 47:199, (December 1814), pp. 575-578.

⁸²³ Charles Daubeny, *On the Nature, Progress, and Consequences of Schism; with immediate reference to the present state of religious affairs in this country* (London, 1818), p. 177.

High Churchmen continued to emphasise the Church's truth to in a bid to counter the challenge posed by evangelicalism to the authority of its ministers. In 1798, Daubeny, addressing William Wilberforce, urged that the 'idea that it is a matter of indifference *where* the word of God is preached, or by *whom*' was 'mistaken'.⁸²⁴ The Church, instituted by Christ, was not a voluntary society; nor was it a mere creature of the state.⁸²⁵ Rather, it was a distinct, divine society entrusted with the preservation of religious truth and its ministers, alone, had 'received a commission from the Head of the church, to administer the affairs of his kingdom'.⁸²⁶ The Whig churchman, Pretyman-Tomline, also placed emphasis on the Church's inherent truth and the divine authority of its ministers. In 1800, he advised his clergy to 'defend our discipline upon the high ground of Apostolic Institution ... We must state the authority transmitted to us from the Apostles, to be preachers of the Word of God, and to administer the holy ordinances of our Religion'.⁸²⁷ Placing emphasis on the *jure divino* origins of the Church's authority rendered the response of High Churchmen to the growth of evangelicalism consistent with their response to rationalism. It also ensured the persistence of differences in Tory opinion, broadly, regarding attitudes to Dissenters and the concept of toleration.

In contrast to Liverpool, High Churchmen continued to emphasise the limits of toleration. Toleration, Daubeny noted, constituted 'a mere civil question; and determines nothing with respect to what is right or wrong in a *religious* point of view'.⁸²⁸ On this basis Daubeny echoed the arguments of both Jones and Stevens, who had died in 1800 and 1807 respectively.⁸²⁹ Daubeny's sentiments were supported by the *British Critic* and *Anti-Jacobin Review*. The former dismissed the notion 'that it is a natural and unalienable right of man to serve God as he pleases', reiterating 'that schism is a sin, and that communion with the Church is part of a Christian's duty'.⁸³⁰ Similarly, the *Anti-Jacobin Review* reasserted that 'Separation ... is generally indefensible; it is criminal, and a crime of high magnitude: it transgresses not a human,

⁸²⁴ Idem, *A Guide to the Church*, p. 4.

⁸²⁵ Ibid., pp. 420-22.

⁸²⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

⁸²⁷ Pretyman-Tomline, *A Charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln at the Triennial visitation of that Diocese in June and July 1800*, p. 20.

⁸²⁸ Daubeny, *On the Nature, Progress and Consequences of Schism*, p. 177.

⁸²⁹ See p. 163-164, 181-182.

⁸³⁰ *BC*, 10, (August 1818), p. 115.

but a superhuman law, a law not founded by the wisdom of man, but by Omniscience itself'.⁸³¹ Thus High-Church Tories maintained that, regardless of the civil status of Dissenters, toleration was limited only to a temporal context. The Church of England was the true church and nonconformity was a sin. This remained an important point of difference from the arguments of leading statesmen, like Liverpool, and helped to fracture Tory unity.

The differences amongst Tories were also exacerbated by conflicts regarding religious education which emerged in the early nineteenth century. High-Church concern about the threat which evangelicalism posed to the authority of the established Church was not only encouraged by Dissenters' itinerancy but also by the growing influence of evangelical Anglicans and the increasing significance of the voluntary religious societies which they led. These included the Church Missionary Society and British and Foreign Bible Society. Disputes regarding the former have been highlighted by Mark Smith in his excellent study of Bishop Henry Ryder and thus the latter will provide the focus for this discussion though, in many respects, the concerns expressed were applicable to both.⁸³² Created in 1804, the BFBS's membership included mostly evangelical churchmen and evangelical Dissenters and it engaged in the spread of the Bible unaccompanied by the Book of Common Prayer or Liturgy.⁸³³ The Society's approach to spreading the Bible unaccompanied was rooted in two of the four key characteristics of evangelicalism identified by David Bebbington in his authoritative *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*: activism and biblicism. Activism obliged evangelicals, following their own conversion, to bring the benefit of the gospel to others, while biblicism entailed the belief that the Bible alone was the religion of Protestants and that its study should be unimpeded by the mediation of priests or church hierarchy.⁸³⁴ In conjunction, these characteristics led to a pragmatic determination to circulate the scriptures while making them as accessible as possible. The Society's nondenominational membership was also encouraged by its evangelical character: shared theological tenets, shared emotive and religious experience, and shared

⁸³¹ *AJ*, 55: 248 (January 1819), p. 422.

⁸³² Smith, 'Henry Ryder and the Bath CMS', pp. 726-743

⁸³³ For details on founding of BFBS see Varley, *The last of the prince bishops*, pp. 65-66.

⁸³⁴ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in modern Britain: a history from the 1730 to the 1980s* (London, 1989), pp. 10-14.

characteristics, like biblicism and activism, facilitated the co-operation of evangelicals inside and outside the Church in the promotion of the Gospel. Consequently, the Society's features exacerbated differences in broader Tory ideology regarding the doctrinal authority of the Church of England and attitudes to Dissent, promoting fissures.

The BFBS excited considerable antipathy from High Churchmen on the basis that it undermined the authority of the Church, its preachers, and its hierarchy, while also encouraging doctrinal laxity. Leading the way in the articulation of these anxieties was the Hackney Phalanx.⁸³⁵ In 1810, Christopher Wordsworth, member of the Phalanx and brother of the poet, expressed concerns regarding scriptural interpretation. The BFBS competed with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, diminishing the latter's membership. Yet, the S.P.C.K provided better service to the word of God by disseminating the scriptures with 'Common Prayer Books, Psalters, Books of Psalms in metre; many excellent tracts on the Scriptures, on the Church Catechism, On Confirmation, on the Sacraments, on the whole Church Service'.⁸³⁶ John Gifford, meanwhile, cautioned that in dissemination of the Bible alone 'the foundation is laid for new sects and schisms'.⁸³⁷ Moreover, by encouraging independent scriptural interpretation, the BFBS undermined the Church's authority.⁸³⁸ Daubeny complained that the BFBS proceeded 'on the erroneous principle ...that between *mere quoting*, and *rightly interpreting* the language of Sacred Writ there is no essential difference'. Yet 'the word and ministry appear to be two *collateral* parts of the same divine provision for the salvation of fallen man'. Thus circulating 'the word independent of the duly appointed ministry' would 'defeat the object which divine wisdom had in view in revealing the one and appointing the other'.⁸³⁹ Meanwhile, Henry Handley Norris, founding member of the Phalanx, 'anticipated [the] subversion of the Church of

⁸³⁵ See p. 24 n. 67.

⁸³⁶ Christopher Wordsworth, *Reasons for declining to become a subscriber to the British and foreign Bible society...* (London 1810), pp. 10-12.

⁸³⁷ Sack notes Gifford as a member of the Hackney Phalanx. See Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 193.

⁸³⁸ *AJ*, 45, 176 (Jan., 1813), p. 32. Also see *ibid.*, 41:164 (February 1812), p. 209.

⁸³⁹ Charles Daubeny, *The Substance of a Discourse, delivered at the abbey Church in Bath, on Thursday the 31st of March 1814...by the Rev Charles Daubeny*, quoted in *AJ*, 46, 193, (Jun, 1814) pp. 527-528.

England by means of the bible [*sic*] Society'.⁸⁴⁰ The *British Critic*, purchased in the winter of 1810-11 by Norris and Joshua Watson, echoed this disposition.⁸⁴¹

Moreover, High Churchmen consistently condemned the BFBS's nondenominational membership. Daubeny insisted that co-operation between Churchmen and Dissenters in the spread of religious knowledge encouraged 'a decreasing attachment to the established Doctrines of our Church; and a consequently increasing indifference to its communion'.⁸⁴² The *Anti-Jacobin* reiterated this argument. Unable to discern the basis of the Church's authority, or the importance of adhering to its communion, the review claimed individuals would inevitably stray into indifference and even infidelity. Thus the 'church will lose her members, and they will be in danger of losing their souls.'⁸⁴³ Moreover, Daubeny added that Churchmen who associated with Dissenters through the BFBS encouraged the notion,

at this time beginning to prevail, that a sort of compromise has taken place ...grounded, as it should seem, on the tacit acknowledgement that religious persuasions of every kind have the sanction of the same divine word... giving every man to understand that he is to make his own Church and his own creed.⁸⁴⁴

But this was not the case. Anglicanism was the true faith, and deviation from communion constituted schism. Thus, in the eyes of High Churchmen, the BFBS undermined the doctrinal purity of the Church and the authority of its ministers, compromising man's salvation in the process. This perspective, though, was not shared by all Tories.

⁸⁴⁰ Henry Handley Norris, *A respectful Letter to the Earl of Liverpool, K.G. First Lord of His Majesty's Treasury, occasioned by the Speech imputed to his Lordship at The Isle of Thanet Bible Society Meeting...* (London, 1822) p. 113.

⁸⁴¹ Varley, *The last of the prince bishops*, p.48. For an example of the *British Critic's* hostility to the BFBS see *BC*, 9, (April, 1818) p. 403.

⁸⁴² Daubeny, *On the Nature, Progress and Consequences of Schism*, pp. 171-172.

⁸⁴³ *AJ*, 41:164 (February 1812), p. 210.

⁸⁴⁴ Daubeny, *On the Nature, Progress and Consequences of Schism*, p. 172.

The BFBS received encouragement from both Tory ministers and prominent Churchmen. This only contributed to the High-Church anxiety that ‘liberality’ was penetrating the administration, and eroding the status and authority of the Church of England in the process. Norris worried about the approbation which the Societies received from members of the administration, not least Lord Liverpool. Following the publication of a speech reportedly delivered by Liverpool in support of a Bible Society at the Isle of Thanet, Norris worried about the ‘abuse’ of Liverpool’s ‘name and authority’. In particular, Liverpool’s show of support for the BFBS might become ‘instrumental in closing the eyes of Churchmen to the existing hostility’ at a time when the Church was ‘beset ... with enemies, both open and concealed, both without and within her sacred inclosure [*sic*], who are all leagued together and carrying on a concentrated hostility against her’.⁸⁴⁵ The *British Critic* censured clerical supporters of the Bible Societies: these ‘clergy of the new school, of minds too enlarged, and zeal too mighty, to be pent within the limits of ancient boundaries’, were undermining the Church’s authority. Thus the reviewer reminded them that, ‘if the Church be divinely appointed, as “the pillar and ground of truth,” to her has been committed the sacred charge of planting and supporting’ the Gospel. The Bible Societies ‘pay her no obedience, they have received from her no commission’ and, therefore, ‘If they are formed of her members, it is to her injury’.⁸⁴⁶ Eager to install religiosity, those who supported the BFBS neglected to consider the dangers which this organisation posed to the preservation of religious truth. Such censures indicate that differences regarding the authority of the Church, the truth of its doctrinal interpretation, and attitudes to Dissent, present in the late eighteenth century, were exacerbated in a new political and religious context.

Indeed, while High Churchmen were uncompromising regarding the threat which the BFBS posed to the Church’s authority, the Society received support from elements of Tory opinion, both within government and outside it. Clerical supporters included Bishop Thomas Burgess and Bishop Beilby Porteus. Both supported the BFBS on the grounds that it would help dissolve animosity between Dissenters and the Church

⁸⁴⁵ Norris, *A respectful Letter to the Earl of Liverpool*, pp. 9-11.

⁸⁴⁶ *BC*, 9, (April, 1818) p. 405.

establishment, and could even win some of the former back to the fold.⁸⁴⁷ Nicholas Vansittart, the evangelical Chancellor of the Exchequer in Liverpool's cabinet, presented a similar argument:

The *co-operation* of CHURCHMEN and DISSENTERS in religious matters, so far as they can *conscientiously co-operate*, seems to me one of the most efficacious means of *lessening both the political and religious evils of dissent* ... From such a communication, the Church of England has nothing to fear, and everything to hope; as holding (*in our judgement at least*) that *middle line of truth* in which all opposite opinions have a natural tendency to coincide.⁸⁴⁸

Blackwood's even went so far as to suggest that it was High Churchmen, not Dissenters or Anglican evangelicals, who were placing the Church at risk: 'If those clergymen who are called High-Churchmen, wish for the utter annihilation of the Church, they have nothing to do but to get up a quarrel with their evangelical brethren touching the Bible societies'.⁸⁴⁹ The review contended that, while the 'Church ought undoubtedly to know its own doctrines', its adherents should not be 'over scrupulous' regarding them. Rather, the Church ought to aim at 'gaining as many Christians as possible, of different persuasions'. It was with this result in mind that its 'Articles were drawn up' and, *Blackwood's* noted, 'Nothing could be more fatal to the Church, than for it to adopt the narrow, jealous, hair-splitting, intolerant, despotic spirit of the Catholic one'.⁸⁵⁰ Indeed, *Blackwood's* censure of the growing animosity between High Churchmen and evangelicals can be viewed as a call for Protestant unity in the face of a more threatening foe: Catholicism.

⁸⁴⁷ John Harford, *The Life of Thomas Burgess, D.D....late Lord Bishop of Salisbury*, (London, 1840), pp. 272-275; Robert Hodgson, *The life of the right reverend Beilby Porteus, late bishop of London*, 4th edition, (London, 1813), pp. 211-212.

⁸⁴⁸ Nicholas Vansittart, *Three Letters on the Subject of the British and Foreign Bible Society...* (London, 1812) pp. 11-12.

⁸⁴⁹ *BEM*, 18:106, (November 1825) p. 625.

⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 624.

Following Britain's Union with Catholic Ireland in 1801, the Anglican establishment was threatened by both Irish rebellion and the question of Catholic emancipation. Consequently, the support offered to the BFBS can be seen, in part, as a pragmatic endeavour to counteract the influence of Catholicism. Liverpool, speaking to a London Bible Society in 1821, claimed that while 'he should be most happy if the Liturgy of the Church could always be circulated together with the Bible' there were certain circumstances which rendered this object 'absolutely impracticable'. Specifically, Liverpool turned to Ireland, remarking that 'religious prejudices' prevented the reception of the Prayer Book. This, though, was no reason to 'forego the advantage of circulating the word of God', a practice which might prove 'the most effectual remedy to those evils which we all equally deplore'.⁸⁵¹ The vehemently anti-Catholic *Blackwood's* was more explicit than Liverpool. In 1824 it ascribed the 'benighted and horrible condition of Ireland' to 'the virtual monopoly enjoyed by the Catholic clergy-[and] to the absence of religious discussion and controversy'.⁸⁵² Consequently, it censured animosity towards Dissenters: as long as they were 'kept within a certain limit, with regard to power and numbers', Dissenters produced 'far more rational benefits than evils'. Specifically, they prevented the development of an 'absolute monopoly' in religious affairs which 'mainly produced those monstrous errors and abuses which have so long characterised the Roman Catholic Church'.⁸⁵³ In 1825, *Blackwood's* continued to criticise acrimony amongst Protestants, again censuring the prejudice of High Churchmen, in particular: 'were all the regular clergy what is called High-Churchmen', who persisted in treating Dissenters 'as bitter enemies', the consequences for the Church, and the country, would be detrimental. 'The war of extermination would not be confined to one side, and the whole of the Dissenters would be continually striving for the political, as well as religious, destruction of the Church'.⁸⁵⁴ Bible Societies, it was noted, mitigated hostility between the two, facilitating co-operation in the spread of the Gospel's light to individuals and, in the process, served to 'bring the whole strength and energies of Protestantism to operate against Catholicism'.⁸⁵⁵ Indeed, although hostility towards Protestant pluralism survived in High Church circles of Tory opinion, this clearly no longer provided a

⁸⁵¹ Lord Liverpool, quoted in *The Christian Observer*, 20: 8 (August 1821), pp. 781-782.

⁸⁵² *BEM*, 26: 93 (October 1824), p. 396.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 18: 106, (November 1825) p. 625.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 632.

broad point of consensus as, over the course of the early nineteenth century, Dissent had been superseded by a new, more imminent threat.

Thus the rapid rise of evangelicalism, both within the Church of England and outside it, encouraged the emergence of fissures amongst Tories in the early nineteenth century. Although there was a broad consensus that orthodox Christianity should be preserved and encouraged in the polity, Tories were divided regarding whether the role of religious instruction should remain an exclusively Anglican one. The proliferation of itinerant, evangelical, Dissenting preachers ensured that different attitudes to toleration and Dissent began to foster divisions regarding the boundaries of toleration. Moreover, the emergence of nondenominational, evangelical led organisations, such as the BFBS, exacerbated tensions regarding the extent to which Protestants should co-operate in the spread of the Gospel, and the extent to which scripture should be left open to individual interpretation. For some Tories, particularly High Churchmen, such organisations inevitably eroded the authority of the Church of England, its ministers, and its interpretation of scripture. Meanwhile, others, including the head of the administration, Lord Liverpool, and the popular periodical, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, believed that Protestant anti-pluralism should be subdued and co-operation encouraged in the face of the more dangerous threat posed by Catholicism. These fissures indicate that differences regarding the authority of the Church, the truth of its doctrine, and attitudes to Dissent, perceptible in the late eighteenth century, were exacerbated in a new political and religious context, creating tension.

Repeal

In 1828, Lord John Russell moved for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. The influence which the Catholic question exerted on Tories' considerations of this motion indicates the extent to which this issue, rather than Protestant pluralism, had become the primary concern for Tories of all shades. There had been no parliamentary discussion regarding the Test and Corporation Acts since the crushing defeat of Fox's motion in 1790.⁸⁵⁶ Debate regarding the Catholic question revived discussions of repeal among

⁸⁵⁶ G.I.T. Machin 'Resistance to repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, 1828' *Historical Journal*, 22 (1979), p. 116

the body of Dissenting Deputies from 1817 onwards, yet divisions persisted among Dissenting organisations more broadly regarding whether religious freedoms should include Catholics. Only in 1828 did the strategic separation of the two issues enable a unified Dissenting campaign.⁸⁵⁷ However, encouraging concern that Dissenters would subsequently oppose Catholic emancipation, this separation prejudiced pro-Catholic Liberal Tories against repeal. In 1827, Canning had highlighted Dissenters' hostility to Catholic emancipation as a reason for not considering the former's application for relief.⁸⁵⁸ The following year, in response to Russell's motion, Huskisson, despite declaring himself 'not abstractedly unfriendly to the proposition', opposed repeal on the grounds that it would hinder emancipation.⁸⁵⁹ There were, he claimed, 'a great number of the Dissenters opposed to Catholic claims' and, consequently, 'So far from thinking that this bill would be a stepping-stone to the Catholic question, he thought, on the contrary, that it would damnify it, and on that ground his opposition had been formed.'⁸⁶⁰ The motion was opposed as a government question. Nonetheless, Huskisson's determination to consider repeal as inextricably linked to emancipation exemplifies the perspective adopted by many Tory politicians, including those who refused to fall in line with the cabinet. Dissenters' hostility to Catholicism, and their prospective opposition to emancipation, encouraged thirty seven anti-Catholic MPs to support repeal in the Commons. Twenty of these individuals were Ultra-Tories who opposed emancipation to the bitter end.⁸⁶¹ As Hilton has noted, these individuals 'disliked Dissenters but disliked Papists more' and their votes were significant: Russell's motion passed by a marginal 44 votes.⁸⁶²

The debates on repeal also cast light on the extent to which pragmatism outweighed principle in ministerial considerations of religious restraints. Peel and the administration sought to mount opposition to Russell's motion, but the ideological justification of the Church-state relationship, derived from the seventeenth century writings of William Sherlock, was rejected. The Test Act, Sherlock had argued, was not the cause of

⁸⁵⁷ R. A., Gaunt 'Peel's Other Repeal: The Test and Corporation Acts, 1828' *Parliamentary History*, 33:1 (2014), p. 249. On the divisions within Dissent regarding repeal and the Catholic question see Davis, *The Politics of Dissent*, pp. 222-230.

⁸⁵⁸ G.I.T. Machin, *The Catholic question in English politics, 1820 to 1830*, (Oxford, 1964), p. 114.

⁸⁵⁹ William Huskisson, Speech to the House of Commons, 26 February 1828, in *Huskisson's Speeches*, vol. III, p. 226; Machin 'Resistance to repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts', pp. 123-124.

⁸⁶⁰ William Huskisson, Speech to the House of Commons, 14 March 1828, *PD*, NS, vol. 18 col. 1137.

⁸⁶¹ Machin 'Resistance to repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts', p. 124.

⁸⁶² Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad, and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), p. 383.

Dissenters' exclusion from office; it merely provided evidence of the qualification for government, that is, true faith. Although recommended by Bishop Lloyd, Peel did not feel that this principled perspective suited the Commons.⁸⁶³ The current system could only be defended in terms of expediency. Arguments from expediency had been advanced by North and Burke to defend subscription in the 1770s, and, in conjunction with Pitt, they had turned to this justification in the debates on repeal in 1787, 1789 and 1790. Yet, while in the context of the French Revolution expediency had promoted broad consensus against Dissenters' requests for repeal, now it provided a feeble foundation. Peel and Huskisson claimed that the current system worked and, on this basis, there was little reason to pursue change.⁸⁶⁴ Moreover, Huskisson argued that, while Protestant Dissenters were discriminated against in a formal sense, the passage of annual Indemnity Acts since 1727 ensured that they suffered no practical grievance. Finally, the Acts had secured peace and tranquillity between the Church and Dissent and their repeal might reignite religious controversy.⁸⁶⁵ Thus, in effect, the administration admitted that Anglican monopoly was merely symbolic. Indeed, importantly, Peel declared that he was

not prepared...to argue this question as if the continuance of the Test and Corporation Acts was so essentially interwoven with the protection of the constitution, or the security of the protestant Establishment, that one or both must fall by the concessions which the Dissenters require.⁸⁶⁶

This was in stark contrast to the anxieties articulated in 1790.⁸⁶⁷ It was also in stark contrast to the principled case advanced by the Ultra-Tory Lord Eldon that the 'Church of England, combined with the State, formed the constitution of Great Britain' and that the Test and Corporation Acts were 'necessary to the preservation of that

⁸⁶³ Gaunt 'Peel's Other Repeal' p. 247.

⁸⁶⁴ Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, pp.240-242; Hilton, *A mad, bad, and Dangerous People?* p. 381.

⁸⁶⁵ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 26 February 1828; Peel quoted in Gaunt 'Peel's Other Repeal', p. 249.

⁸⁶⁶ Peel quoted in Gaunt 'Peel's Other Repeal', p. 249.

⁸⁶⁷ See above pp. 157-161.

constitution'.⁸⁶⁸ Yet Eldon was virtually alone in his refusal to concede to expediency.⁸⁶⁹

Once the bill had passed to the Lords, Peel's careful management ensured that the Bishops mounted no opposition. Even the High-Church Bishop Van Mildert, although initially reluctant, was eventually reconciled to the bill by the argument that current legislation encouraged profanation of the sacrament. Thus he supported the substitution of a political rather than religious test which, instead of claim Church membership, simply disclaimed hostility to the Church.⁸⁷⁰ The question, in his eyes, was not 'whether the fortress shall be surrendered' but whether its outworks be 'reconstructed on a somewhat different plan.'⁸⁷¹ Even Eldon accepted that the sacrament should be replaced, and there was no division on the principle of the bill.⁸⁷² Discussion in the Lords focused on nature of the declaration proposed in place of the Sacrament, rather than resistance to the measure itself. An amendment from Edward Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff, to add the words 'upon the true faith of a Christian' to the declaration was passed by a large majority.⁸⁷³ Meanwhile, Eldon and his Ultra-Tory allies turned their efforts towards ensuring 'something of substantial protection... be substituted' for the sacrament, specifically, a declaration of Protestantism.⁸⁷⁴ Ultimately, though, Eldon was defeated and the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed by a bill which he deemed 'as bad, as mischievous, and as revolutionary, as the most captious Dissenter would wish it to be'.⁸⁷⁵ The measure indeed marked the beginning of a constitutional revolution and was succeeded the following year by perhaps the most revolutionary measure of all: Catholic emancipation. This will be the subject of the following chapter.

Conclusion

The defence of the Church of England and opposition to Protestant pluralism facilitated consensus between old Tories and conservative Whigs in the late eighteenth century; a

⁸⁶⁸ Lord Eldon, quoted in Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed, p. 532.

⁸⁶⁹ Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, p. 241.

⁸⁷⁰ William Van Mildert, Speech in the House of Lords, 17 April 1828, *PD*, NS, vol. 18, col. 1495.

⁸⁷¹ *Idem*, Speech in the House of Lords, 28 April 1828, *PD*, NS, vol.19, col. 164.

⁸⁷² Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., p. 532.

⁸⁷³ Machin 'Resistance to repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts', pp. 134-135.

⁸⁷⁴ Eldon 28 April, 1828. Duke of Newcastle, Kenyon and Redesdale support him. Machin 'Resistance to repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts', pp. 133-138.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

consensus which contributed to the rehabilitation of a broad, distinct Tory identity in the early nineteenth century. The outbreak of revolutions in America and France, and the enthusiasm exhibited by Dissenters for both events, encouraged concurrence regarding the importance of maintaining the religious establishment as a buttress of civil stability; it also promoted consensus regarding the necessity of upholding the Test and Corporation Acts to defend this establishment. Furthermore, there was a broad consensus amongst conservative Whigs and Tories, churchmen and statesmen, regarding the threat which rationalism posed to the Christian nature of the polity. It was widely believed that the erosion of religious principles was responsible for the horrors of the French Revolution and, when radicalism re-emerged in Britain in the opening decades of the nineteenth century, it was considered to be facilitated by irreligion. Consequently, rehabilitated Tory identity entailed a strong commitment to the preservation of orthodox Christianity within the polity.

However, important differences persisted regarding the authority of the Church, the truth of its doctrine, the principle of toleration and attitudes to Dissent. Old Tories, particularly High-Church Tories, painted Dissenters as schismatical, innately rebellious, and emphasised the temporal limits of toleration. Meanwhile, conservative Whigs, generally, tended to be more conciliatory towards Dissenters and praised the principles of liberty of conscience and toleration. Furthermore, High Churchmen tended to emphasise the truth of Anglicanism and faith in its doctrines, specifically, as integral to the cultivation of subjects' morality. Meanwhile, the arguments advanced by conservative Whig statesmen in defence of the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Test and Corporation Acts were rooted largely in pragmatism. They did not stress the inherent truth of the Church of England nor make prejudicial, sweeping claims regarding the rebellious nature of Dissenters, but rather drew attention to immediate political circumstances to justify religious restraints. Moreover, conservative latitudinarians, such as Burke, while committed to the preservation of doctrinal orthodoxy, advocated the preservation and establishment of orthodox Christianity, broadly defined, rather than asserting the truth of the Church of England. These differences were obscured in the late eighteenth century by political crises, particularly in the 1790s.

However, in the early nineteenth century, persistent differences promoted fissures, encouraged, in particular, by the rapid rise of evangelicalism both within and outside the Church of England. Despite the broad consensus that orthodox Christianity should be preserved and encouraged in the polity, Tories were divided regarding whether the dissemination of religious principles should remain an exclusively Anglican role. Moreover, once the French Revolution had subsided, differences emerged regarding the boundaries of toleration and the extent to which co-operation between Dissenters and Churchmen should be encouraged. Protestant pluralism no longer posed the primary threat to the constitution in the Church. Rather, it had been gradually superseded by Catholicism. The attention of Tories was consumed by this issue and, consequently, for many, it dictated their approach towards Protestant pluralism. While hostility to the extension of Dissenters' religious and civil freedoms invariably remained a key trait amongst some Tories, particularly High Churchmen, others promoted conciliation and Protestant unity in the face of a greater foe. Therefore, by 1828, hostility towards Protestant pluralism was no longer a centripetal force for Tories, nor a defining characteristic of Tory identity.

Chapter Four: Catholicism

Introduction

The issue of Catholic relief, debated in the early nineteenth century against the backdrop of growing discontent in Ireland, had a polarising effect on political opinion which made it increasingly difficult to adopt a moderate stance. For the Opposition Whigs, support of Catholic relief emerged as a centripetal force: it was, Tierney admitted to Grey in 1814, ‘the only tie by which for some time past we have... appeared to be kept together’.⁸⁷⁶ The same cannot be said for those in government. Following the fall of the Talents’ ministry in 1807, every administration was divided regarding the Catholic question.⁸⁷⁷ Under Lord Liverpool, the issue of Catholic relief was left as an ‘open question’ with the ministry neglecting to adopt an official policy in order to avoid fragmentation. Liverpool’s stroke in February 1827, and the accession of the pro-Catholic George Canning to the premiership, served to bring the divisions between pro- and anti-Catholic Tories into the open. The refusal of six cabinet members — among them, Peel, Wellington, and Eldon — to serve in Canning’s ministry was largely related to his support of removing Catholic disabilities.⁸⁷⁸ Moreover, the Catholic question was wholly responsible for the Tory split in 1829.⁸⁷⁹ This chapter accounts for the divisions which the Catholic question engendered and details their impact on Tory ideology and identity.

Tory defence of the Protestant constitution has received detailed coverage, particularly from Geoffrey Best, James Sack and J.C.D Clark.⁸⁸⁰ Yet the basis, extent and impact of Tory divisions on this issue are beyond the remit of Best’s study, and they are overlooked in James Sack’s comprehensive overview of the right-wing press. Similarly, perhaps the most significant defect of Clark’s excellent, if controversial, *English*

⁸⁷⁶ Tierney to Grey, 3 March 1814, quoted in Austin Mitchell, *The Whigs in opposition, 1815-1830* (Oxford: 1967), p. 13. There were some Whigs, like Erskine, who opposed Catholic relief, but their numbers were not substantial.

⁸⁷⁷ J.C.D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832: religion, ideology, and politics during the ancien regime*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, 2000), p. 306.

⁸⁷⁸ Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad, and dangerous people? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), p. 372

⁸⁷⁹ G.I.T. Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics, 1820-1830* (Oxford, 1964), p. 1.

⁸⁸⁰ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., pp. 514-527; James Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain, c. 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 217-151; Geoffrey F. Best, ‘The Protestant constitution and its supporters, 1800-29’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, 8 (1958), pp. 105-127.

Society is the lack of attention which it accords divisions regarding the issue of Catholic emancipation, particularly within Tory opinion. To borrow the words of Robert Hole, Clark provides ‘quite brilliantly, the view from Lord Eldon’s window’, with the ancien regime ‘as stable in 1828 as it had ever been’.⁸⁸¹ While acknowledging Ultra resistance and the integral nature of the Church within Britain’s constitution, Hole disagrees with Clark’s thesis by asserting the secular nature of political argument by 1828-1829. For Hole, the passage of emancipation was secured ‘not because the religious arguments for it defeated religious arguments against it’, but, rather, ‘because sufficient men of power were convinced by the secular arguments of political necessity and advantage.’⁸⁸² Indeed, as Hole suggests, Clark downplays the wider political and ideological context in which emancipation was debated, particularly its Irish dimension.⁸⁸³ The passage of emancipation is presented by Clark as an unnecessary ‘capitulation’ by Peel and Wellington which the County Clare election in 1828 enabled them to disguise as ‘a prudent act of political expediency, to avoid civil war in Ireland’.⁸⁸⁴ Yet, as G.I.T Machin has argued convincingly in his authoritative study, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, the ‘main concessions, including the final one of 1829, were only made because emancipation was mainly an Irish question.’⁸⁸⁵ In Ireland, Catholics constituted a large majority of the population and the persistent unrest in this country posed a consistent threat to British political stability, particularly following the Union in 1801. As outlined below, Ireland featured heavily in the arguments of pro-Catholics and it is impossible to understand the broader ideological context of debates on emancipation, and the failure of Tory Ultras to defend the Protestant constitution, without serious consideration of this dimension.

This chapter adds to the studies outlined above by examining the basis and extent of Tory divisions regarding Catholic emancipation, and the impact which divisions over this issue had on Tory ideology and identity. Throughout, it concurs with, and builds upon, Machin’s emphasis on the importance of Irish agitation; it also pursues a middle course between Hole and Clark by according significance to both principled and

⁸⁸¹ Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England, 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 269.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 269. Hole is referring to the first edition of Clark’s work, but the second edition can be subject to the same criticism. See Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., pp. 514-526.

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 534.

⁸⁸⁵ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, pp. 10-11.

pragmatic lines of argument within Tory ideology. It suggests that the Union with Ireland forced the issue of emancipation to the forefront of the political stage. Consequently, differences between ideological strains, obscured in the late eighteenth century, were exacerbated in a new political context. Specifically, disagreements emerged from the different degrees of emphasis accorded to truth and expediency in defences of religious exclusions and the Church establishment; from varied perspectives regarding what course of action would be politically expedient; and, finally, from different interpretations of the nature of the British constitution, particularly as settled in 1688. Moreover, it contends that, by resisting Catholic claims and stigmatising the politicians who sought to advance them, anti-Catholic Tories consolidated the transition underway in their civil political thought. That is, they painted themselves as the faithful preservers of religious and civil freedom, the Glorious Revolution which ratified it, and the Hanoverian Succession which had secured its perpetuity. In the process, they instigated a conscious departure from late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Tory identity. Meanwhile, pro-Catholic Tories adopted pragmatic arguments which, rhetorically, emulated those of Edmund Burke by depicting the constitution as mutable and capable of adaptation to changing political circumstances. They also elevated expediency over principle, a course eventually adopted by Peel and Wellington once they had assumed the reins of government. Nonetheless, there remained shades of difference between pro-Catholic Whigs and pro-Catholic Tories, and shades of consensus between the latter and anti-Catholic Tories.

Catholicism and the Extent of Consensus

The relationship between Toryism and Catholicism was ambiguous in the early eighteenth century largely because of Tory sympathy for the Catholic James II and his heirs. Of course, Tories, particularly High-Church Tories, had had little sympathy for James's policies of religious indulgence; five of the nine of Nonjuring Bishops had been amongst the seven imprisoned in the Tower of London for opposing the King's Declaration of Indulgence in 1688.⁸⁸⁶ Subsequently, the exiled Stuarts were acutely conscious of the difficulties which their Catholicism posed to rallying support for the

⁸⁸⁶ Robert D. Cornwall, 'Nonjuring bishops (*act.* 1689–1710)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press. [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/theme/47712>, accessed 24 Sept 2015]

Jacobite cause. Thus, Linda Colley has noted, the Stuarts' proclamations, particularly those issued after 1715, always concentrated on the preservation and protection of the Church of England.⁸⁸⁷ Nonetheless, just as Tory identity was considered disloyal to the state due to its connection with Jacobitism, so it was easily painted as hostile to the Protestant Succession secured in 1689, and sympathetic to Catholic tyranny by supporting James's claim to the throne.

After the failure of the Jacobite uprising in 1745, Catholicism ceased to pose a substantial, political threat to the Hanoverian dynasty. The fading of the Stuart challenge to the throne, John Wolffe has suggested, contributed significantly to a waning of anti-Catholicism in late eighteenth-century society at large. The dissolution of the Jesuits, in 1773, aided this development by indicating a moderation in the Church of Rome under Clement XIV.⁸⁸⁸ Moreover, though a movement for Catholic emancipation initially emerged in England in the 1780s, relative to Protestant Dissenters, the English Catholics remained few in numbers and somewhat isolated; they sought to present themselves as another domestic dissenting sect rather than as members of a universal Church with foreign connections.⁸⁸⁹ Also, unlike Protestant Dissenters, English Catholics were relatively passive, encouraging the notion that the case for their repression was defunct.⁸⁹⁰ James Sack, in his study of the right-wing press, agrees with Wolffe's assessment regarding the waning of anti-Catholicism, claiming that the Northite press exhibited Catholic sympathies.⁸⁹¹ Meanwhile, North himself, speaking in 1780, declared that 'Popery had been on the decline within the last 20 years...there were no Jacobites now, and few peers professed the Catholic religion.'⁸⁹² During North's administration there were legislative manifestations of waning anti-Catholicism in the form of the Quebec Act (1774) and Catholic Relief Act (1778). The former enabled Catholic inhabitants in the province of Quebec to practise their religion freely; it also authorized the Catholic Church to collect tithes and waived the Test Act

⁸⁸⁷ Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 42.

⁸⁸⁸ John Wolffe, *The Protestant Crusade in Britain 1829-1860* (Oxford, 1991), p. 10.

⁸⁸⁹ Catholics numbered 75,000 in 1760, compared to 343,000 Protestant Dissenters, while in 1800 Catholics numbered 120,000 compared to 878,300 Protestant Dissenters. See Clive Fields, 'Counting Religion in England and Wales; The Long Eighteenth Century, c 1680- c. 1840', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 63: 4 (2012), p. 710. Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 10.

⁸⁹⁰ Wolffe, *The Protestant Crusade in Britain 1829-1860*, p. 10.

⁸⁹¹ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 223.

⁸⁹² Lord North, speech in the House of Commons, 20 June 1780, *PH*, vol. 21, col. 705.

so that Catholics could hold office. The latter, passed largely in response to the demands of the American war, enabled Catholics to inherit property legally and relieved priests from the threat of life imprisonment.⁸⁹³ Though the Catholic Relief Act provoked fierce resistance in the form of the infamous Gordon Riots, Wolffe proceeds to argue that this incident only encouraged sympathy for Catholics and antipathy towards active Protestantism.⁸⁹⁴ This was certainly the case on a high-political level. In the wake of the Gordon Riots, North warned the House ‘to weigh well the consequences that might attend its repeal’ and subsequently added his opinion that it would be ‘impolitic to continue restraints of the sort imposed by the Act of king William’ which the Catholic Relief Act had abolished.⁸⁹⁵

The apparent willingness to accommodate Roman Catholics was coupled with reluctance to extend religious freedom to Protestant Dissenters regarding subscription to the Thirty-Nine articles as well as a simultaneous, conspicuous revival of High-Church attitudes towards episcopacy and doctrine.⁸⁹⁶ In this context, Whig and Dissenting suspicions that George III’s court had been infiltrated by Tory monarchical principles were concomitant with accusations that the spirit of Popery had also been revived and was aiding Britain’s slide towards tyranny.⁸⁹⁷ Francis Blackburne, author of the controversial *Confessional* which attacked subscription, suggested that Popery was being encouraged by ‘some to whom their political principles may be useful; and from others to whom their sort of church-discipline is not exceptionable’, adding that ‘papists’ would ‘ever be the favourites of a tory administration, to whom the maxims of civil liberty are odious’.⁸⁹⁸ Similarly, in 1774, Joseph Priestley complained that ‘mercy is extended to papists and rebels, because friends of despotism, and even to murderers,

⁸⁹³ G.M. Ditchfield, ‘The Subscription Issue in British Parliamentary Politics, 1772-1779’, *Parliamentary History*, 7 (1988), p. 61; William Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688-1832: Unity and Accord* (London, 2001), p. 100.

⁸⁹⁴ Wolffe, *The Protestant Crusade in Britain*, p. 8.

⁸⁹⁵ Lord North, Speech in the House of Commons, 20 June 1780, *PH*, vol. 21. cols. 700-701, 705.

⁸⁹⁶ See Chapter Two.

⁸⁹⁷ Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England, 1714-80: a political and social study* (Manchester, 1993), pp. 184-185; John Seed, “‘The Fall of Romish Babylon anticipated’: plebian Dissenters and anti-popery in the Gordon riots’ in Ian Haywood and John Seed (eds.), *The Gordon Riots: Politics, Culture and Insurrection in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 81-83.

⁸⁹⁸ Francis Blackburne, *The memoirs of Thomas Hollis Esq.* (London, 1780), p. 352.

if they be employed against the constitution of the country'.⁸⁹⁹ Amidst the debates over subscription, Lewis Bagot, the Tory canon of Christ Church and subsequently Bishop of Bristol, Norwich and St Asaph, certainly found it necessary to refute accusation of Popery, replying to Blackburne specifically.⁹⁰⁰ Similarly, in the wake of the Quebec Act, William Jones acknowledged that it was 'Whigs and Dissenters' who had seized most upon this legislation as 'a ground for clamour', hastening to add his own censure that the measure constituted both an 'injustice' and 'absurdity'.⁹⁰¹

Despite Dissenting suspicions, reflections on the corruptions of Rome were never too far below the surface in the discourses of High-Churchmen, and High-Church sympathy for Catholicism should not be overstated.⁹⁰² Nonetheless, faced with the proliferation of rational Christianity, Tory High-Churchmen generally did not perceive Catholicism as an immediate threat in the late eighteenth century. Thus anti-Catholicism, even if it did not disappear, was certainly muted. Even when the corruptions of Catholicism were noted in Tory discourses, it was often on the opposite extreme unleashed by the Reformation, and the dangers of pursuing reformation too far, that emphasis fell. William Jones suggested in his *Preservative Against the Publications Dispersed by Modern Socinians* (1774) that the 'imperfection of the Reformation' was 'declaimed upon of late', with those who sought to abolish the Thirty-Nine Articles propagating the notion that 'though Popery is gone, many errors are still remaining'. Yet the Reformation, Jones contested, had gone far enough. Those who were 'Lovers of the Gospel in Luther's days took off the superstitious dress of Christianity, but left the body of it secure. If we go to work now, we must reform it to the bone'.⁹⁰³ Similarly, in the

⁸⁹⁹ Joseph Priestley, *An Address to Protestant Dissenters of All Denominations, on the Approaching Election of Members of Parliament...* (London, 1774), p. 5, quoted in John Seed, "'The Fall of Romish Babylon anticipated": plebian Dissenters and anti-popery in the Gordon riots', p. 82.

⁹⁰⁰ Lewis Bagot, *A Defence of the Subscription to the XXXIX Articles ...* (Oxford, 1772), p. 24.

⁹⁰¹ William Jones, 'An Address to the British Government on a Subject of present Concern, 1776', in William Stevens (ed.), *The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of the Rev. William Jones...in six volumes*, vol VI, (London, 1810), p. 361.

⁹⁰² Idem, *A Letter to a Young Gentleman at Oxford, intended for Holy Orders ...* (London, 1769), p. 13 in footnote marked *; George Horne, *The providence of God manifested in the rise and fall of empires. A sermon preached at St. Mary's, in Oxford, at the assizes... on Thursday, July, 27. 1775* (Oxford, [1775]), p.19; Thomas Nowell, *A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on Thursday, January XXX, 1772 ...* (London, 1772), p. 17.

⁹⁰³ William Jones, *A Preservative against the publications dispersed by modern Socinians ...*, 3rd ed., (London, 1786), p. 12. Similarly, Jones's *A Letter to a Young Gentleman at Oxford*, pp. 15-16, suggested that the Reformation, though 'a term very respectable in itself', had been capitalised by the Devil to 'revive all the folly and wickedness that had ever entered into the heart of man', lending encouragement

context of the French Revolution, Jones's companion, John Reeves, in his controversial *Thoughts on English Government* (1795) noted that the Reformation sat alongside the Glorious Revolution as one of 'those two great events' from which 'errors and misconceptions relative to the nature of our Government, have taken their rise'.⁹⁰⁴ The former had been conducted to remove the 'errors and superstitions that had gradually been introduced into the doctrines and ceremonies of the Church by the Popish Clergy' as well as 'to put an end to the long-contested claim of the Pope to exercise ecclesiastical dominion over the King's subjects'.⁹⁰⁵ These goals, Reeves urged, 'and no more seems to have been the sum of what was done and designed to be done by the Reformation.' Where reformation had been pursued further, as in Geneva, it had resulted in the destruction of the entire Church establishment.⁹⁰⁶

There was widespread consensus amongst High Churchmen that it was Protestant Dissenters, not the see of Rome, which presented the biggest danger to Church and state. In the context of the American Revolution, William Stevens suggested that 'the persecution from presbyterianism', so recently witnessed in the maltreatment of American Episcopalians, was certainly 'not less to be dreaded than that from popery'.⁹⁰⁷ Stevens' close companion, Jonathan Boucher, an American loyalist forced to flee back to Britain following the American Revolution, reiterated that, in his eyes, it had never been satisfactorily proved 'that Papists hold any tenets more dangerous to the State, than many that are held by other Separatists; who yet are treated... with a much more liberal toleration'. Moreover, Boucher highlighted that, despite 'all the bad principles respecting Civil Government so frequently imputed to them', Catholics were 'clear of any suspicion of having begun that [rebellion] in America'; this charge fell squarely on Protestant Dissenters.⁹⁰⁸ Bishop Samuel Horsley presented similar arguments when

to those who 'could not think themselves well reformed, till they had purged their system of all the capital articles of Christianity; and indeed till they could hardly distinguish their own creed from that of *Mahomet*'.

⁹⁰⁴ John Reeves, *Thoughts on English Government Addressed to the Quiet Good Sense of the People of England in a series of Letters. Letter the First* (London, 1795), p. 25.

⁹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

⁹⁰⁷ William Stevens, *The Revolution Vindicated and Constitutional Liberty Asserted, in answer to the Reverend Dr. Watson's Accession Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, on October 25th, 1776...* (Cambridge, 1777), p. 56.

⁹⁰⁸ Johnathan Boucher, *A View of the causes and consequences of the American Revolution in thirteen discourses* (London, 1797), pp. 270-271, 244.

speaking on the bill for Catholic Relief presented in 1791 to give Catholics the same legal freedom of worship as Trinitarian, Protestant Dissenters. Given the reduction in Papal power and the extinction of the Stuarts, British Catholics had no other alternative than to acquiesce in ‘loyal attachment to the existing Government.’⁹⁰⁹ Indeed, Catholics, led by the ‘genuine principles of their religion... to dutiful submission, and cordial loyalty’, tended to ‘better understand’ the Gospel precepts of obedience than ‘many of those who call themselves our Protestant brethren’.⁹¹⁰ Unlike the previous Catholic Relief Act (1778), the passage of legislation to relieve Catholics in 1791 and 1793 evoked no popular outcry, a response owing much to the political climate introduced by the French Revolution.⁹¹¹

As Sack points out, the 1790s became the ‘*anni mirabili*’ of ‘pro-Catholic...sentiments on the Right’.⁹¹² The destruction of the Catholic Church in France instilled a degree of sympathy for exiled French clergy with Church and state combining to make provisions.⁹¹³ The Committee for the Relief of the Suffering of the Clergy and Laity of France, established in 1792, was funded and supported by government patronage and, in 1793, with authorization from the Crown, the Bishops subscribed funds and allowed collections in their dioceses for French émigrés, raising £41,314.⁹¹⁴ Even those who would become virulent anti-Catholics, like Charles Daubeny, offered their financial support while Oxford and Cambridge, two Anglican strongholds, contributed two thousand copies of the *Vulgate* for the use of French curates.⁹¹⁵ As Norman has

⁹⁰⁹ Samuel Horsley, *The Speech delivered by the Bishop of St David’s, in the House of Lords, May 31, 1791, on the second reading of the bill for the relief of papists, or persons professing the popish religion* ([London, 1791]), p. 2.

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹¹¹ Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 264.

⁹¹² Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 227.

⁹¹³ David Rice, ‘Combine Against the Devil: The Anglican Church and the French Refugee Clergy in the French Revolution’, *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 50 (1981), pp. 271-281; N. Aston, ‘A “lay divine”: Burke, Christianity, and the Preservation of the British State, 1790-1797’ in Nigel Aston (ed.), *Religious Change in Europe 1650-1914* (Oxford, 1997), p. 201.

⁹¹⁴ E.R. Norman, *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970: a historical study* (Oxford, 1976), p. 21; William Gibson, *Church, State and Society, 1760-1850* (Basingstoke, 1994), p. 49.

⁹¹⁵ Peter Nockles ‘The Waning of Protestant Unity and Waxing of Anti-Catholicism? Archdeacon Daubeny and the reconstruction of ‘Anglican’ identity in the later Georgian church, c. 1780-c. 1830’, in William Gibson and Robert Ingram (eds.), *Religious Identities in Britain, 1660-1832* (Aldershot, 2005), p. 213; Rice, ‘Combine Against the Devil: The Anglican Church and the French Refugee Clergy in the French Revolution’, p. 272. Others, such as Bishop Shute Barrington, hardly a sympathiser of Roman Catholicism under normal circumstances, even went as far as providing lodgings for exiles in his palace. D. Bellenger, ‘The Émigré Clergy and the English Church, 1789-1815’, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical*

suggested, these efforts were not simply the product of ‘dismay at the fate of religion in France, but also an application of the need to give public support to religion, even if it was Catholic and foreign’.⁹¹⁶ Indeed, with perceptions of the relationship between Dissent and Jacobinism reaching fever pitch, the belief that Catholicism was an ally in the struggle against rationalism, atheism and republicanism was widespread. Most notably, Edmund Burke, now the mouthpiece of conservative Whiggery, declared that just as the turmoil of the French monarchy rendered ‘the case of the sovereign of France the cause of all sovereigns’, so the ‘case of its church’ was ‘the cause of all churches’.⁹¹⁷ Burke’s Catholic sympathies derived in large part from his Irish roots, not simply events in France, but the latter certainly led him to view the Church of England and Church of Rome as united in the face of atheistic Jacobinism.⁹¹⁸ The present contest, Burke contended, was not between Anglicanism and Catholicism, or even Anglicanism and Presbyterianism; if ‘ever the church and the constitution of England should fall’ it was not ‘Presbyterian discipline, nor Popish hierarchy, that will rise upon their ruins’, but rather ‘the new fanatical religion, now in the heat of its first ferment, of the Rights of Man, which rejects all establishments’.⁹¹⁹ The High-Church, Tory reviews propagated similar messages. The *Anti-Jacobin Review*, in 1799, classed Roman Catholics as amongst the ‘true friends of Christianity’ likely to be alarmed by publications espousing latitudinarian principles, demonstrating the persistence of orthodox opinion united in the face of doctrinal laxity.⁹²⁰ Meanwhile, in 1794, the *British Critic* encouraged ‘mutual forbearance and charity, that may ultimately open us to a reconciliation’ with the Catholic Church, although the reviewer was careful to note that the ‘essential points of difference’ between Protestantism and Catholicism should

History, 34:3 (July 1983) p. 395. On the attitude of the Anglican clergy to the French Émigrés generally, and the impact of the French exiles on the waning of anti-Catholicism see *ibid.*, pp. 392-410.

⁹¹⁶ Norman, *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970* p. 21; also see Rice, ‘Combine Against the Devil: The Anglican Church and the French Refugee Clergy in the French Revolution’, p. 271, 276-278.

⁹¹⁷ Edmund Burke, ‘A Letter to the Empress of Russia’, 1791, in *The works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol. 5. p. 435.

⁹¹⁸ For Burke’s Irish roots and his early sympathy with Catholicism see Denis Gwynn, ‘To the “Beginners” the Glory: Edmund Burke and Catholic Emancipation’, *Catholic World*, 128 (1929), pp. 385-396; A. Paul Levack, ‘Edmund Burke, His Friends, and the Dawn of Irish Catholic Emancipation’, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 37: 4 (Jan., 1952), pp. 385-414; Ursula Henriques, *Religious toleration in England, 1787-1833* (London, 1961), pp. 101-104; T.H.D. Mahoney, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), pp. 189-241. On the impact of the French Revolution on his perspective of Roman Catholicism see Aston, ‘A “lay divine”: Burke, Christianity, and the Preservation of the British State, 1790-1797’ p. 204.

⁹¹⁹ Burke, ‘Letter to Richard Burke’, post 19 Feb 1792, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol.9, p. 647.

⁹²⁰ *AJ*, 3: 11 (May 1799), p. 1.

not be forgotten.⁹²¹ As Sack's study of the right-wing press demonstrates, such attitudes were by no means isolated.⁹²²

The relative consensus regarding the unthreatening nature of Catholicism was not sustained in the new century. The turn in attitudes towards Catholicism was motivated by a variety of factors, both in relation to domestic politics and changes on the continent. In the latter category was the resurgent Papacy of Pope Pius VII and Cardinal Consalvi, as well as the reunion of the Catholic Church and French state illustrated by the 1801 Concordat and 1804 coronation. Moreover, both the dictatorship of Bonaparte and, more significantly, the restoration of the Bourbons appeared to signal the revival of Catholic backed absolutism in Europe. Meanwhile, the former category included a significant growth in Catholic numbers due to an increase in Irish immigration, particularly after 1815. Not only did this change the social profile of British Catholicism, with most immigrants being of lower economic status, the immigration of Irish Protestants also encouraged anti-Catholic prejudices.⁹²³ Moreover, the relatively passive character of late eighteenth-century Catholicism was succeeded by aggressive proselytism under Bishop John Milner, accompanied by revived emphasis on the heretical nature of Protestantism.⁹²⁴

Most significant, though, were events in Ireland. The rebellion of 1798 highlighted the revolutionary potential of Ireland and the account of it provided by Musgrave in 1802 did much to reignite Protestant fears about the dangerous nature of Catholicism.⁹²⁵ The subsequent Union, in 1801, was essentially undertaken as a means of quelling Irish discontent and firmly cementing the Anglo-Irish relationship, but it also served to push the issue of emancipation to the forefront of the British political stage. In the eyes of William Pitt, the Union was necessary 'to counteract the restless machinations of an inveterate enemy, who has uniformly and anxiously endeavoured to effect a separation'

⁹²¹ *BC*, 3 (January 1794), p. 93.

⁹²² Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 229-230.

⁹²³ Wolfe, *The Protestant Crusade in Britain*, p.18. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 238.

⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*; Nockles 'The Waning of Protestant Unity and Waxing of Anti-Catholicism?' p. 215.

⁹²⁵ Richard Musgrave, *Memoirs of the various rebellions in Ireland* (1802). Musgrave argued that the rebellion was an attempt by Catholics, under the sway of their clergy, to eliminate Protestantism on the basis of its heresy.

of Britain and Ireland. Moreover, Pitt acknowledged that, in the event of a Union, ‘It may be proper to leave to parliament an opportunity of considering what may be fit to be done for his majesty’s catholic subjects, without seeking at present...to make any provision upon that subject.’⁹²⁶ This point initially met consensus from those who would become both pro- and anti-Catholic Tories. George Canning, the most controversial pro-Catholic Tory, agreed that the object of the Irish rebellion had been the ‘complete destruction of all connection’ between Britain and Ireland; he also agreed that ‘a union would satisfy the friends of the protestant ascendancy, without passing laws against the catholics, and without maintaining those which are yet in force.’⁹²⁷ Even Henry Addington, later to become the staunchly anti-Catholic Lord Sidmouth, suggested that he would not be averse to emancipation if ‘it were effected by the means of a Legislative Union’.⁹²⁸ He only appeared to change his mind in the wake of the Union when the reality of governing an increasingly turbulent, predominantly Catholic population in Ireland thrust the issue of emancipation into the spotlight.

Support for George III, his conscience, and the integrity of the prerogative promoted initial consensus amongst pro- and anti-Catholic Tories too. The relief of Catholic disabilities was first raised by Pitt in 1801. It met staunch rejection from the King who argued that the measure compromised the oath taken upon his coronation to defend the established Church. George III requested that the issue not be raised again and Pitt resigned. The real reasons underpinning Pitt’s resignation have been scrutinised by Fedorak, who has questioned Pitt’s commitment to the issue of Catholic emancipation and has instead highlighted the opportunistic nature of the move: beleaguered by ill health and exasperated by Cabinet divisions over military strategies and grain shortages, Pitt used the King’s refusal as an excuse to escape the burdens of office.⁹²⁹ It is also

⁹²⁶ William Pitt, Speech to the House of Commons, 21 April, 1800, in *The speeches of the Right Honourable William Pitt in the House of Commons...in four volumes* (hereafter *Pitt’s Speeches*), vol. IV, (London, 1806), p. 70, 82.

⁹²⁷ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 22 January, 1799, in R. Therry (ed.), *The Speeches of the Right Honourable George Canning. With a memoir of his life...in six volumes* (hereafter *Canning’s Speeches*), vol. I, (London, 1828), p. 131, 138.

⁹²⁸ *BC*, 13 (May 1799), p. 528.

⁹²⁹ C.J. Fedorak, ‘Catholic Emancipation and the Resignation of William Pitt in 1801’, *Albion*, 24:1 (Spring, 1992), pp. 49-64, especially pp. 58-63. Contemporaries also questioned whether Catholic emancipation was the real reason for Pitt’s resignation: Lord Malmesbury accused Pitt of escaping the intractable circumstances brought on by the war, others highlighted difficulties within the cabinet, while Grenville and Dundas believed the Catholic question was the true cause. Duffy, M., *The Younger Pitt*

likely that Pitt was irritated by the King's determination to interfere with ministerial affairs: from 1795-1800 Pitt had regularly neglected to consult the King on measures and had even overridden him upon occasion. The King's opposition to Catholic emancipation accompanied attempts to reassert monarchical influence by opposing military strategy in the Mediterranean.⁹³⁰ Regardless of the true reasons underlying Pitt's decision to leave office, the constitutional drama which followed enabled Tory ideologues to emphasise the constitutional importance of the King's position, asserting pro-prerogative positions. The infamous barrister, John Reeves, reflecting on Pitt's departure, turned to the 'question merely as it stands upon the law, and constitution of the realm'.⁹³¹ The fact that the King had declared his negative stance on the issue rendered any further parliamentary discussion of the measure pointless. Though Parliament might very well pass bills to secure the advancement of Catholics, it was already known that the crown's sanction would not be granted.⁹³² Therefore, when 'Parliament submits to him [the King] a bill, to which he refuses his assent; there the matter must end'.⁹³³ When Pitt did resume power in 1804, in compliance with the King's wishes, the issue was not revived and, consequently, the incident set an important constitutional precedent which acknowledged that the King continued to retain a significant power over his ministers.⁹³⁴ However, the 'Ministry of All the Talents' which took office following Pitt's death in 1806 was not so willing to adhere to the King's request. In March 1807 the ministry fell not because of the efforts of an effective opposition, but because they chose to raise the Catholic Question.⁹³⁵

Consequently, the election of 1807 witnessed mass support for the newly constituted Portland ministry with cries of 'No Popery' accompanying defences of the royal

(Harlow, 2000), p. 211. For a balanced discussion of the various factors see John Ehrman, *The Younger Pitt*, vol. 3: *The Consuming Struggle* (London, 1996), pp. 495-534, especially pp. 509-523. For Ehrman, although Pitt's ill health and the challenges of the war were certainly 'collateral', neither 'furnished the occasion of Pitt's going', and emphasis falls upon the deteriorating relationship between the minister and the King and their interactions regarding the point at issue. Quote from *ibid.* p. 520. For the discussion of Pitt's relationship with the King and the occasion of his resignation see pp. 520-523.

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56. Duffy also highlights significance of power-politics, noting Canning's claim, following a meeting with Pitt, that should the latter not make a stand on the issue, he would possess only a nominal power henceforth. See Duffy, *The Younger Pitt*, p. 212.

⁹³¹ Reeves, *Thoughts on English Government ... Letter the First*, p. 7.

⁹³² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁹³⁴ Hilton, *A mad, bad, and dangerous people?*, p. 97; Fedorak, 'Catholic Emancipation and the Resignation of William Pitt in 1801', p. 63.

⁹³⁵ Clark, *English Society*, 2nd ed., p. 508.

prerogative exercised to dismiss the Talents. It was at this point, Frank O’Gorman suggests, that the old party labels of Whig and Tory were widely adopted in the constituencies.⁹³⁶ Even the pro-Catholic Canning, adhering to his Pittite roots, supported the exercise of the prerogative in 1807 and, like the anti-Catholic John Bowles, severely censured the Whigs for trying to make the king ‘most unconstitutionally responsible in his own person’.⁹³⁷ Meanwhile, backbenchers who would later rebel as the ‘Ultra’ defenders of the Protestant Constitution found their loyalty determined by the Talents’ attempts to further Catholic claims. The Duke of Newcastle, for instance, pledged the seven borough MPs under his patronage to sustaining Portland, Perceval and Liverpool as a means of preventing any alteration in the religious nature of the constitution.⁹³⁸ From 1807 until the regency crisis of 1812 effectively removed George III from an active political role, only the opposition Whigs openly pursued emancipation.⁹³⁹ Thus it was only from 1812 onwards that Tory unity seriously began to fracture, culminating in the splits of 1827 and 1829.

Yet even in the midst of fissures, there were points of agreement between pro- and anti-Catholic Tories; points which ensured that, despite their support for emancipation, the former remained subtly distinct from the pro-Catholic Whigs. This distinction derived, in large part, from different attitudes to the increasingly democratic nature of the movement for emancipation in Ireland facilitated, above all, by the formation of the Catholic Association in 1823. The inauguration of the Catholic rent in February 1824 served to transform the Association into a nationwide movement which appeared both nationalistic and frighteningly democratic. As Machin notes, the impact of the Association was to ‘sharpen the current divisions of opinion on the Catholic question between English political groups’ with fissures emerging ‘not between pro- and anti-Catholics but between Whigs and Tories’. While Radicals enthusiastically welcomed the movement, opposition Whigs, though not fond of popular associations, sympathised

⁹³⁶ Frank O’Gorman, ‘Pitt and the Tory reaction to French revolution, 1789-1815’ in H.T Dickinson, (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke, 1989), p. 27.

⁹³⁷ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, March, 1807, in *Canning’s Speeches*, vol. II, p.284. Also see John Bowles, *Strictures on the motions made in the last Parliament respecting the pledge which his majesty was under the necessity of demanding from his late ministers...in a letter to the right hon. Lord Viscount Howick by John Bowles Esq.* (London, 1807).

⁹³⁸ Richard Gaunt, ‘The Fourth Duke of Newcastle, the Ultra-Tories and the Opposition to Canning’s Administration’, *History*, 88:292 (2003), pp. 570-71.

⁹³⁹ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 13.

with its aims and agreed to its suppression only if accompanied by emancipation.⁹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the Association immediately aroused antipathy and suspicion from anti-Catholic Tories. This body, it was claimed, had been ‘ostentatiously formed to defy, and trample upon, the laws’.⁹⁴¹ Moreover, as a popular political movement, it ‘usurped various of the functions of the Government’ and was deemed a primary cause in rendering Ireland ‘convulsed and ungovernable’.⁹⁴² These sentiments resonated with those of pro-Catholic Tories who viewed the Association as a democratic challenge to the legitimate authority of the state and therefore ‘inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution’.⁹⁴³ Unlike the Whigs, they adopted the perspective that emancipation could only be considered if the Association was suppressed.⁹⁴⁴ It was a ‘Self-elected, self-constructed, self-assembled, self-adjourned’ organisation, Canning declared in 1825, dedicated to ‘arrogating to itself unconstitutional powers, tending to excite animosity, and to check the progress of national improvement’.⁹⁴⁵ It also impeded the progress of the Catholic question by exciting English antipathy.⁹⁴⁶ Thus relative coherence amongst Tories regarding the civil element of the constitution, specifically the danger of posed by popular assemblies, persisted.⁹⁴⁷

Consensus also persisted regarding the illegitimacy of natural rights. Both pro- and anti-Catholic Tories argued that Catholic concessions should by no means be considered in terms of abstract, natural rights. Denial of a right to exercise political power had underpinned the parliamentary rejection of attempts to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts in 1787, 1789 and 1790.⁹⁴⁸ This was a position which the conservative Whig premier, William Pitt, maintained in his subsequent speeches on Catholic relief, declaring, in 1805, that it was in terms of expediency, connected to circumstances, that ‘the measure ought alone to be discussed’.⁹⁴⁹ The avidly pro-Catholic conservative Whig, Edmund Burke, also denied that concessions should be considered in relation to

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 45-48.

⁹⁴¹ *BEM*, 18:105 (October 1825), p. 480.

⁹⁴² Ibid., 21:125 (May 1827), p. 589.

⁹⁴³ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 15 February, 1825, in *Canning's Speeches*, vol. V, p. 330.

⁹⁴⁴ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 48.

⁹⁴⁵ Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 15 February, 1825, p. 332, 340.

⁹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 347.

⁹⁴⁷ See above, pp. 80-81.

⁹⁴⁸ See above p. 158.

⁹⁴⁹ William Pitt, Speech to the House of Commons, 13 May, 1805, in *Pitt's Speeches*, vol. IV, pp. 436-7.

abstract rights, reinforcing his distinction from the more liberal Whigs headed by Charles James Fox. In the nineteenth century, Canning, the most conspicuous Tory supporter of emancipation, adopted a similar stance.⁹⁵⁰ Natural rights arguments were, of course, rejected by anti-Catholic Tories too. John Bowles, in response to the Talents' attempts to secure relief in 1807 asked, 'In what code...does it appear, that the British Constitution bestows on all descriptions of persons an equal right of admissibility to power and office?' The question was, of course, rhetorical: the 'Constitution takes especial care to prevent such an equality', operating instead on 'a principle of *exclusion*' which ensured that 'offices are bestowed for the benefit of the community, rather than of the individuals who are to fill them.'⁹⁵¹ The *British Critic* and *Anti-Jacobin* both rejected the notion that any subject held a right to govern while the High-Churchman, Charles Daubeny, was equally dismissive: in 1827 he declared that to talk of 'an equalization of civil rights in society' was, quite simply, 'to talk revolutionary nonsense'.⁹⁵² In the wake of the French Revolution, natural rights arguments had become outdated and were adopted only by the most liberal Whigs.⁹⁵³

Rather, it was the issue of whether it was expedient to grant Catholic concessions, and, indeed, whether expediency constituted a legitimate ground for considering Catholic claims, which formed the crux of Tory discussions and divisions over emancipation. Pro- and anti-Catholic Tories presented fundamentally different interpretations of the nature of the constitution and the political threat posed by Catholicism. These differences, it will be suggested, engendered alternative responses to Irish discontent and the question of emancipation. In order to elucidate these different responses, and their relationship to the development of Tory identity, Tory pro- and anti-Catholicism will be dealt with distinctly in the ensuing sections.

⁹⁵⁰ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 22 June, 1812, in *Canning's Speeches*, vol. III, p. 295.

⁹⁵¹ John Bowles, *Strictures on the Motions made in the last parliament*, p. 47.

⁹⁵² *BC*, 44 (June 1813), p.644; *AJ*, 52:229 (June 1817), p.396. Charles Daubeny, *A Letter to the Right Honourable George Canning. By the Rev. C. Daubeny ... in the character of one of the old reformers* (London, 1827), p. 33.

⁹⁵³ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 16.

Pro-Catholicism

Machin has suggested that Ireland provides the ‘connecting link’ in the story of Catholic persecution and the passage of emancipation in 1829.⁹⁵⁴ Indeed, relief of Irish discontent was the driving force behind the arguments of pro-Catholic Tories. Canning, in 1812, suggested that the ‘habitual irritation of the public mind [in Ireland]...is produced by the unsettled state of this [the Catholic] question’, and that it ‘must be settled, if we wish to give peace to the united kingdom [*sic*].’⁹⁵⁵ It was political exclusions which were the source of Irish discontent and thus, pro-Catholics argued, removing them was the key to alleviating Irish grievances. Emancipation was a measure ‘eminently calculated to conciliate the Irish, and the cement the Union’ by ‘unit[ing] them to Great Britain firmly and effectually’, Canning claimed in 1821.⁹⁵⁶ Towards the end of the 1820s, as Ireland approached the brink of civil war, insistence that Catholic relief would serve as a conciliatory measure became more urgent. In 1828, Huskisson noted that, in late years, public opinion had become more favourable to Catholic relief. But, he hastened to add, ‘while good is thus speeding, the progress of evil is not less rapid in Ireland. In this race of contending principles, the evil will overcome the good, unless its retardation shall be effected by those measures which are now recommended for the tranquillization of Ireland.’⁹⁵⁷ While the anti-Catholics worried about the dangers which would accompany the passage of emancipation, these were speculative; those presented by the Irish situation were real.⁹⁵⁸ Thus, in the nineteenth century, the Tories who supported Catholic emancipation were, above all, pragmatists. They believed that discontent in Ireland was grounded in the political exclusion of Catholics and that failure to make concessions only served to aggravate this situation. However, while the pro-Catholic case was ultimately a response to events in Ireland, those who supported relief were faced with legitimating this stance ideologically. This section will suggest that the arguments pro-Catholic Tories selected to do so were derived from the conservative Whig tradition, particularly that articulated by Edmund Burke.

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁹⁵⁵ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 22 June 1812, pp. 294-295.

⁹⁵⁶ *Idem*, Speech to the House of Commons, 2 April, 1821, *Canning's Speeches*, vol. IV, p. 304.

⁹⁵⁷ William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 12 May, 1828, in *The Speeches of the Right Honourable William Huskisson with a biographical memoir...in three volumes* (hereafter *Huskisson's Speeches*), vol. III, (London, 1831), p. 303.

⁹⁵⁸ *Idem*, Speech in the House of Commons, 10 May, 1825, in *Huskisson's Speeches*, vol.II, p. 418.

A broad similarity between the pro-Catholic Tories and their conservative Whig predecessors was a determination to consider disqualifications from political office, whether exercised against Catholic or Protestant nonconformists, as a political rather than a religious matter. It was consideration of the question in a solely political light which enabled Huskisson to insist repeatedly upon his abhorrence for Catholic doctrines and tenets while simultaneously declaring himself to be ‘warmly attached to the Catholic cause’. Legislating on the question of Catholic political rights, Huskisson told parliament in 1829, ‘had nothing to do with those tenets or doctrines.’⁹⁵⁹

Theologically, Canning pointed out, Catholics stood much closer to the Church of England than many Protestant Dissenters who, by occasionally conforming, could sit in parliament, including Unitarians.⁹⁶⁰ Moreover, if a connection was assumed between theology and political conduct, a Roman Catholic, who insisted ‘on the necessity of good works as part of his religious creed’, retained greater potential to be a good subject than the Calvinist evangelical who, believing in predestination, ‘thinks himself irresponsible for his actions.’⁹⁶¹ But the issue was not about doctrines.

Transubstantiation had been appointed a test of political loyalty not because the doctrine itself was vicious but because of ‘the supposed political as well as spiritual connection...with a foreign power’ attributed to Catholics.⁹⁶² Yet pro-Catholics accepted Catholic claims that there was a distinction between the Pope’s spiritual and temporal power and that adherence to the Catholic religion did not automatically create Papists, nor was it inconsistent with exercising loyalty under a Protestant king and constitution.⁹⁶³ Thus, throughout debates regarding emancipation pro-Catholics maintained that Catholicism, as a religion, did not pose a threat. Therefore, as Canning declared in 1812, Catholic Relief should be considered ‘not in a religious, but in a political point of view...as a question of political expediency’.⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁵⁹ Idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 February, 1829, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol. III p. 389. Also see Idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 10 May, 1825, p. 410.

⁹⁶⁰ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 21 April, 1825, *Canning’s Speeches*, vol. V, p.394; Idem, Speech to the House of Commons, 26 March, 1821, *Canning’s Speeches*, vol. IV, p. 308.

⁹⁶¹ Idem, Speech to the House of Commons, 21 April, 1825, p. 394-395.

⁹⁶² Idem, Speech to the House of Commons, 16 March, 1821, *Canning’s Speeches*, vol.IV, p. 274. See also Idem, Speech to the House of Commons, 26 March, 1821, p. 291 and Idem, Speech to the House of Commons, 21 April, 1825, p. 392.

⁹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 396- 398.

⁹⁶⁴ Idem, Speech at the close of the fifth day’s pole, 13 October, 1812, in T. Kaye (ed.), *Speeches of the Right Hon. George Canning delivered on public occasions in Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1825), (hereafter *Canning’s Speeches...in Liverpool*), p. 19.

This approach differed fundamentally from the conceptualisation of the Church establishment advocated by Tory High-Churchmen in both the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁹⁶⁵ Rather, it resonated with the Warburtonian attitude to the Church establishment espoused by conservative Whigs including Pitt and Burke.⁹⁶⁶ Burke, for instance, thought it only just for a magistrate to impose religious restraints if ‘the person dissenting does not dissent from the scruples of ill-informed conscience, but from a party ground of dissension, in order to raise a faction in the state.’⁹⁶⁷ It was the perception that, by 1790, Protestant Dissenters were doing just that which facilitated Burke’s support for upholding the Test and Corporation Acts in 1790. In 1792, he even suggested that, if Dissenters ceased ‘to give alarm to the government’, repeal or modification of this legislation would be justified.⁹⁶⁸ In short, the imposition of religious restraints could only be justified by political danger, not religious difference *per se*. Consequently, this line of argument subordinated the preservation of religious truth to the need to maintain civil stability.

Pro-Catholics emulated this political focus, as did certain anti-Catholic Tories, though they reached quite different conclusions. Pro-Catholics pointed out that the restraints against Catholicism had been imposed in response to specific political dangers; they had been the product of both expediency and necessity in particular historical contexts. It was emphasised repeatedly that these dangers had now dissipated and, therefore, Catholic disqualifications were no longer justified. The Glorious Revolution, for instance, was the historical event ‘to which we are desired to refer most particularly’ regarding Catholic exclusions, ‘the spirit in which they were framed, and in which we ought to maintain them’, Canning noted. Yet, the disqualifications erected in this context had been justified by the ‘intimate connection of the Catholic religion...with political doctrines hostile to the civil and religious establishment of this country’ and with the cause of the Stuarts. However, this political association had now

⁹⁶⁵ See pp. 234-236.

⁹⁶⁶ See p. 157-166.

⁹⁶⁷ Edmund Burke, ‘Speech on Toleration Bill 17 March 1773’, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. 2, pp. 384-385.

⁹⁶⁸ Idem, ‘Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe 1792’, in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. 9, p. 609.

disappeared.⁹⁶⁹ Therefore the pro-Catholic Tories did not conceive of the Revolutionary Settlement, or any other religious restraints imposed against Catholics, as inviolable. Huskisson praised the Act of Settlement (1689) for expressly stipulating that the established Church should be Protestant. Yet, while affirming that he hoped this establishment would ‘long continue’, Huskisson also stressed that all the points and provisions of the Act were not ‘intended to be permanent, without the power of making alteration or amendment’. Indeed, the Act of Settlement had soon been altered by the Act of Union (1707) which admitted Scottish Presbyterians into parliament.⁹⁷⁰ Canning, meanwhile, urged that those who ‘deduce an example for our conduct from that of our ancestors who framed the penal laws, at, or immediately after the Revolution’ should ‘look a little lower on the page of history’. The penal code had been relaxed by ‘our more immediate predecessors’ and, Canning asked rhetorically, ‘With which of these generations have we the nearer sympathy?’⁹⁷¹ Moreover, because concessions had already been enacted under George III, further relief did not constitute an innovation but the pursuit of a principle already established.⁹⁷² Thus all the restraints imposed against Catholics, including the Revolutionary Settlement, as well as the relaxation of these restraints, were presented as successive stages in a constantly evolving body of legislation. This evolution was governed by expediency and circumstance and in the current context the exclusion of Catholics from political office was no longer necessary.

Underpinning this line of argument was a conceptualisation of the constitution not as a fixed body of laws, the integrity of which would be compromised by emancipation, but as capable of amelioration through gradual change. In this respect, the theory of the constitution which pro-Catholics presented bore striking resemblance to Burke’s. Indeed, the similarity between Burke’s and Canning’s political thought has been noted by both Sack and Lee.⁹⁷³ In his first *Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe* (1792), perhaps the most influential of his writings on the Catholic issue, Burke defended the

⁹⁶⁹ Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 22 June, 1812, p. 303; idem, Speech to the House of Commons 21 April, 1825, p. 401.

⁹⁷⁰ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 12 May, 1828, p. 301.

⁹⁷¹ Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 21 April, 1825, p. 402.

⁹⁷² Idem, Speech to the House of Commons, 22 June, 1812, p. 340.

⁹⁷³ Stephen Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism* (London, 2008), pp. 104-7, 150-151; Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 249-250.

establishment of the Church of England as ‘a fundamental of the constitution’.⁹⁷⁴ However, he denied the perception that ‘all the *laws of regulation*, made from time to time, in support of that fundamental law, are, of course, equally fundamental and equally unchangeable.’⁹⁷⁵ Amongst these laws of regulation Burke included the exclusion of nonconformists from the political state.⁹⁷⁶ There were many examples of laws which had been introduced ‘in support of things truly fundamental in our constitution’, though themselves ‘*secondary and subsidiary*’, being repealed on the basis of expediency. ‘They have yielded to circumstances: particularly where they were thought, even in their consequences, or obliquely, to affect other fundamentals.’⁹⁷⁷ Constitutional change was not only possible, it was essential to preserving its ‘fundamental’ elements. ‘We must all obey the great law of change’, Burke argued, ‘It is the most powerful law of nature’. Society would continue to evolve and all ‘that human wisdom can do,’ therefore, ‘is to provide that the change shall proceed by insensible degrees’ in order to secure ‘all the benefits of which may be in change, without any of the inconveniences’. By engaging the issue of Catholic rights, and providing concessions, legislators held the capacity to ‘proceed by degrees’.⁹⁷⁸

Canning delivered one of his most important speeches on the Catholic question in support of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill presented to parliament in 1825. The speech certainly contained Burkean undertones regarding the need to permit constitutional concessions: ‘Is there no danger that if you do not anticipate change, change may overmaster you?’ The question was rhetorical: ‘If a change must be made, it is surely better that it should be brought about temperately and amicably.’⁹⁷⁹ Like Burke, Canning argued that it was necessary to concede constitutional change when it could be brought about temperately and, importantly, without endangering the fundamental elements of the constitution with subversion. Huskisson, too, emphasised the necessity and expediency of Catholic relief. The demand for emancipation would only continue to grow and, in light of this, it was ‘better to give willingly and while we can, that which

⁹⁷⁴ On the influence of this work see Henriques, *Religious toleration in England*, p. 101.

⁹⁷⁵ Burke, ‘Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe 1792’, pp. 611-612.

⁹⁷⁶ Thus, as noted above, Burke even suggested that if Protestant Dissenters ceased to pose a political danger then the Test and Corporation Acts could quite reasonably be repealed. *Ibid.*, p. 609.

⁹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 612.

⁹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 634.

⁹⁷⁹ Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 21 April, 1825, p. 400.

may one day be extorted from us.’⁹⁸⁰ In March 1829, on the brink of the passage of Catholic emancipation, Huskisson quoted Burke directly to legitimise his stance: ‘If there is...any one eminent criterion, which above all the rest, distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is this — well to know the best time and manner of yielding what it is impossible to keep.’ There was no way in which Huskisson felt he could ‘better describe the wisdom and courage of Government, in at length bringing forward this great question’.⁹⁸¹ The view that it was necessary to concede emancipation before constitutional change was forced, potentially at the expense of the constitution itself, was essentially pragmatic and intimately connected to the deepening crisis in Ireland. Nonetheless, legitimisation of this measure was grounded in conceptualisation of the constitution adapted from the conservative Whig tradition articulated by Burke.

Inextricably linked to the pro-Catholic and Burkean justification of constitutional change was the notion that through small, temperate change the constitution would be strengthened rather than endangered. Pro-Catholics were always careful to point out that they did not wish to undermine or imperil the Church of England’s established status. ‘I would not, even in appearance, meddle with the laws which secure that predominance to the Church of England — I would not sanction any measure which, even by inference, could be shown to be hostile to that establishment’, Canning insisted.⁹⁸² But, rather than threaten the Church of England, conceding Catholic demands was likely to render it more secure. As Huskisson pointed out in reference to the Church establishment, ‘the best of all securities is the absence of all those dangers which the present system engenders, foments, and calls into action.’⁹⁸³ Regarding the Protestant constitution generally, it was illogical to assume that Catholics would seek to subvert it through an attack on its institutions if they were admitted to its benefits.⁹⁸⁴ Importantly, because emancipation held the potential to render the Church of England more secure, inconsistency between this measure and the King’s Coronation Oath was

⁹⁸⁰ Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 12 May, 1828, p. 304.

⁹⁸¹ Idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 6 March, 1829, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol.III, p. 404.

⁹⁸² George Canning, Speech in the House of Commons, 21 April 1825, p. 390. For a similar expression see William Huskisson, Speech in the House of Commons, 3 March, 1829, in *Huskisson’s Speeches*, vol III, p. 396.

⁹⁸³ Idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 12 May, 1828, p. 295.

⁹⁸⁴ Idem, Speech in the House of Commons, 10 May, 1825, p. 418.

not axiomatic; indeed, in 1827 Canning claimed that this point had even been acknowledged by the anti-Catholic Lord Liverpool.⁹⁸⁵

Anti-Catholicism

In contrast to the pro-Catholic Tories, anti-Catholic Tories of a High-Church disposition argued that considerations of political expediency were not a legitimate basis on which to alter the Church-State relationship for the very simple reason that this relationship was not rooted in utility, but truth. In this respect they retained a degree of consistency with eighteenth-century High-Churchmen like Jones. Charles Daubeny, when issuing his charge to the clergy of Sarum in 1807, reminded his audience that if deemed to be subservient only to the immediate, temporary concerns of society, ‘one religion, when established, might serve the purpose as well as another’.⁹⁸⁶ Yet the ‘full revelation’ of God’s plan for salvation had been ‘vouchsafed to man under the Christian dispensation’ and thus it was illogical to presume that it was a matter of indifference to God ‘in what manner he is worshipped in a Christian country’. Rather, it was axiomatic that ‘the promotion of what by its establishment in any country is considered to be the *true* religion, ought to be a primary object with the Government of that country’.⁹⁸⁷ In England, this meant the promotion and protection of Anglicanism.

Because, in the perspective of High Churchmen, the establishment of the Church of England was grounded in truth rather than expediency, they severely criticised pro-Catholic claims that Catholic relief was solely a political question. In 1813, Daubeny complained that pro-Catholics, by ‘placing the contemplated measure on the sole ground of *liberality* and *justice*’ had perverted the public mind ‘to view the present subject merely through a *political* medium’.⁹⁸⁸ Yet the Catholic Church, through its exercise of spiritual tyranny, failed to separate religion from politics. On this basis, if, ‘in conformity with the imposing language of the day, the Catholic Question’ was

⁹⁸⁵ George Canning, Speech to the House of Commons, 6 March, 1827, *Canning’s Speeches*, vol.VI, p. 165.

⁹⁸⁶ Charles Daubeny, *A charge delivered before the Reverend the clergy of the archdeaconry of Sarum, on the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, of August, 1807* (London, 1807), p. 6.

⁹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

⁹⁸⁸ *Idem*, *A charge delivered to the clergy of his Archdeaconry; at his visitation in 1813* (London, 1813), p. 21.

considered ‘in its outset a mere *political* one; still, it will not fail to terminate in religion’.⁹⁸⁹ Daubeny criticised Canning specifically for adopting a Warburtonian approach to the Church’s establishment as did the High-Church reviews.⁹⁹⁰ A reviewer in the *Anti-Jacobin* was ‘at a loss’ to understand how a ‘representative of a Christian nation’ could argue a point so intimately linked with ‘many religious considerations’ from an ‘exclusively... political point of view, without involving in his discussion any religious considerations, and without admitting, that religion had any thing to do with it.’⁹⁹¹ Britain was a Christian state, the development of which, from the Reformation to the Glorious Revolution, had been characterised by determination to preserve the unadulterated doctrines of the Gospel.⁹⁹² The admittance of Catholicism was, quite simply, anathema to this development, and God’s greater plan for man’s salvation.

Even if emancipation was considered in relation to temporal, political concerns, *Blackwood’s* insisted that the promotion of religious truth was essential. In 1825 the review claimed that there were two forms of government in the empire: moral government, which comprised good opinions, habits and feelings, and physical government, which was the political government of the state. Of the two, the moral was deemed the ‘exalted superior’ for ‘statutes to govern the body, can only be executed by means of the laws that govern the soul’.⁹⁹³ Religion was fundamental to the operation of moral government because it encouraged a perception of moral laws as binding and ‘the breach of them penal’. Thus, ‘if religion be destroyed, the Moral Government... must fall with it.’⁹⁹⁴ By religion, the reviewer hastened to explain, ‘We mean the religion of the Church of England’, because it was this institution which defended the true interpretation of Scripture.⁹⁹⁵ Anything a ‘Protestant or Catholic may call religion, which cannot be found in the Holy volume’ held the danger of unwittingly perverting man’s moral conduct:

While his nature leads him to believe, that there is a God whom

⁹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁹⁹⁰ Daubeny, *A Letter to the Right Honourable George Canning*, p. 27.

⁹⁹¹ *AJ*, 41:164 (February 1812), p.182 see also *BEM*, 21:127 (June 1827), p. 859.

⁹⁹² Daubeny, *A Letter to the Right Honourable George Canning*, pp. 25-26.

⁹⁹³ *BEM*, 17:98 (March 1825), p. 256.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 261-2.

he ought to obey and worship, it incessantly tempts him to violate every precept of genuine religion, and, therefore, he may be, at the same time, an outrageous fanatic in respect of opinion, and a very fiend in respect of practice.’⁹⁹⁶

Indeed, the distortion of moral conduct encouraged by false religion could be seen in Ireland where, under the thralldom of Catholic priests, men were encouraged to subvert the laws of civil government.⁹⁹⁷ This example demonstrated that there remained an intimate connection between Catholicism and civil conduct which, of course, pro-Catholics denied.

While pro-Catholics stressed that Catholicism, as a religion, posed no political threat and that the political associations which had rendered it dangerous had disappeared, anti-Catholics disagreed with this assessment. Although emancipation was, in essence, a political rather than religious issue, anti-Catholics continued to assert that Catholicism encouraged particular modes of political behaviour. On this basis, Catholics continued to pose a political danger. It was urged that the Catholic Church continued to adhere to the notion of infallibility, a principle derived from the corruptions of man rather than the Bible.⁹⁹⁸ The doctrine of infallibility axiomatically denied the legitimacy of the Reformation. Therefore much like High-Anglican condemnations of Protestant pluralism, Catholicism charged those who had left the Catholic Church with schism and propagated the notion that salvation was accorded exclusively to Catholics.⁹⁹⁹ The *Anti-Jacobin* was not alone when it suggested that consultation of scripture demonstrated that the Church of Rome’s ‘claim to the character of the only true church’ was ‘wholly without foundation’.¹⁰⁰⁰ Nonetheless, the doctrines of infallibility and exclusive salvation were believed to engender a hostile attitude towards Protestants who, Tories insisted, Catholics were always determined to persecute. The *British Critic*, for

⁹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 261, 263.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 257, 260.

⁹⁹⁸ John Bowles, *The Claims of the Established Church considered as an Apostolical Institution* (London, 1815), pp.120-121; *AJ*, 41:166 (Apr 1812), p. 432.

⁹⁹⁹ *BC*, 7 (May 1817), p. 502.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *AJ*, 41:164 (February 1812) p. 189. Also see Charles Daubeny, *A Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Sarum, in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th of July, 1824* (London, 1824), pp. 31-32.

instance, citing one apparently ‘popular’ Catholic tract, highlighted a passage in which the author proclaimed, in relation to Protestants, that ‘We are convinced that they are *schismatics*, by separating themselves from the communion of the Church of Christ; and *heretics*...and consequently that they have no part in the Church of Christ’. By such arguments, the reviewer noted, the ‘*Abhorrence* of the Protestants is inculcated’.¹⁰⁰¹ Similarly, the *Anti-Jacobin* claimed that the ‘true and staunch Catholic’, ‘not only considers all other religionists as heretics, as no christians, but treats them as such, persecutes them...and would rather exterminate the whole race, than *tolerate* one individual.’¹⁰⁰² These anxieties resonated with the assertion of High Churchmen, including Daubeny, that ‘irreconcilable enmity to Protestantism is an essential part of the Romanish Religion’ and that granting Catholics political power would only encourage their ‘inclination to employ it to the destruction of the Protestant cause’.¹⁰⁰³ As long as Catholics upheld the doctrines of infallibility and exclusive salvation they would not tolerate Protestants. Thus, unless these doctrines were renounced, Catholics could not be trusted to exercise political power.

In addition to encouraging antipathy towards Protestants, the Catholic religion was painted as inextricably linked to political disloyalty. Anti-Catholics argued that adherence to the infallibility of the Church of Rome and, importantly, the interlocking principle of Papal supremacy, meant that Catholics could not pledge allegiance to a Protestant King, nor loyally defend Britain’s Protestant constitution. Lord Liverpool, for example, argued that:

he could not admit that the Roman Catholic, whose allegiance was divided between a spiritual and a temporal master, was entitled to the enjoyment of the same civil rights and privileges as the Protestant, whose allegiance was, undivided, and who acknowledged but one ruler.¹⁰⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰¹ *BC*, 38 (December 1811), p. 620.

¹⁰⁰² *AJ*, 49:211 (December 1815) p. 581. Also see *BEM*, 21:125 (May 1827), p. 575.

¹⁰⁰³ Daubeny, *A charge delivered to the clergy of his Archdeaconry; at his visitation in 1813*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Lord Liverpool, Speech in the House of Lords, 17 May 1825, *PD*, NS, vol. 7, col. vol. 13, col. 741.

The issue of the Pope's authority over Catholics was complex. Catholics and their supporters denied that this authority could be exercised in a civil, or temporal, capacity. Yet, anti-Catholics argued, it was impossible for Catholics to reconcile the rejection of the Pope's spiritual authority with their consciences and this was problematic because the spiritual dimension of the Pope's authority was inseparable from Catholics' civil conduct. Consequently, although Papal supremacy in a temporal context might be denied, spiritual allegiance to the Pope entailed temporal consequences. The most sophisticated delineation of the relationship between the spiritual and temporal realms came from William Van Mildert, High-Church Bishop of Llandaff and, from 1826, Bishop of Durham. In 1825 Van Mildert delivered a speech in the House of Lords on the Catholic Question which constituted his most significant contribution to debates on the issue. Much like pro-Catholics, Van Mildert claimed that Catholics were not excluded on the basis of their theological tenets. Rather, they were excluded, primarily, because they were Papists.¹⁰⁰⁵ Unlike pro-Catholics, though, Van Mildert considered this connection to continue to pose a political danger. Though the Papal see might claim power only over spiritual and not temporal concerns, this did not mean that the two spheres were unconnected.¹⁰⁰⁶ Though theoretically distinct, practically, it was 'hardly possible to disunite them.'¹⁰⁰⁷ Like the soul and body, the two spheres 'act one upon the other by mutual co-operation, and affect each other by mutual influence'. Indeed, this connection formed the rationale for the alliance of Church and State 'which sustains the fabric of the British Constitution'.¹⁰⁰⁸

Turning to the limits of spiritual power, Van Mildert proceeded to outline its two elements: power of order and power of jurisdiction. The power of order emanated only from spiritual authority, conferring the ability to perform spiritual functions and thus the King, as a layman, could not exercise it. Spiritual jurisdiction, however, extended to the whole government of the ecclesiastical body and, although its purpose was spiritual, this power could not be exercised by any authority other than the state: 'spiritual *jurisdiction* belongs to the State, as allied to the Church, and although exercised by the

¹⁰⁰⁵ William Van Mildert, *Substance of a Speech, delivered in the House of Lords on Tuesday, May 17, 1825...on a Bill for the Removal of Certain Disqualifications of the Roman Catholics* (London, 1825), p. 4.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Church, is derived from the State', specifically, the monarch.¹⁰⁰⁹ Thus even if the Pope maintained only spiritual supremacy it would still render the allegiance of Catholic subjects divided: 'If *spiritual* jurisdiction or authority, in whatever degree, be acknowledged as the right of some other Potentate, that, whether it be more or less, is so much subtracted from the Supreme Authority claimed...by the Head of the State.' Therefore, no matter how sincere Catholics presumed their allegiance to the monarch to be, it would always be both divided and 'imperfect', rendering them unfit for office.¹⁰¹⁰

Moreover, because concerns of conscience were always to be considered as superior to immediate temporal concerns, spiritual allegiance retained the potential to be politically subversive. In 1817 the *Anti-Jacobin* published the speech of Bishop Herbert Marsh of Llandaff on the Catholic Question which had elaborated on this danger. The Catholic Church was governed by 'a FOREIGNER, who has neither DEPENDENCE ON, nor a COMMON INTEREST with, THE KING' and, therefore, 'the CIVIL ALLEGIANCE of those who belong to that Church, cannot fail to be weakened by their ECCLESIASTICAL ALLEGIANCE.' While it was claimed that 'the provinces of SPIRITUAL, and of TEMPORAL OBEDIENCE, is quite DISTINCT', thus eliminating the danger of the Pope's supremacy, the two contexts were not so easily separated: 'where religion and politics are so blended, as in this country, it is often difficult to determine whether the subject of dispute shall be regarded as a civil, or regarded as a religious question.' The very nature of the British constitution blurred the boundary between these two spheres. Indeed, Marsh added, the 'very case which is now before us, is a case in point. Some view it in a civil light, others in a religious light'. It was inevitable, therefore, that 'doubts should arise whether a subject of dispute shall be considered as a spiritual, or considered as a temporal concern'. In circumstances such as this, 'allegiance to THE POPE MUST interfere with allegiance to THE KING.' In such circumstances, the Catholic subject would prioritise the call of their conscience: 'when the soul is threatened on the one side, but the body only on the other, men will yield to that authority of which they are most afraid.'¹⁰¹¹ Disobedience to the king, for Catholics, would hold only temporal punishment; disobedience to the Pope threatened

¹⁰⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁰¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

¹⁰¹¹ *AJ*, 52:229 (June 1817), p. 399.

eternal damnation and thus the greater penalty. Consequently, they would always prioritise allegiance to the latter.

Catholic allegiance to a foreign power could and, indeed, had been used in attempts to subvert the Protestant, British state. In the context of the Napoleonic war, anti-Catholic Tories did not have to try too hard to identify ‘danger from the influence which the Pope, in subjection to Bonaparte, might have’.¹⁰¹² One reviewer suggested that ‘Catholic senators in our parliament, and counsellors at Whitehall, would assist the usurper more effectually in our subjugation in one year, than the total loss to us of “ships, colonies, and commerce.”’¹⁰¹³ Bonaparte was fully aware of the power accorded by ‘spiritual dominion: give him then, through the Pope, the command of the souls of men, and he will direct their bodies wherever he pleases.’¹⁰¹⁴ Similarly, in parliament, Liverpool noted that ‘James the Second, his son, and grandson, had, for a succession of years, recommended to the vacant Irish bishopricks, and that the Pope had invariably attended to their recommendations.’ The same tactic could easily be deployed by the King of France or Spain.¹⁰¹⁵ *Blackwood’s*, meanwhile, suggested that Catholics were ‘denaturalized’ by their religion. Thus ‘whatever he [a Catholic] may be in birth and blood, he is, in soul and action, a foreigner: he has no country, but Catholicism... it divests him of loyalty and patriotism.’¹⁰¹⁶ Catholics were anti-patriotic and disloyal, characteristics exhibited by the persistent state of discord in Ireland. It was to the disloyalty inherent in Catholicism that anti-Catholic Tories turned when discussing Irish discontent. Focusing on the papal supremacy, Kenyon noted the ‘danger arising...from absolution, being considered judicial’. During the Irish rebellion in 1798, ‘innumerable instances’ of absolution had occurred, encompassing ‘acts of rebellion even about to be committed!’¹⁰¹⁷ The *Anti-Jacobin*, emphasised the problematical nature of infallibility and exclusive salvation:

it appears to me that alienation from a *Protestant*, (that is, an

¹⁰¹² *Ibid.*, 41:164 (February 1812), p. 185.

¹⁰¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁰¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29: 115 (January 1808) p. 93.

¹⁰¹⁵ Lord Liverpool, Speech in the House of Lords, 17 May 1825, *PD*, NS, vol. 13, col. 742.

¹⁰¹⁶ *BEM*, 17:98 (March 1825), p. 273.

¹⁰¹⁷ Lloyd Kenyon [Lord Kenyon], *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question* (London, 1810), p.49; *AJ*, 29:115 (January 1808), p. 93.

heretical Government,) and hostility against *Protestants*, (that is, heretics,) are their natural and unavoidable effects– and to this primary source, the disturbed and dangerous state of Ireland is to be attributed.¹⁰¹⁸

Turbulence in Ireland, therefore, was not a product of Catholic disabilities as pro-Catholics argued but intimately connected to Catholicism as a religion.

Somewhat paradoxical to the complaint that emancipation was being viewed in a solely political light, however, some anti-Catholic Tories consistently denied that the exclusion of Catholics from political office was a religious issue. Samuel Horsley raised this point in the Lords in 1805. Although he stressed his cordiality to the principle of religious liberty, and highlighted his support for the relaxation of the old penal code, Horsley admitted his ‘mind...so unfashionably constructed that it cannot quit hold of the distinction between toleration and admission to political power and authority in the state.’ Catholics had already been granted liberty of conscience and thus ‘enjoy perfect toleration’. Consequently, the exclusion of Catholics from political office could not be considered penal and, rather than toleration, their admission to power would ‘be an indulgence of a very different kind.’¹⁰¹⁹ Kenyon reiterated that ‘Toleration means no more than a permission to every individual to adhere to that faith and form of worship which are most agreeable to the dictates of his conscience.’ No persecution could be claimed unless ‘some restraint be imposed on that liberty’ and, where this restraint was absent, ‘perfect toleration’ existed.¹⁰²⁰ Similarly, in 1811, the *British Critic* supported the notion that laws formulated for the protection of the state could not be considered oppressive. Moreover, the reviewer was keen to absolve the periodical from the accusation of ‘any propensity towards bigotry, the smallest inclination to abridge or

¹⁰¹⁸ *AJ*, 52:226 (May 1817), p. 66.

¹⁰¹⁹ Samuel Horsley, *Protestant authorities against concessions to the Roman Catholics: being speeches of ... Dr. Horsley, Lord Bishop of St. Asaph, and of Lord Ellenborough, delivered in the House of Lords, 13th May, 1805* (London, 1813), p. 4.

¹⁰²⁰ Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*, pp. 7-8.

control the freedom of religious service and sentiment, or to impose undue and harsh restraints upon those who differ from ourselves.’¹⁰²¹

Indeed, despite their reluctance to submit to Catholic advances, anti-Catholics contended that they, rather than pro-Catholic Whigs and Tories, were the legitimate defenders of religious toleration. The example of Ireland was drawn upon frequently to accentuate the tyrannical, intolerant nature of Catholicism. *Blackwood's*, for instance, insisted that belief in the infallibility of the Catholic Church had endowed priests with a despotic sway over the laity which denied them liberty of conscience. Catholic animosity to the circulation of Scripture ensured that the ‘people can apply no test to the words of the Priest; they can obtain no knowledge of religion ... they are completely at his mercy’.¹⁰²² Moreover, *Blackwood's* never missed an opportunity to point to the irony of ‘modern liberty- mongers’ supporting the rights of a tyrannical denomination. They ‘constantly do their utmost to support that religious tyranny which the Romanish Church has established over the body of the people of Ireland’ one review mocked. The ‘religious liberty which they uphold converts the priest into a despot, and maintains that the layman has no right of private judgment, has no right to read the Bible, to send his children to school, to enter a different place of worship’.¹⁰²³ It was the Catholic Church along with supporters of emancipation who imperilled religious liberty, and those who denied concessions that upheld it.

The preservation of liberty, both religious and civil, was fundamental to Britain’s constitutional development. In England, historical precedent proved that the establishment of the Church of England, specifically, was most conducive to preserving these benefits. In 1801, John Reeves highlighted that, predominantly, three forms of religion existed in Britain: Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, and Roman Catholicism. Each had experienced a period of ascendancy. Catholicism, prior to the Reformation, and Presbyterianism, during the period of Cromwell’s usurpation, had demonstrated that they were ‘equally intolerant’. Anglicanism was the *via media* between the

¹⁰²¹ *BC*, 38 (December 1811) pp. 616-617.

¹⁰²² *BEM*, 17:98 (March 1825), p. 256.

¹⁰²³ *Ibid.*, 21:125 (May 1827), p. 582. For similar depictions of Ireland see *ibid.*, 18:102 (July 1825), pp. 7-8.

republican despotism of Dissenters and the Popish tyranny which would be instituted by Catholic ascendancy. It was to secure the state from the evils derived from either denomination that the Test and Corporation Acts had been introduced during the Restoration, and they had been successful in their objective: it ‘must be confessed’, Reeves concluded, ‘that the times, when there was most moderation in the governors, and most liberty, civil and religious, enjoyed by the governed, were those, in which the Church of England was the established church’.¹⁰²⁴ Charles Daubeny, in his clerical charge of 1807, reiterated the legitimacy of the legislation which preserved Anglican hegemony. The Restoration had not merely reinstated the monarchy but also served as a ‘seasonable renovation of those principles, by which the Church and State, for their mutual security, had originally connected themselves with each other at the Reformation.’¹⁰²⁵ It was a determination to secure the position of the Church of England, and the liberties which its establishment buttressed, which had underpinned this event and the legislation which secured its hegemony was depicted as immutable.

Similarly, it was the defence of the Church which had been the overriding concern in 1688 and thus, unlike pro-Catholic Tories, anti-Catholics viewed the Revolutionary Settlement as inviolate. Daubeny argued that the Glorious Revolution ‘did not originate in any innovating or licentious spirit’. Rather, like the Restoration, the Glorious Revolution ‘was in fact...another restoration of those constitutional rights, which by ill-judged encroachments had been reduced to a state of imminent danger’.¹⁰²⁶ The principle which had underpinned this historic event was not ‘any lust of hostility towards the Church of Rome, but a necessary security and protection for the church of England’ as the buttress of ‘religious and civil rights’.¹⁰²⁷ Similar arguments were issued in Parliament by Lord Liverpool: the Protestant nature of the constitution had been consistently ‘renewed and confirmed’ in words which ‘though they could not make an Act of Parliament eternal, showed that it was considered one of the essential and fundamental laws of the realm.’ Similarly, Lord Chancellor Eldon noted that while ‘the legislature of one day could not bind the legislature of another’, the Acts placing

¹⁰²⁴ John Reeves, *Considerations on the Coronation Oath ...*, 2nd ed. (London, 1801), p. 15.

¹⁰²⁵ Daubeny, *A charge delivered before the Reverend the clergy of the archdeaconry of Sarum, on the 4th, 5^h, 6th, and 7th, of August, 1807*, p. 17.

¹⁰²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

¹⁰²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

restraints on Catholics ‘were stated at the time to be fundamental and binding for ever; which marked at least the importance attached to them by our ancestors’ and ministers should ‘hesitate before they passed so great a censure upon those who effected the Revolution’.¹⁰²⁸ As one historian has noted, Eldon’s ‘constitutional thought hardly extended beyond 1688’ and he presented similar arguments throughout the debates on emancipation both in public and in private.¹⁰²⁹

By defending the Church from contemporary Catholic encroachments, anti-Catholic Tories argued that they were faithfully defending the legacy of 1688 from those who sought to pervert its meaning for party gain. In the current climate, advocates of Catholic emancipation spoke ‘of “their value for the great principles laid down at the Revolution;” principles, which, we are told, “it will be their study and pride to maintain;”’ Daubeny noted. Yet these individuals were simultaneously ‘engaged in the prosecution of a system of policy manifestly tending to the subversion of what we must consider to be among the most important of those principles’: the political exclusion of Catholicism.¹⁰³⁰ Kenyon reiterated this sentiment in 1810. It was the defence of the religious establishment which constituted ‘the true character of the principles which guided the revolution in 1688’.¹⁰³¹ All ‘dangers to the liberties of the country’ under James II had sprung from ‘attempts made to violate the laws...for the sake of promoting Popery’.¹⁰³² Foremost among these violations stood James II’s Declaration of Indulgence (1687), with its emphasis on the benefits of removing the religious barriers to preferment in civil and military offices. Confronted with this measure, the nation at large had ‘felt the value of religious principles, and considered, that a religious establishment alone, fenced by due safeguards, could preserve the liberties of England’.¹⁰³³ Therefore although, in the current context, it was ‘a device of the advocates for the Roman Catholics to state, that religion was not the great object at the

¹⁰²⁸ Lord Eldon, Speech in the House of Lords, 21 June 1822, *PD*, NS, vol. 7, col. 1234.

¹⁰²⁹ Quote from Geoffrey F. Best, ‘The Protestant constitution and its supporters, 1800-29’, p. 110. For an example of Eldon’s thoughts uttered in private see Lord Eldon to Lord Stowell, 28 November, 1828, in Horace Twiss, *The public and private life of Lord Chancellor Eldon*, 3 vols, vol. 2, (London, 1844), pp. 60-61.

¹⁰³⁰ Daubeny, *A charge delivered before the Reverend the clergy of the archdeaconry of Sarum, on the 4th, 5^h, 6th, and 7th, of August, 1807*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰³¹ Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*, p. 25.

¹⁰³² *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁰³³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

revolution’, these attempts at misrepresentation were futile: ‘every thing shows that the establishment of the Protestant religion was so’.¹⁰³⁴ Indeed, the Revolution had secured three fundamental principles: that the union of Church and State was essential to the ‘peace and happiness of England’; that, in order to buttress this connection, the monarch must be Anglican; and, finally, that any encouragement which might lead to ‘the creation of a power disposed to shake the security of the church establishment must be resisted.’¹⁰³⁵ These principles formed the very basis of the constitution ratified by the Revolution, and they were integral to its preservation.

Moreover, anti-Catholics were always eager to point out the hypocrisy of those who now appropriated the title ‘Whig’. Eldon revelled that it was his principles, not those of Holland and Grey, which were consistent with historic Whiggery.¹⁰³⁶ Similarly, the *Anti-Jacobin* asked,

is it not...strange and unaccountable, that any persons professing
and calling themselves Whigs, should be so inconsistent, so untrue
to their principles, as to give their support to the Roman Catholics?
It is abundantly notorious, that the Revolution was the work of the
Whigs; that they expelled their lawful Sovereign, and broke the direct
line of succession, for the express purpose of preserving these kingdoms
from the dangers of Popery and arbitrary power...How then can we
admit the claims of these new Whigs to be their legitimate descendants,
when they so manifestly desert their principles?

Those who now appropriated the title of Whigs were not ‘*Genuine Whigs*’ but, rather, were taunted for abandoning the fundamental principle on which transactions had turned in 1688.¹⁰³⁷ In the current ‘liberal age’, *Blackwood’s* continued, in 1828,

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁰³⁶ Best, ‘The Protestant constitution and its supporters, 1800-29’, p. 110.

¹⁰³⁷ *AJ*, 43:174 (November 1812) pp. 270-271.

advocates of Catholic emancipation suggested that James II's transgressions had been effected solely by 'impatience of all restraints on the royal prerogative, not properly his religion'. Moreover, they claimed that 'his religion was no more than an instrument employed by him in aid of his designs against the civil liberties of his subjects'. Yet, this interpretation of 1688 was inaccurate; fuelled by the Whig determination to encroach upon regal power, it obscured the root cause of James's abuses. Religion, the reviewer maintained, had been 'the dominant principle' of James's designs. This was exemplified by 'the illustrious actors in that great emergence' who, 'uniformly in all their proceedings, testified their dread and abhorrence of the *religion* of James.' Consequently, the Declaration of Rights had expressed the unequivocal sentiment that 'there is an intimate union between the Protestant religion and the civil freedom of this country'.¹⁰³⁸ It was the anti-Catholic Tories, not their Whig or pro-Catholic adversaries, who sought to uphold this intimate connection and who were therefore the true defenders of the legacy of 1688.

The subsequent amendment of the Coronation Oath by the Convocation Parliament was a fundamental manifestation of the Revolution's pro-Anglican, anti-Catholic character. The Coronation Oath, Reeves suggested, constituted 'the ORIGINAL CONTRACT on the part of the King, as allegiance is that on the part of the People'. Thus, when 'King James was declared by Parliament to have broken the Original Contract between King and People' it was the Oath, not some speculative historic agreement to which they referred.¹⁰³⁹ Given the encroachments which James had pursued, it was recognised that a 'stronger measure must be taken, than any yet tried, for securing both church and state'. In the wake of James 'abdicating the throne', the opportunity was presented for 'framing some fundamental constitutions of the realm, that should remain unalterable'.¹⁰⁴⁰ It was a constitutional maxim that every legislature retained the power to alter those laws which former assemblies had enacted. It was for this reason that the conscience of the King had been bound by an oath which specifically, and unambiguously, referred to the defence of the Church. Consequently, Reeves pointed out, 'whatever changes might happen in the minds of ministers or parliaments', the

¹⁰³⁸ *BEM*, 24:141 (July 1828) p. 11.

¹⁰³⁹ Reeves, *Considerations on the Coronation Oath*, pp. 52-53.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

King should turn ‘only to the obligation of his own oath, and refuse all alterations...if they appeared to him, in his conscience, to be incompatible with it.’¹⁰⁴¹ Regardless of Parliament’s advice on the Catholic Question, repeal of the Church’s legislative defences could not be implemented without the King’s assent, and it was precisely to render them irrevocable that the King’s conscience had been bound.¹⁰⁴²

This did not, though, detract from the constitutional impropriety of raising the issue. In 1807, John Bowles severely censured the Talents’ pursuit of Catholic claims, despite being fully aware of the King’s opinion on the issue: ‘to oppose claims which are incompatible with the safety of the Church, ought to be considered as an indispensable qualification for a British Minister’ he urged, adding that a ‘difference between King and his Ministers, on a subject of this major importance, is an anomaly in government, which should never be permitted to recur.’¹⁰⁴³ In his subsequent *Strictures on the motions made in the last Parliament* (1807), Bowles reiterated the underlying principle of the Test Act, namely ‘that the power of the State cannot, consistently with the safety of the established Church, be intrusted to persons who are not members of that establishment’. This principle, he urged, formed ‘the only valid bond of alliance between Church and State’.¹⁰⁴⁴ Consequently, it was ‘beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament to pass, through either House, and, of course, even to entertain, a Bill to repeal the Corporation and Test Acts’.¹⁰⁴⁵ The inconsistency of such a measure with the King’s Oath was axiomatic. By bringing forth and deliberating upon Catholic measures, Parliament had essentially perverted its function. Parliament was ‘the legislative council of the King’, his ‘constitutional advisor’, and it was ‘beyond all description of absurdity to maintain, that this Council can, consistently with its duty,

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁰⁴² This argument was reiterated in John Bowles, *Strictures on the motions made in the last Parliament*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁴³ John Bowles, *A Letter Addressed to Samuel Whitbread, Esq. M.P. in consequence of the unqualified approbation expressed by him in the House of Commons, of Mr Lancaster’s system of education ...*, 2nd ed., (London, 1808), p. 48.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Idem, *Strictures on the Motions made in the last parliament*, p.26. Kenyon elaborated on the rationale of exclusion in 1810. The relationship between Church and State was not simply economically supportive but legislatively protective because, should power be conferred on those outside the Church’s communion, it was axiomatic that they would ‘employ their power and influence against the establishment’ to secure the ascendancy of their own denomination, imperilling the Church in the process. Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Bowles, *Strictures on the Motions made in the last parliament*, p. 33.

advise the Sovereign to violate his Coronation Oath' to protect the Church.¹⁰⁴⁶ Like Reeves, Bowles held the Coronation Oath to be a 'fundamental compact' between King and people; 'the very condition on which he [the King] holds his Crown'.¹⁰⁴⁷ No parliament had the right to encourage the violation of this agreement because this was, effectively, to encourage the subversion of the constitution.

Both the sanctity and personal nature of the Coronation Oath were maintained throughout discussions of Catholic emancipation. When, in 1810, a motion was once again brought forward to establish a committee for the consideration for Catholic claims, Kenyon urged that if Parliament 'will not do its duty' in relation to the Church, 'it is for the sovereign to remember...that he is still not absolved from his engagement; but is bound, by every tie, to his family, his country, and his God'.¹⁰⁴⁸ In 1825, with pro-Catholics achieving majorities in the Commons, Daubeny sought to remind George IV of the 'most awful state of responsibility' in which the Coronation Oath placed him. His 'present Majesty' had received 'a crown most solemnly charged with the preservation of the Protestant Religion', and it was through this pledge that 'a king of this country solemnly and voluntarily binds himself to the people, over whom God has thought fit to place him'.¹⁰⁴⁹ The *British Critic* also supported elevation of the Oath above the demands of political expediency. In July 1827, faced with the accession of the pro-Catholic Canning, the review compiled the publications of Kenyon and Phillpotts, among others, on the subject.¹⁰⁵⁰ The Oath, Phillpotts had urged, was a 'purely personal act' between the King and God. 'To apply to it our little, convenient, political or legal fictions,—to talk of "the omnipotence of Parliament," as enabling it to annul, or dispense with, the Oath of the Sovereign,—to speak gravely of "a Keeper of the King's Conscience,"' was absurd.¹⁰⁵¹ It was the King, and the King alone, who was charged with the responsibility of determining whether alteration in the religious element of the constitution could be reconciled with his conscience. On this basis, any minister who dared to 'tell his Sovereign, that he is exempt from this duty, that he may act on the conscience of his Parliament, or of his Privy Council, instead of his own'

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*, pp. 31-33.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Daubeny, *A Letter to the Right Honourable George Canning*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *BC*, 2:3 (July 1827) pp. 188-203.

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid., p. 195.

both degraded and usurped the King's individual moral responsibility.¹⁰⁵² Indeed, *Blackwood's* even claimed that should the King, 'on consulting his conscience, often and long', be able to reconcile Catholic claims 'to their fullest extent', the reviewer would 'feel still that the King did right' even though, in their opinion, such concessions would deal 'a fatal blow...[to] the heart of the well-being of Britain'.¹⁰⁵³

The obligation imposed by the Coronation Oath, though, was not the only constitutional barrier to prevent emulation of James II's errors. The Act of Settlement (1701) had been designed 'for seconding the principles of the Coronation Oath, and securing still more firmly the protestant religion', Reeves suggested. Its particular purpose was to ensure the monarch's 'affection to the cause' which the Oath determined 'he was to support' by ensuring that those who succeeded the throne were both Protestant and conformed to Anglicanism.¹⁰⁵⁴ To grant Catholic political rights would be to endow a liberty not allowed to the King himself. Moreover, this allowance would render the constitution inconsistent: a Protestant King surrounded by Catholic ministers would be 'absurd', Bowles argued.¹⁰⁵⁵ If the King's most 'confidential and responsible advisers' were Catholic, Peel added later, he might eventually be converted to this religion from 'sincere conviction', thereby forfeiting his crown.¹⁰⁵⁶ Alternatively, of course, a King favourable to Catholicism, at the head of a Catholic parliament, could simply repeal the Act of Settlement and meet very little objection.

Moreover, while the admission of Catholics into political office was not synonymous with removing the barriers which prevented them from assuming the crown, such measures were still antipathetic to the principle underlying the Act of Settlement's legitimisation, namely the dangerous nature of Catholicism. In 1805, Samuel Horsley, who was relatively cordial in his disposition towards Catholics when considered alongside other anti-Catholic Tories, admitted that 'if there would be no danger to the constitution, to admit a Roman Catholic to be any thing but King...I confess it is

¹⁰⁵² *BC*, 2:3 (July 1827), p. 195.

¹⁰⁵³ *BEM*, 24: 141 (July 1828), p. 14.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Reeves, *Considerations on the Coronation Oath*, pp. 32-33.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Bowles, *Strictures on the Motions made in the last parliament*, p. 47.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Robert Peel quoted in *AJ*, 52:228 (May 1817), p. 309.

beyond the powers of my mind to imagine upon what principle the Act of Settlement can be defended.¹⁰⁵⁷ If Catholics would not present a threat to the Church if admitted into the state, then the legitimacy of excluding them from the throne was defunct. Moreover, if Catholics were admitted to the state, there would be little to stifle any ambition amongst them to further the aims of their denomination by securing a Catholic King: ‘supposing all other privileges were extended to the Romanists’, Kenyon proposed, ‘it surely cannot enter into the mind of man to doubt that they would seek this last important one, that the King should be a Roman Catholic!’¹⁰⁵⁸ The *Anti-Jacobin* expressed similar anxieties:

after having repealed the Test laws, and removed every other barrier, we see no objection which could be urged without a palpable violation of principle, by the supporters of emancipation, to a repeal of the Act of Settlement, and to the annihilation of every provision for preserving the crown on the head of a Protestant Prince. Every argument used in favour of admitting Papists to hold seats in both houses of Parliament, will apply equally to the propriety of admitting a Popish Prince to fill the throne.¹⁰⁵⁹

Repealing the Test Laws would leave few plausible principles to prevent Catholic usurpation of the monarchy. To remove one constitutional barrier against Catholicism was to undermine all those that remained.

Like emphasis on the ‘true’ principles of 1688, focus upon the threat which Catholic concessions could pose to the Act of Settlement provided a useful stick with which to beat pro-Catholics, particularly the Whigs. Whereas, in the early eighteenth century, the

¹⁰⁵⁷ Horsley, *Protestant authorities against concessions to the Roman Catholics*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *AJ*, 41:164 (February 1812), p. 178.

charge of ‘the succession in danger’ had been a useful cry to tarnish Tories, now circumstances were reversed.¹⁰⁶⁰ It ‘is on the ground of being the protectors of a government essentially protestant, and on those alone, that the House of Brunswick possess the Crown of this united kingdom’, Kenyon pointed out, and it was ‘to be wondered at, that any one professing himself attached to that succession can wish to alter laws which [it is] his duty ... to uphold.’¹⁰⁶¹ Through the pursuit of emancipation, Daubeny chastised, pro-Catholics were ‘advocating a cause, from which their less venturous forefathers would have shrunk’.¹⁰⁶² Rather, their pursuits imperilled the very constitutional settlement which their forefathers had endeavoured to secure. Should Catholics be admitted to power, Daubeny added in another tract, ‘their religious prejudices will always be pushing them on to gain that ascendancy’ which would enable them to establish ‘their own exclusive dominion’. Thus, should Protestants be content to admit Catholics into political office, they should also ‘be contented to see the establishment of both a popish church and popish king’. Moreover, Daubeny added for emphasis, ‘the *exiled family*, wherever it may be found, will have just cause to bring *writ of error* against the government of this country, for the recovery of their long since forfeited inheritance.’¹⁰⁶³ Thus through resistance to the Catholic question, Tories were able to consolidate the renegotiation of their identity, underway in their arguments regarding the civil element of the constitution. By resisting Catholic claims, it was the Tories, not the Whigs, who defended both the Glorious Revolution and the Hanoverian dynasty.

The lack of Whig patriotism was easily cited as a basis for their support of Catholic claims. ‘Men who would have retired from the House, during the mutiny at the Nore, and pronounced panegyrics on each successive atrocity of the French Revolution... and dwelt with malignant satisfaction upon the reverses of the war’ had inevitably come to support emancipation ‘merely as an instrument of annoyance to the ministry’. Of

¹⁰⁶⁰ For old Tories and the issue of the succession see Geoffrey Holmes, *British politics in the Age of Anne*, 2nd edition, (London, 1987), pp. 87-94.

¹⁰⁶¹ Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*, p. 17. For the association of the Hanoverian dynasty and the Protestant cause see Andrew C Thompson, ‘Hanover-Britain and the Protestant Cause, 1714-1760’ in Andreas Gestrich and Michael Schaich ed., *The Hanoverian Succession. Dynastic Politics and Monarchical Culture*, (Ashgate, 2015) pp. 89-107.

¹⁰⁶² Charles Daubeny *A Charge, delivered to the Reverend the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Sarum, at his visitation in July, 1819...* (London, 1819), p. 22.

¹⁰⁶³ Daubeny, *A Letter to the Right Honourable George Canning*, pp. 34-35.

greater concern, though, were those who ‘by shutting their eyes on past experience, truly hope to conciliate by concession’.¹⁰⁶⁴ Included in this category were the pro-Catholic Tories whose naivety was repeatedly insisted upon. Though emancipation was held forth as a panacea for Irish grievances, the admittance of some higher-order men into political office would do little to relieve the disaffection of the lower orders, the anti-Catholics argued.¹⁰⁶⁵ Moreover, by advocating the cause of conciliation, men like Huskisson and Canning only encouraged demand for greater concessions, while other pro-Catholics, like Castlereagh, were criticised for suggesting that conceding Catholic claims was the only means to prevent consistent revival of the issue and the ‘periodical agitation of the public mind’ which accompanied it. ‘According to this notion, every petition pertinaciously persisted in, ought to be granted for quietness sake’, the reviewer concluded.¹⁰⁶⁶ For a statesman to make ‘sacrifices merely to satisfy clamour and appease animosity’, *Blackwood’s* proclaimed in 1828, ‘will only feed both, to the ruin of himself and those whom he governs.’ It was nothing but absurd to believe that by ‘pardoning, indulging, and petting the Catholics in every thing’ that they would be ‘rendered excessively orderly and loyal.’¹⁰⁶⁷ There was a blatant inconsistency in the argument that ‘if you do not grant what they demand...they will become traitors and rebels; THEREFORE you ought to concede everything they ask.’ This argument could easily be pursued by Catholics to ‘change the dynasty, destroy the Constitution, raise their Church on the ruins of the Established one, and sweep away every vestige of freedom.’¹⁰⁶⁸ Indeed, anti-Catholic Tories maintained, such agendas would soon be pursued should Catholic concessions be granted.

Tory Splits and the Passage of Emancipation

Under Lord Liverpool, the issue of Catholic relief had been left as an ‘open question’. Yet Liverpool’s stroke in 1827, and George IV’s promotion of Canning as his successor, ensured that the varied temperaments amongst the Tories plunged emergent party alignments into a state of disarray. In the intermission between Liverpool’s stroke and Canning’s formal appointment, a group of approximately 60 Ultra peers, including

¹⁰⁶⁴ *AJ*, 52:228 (May 1817), p. 298.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.312; *BC*, 33, (January 1809), p. 87.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 52:228 (May 1817), p. 307.

¹⁰⁶⁷ *BEM*, 24:144 (October 1828) pp. 409-410.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

the Duke of Newcastle, the Marquis of Winchelsea, and Lord Kenyon, attempted to form a pressure group, ‘the King’s Friends’, to exert pressure upon the monarch to appoint an anti-Catholic successor. However, ‘backbiting, slandering & tricking’ amongst the grouping did little to demonstrate a unified front to the King, or Parliament, and the failure of their endeavour was confirmed by Canning’s accession in April.¹⁰⁶⁹ Upon Canning’s assumption of the premiership, thirty-five junior ministers resigned accompanied by six Cabinet ministers: Wellington, Peel, Westmorland, Bathurst, Melville and Eldon. All but Melville cited the new premier’s Catholic sympathies as their justification and the mass resignation led Canning to invite the moderate Whigs, Lansdowne, Tierney and the sixth Earl of Carlile, to form a government, much to the fury of Grey and Russel.¹⁰⁷⁰

Divisions over the Catholic question were fundamental to the consolidation of Tory identity. Pro-Catholics existed in the minority amongst Tories and their voices were increasingly alienated from extra-parliamentary mediums of discussion, particularly the press.¹⁰⁷¹ The *Quarterly Review*, as a Canningite organ, generally maintained a moderate or neutral stance on the Catholic question, potentially to the detriment of its circulation. However, after Canning’s death and despite the pro-Catholic stance of its editor, John Gibson Lockhart, even this review adopted an anti-Catholic stance in 1828.¹⁰⁷² This example lends credence to James Sack’s suggestion that the 1820s witnessed the completion of a process, initiated in 1801, through which anti-Catholicism emerged as the ‘defining characteristic of the British Right’.¹⁰⁷³ Stephen Lee concurs with Sack’s assessment. From the divisions of the late 1820s, Lee contends that a new party system was born in which ‘the parties themselves were significantly different entities’.¹⁰⁷⁴ In Lee’s opinion, these events served to ascribe ‘words like

¹⁰⁶⁹ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, pp. 2-3; Gaunt, ‘The Fourth Duke of Newcastle, the Ultra-Tories and the Opposition to Canning’s Administration’, pp. 575-576.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Peel claimed ‘an entire union of opinion’ with Canning ‘on all public questions except one’ quoted in Hilton, *A mad, bad, and dangerous people?* pp. 372-373; Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p.171; Mr. Peel to Lord Chancellor Eldon, 9 April, 1827, in Horace Twiss, *The public and private life of Lord Chancellor Eldon*, 3 vols, vol II (London, 1844), p. 590 and Extract from Lord Eldon’s Speech 2 May 1827, *Ibid.*, p. 598.

¹⁰⁷¹ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, pp. 232-233.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.*, pp.236-237; Scott Bennett, ‘Catholic Emancipation, the “Quarterly Review,” and Britain’s Constitutional Revolution’, *Victorian Studies*, 12: 3 (March, 1969), pp. 283- 304.

¹⁰⁷³ Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative*, p. 230.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*, p. 173.

“Tory” a more precise meaning’; henceforth, ‘to be a Tory was to be an anti-Catholic’ and to be a Liberal Tory was ‘an impossibility, to be oximoronic’.¹⁰⁷⁵

The Tory reviews certainly viewed the crisis of 1827 as instrumental in consolidating Tory identity. The *British Critic*, suggested that while the Whigs had ‘declared that they coalesced with Mr. Canning in order to carry the Catholic question’ this manoeuvre would serve finally to unify the Tory opposition:

If the Whigs support the cause of emancipation, it is certain that the Tories will as resolutely resist it....during the whole of the present century the Tories have been divided upon the Catholic question, it is impossible to deny that great effects may be produced by their unanimity.¹⁰⁷⁶

The reviewer’s tone was hopeful when suggesting that Canning’s betrayal would facilitate the rallying of anti-Catholic opposition. *Blackwood’s* perceived an ideological dimension in realignment, pointing out that ‘No sooner did Mr Canning obtain the office, than he embraced nearly all the principles of the Whigs and Radicals’, though this manoeuvre was denounced as the ‘most gross and loathsome inconsistency and apostacy [*sic*]’.¹⁰⁷⁷ Moreover, in the pages of this review, Canning and his pro-Catholic associates were consciously excluded from Tory identity, this appellation increasingly viewed as no longer applicable to them. After Canning’s death and the accession of the Goderich ministry, *Blackwood’s* claimed that the ‘assemblage, which bears the name and exercises the functions of the Ministry, has such an incongruous appearance, that its menials actually do not know what title to give it’.¹⁰⁷⁸ Finally, after Wellington had assumed office and Huskisson resigned, followed hastily by a wave of Canningites, *Blackwood’s* expressed joy that the nation ‘once more have the happiness to live under a pure Tory government...The Liberals are gone, one and all’.¹⁰⁷⁹ From these

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *BC*, 2:3, (July 1827), p. 189.

¹⁰⁷⁷ *BEM*, 21:126 (June 1827) p. 745, 757.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *BEM*, 22:132 (November 1827) p. 612.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid., 24:141 (July 1828) p. 96. Not all anti-Catholics were so jubilant, though. Eldon, irritated at being left out of Wellington’s government, remarked that ‘The character of the Ministry is given very much in the same words by everybody: — “It is better than the last, but it is not what was wished and

perspectives, the crisis of 1827 and its aftermath aided the refinement of party groupings in both a structural and an ideological sense.

The appointment of Wellington's administration in January 1828 excited the hostility of the Catholic Association, still in existence despite all the efforts undertaken by the government to suppress it. The departure of Huskisson and his pro-Catholic colleagues in May exacerbated the disdain of Irish Catholics towards the ministry, but it also provided opportunity: at the consequent by-election in County Clare, Daniel O'Connell, leader of the Association, stood for election. His landslide victory in July brought tensions in Ireland to a head. As a Catholic, he could not take his seat in parliament, yet his victory explicitly linked Catholic emancipation to democratic struggle and popular expression: to prevent him taking his place could ignite rebellion in Ireland. Moreover, the possibility that O'Connell's manoeuvre could be repeated in all subsequent election campaigns in Ireland presented the government with an immense difficulty: if there emerged a number of Irish MPs who could not sit in Westminster, the Union would be imperilled. Over the summer of 1828, Ireland veered towards the brink of revolution. Members of the Catholic Association were garbed in uniform and organised in infantry and cavalry units; there were thousands of meetings held across Ireland, denouncing the Church and government in Westminster, and, on one occasion, fifty thousand peasants conducted an orderly protest march which lasted for three days.¹⁰⁸⁰ It was against this backdrop that Peel and Wellington introduced their bill for the relief of Catholic disabilities.

Both statesmen emphasised immediate circumstances and political expediency to justify the measure. Peel, consistent with Tories across the board, determined to 'abstain from all discussions upon the natural or social rights of man'. He also refused to 'enter into...disquisitions upon the theories of government' but rather declared that his argument would turn only upon 'a practical view of the present condition of affairs...[and] what is to be done under circumstances of immediate and pressing

expected. It will be supported, but not cordially.'" Letter to Lady F.J. Bankes, 9 Feb 1828, in in Horace Twiss, *The public and private life of Lord Chancellor Eldon*, vol III, p. 33.

¹⁰⁸⁰ C.J. Lewis, 'The Disintegration of the Tory-Anglican Alliance in the Struggle for Catholic Emancipation', *Church History*, 29 (1960), p. 31.

difficulty'. The Catholic Association, despite all previous ministerial efforts, could not be suppressed for it was the manifestation of deeper dissatisfaction within Ireland: 'the evil is one of long continuance – it has assumed various shapes, and has survived more than one attempt at its extinction.' Moreover, it was impossible to withdraw the elective franchise from Catholics in a bid to circumvent repetition of the County Clare result. This would only 'add fuel to the flame in Ireland – increase the existing irritation and excitement' and thus any government should 'pause before it enters upon the task of withdrawing from the Irish Roman Catholics privileges already granted.' Rather, Peel could only express hope that emancipation would induce tranquillity, declaring that he held

not the slightest hesitation...that the adjustment of this question
 ...will give better and stronger securities to the Protestant interest
 and the Protestant establishment, than any that the present state
 of things admits of; and will avert evils and dangers impending
 and immediate.¹⁰⁸¹

Wellington deployed a similar, pragmatic consideration of immediate circumstances. When introducing the bill to the Lords, on 2 April 1829, Wellington related that 'within the last year or two' Ireland had experienced 'particular aggravation', encouraged by the Catholic Association, ensuring that the nation was now 'bordering upon civil war'. While parliament could suppress the Association again, this would be futile unless 'we were ready to consider the whole condition of Ireland to that which Parliament had stated to be the cause of the disease'. Turning next to the settlement in 1688, Wellington outlined that while the Bill of Rights 'says that the Protestantism of the Crown shall last for ever' the detail of the oaths by which Catholics were excluded contained 'not one word about how long they shall last'. Moreover, circumstances had been 'tending towards their repeal since the extinction of the House of Stuart; and at last the period has come when it is quite clear that the repeal can be no longer delayed with safety to the State'.¹⁰⁸² In short, the constitution could viably be altered: the restraints

¹⁰⁸¹ Robert Peel, *The Speeches of the late right honourable Sir Robert Peel, Bart. Delivered in the House of Commons...*, 4 vols, vol I, (London, 1853), p. 699, 706, 707, 724.

¹⁰⁸² The Duke of Wellington, Speech in the House of Lords, 2 April, 1829, in Colonel Gurwood (ed.), *The Speeches of the Duke of Wellington in Parliament*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (London, 1854) p. 256, 259, 263, 266.

upon Roman Catholics had been introduced to combat a specific political danger, and they should now be relieved to combat a new one.

Considering the emphasis which Wellington and Peel gave to Ireland alongside the arguments of pro-Catholic Tories vindicates them from Clark's charge of unnecessary 'capitulation'. Rather, acknowledging the influence which the Irish context exerted on the debates regarding emancipation, and how heavily it featured in the arguments of pro-Catholic Tories for repeal, this chapter concurs with Machin's claim that it was the fact that Irish Catholics could 'bring political pressure to bear on the Government' which 'eventually proved to be decisive'.¹⁰⁸³ In this respect, it also concurs with Robert Hole's analysis that, eventually, emancipation was secured 'because sufficient men of power were convinced by the secular arguments of political necessity and advantage.'¹⁰⁸⁴ Pro-Catholic Tories contended that the constitution was not immutable, emphasising instead its capacity to respond to change, and that the legislative exclusion of Catholics had been rooted in immediate political expediency. This enabled them to present emancipation as a pragmatic and constitutionally viable response to Irish discontent. By 1828, Peel and Wellington were ready to accept and deploy this argument.

As the passage of emancipation edged closer, the Tory Ultras broke into outright rebellion against the government in a bid to influence proceedings. In the summer of 1828, Ultras sought to rally anti-Catholics through the establishment of Brunswick Clubs across the country and the orchestration of a nationwide petitioning campaign. Winchilsea headed the offensive, determined to 'exert, to the utmost, the humble talents & power which I possess, in rousing the dormant spirit of the Country, & awakening it to the perilous situation in which we now stand'.¹⁰⁸⁵ The Duke of Newcastle supported this endeavour. In a published letter to Kenyon, Newcastle complained that while it had been hoped that Wellington would take a strong stance, 'nothing is to be done by the

¹⁰⁸³ Clark, *English Society 1660 -1832*, 2nd ed., p. 534; Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England*, p. 244.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Winchilsea papers, 26 Aug 1828, quoted in Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 133. For a similar approach see Henry Pelham Fiennes Pelham Clinton [Duke of Newcastle], *A Letter to the Right Hon. Lord Kenyon, from his grace the Duke of Newcastle* (London 1828), p. 4.

Government, because neutrality, conciliation, and modern liberality are still the ruling deliberations of the Cabinet.’ Consequently, the last session of Parliament had been ‘by far the most disastrous of any’: witnessing the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, it had been ‘pre-eminently stained by liberalising religion’ and thus Ultras ‘must no longer wait in expectation of tardy assistance, we must act for ourselves.’¹⁰⁸⁶ In the Commons, approximately 170 MPs opposed emancipation until the end, accompanied by approximately 110 peers.¹⁰⁸⁷ Amongst the Bishops, some supported the government’s measure on the grounds of expediency. Bishop Lloyd of Oxford, for instance, admitted that he would rather have preserved the status quo but for the threat of revolution in Ireland. Yet the majority of the bench remained opposed.¹⁰⁸⁸ Once the intention to concede emancipation had been announced, in February 1829, the Ultras adopted systematic opposition to the Government’s policy and Tory divisions following the bill’s passage secured Wellington’s fall.¹⁰⁸⁹ When, in November, the government was defeated on proposals relating to a reduction of the civil list by 233 votes to 204 votes, the Ultras voted 33 to 8 against the government.¹⁰⁹⁰ Consequently, Wellington resigned and it was only in the face of growing agitation for parliamentary reform that he reunited with the Ultras in opposition to the Whigs and Husskisonites, now led by Palmerston.¹⁰⁹¹

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined that there was relative consensus in the late eighteenth century that Catholicism did not pose an immediate threat. Moreover, after the turn of the century, the abhorrence of natural rights, popular associations, and respect for George III’s prerogative facilitated consensus amongst pro- and anti-Catholic Tories. Nonetheless, the nineteenth century witnessed significant division amongst Tories regarding Catholic Relief, divisions which played a key role in the development of Tory ideology and identity. In the end, it was the Irish situation which was the crux of pro-Catholic responses to the question of emancipation. To validate Catholic concessions

¹⁰⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 5, 9, 12.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Best, ‘The Protestant constitution and its supporters, 1800-29’, p. 106.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Lewis, ‘The Disintegration of the Tory-Anglican Alliance in the Struggle for Catholic Emancipation’ p. 38.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, pp. 131-156, 179-190.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), p. 359.

¹⁰⁹¹ Machin, *The Catholic Question in English Politics*, p. 190.

pro-Catholic Tories approached the question from a Warburtonian perspective while also appropriating a Burkean outlook on constitutional change. They argued that the Church-state relationship and the legislative restraints which protected it were primarily the product of political expediency. They contended that Catholic tenets and doctrines themselves did not engender specific forms of political behaviour and that whereas, in prior historical periods, Catholicism had been excluded because of its political connections these connections no longer existed. In particular, the Pope had renounced temporal supremacy and his function as the head of the Catholic Church operated only in a spiritual capacity. Furthermore, the extinction of the Stuart dynastic threat rendered the impositions against Catholics enacted as part of the Revolutionary Settlement defunct. This body of legislation, alongside prior restraints, rather than forming an inviolable element of the constitution could, and indeed had been altered in response to the needs of expediency. The constitution was not immutable and rather its capacity to respond to change was fundamental to its amelioration. Indeed, temperate constitutional change through Catholic concession was absolutely necessary if the fundamental elements of the constitution, most notably the established Church, were to be protected from growing discontent in Ireland.

The pro-Catholic Tories existed in the minority and, particularly, after the split in 1827, they were excluded from Tory identity by their anti-Catholic counterparts, eventually joining the Whigs. Anti-Catholic arguments against emancipation were grounded in both political and theological concerns. Anti-Catholics of a High-Church disposition continued to argue that the Church-state relationship was grounded in truth rather than expediency and, on this basis, the laws which upheld it should not be altered in response to contemporary political discontent. Consequently, they resented pro-Catholic insistence that the issue was solely political and not religious. Even anti-Catholics who painted the question of emancipation as a predominantly political issue considered there to be a direct connection between Catholicism as a religion and political behaviour, highlighting the doctrines of infallibility, exclusive salvation and Papal supremacy, in particular, as politically dangerous. Unlike their pro-Catholic counterparts, anti-Catholics continued to stress that, although the Pope had renounced temporal supremacy, his spiritual authority continued to influence Catholics' civil conduct; they considered Catholicism as directly responsible for disloyalty in Ireland and as anathema

to British constitutional freedoms, particularly religious toleration. Consequently, despite refusing Catholic Relief, anti-Catholics contended that they, rather than pro-Catholic Whigs and Tories, were the protectors of religious liberty. Moreover, they painted themselves, rather than the Whigs, as the defenders of both 1688 and the Hanoverian Succession, consolidating the renegotiation of Tory identity underway in their civil thought. These events had been underpinned by the political exclusion of Catholicism and the restraints imposed were fundamental elements of the constitution and therefore immutable.

Conclusion of Thesis

This thesis has argued that Tory identity was under development throughout the period 1760-1832. This development was underpinned by the rehabilitation and renegotiation of old Tory ideas and their convergence with conservative Whiggery; it was also refined through the recognition and articulation of ideological differences. These tensions culminated in the Tory splits between 1827 and 1830 and, through them, the consolidation of Tory identity.

There was a convergence of old Toryism and conservative Whiggery in the late eighteenth century which laid the foundations for the re-emergence of a broad Tory identity in the early nineteenth century. This identity was characterised by authoritarian anti-populism, commitment to upholding the establishment of the Church of England, and preserving the Christian, orthodox character of the state. The outbreak of revolutions in America and France, alongside the emergence of domestic radicalism, reinvigorated debates regarding the nature and location of sovereignty, the limits of subjects' obedience, the relationship between crown and parliament, as well as parliament and people. These debates encouraged the Whig tradition to fracture and an authoritarian, conservative Whig disposition to emerge. Simultaneously, old Tory ideas regarding the divine, paternal origin of political sovereignty, passive obedience and non-resistance, were reinvigorated and redirected in support of George III. Both ideological traditions concurred that it was popular power, not the crown, which posed the primary danger to the constitution in the state. This facilitated distinction from cohering opposition Whig identity which consistently highlighted the dangers of executive encroachment. Rather, conservative Whigs and old Tories stressed the importance of defending the existing powers of the crown with concurrence on this point, and determination to achieve it, consolidated during the French Revolution, particularly after the execution of Louis XVI.

Moreover, importantly, ideological convergence was facilitated by the renegotiation of old Tory ideology. Notions of absolute monarchical power and indefeasible hereditary right, which had hindered Tory accommodation of 1688 and the Hanoverian succession, were abandoned. Instead, old Tories adopted notions of providential divine right and

regal limitation, although their arguments continued to stress the supremacy of the crown in Britain's constitutional arrangement. These ideological renegotiations enabled old Tories to conspicuously redirect their loyalties to George III; they also enabled them to concur with conservative Whigs in defence of an interpretation of the Glorious Revolution which emphasised constitutional preservation, rather than alteration. Both ideological traditions emphasised that this event had specifically defended the principle of hereditary monarchy and certainly did not set a precedent for legitimate, sporadic popular resistance. However, conservative Whigs, unlike old Tories, tended to refute passive obedience and non-resistance, maintaining instead that subjects could resist in circumstances of extreme necessity. They also continued to adhere to notions of mixed government and a balanced constitution, though also stressed the importance of the crown within this arrangement. Nonetheless, despite these differences, the two traditions aligned to form an ideological consensus which was authoritarian, anti-populist, and pro-monarchical. This ensured distinction from cohering opposition Whiggery and laid the foundations for the re-emergence of a broad, loose, Tory identity in the early nineteenth century.

In the early nineteenth century, focus was redirected from the origin of sovereignty and the powers of the crown specifically. The revival of popular radicalism encouraged Tories to highlight the increase and 'abuse' of liberty, while demands for parliamentary reform focused attention on the power of the popular branch of the constitution. Consequently, while defence of the crown's powers remained an element of Tory discourse, it was the authoritarian, anti-populist dimensions of cohering Tory rhetoric which received emphasis. These were reflected in discussions of Catholic emancipation too. While this issue promoted disagreement amongst Tories regarding the religious element of the constitution, there was relative consensus that arguments grounded in natural rights should be rejected, and that the populist Catholic Association should be suppressed. Consequently, despite ideological fissures regarding political rights for Catholics, and the convergence of pro-Catholic Tories and pro-Catholic Whigs, an anti-populist distinction remained an element of Tory identity.

In addition to civil issues, attacks on the authority of the Church of England and attempts to alter the legal status of non-Anglicans encouraged discussion regarding the constitution established in the Church. In the late eighteenth century, the attempts of Protestant Dissenters to acquire greater religious and political freedoms, the emergence of revolutions abroad, and the reception offered to these events by domestic Dissenters, promoted consensus between conservative Whigs and old Tories, churchmen and statesmen. All concurred regarding the political benefits of retaining a Church establishment and the necessity of upholding the Test and Corporation Acts to defend this establishment. Furthermore, there was a broad consensus regarding the threat which rationalism posed to the polity. This was strengthened by the French Revolution, the roots of which were widely believed to lie in the erosion of orthodox Christianity. It was also enhanced by the proliferation of domestic political radicalism in the early nineteenth century which appeared to be assisted by the waning of religious principles. These points of consensus added commitment to the preservation of the Church establishment, and determination to maintain the orthodox, Christian character of the state, to the broad Tory identity which emerged in the early nineteenth century.

The conclusions outlined above resemble those advanced by existing historiography. However, this study makes an original contribution to existing scholarship by arguing that ideological differences persisted beneath these broad points of Tory consensus. Moreover, it contends that these differences played a central role in the refinement of Tory identity: they were so severe that the accession of Canning to the premiership in 1827, followed by the constitutional revolution between 1828 and 1832, ensured that any semblance of broad Tory consensus fell apart. The result was the expulsion of individuals, including Canning and Huskisson, from Tory identity. It also produced the consolidation of a more refined, coherent identity characterised by commitment to anti-populism and orthodoxy as well as protectionism and, above all, Protestantism.

Fissures were encouraged by the introduction of freer trade, the rise of evangelicalism, the granting of greater religious freedoms to Protestant Dissenters and, most importantly, the sympathy of certain ministers for Catholic emancipation. To a large extent, Tory divisions can be located in the weighting which ministers, in particular,

gave to pragmatism, concession and conciliation. Division was most clear in relation to Catholic emancipation, the issue which occupied the centre of the political stage in the early nineteenth century. For pro-Catholic Tories, the constitutional settlement established in the wake of the Glorious Revolution was not inviolable but the product of immediate circumstances. Furthermore, the capacity of the constitution to undergo gradual reform to accommodate change, particularly the union with predominantly Catholic Ireland, was fundamental to its survival. Similar rhetoric was deployed to justify economic reforms. Liberal-Tory ministers advocated the integration of abstract economic theories in a bid to secure temperate reform and gradual amelioration, rather than risk succumbing to rash innovations. Thus these arguments prioritised considerations of circumstance, expediency and temperate concession on conservative grounds.

In this respect, the arguments of Liberal and pro-Catholic Tories emulated the arguments of both William Pitt and Edmund Burke. This thesis has highlighted that leading Liberal-Tory and pro-Catholic ministers identified these conservative Whigs, in particular, as their political inspirations and has suggested that there was a considerable degree of consistency in approach to policy decisions. The economic reforms undertaken by Lord Liverpool's administration, spearheaded by William Huskisson, were depicted by ministers as a continuation of Pitt's pre-war economic policy. Similarly, consistent reference was made throughout the debates on Catholic emancipation to Pitt's pro-Catholic sympathies.

Indeed, importantly, when viewed in the context of long-term ideological developments, the concessions made in 1828 and 1829 do not appear out of place with earlier, conservative Whig approaches to religious questions. In the late eighteenth century, conservative Whig statesmen, in contrast to churchmen, did not stress the inherent truth of the Church of England. Furthermore, unlike old Tories, Whig statesmen did not make prejudicial, sweeping condemnations of Dissenters as schismatics and rebels. Rather, they adopted a conciliatory approach to Protestant Dissenters and highlighted immediate circumstances and political expediency when justifying religious discriminations. In response to the subscription controversy,

rebellion in America and, more securely, revolution in France, this pragmatic approach produced a broad consensus amongst old Tories and conservative Whigs, churchmen and statesmen, that the Church establishment, and the political exclusions which buttressed it, should be defended. However, in the early nineteenth century, the proliferation of evangelicalism, as well as Britain's political union with Ireland introduced new circumstances which exacerbated these ideological tensions by introducing diverging interpretations of how to maintain political stability and avert whole-scale reform. In short, changing circumstances ensured that, by 1829, pragmatism conflicted with the principle of an inviolable constitution. Liberal Tories and pro-Catholics chose the former, a path which entailed conciliation and concession.

Chapters two, three, and four, outlined the growing dissatisfaction in Ultra-Tory opinion with what was considered to be the administration's 'liberality'. Writing in September 1828, the Duke of Newcastle articulated Ultra-Tory frustrations when he complained that, from 1812, a 'cursed system of liberalism, neutrality, and conciliation' had emerged which determined that 'all [should]... bend to expediency, and [that] principle must not stand in the way of policy'.¹⁰⁹² The recognition and articulation of opposition to Liberal Toryism and pro-Catholicism enhanced notions of political otherness through which the key characteristics of Toryism were polished and refined. For Ultra Tories, free-thinking in the spheres of economics, politics and religion were interlinked. The doctrines of political economy jeopardised sustainable, balanced economic growth; these doctrines also mounted an attack on the economic status of the landed interest, in particular, posing a substantial intellectual threat to the constitutional *status quo*. This threat, in Ultra opinion, was only exacerbated by ministers' determination to concede to pressures for economic reform. Moreover, ministers' tendency to conciliate Protestant pluralism in the early nineteenth century enraged High Church Tories. By undermining the authority of Anglicanism's truth, co-operation with Protestant Dissenters in the circulation of religious knowledge, coupled with the extension of toleration, encouraged religious laxity which threatened the established status of the Church of England.

¹⁰⁹² Henry Pelham Fiennes Pelham Clinton [Duke of Newcastle], *A Letter to the Right Hon. Lord Kenyon, from his grace the Duke of Newcastle* (London 1828), p. 8.

Yet, above all, it was the determination of pro-Catholic ministers to concede Catholic emancipation which contributed towards Tory fissures. For Ultra Tories, the constitution established in 1688 was inviolable, and the defence of Protestantism alongside the exclusion of Catholicism were its key features. This agenda also provided the basis on which the Hanoverian dynasty held its crown. To concede these characteristics, as pro-Catholic Whigs and Tories desired, would constitute betrayal of the Glorious Revolution and undermine the legitimacy of the Hanoverian dynasty. Consequently, by protecting these elements, anti-Catholic Tories perpetuated the transformation, already underway, through which Tory identity was detached from its historic associations with loyalty to the Catholic, Stuart dynasty. Instead, it was reconstructed as zealously loyal to the 'true' legacy of the Glorious Revolution and underpinned by loyalty to the Hanoverian succession.

This process had been instigated in the eighteenth century by the redirection of Tory loyalties and renegotiation of their most controversial doctrines: indefeasible hereditary succession and absolutism. The abandonment of both functioned as part of conscious attempt to separate Tory identity from its historical associations with Jacobite disloyalty while retaining its pro-monarchical, anti-populist characteristics. Hostility to Protestant pluralism, reinvigorated by Dissenting challenges to the establishment in the late eighteenth century, also resembled historic Toryism, ensuring that this identity continued to correspond loosely with its historical past. Yet throughout the period 1760-1832, Tory identity was undergoing what Stuart Hall refers to as a 'process of becoming rather than being'.¹⁰⁹³ Despite the retention of historic characteristics, emphasis was increasingly placed on Tory loyalty to the 'true' interpretation of 1688 and the Hanoverian dynasty. This characterisation was perpetuated in the early nineteenth century by Tories' determination to defend the existing constitution from political radicalism, free trade, and above all, Catholic emancipation.

¹⁰⁹³ Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London, 1996), p. 4.

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