

The Language of Patriotism in France, 1750-1770¹

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With his customary cynicism Voltaire, in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*, cut through the rhetoric to raise the question of patriotic language and motivation:

A *patrie* is composed of several families and, as we usually support our family out of self-interest [amour propre], when we have no contrary interest, we support by the same self-interest our town or village, that we call our *patrie*... He who burns with ambition to be edile, praeter, consul dictator, proclaims that he loves his *patrie*, but he loves only himself.

Can we indeed arrive at a deeper understanding of the use of the language of *patrie* in this period? After all, in France from the middle years of the eighteenth century onwards, *patrie* is one of the key terms employed in writings on society and politics. Its importance in the political culture of the period has long been recognized, but the

¹ This study may be seen as the interpretative prolegomena to a fuller study of patriotism in the later ancien régime on which I have been working since 1995, principally with the aim of understanding the role of ideas in politics in the 1780s. I would like to thank the British Academy and The Leverhulme Trust for a Research Award and a Research Fellowship that enabled me to carry out much of the research for this article (and more besides). I wish to thank Dale Van Kley, Tom Kaiser, Marisa Linton, Annie Jourdan, John Renwick and Joël Félix and Julian Swann for the opportunities they have given me to test and clarify my ideas, at conferences, seminars and in exchanges. My first essay in this field was for the East-West Seminar in Naples in 1991, for which I would like to thank Robert Darnton.

sporadic publications up to the 1970s usually contented themselves with reproducing definitions and noting its coming into fashion in the 1750s, to be followed by an ever wider diffusion before the Revolution.² However, particularly in the last decade, with the shift to cultural history, *patrie* and patriotism have become the subject of much deeper historical interest. Patriotism has been seen as a sentiment; it is frequently described as an ideology; more recently it has been referred to as a rhetoric, a language, or idiom. Certainly it becomes an ideology during the Revolution, but quite how to evaluate its significance in the preceding decades remains problematic. Was Voltaire right to suggest that it was a cover for selfish interests?

This article explores the complexities of *patrie* and patriotism during its key formative period. Its basis in primary publications is much broader than texts which simply use the word *patrie* in the title, although most of those have been read, and this has made it possible to analyse the language as it is used more widely. In this light, the concepts of *patrie* and *patriote* in the period 1750-1770 were more complex than many have assumed. After a brief survey of the issues raised by recent historiography, the following pages will consider definitions, explore how the language operated as a discourse, and show how it was employed in a range of contexts. My argument is that *patrie* was part of an ambiguous discourse that was exploited

² There has been relatively little work on eighteenth-century patriotism until very recently and little has been really systematic. See Alfonse Aulard *Le patriotisme française de la Renaissance à la révolution*, Paris, 1921; Daniel Mornet chronicles the diffusion of a patriotic morality in his *Les Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution française* (Paris, 1933), 1954; Robert R. Palmer, 'The national Idea in France before the Revolution', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1 (1940), 95-111; and Jacques Godechot 1967, 'Nation, patrie, nationalisme, et patriotisme en France au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 206 (1971), 481-501; Werner Kraus considered definitions of 'Patriote', 'patriotique', 'patriotisme' à la fin de l'Ancien Régime', in W.H. Barber, J. Brumfitt et al, eds, *The Age of enlightenment* (Oxford, 1967), 387-94; Norman Hampson, 'La patrie', in C. Lucas, ed. *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, 2, (Oxford, 1988), 125-37. These older works mostly confine themselves to elucidating the definitions in dictionaries and the main authors of Enlightened texts. More substantial are Palmer's two volumes on the 'democratic revolution', which remain influential: *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, 2 vols (Princeton, 1959-64). Collette Beaune has stressed the religious dimension in *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and symbols of a Nation in Late-Medieval France*, trans F.L. Cheyette (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991) and for the later sixteenth century there is Myriam Yardeni, *La conscience nationale en France pendant les guerres de religion (1559-1598)* (Louvain, 1971); David Bell has an extensive bibliography on his website. Bernard Cottret and Dale Van Kley have organised three conferences, see esp. B. Cottret, ed. *Du patriotisme aux nationalismes (1700-1848)* (Paris, 2002).

rhetorically and strategically from 1750 onwards. Notwithstanding recent historiography, its wider use clearly preceded the onset of the Seven Years War. Its emergence and more general use should not be explained by postulating a process of internalizing an ideology or a sentiment that genuinely motivated people.

On the contrary, several different and concurrent processes were at work. First, there was a particular intellectual conjuncture of reformulated or revived concepts, including above all virtue, classical antiquity, and sensibility, all of which emerged in the 1740s. Second, the language of *patrie*, deeply influenced by these elements, could be deployed in a variety of contexts to underpin arguments that might even be quite contradictory. Certainly up to 1770, and indeed up to 1789, I would argue, ambiguity is therefore one of the main characteristics of the language of *patrie* and patriotism. Thirdly, the political culture at the time, in which political debate over matters regarded as the king's business was not formally allowed, prompted authors to justify themselves by appealing to their love of the *patrie* as a legitimization of their intervention in the rapidly developing public sphere.³ This authorial strategy was attractive, and clearly deliberate, but the arguments that could be justified in terms of patriotism nevertheless remained subject to the many contradictions and ambiguities inherent in the concepts that made up this rather broad and imprecise discourse. So writers claiming to be patriots could espouse several different and sometimes contradictory positions. Finally, to become widespread and such arguments to be made, the language needed opportunities for use by a variety of interests. For this, the political conjuncture of the turbulent 1750s was important, as particular struggles provided possibilities for its use in the emergent public sphere. The legacy of the War of the Austrian Succession, the emergence of the Pompadour faction which included the reforming *contrôleur général* Machault, the renewed struggles with the church and the parlements over Jansenism and over fiscal immunities, the war with England from 1756, all generated discussions made possible by the relaxation of the censorship regime. Crucially, patriotism was also promoted quite deliberately by ministerial policy in the 1750s and 1760s. In some cases all these opportunities for the employment of the

³ I have been making this point in conference papers since 1991, and am delighted to see David Bell write that 'patrie [was] put forward loudly and insistently as justification and legitimization for nearly all political claims': *The Cult of the Nation in France. Inventing nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001) p. 199. It is not a point to be made in passing, however, for it is central to how the discourse of *patrie* worked.

concept fed back into the development of the discourse by evoking latent elements that may otherwise have lain dormant or developed differently. It was a complicated process that historians have not paid sufficient attention to, and which takes us a little closer to an understanding of the processes by which political writings were produced in this period. Let us begin by considering other historical approaches.

1 Recent historiographical approaches

Many historians have linked *patrie* very closely to the emerging concept of *nation*.⁴ Jean-Yves Guiomar in 1974 argued that during the eighteenth century, *patrie* became separated from a political entity dominated by the prince, and was essentially in opposition to absolute monarchy. It implied community, self-sacrifice, liberty, equality, and devotion to the commonwealth. *Patrie* was the ideological seed which engendered the nation, and right into the revolution *patrie* denoted the ‘national ideology’.⁵ Liah Greenfeld in a comparative sociological study also linked *patrie* and nationalism closely. But before the later 1780s, the link between patriotism and nationalism was not as close as has often been suggested. For example, her comparative analysis of the development of nationalism seems to emphasise a linear development in France, that links the development of state and language, but pays little attention to contested definitions and debates, nor to the centrality of virtue. (She does however point to the issue of noble virtue, but virtue was more complex.) Although she mentions that *patrie* could be associated with ‘universalistic, cosmopolitan attitudes’ her argument cannot account for it.⁶ At the time however the contradiction with nation is very clear. As Beausobre stated in 1762:

What is patriotism? Let us not confuse it with that blind love of our nation, a love that seems inseparable from a decided disdain for other nations.⁷

⁴ For the argument that patriotism was both European and religiously influenced, see Dale Van Kley, ‘Religion and the Age of “Patriot” Reform’, *Journal of Modern History*, forthcoming (2008), whose footnotes provide a guide to other recent work.

⁵ Jean-Yves Guiomar, *L'idéologie nationale: nation, représentation, propriété* (Paris, 1974).

⁶ See Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), p.163.

⁷ M. de Beausobre, *Discours sur le Patriotisme prononcé dans l'assemblée publique de l'Académie royale des Sciences et Belles Lettres de Berlin le 29 janvier, 1761* (à Berlin, chez Chrétien Frédéric Voss, 32 pp. – BL 117 a 57). One might read this as a critique of the attempt to manipulate the sentiment of virtuous citizenship in

Patriotism was for many *philosophes* about being citizens of the world, but for others it remained more closely related to one's town or province, or to being a member of the French national (or royal) community.

As David Bell wrote of nationalism, 'the history of the concept of the nation remains something very different from the history of nationalism and national identity' – and the same can be said of *patrie* and patriotism.⁸ We must beware the assumption that patriotism was just the sentimental accompaniment to the rise of the concept of the *patrie* or the nation. One of the problems has been that *patrie* and patriotism have been studied because the concepts appear to be part of a chain of development towards modern nationalism. Although studying the roots of nationalism is a perfectly legitimate project, it has here meant that *patrie* has not been searchingly studied as a subject in itself, free of hindsight and indeed the occasional dose of teleology. Guiomar highlighted as characteristic of the language of *patrie* in the mid-century those elements that are also to be found in the Revolutionary period after 1789. He rightly stresses equality and community, but the moral vision of politics is left out of what he labels a 'mouvement patriotique' (that for him was class-based as well). We should try not to telescope time, for there were developments between 1750 and 1789, and then the Revolution intervened to further modify the meanings of patriotism. Thus, the problem of whether the development of this 'national ideology' was ineluctable and necessary, or contingent upon a range of factors, is not addressed. *Nation* and *patrie* were indeed part of the same broad discourse, but significantly *patrie* contained elements that were left aside when the close link with nationalism was formed during the Revolution (notably the immensely important association with royalism).⁹ The development of a close identity between the two overlapping but different terms thus should be

the direction of nationalism in the service of foreign policy, which was a feature of Moreau's *Observateur hollandais*: see below, pp. 37–8. For a concise statement of the cosmopolitanism of the *philosophes*, see L.G. Crocker, 'A note on Diderot and patriotism', *Modern language Notes*, 64, 7 (1949), 476–80

⁸ D.A. Bell, 'Lingua populi, lingua dei: Language, religion, and the origins of French revolutionary nationalism', *American Historical Review*, 100, 5 (1995), 1403–37; idem, 'Recent works on early modern French national identity', *Journal of Modern History*, 68 (March 1996), 84–113, the quotation is from p. 92.

⁹ See for example Greenfeld who on p. 160 writes that *nation*, *peuple*, *patrie* and *état* were 'used interchangeably, as near synonyms'. These pages on vocabulary and language reveal little sensitivity to the context of the utterances or the political aims of the authors of the definitions.

seen not as natural and necessary, as may appear with hindsight, but as a problem to be explained.¹⁰

Most historians have interpreted patriotism as a genuine sentiment. In a massive volume embodying impressive scholarship, Edmond Dziembowski sets out to prove that there was a real, a new patriotism, that was largely generated by the Anglophobia that came into being during the Seven Years War.¹¹ Encouraged by government propaganda, it was especially indebted for its emergence to the great debate on the failure of France to match Britain's achievement. There is of course merit in this argument, yet some key aspects may be questioned. It is important to avoid the assumption that that the concept and the feeling were coterminous. The issue is of course problematic. On the one hand there is evidence about the frequency of words and book titles that does indeed show a marked increase in the use of phrases, words and concepts in precisely this period. Significant numbers of authors certainly did appeal to patriotism in their writings, and even actions like *dons patriotiques* were proposed or actually performed, while some were *said* to have laid down their lives for the *patrie*. On the other hand, we should treat the statistical evidence with caution and the *dons patriotiques* turn out to be more expressions of provincial pride than true patriotism.¹² The tables and statistics provided by several historians showing the rise in usage of the terms *patrie*, *patriote* and *nation* are very useful in demonstrating that there

¹⁰ I am currently preparing a second paper on *patrie* from 1770 to 1792, the period during which it develops from being an ambiguous discourse into an ideology, a process that poses interesting questions. It could be argued that the close conjunction of *nation* and *patrie* under the Revolution owes at least as much to contingency and the circumstances of *patrie* moving from an opposition concept to one at the centre of the stage, as it does to any logic internal to the concept.

¹¹ E. Dziembowski, *Un nouveau patriotisme français, 1750-1770: La France face à la puissance anglaise à l'époque de la guerre de Sept Ans*, SVEC 365 (Oxford, 1998).

¹² Sometimes this evidence is far from conclusive. The evidence produced by Dziembowski is almost all language, not actions, except perhaps some letters from soldiers and provincials (*said* to have been sent). The patriotic ships of 1762 (pp. 458-70) clearly were not given for patriotic reasons, as his own evidence in an appendix shows, as well as an analysis of the case in Burgundy Julian Swann, *Provincial Power and Absolute Monarchy. The Estates General of Burgundy, 1661-1790* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 316-19. Both Dziembowski's Appendix VII (which does not actually use the word *patrie*, but cites 'love of king' instead) and Swann's pages show the ships being offered for the love of the king and honour or glory of the province. We are dealing with a process of relabelling by the monarchy. The evidence (pp. 472-86) that the audience response to *The Siege of Calais* in 1765 actually reflected the new patriotism and not Anglophobia, the free shows, and a chance to vaunt the role of the people, is at best very equivocal, yet it is the crux of his argument.

was indeed a marked increase in the period of the 1750s and 1760s.¹³ They certainly prove that in terms of a discourse, language or idiom, there is a subject to be studied. What both the appeals to patriotism and the statistics do *not* prove is exactly what is often taken for granted, that this rise reflects a genuinely internalized ideology or sentiment on the part of the authors.¹⁴

Several historians do refer to patriotism as an ‘ideology’, and studies on the period from 1770 onwards tend to label it as such.¹⁵ In one of the most recent contributions to deal with *la patrie*, John Shovlin accepts Dziembowski’s case that patriotism was a genuine sentiment, and takes it further to argue that there was a concept of ‘patriotic political economy of virtue’ whose rise can be traced from the 1750s. The book actually focuses on the debate over luxury, but its broader argument on patriotism is undermined because it does not explore the notion of either *patrie* or virtue in depth and, treating utterances as beliefs, does not address the question of whether writers may have employed authorial strategies to select elements from a wider range of possibilities. If on the other hand patriotism is seen as an ambiguous discourse, as I argue, it becomes easier to explain that there was not just one form of patriotic political economy in the 1780s (and Shovlin suggests there was only one) but continued debate for strategic reasons over different models. Patriotism was just too ambiguous to predetermine choices and directions.¹⁶

¹³ For the figures, see: Greenfeld, *Five Roads*, pp. 520-1, notes 156-9; Dziembowski, *Un nouveau patriotisme*, pp. 508-528 (list of titles and tables); Bell, *Cult of the nation*, pp. 11-12, 69, and p. 246, n. 81.

¹⁴ In focusing on Dziembowski’s main argument I do not mean to suggest that the many subtle points he makes are any the less valid; on the contrary, he is well aware of the authorial strategies of publicists who wrote any of the texts he analyses and states that patriotism has varied forms.

¹⁵ From 1770 on see Durand Echeverria’s study of the ‘the patriote ideology’, in the literature responding to the Maupeou coup, *The Maupeou Revolution. A Study in the History of Libertarianism, France 1770-1774* (Baton Rouge and London, 1985), pp. 37-124; Shanti Singham’s thesis on the Jansenists, ‘A conspiracy of twenty million Frenchmen: Public opinion, patriotism and the assault on absolutism’, PhD thesis, Princeton University, 1991, and her article ‘*Vox populi vox dei*’, in *Jansénisme et Révolution*, ed. C.-L. Maire, *Chroniques de Port Royal* (1990), 183-94. For the 1780s we have Daniel Wick in *A Conspiracy of Well Intentioned Men* (London and New York, 1987), with a chapter entitled ‘Collective ideology of the patriot party’, pp. 244-90.

¹⁶ John Shovlin, *The Political Economy of Virtue. Luxury, Patriotism, and the Origins of the French Revolution* (Ithaca and London, 2006): ‘One of the primary conclusions of my analysis is that much of the political economy elaborated and embraced by ordinary elites was animated and shaped by a patriotic impulse.’ (p. 5). This is doubtful. Shovlin does moreover produce evidence of ministerial sponsorship

If love of the *patrie* was perhaps not a genuine sentiment or clear ideology at this point (it may however evolve in this direction before the revolution), is it best considered as a language or broad concept? Several historians have taken this approach. Nathalie Elie-Lefebvre read 110 texts in terms of a debate and sheds much light on the concept.¹⁷ The only reservation about this excellent postgraduate study is that the authors were not so much having a debate on *patrie*, as contributing to many different debates when using the concepts it implied. Hélène Dupuy has however argued that the language of *patrie*, although employed early on by the monarchy, was in the long run bound to be inimical to the notion of a patriot king. As king and *patrie* were separated, it was difficult to argue that the king was above the *patrie* and the logic of the concept was for him to be subsumed within the *patrie* – a very different role.¹⁸ Maurizio Viroli argues that there was a language of love of country across the centuries, essentially ‘a language of common liberty’. Valuable for showing antecedents, his book is in the tradition of the grand history of ideas, citing only the great thinkers, omitting the Revolution in France entirely, and considering on France only Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jaucourt and at disproportionate length Rousseau, with no social, religious or political context and no questions about motives. He attributes the meaning of the language as used in any period to its forming part of a republican discourse, an interpretation which is antithetical to the whole point of attempting to understand intentions at a given moment.¹⁹

This approach is a far cry from that of the present author and David Bell, whose important study also deals with *patrie* and nation as

of Coyer, and of the agricultural societies, that would suggest that the latter were more ministerial creations that the result of true patriotism: Chapter 3, pp. 81-92. The fact that their activities did not seem to bring about much agricultural change might also lead us to question their true patriotism. See also Jeremy Jennings, stressing that debate continued in the 1780s: ‘The debate about luxury in eighteenth century French political thought’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 68 (2007), 79-106.

¹⁷ ‘Le débat sur l’idée de patrie et sur le patriotisme, 1742-1789’, *Mémoire de Maîtrise*, Université de Paris, 1974 (available on microfiche in the BN)

¹⁸ Helene Dupuy, ‘Le roi dans la Patrie’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 1991, pp. 139-57. See also her unpublished thesis, ‘Genèse de la patrie moderne: La naissance de l’idée moderne de patrie en France avant et pendant la Révolution’, Université de Paris I (Panthéon-Sorbonne), 1995.

¹⁹ I do agree that patriotism and nationalism should be studied as two different things. For some important criticisms of Viroli’s approach, see V. Bader, ‘For love of country’, *Political Theory*, 27, 3 (1999), 379-97. Where I see ambiguities and the importance of context, Viroli sees deviations from a normative language. It seems strange to quote from Skinner’s article on Bolingbroke (see note 21 below) without engaging with his main point about strategies.

language and concept, and avoids the issue of sentiment by focusing on the emergence of a concept of the nation that could be inculcated during the Revolution. He relates *patrie* to *nation* and, following Dale Van Kley, raises the interesting question of the relationship between *patrie* and religion. To underpin his argument that there was a strong religious dimension to both *patrie* and *nation*, he appeals to a process of disenchantment with religion, but the case as he expresses it is far from conclusive. While Bell has addressed *patrie* in the context of the nation, Jay Smith has explored the role of *patrie* within the equally important debate over noble virtue and honour. In what some might choose to read as an intellectual history of a broad and complex discourse on nobility, he argues that the patriotic impulse necessitated a rethinking of honour and equality. Stimulating as it is on this significant debate, his study does display unresolved tensions between an acceptance of the language of *patrie* as rhetoric, and the idea that the concept had some form of agency as it necessitated a rethinking, and attributing motives for publication to ‘patriotism’, ‘patriotic feeling’, with writers being ‘civic minded’ or simply ‘patriots’.²⁰ Of course, all of these elements may be true of specific writers at different times, and this would justify the kind of stress on a synchronic approach to eighteenth-century thought that I would also advocate for terms like citizen, liberty, and equality. As with the ‘patriotic’ writings against the Maupeou coup (but of course not with *all* patriotic writings), the fundamental question is whether we can take propagandist writings or political polemics to be statements of a motivational ideology. The specific motivations of most writers must remain an open question, but the issue of whether writers are best viewed as articulating interests or are simply involved in an evolving intellectual debate is one that needs to be more clearly addressed by both political and intellectual historians of this period.

²⁰ Jay Smith, *Nobility Reimagined. The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca and London, 2005). The book is subtle, persuasive and full of insights and Smith is well aware of the ambiguities. A key part of his argument is that writers are trying to define a modern patriotism that was ‘distinctly postclassical’ (p. 145). Instances of different terminology to describe users of the language include, ‘rhetoric’, pp. 10, 206; ‘self-styled’ or ‘self-described’ on pp. 153, 193, 262, 267; but he then describes a century-long growth of ‘patriotic feeling’, p. 266, and ‘the growth of French patriotism in the eighteenth century’, p. 265. Coyer is described as ‘convinced’ of the need for patriotic virtues, p. 113, although Basset de la Marelle employs ‘a standard rhetorical feature of patriotic literature’, p. 168. In some cases we cannot know which term to apply, but in others there is evidence, clear or circumstantial, of other motives. This takes us to the heart of a problem of evaluating apparent ideologies under a system which forbade discussion of politics as ideology, or which had not yet conceived of it as such.

Britain and the Netherlands provide material for comparative studies.²¹ In this early period the French link to Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King* is clear and important. In other respects though, comparisons with England may be misleading. According to Quentin Skinner, in England patriotism was a far less complicated idea, with a broadly agreed definition: as the Tories used it, it stood for Machiavellian and Harringtonian civic virtue, against a standing army, and against corruption. The French ministerial policy of translating English works on political economy into French, and the policy of stressing that the English victory in the Seven Years War was due to English patriotism and virtue, perhaps conceals the fact that the concepts of virtue and *patrie* were much more complex in France – although of course some of the complexity comes from the marriage of English and French elements. French writers were much more attached than British ones to antique virtues rather than the Mandevillian notion of private vices leading to public benefits. There was a very different intellectual climate, very different means or limits of expression, and thus different authorial codes and strategies. Censorship in France led to much more ambiguous forms of expression of a concept that was more open to debate and inflection. Nevertheless, one particularly illuminating comparison is the way that English writers, like the French, used patriotic language to legitimise their interventions, as Quentin Skinner and Linda Colley have suggested.²²

This *tour d'horizon* shows that the latest works to have dealt with aspects of patriotism have undoubtedly enriched our understanding from several perspectives. Their various approaches have raised questions that deserve answers. One of the key questions is whether or not patriotism before 1789 was an ideology, like modern nationalism, capable of motivating people. Further issues centre upon the role of religion, its relationship to Anglophobia, its operation as a language and the conditions for its use. Of one thing there is no doubt, political language changed during this period, and the language of *patrie* was

²¹ See Q. Skinner, 'The principles and practice of opposition: The case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole', in Neil McKendrick, ed., *Historical perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society in Honour of J.H. Plumb* (London, 1974), pp. 93-128; Hugh Dunthorne, 'The language of patriotism', *History Workshop Journal*, 12 (1981), 8-33; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983); John Dinwiddy, "England," in *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, John Dinwiddy and Otto Dann eds (London, 1988), pp. 52-70; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven, 1992); and many more. On the Netherlands, see S. Schama, *Patriots and Liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780-1813* (London, 1992).

²² See Skinner, 'Principles and practice', and Colley, *Britons*, p. 5.

related to the changes. By 1779 it was clear to the abbé de Véri that an important shift had taken place:

The trivial expressions of my youth: Serve the King, serve the *Patrie*, 'plant cabbages', 'vegetate in one's village', no longer convey to Frenchmen those impressions of glory or disdain that they once had. One hardly dares say: Serve the King, now they say serve the State. This latter expression was, in the time of Louis XIV, a blasphemy. During the first twenty years of Louis XV, we saw a legacy of this way of thinking, when a minister protested in an academy against the phrase: Serve the nation. 'There is no nation in France, he said, there is only a King.' Today, hardly anyone would dare say in Parisian circles, I serve the King. He would be taken for one of the grand valets of Versailles. I serve the State, I served the State, that's the expression they most frequently use. The difference between expressions certainly denotes the difference of sentiments. On the other hand, plant cabbages, vegetate in one's village are no longer expressions of disdain. Nowadays the gentleman cultivator is respected as much as the gentleman destroyer. In time he will be given preference.²³

To explain the nature of this transformation in language and establish its chronology as well as its modalities remains a challenge, and one well beyond the scope of this essay. To find an answer is not likely to be an easy task because language is often unclear, and with the history of concepts it is extremely hard to distinguish between what is original, what is culled from the classics or past traditions and experience, and what is simply an old idea expressed in a new way. All three aspects coexist. A further problem is that in this situation, as recent work shows, it is often possible to find quotations that support several different lines of development. These problems become more apparent when we focus specifically on the topic of *patrie*.

2 Defining *la patrie*

As a prelude to further discussion, and at the risk of repeating the well known, let us therefore consider the French definitions of *patrie* and patriotism. In the later eighteenth century these words still carried with them multiple meanings from the past. Medieval and Renaissance meanings associated the word with *pays*, locality, but by the sixteenth century it could also mean the totality of the kingdom. *Patriote* then

²³ *Journal de l'abbé de Véri*, ed. J. de Witte (2 vols, Paris, 1928-30) II, pp. 194-5 (February-March 1779). See also his scathing commentary on the parlementaire use of language in his *Journal*: II, p. 68.

meant imbued with a love of the *patrie*, and could even mean a partisan of popular reforms. Prince and *patrie* are often linked with paternal authority and filial devotion.²⁴ During the Wars of Religion the concept served to distinguish loyalty to France as opposed to the religious loyalties that were so divisive. In the later seventeenth century both Bossuet and La Bruyère discussed patriotism very briefly. Bossuet stressed platitudinously the need to be a good citizen and to love the *patrie* which contained the happiness of friends and family. La Bruyère, wrote that ‘There is no *patrie* under despotism’. In the later seventeenth century the word was far from common, and rarely had the associations it was to develop fifty years later.²⁵ From its publication in 1699, Fénelon’s *Adventures of Telemach* presented a tremendously influential model of virtuous kingship in which the king existed for the good of his people. But Fénelon does not use the word *patrie* in the later sense, although his model was of what would later be called a patriot king. Daguesseau gave a well-known speech on the subject of love of the *patrie* for his *mercuriale* of 1715.²⁶ From the late 1730s in France the words *patrie* and patriotism start to appear with increasing frequency. Thus by mid-century it had been used sporadically in France for three centuries, and widely for the last three decades in England, where Cato especially had been revived as a classical model. Although the several key elements of a definition can be identified separately earlier, they all come together in France in the space of a few years around 1750 in what was to become a fashionable, useful and emotive concept.²⁷ As is well known, it was increasingly employed in a wide variety of contexts before 1789, and became central to the language of the Revolution. Some of its component notions were to be discredited by the Terror, – antique virtue is a case in point – so *patrie* parallels the concept of *vertu*, but unlike *vertu* was destined for a greater future in politics.

²⁴ G. Dupont-Ferrier, ‘Le sens des mots “Patria” et “patrie” en France au moyen age jusqu’au début du XVIIe siècle’, *Revue historique* (1940), 89-104.

²⁵ Victor L. Tapié, ‘Comment les français voyaient la Patrie’, *Dix-Septième Siècle*, nos 25-6 (1955), 37-58; Jean-Pierre Labatut, ‘Patriotisme et noblesse sous le règne de Louis XIV’, *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 29 (1982), 622-34. Patriotism was above all heroic and aristocratic, p.631.

²⁶ ‘De l’amour de la patrie’ nineteenth *Mercuriale*, 1715, *Oeuvres choisies du Chancelier d’Aguesseau* (Paris, 1863), pp. 161-9. He is arguing for a royalist patriotism sustained by virtuous judges.

²⁷ However much one shares the laudable belief in the necessity of modern civic virtue today, it simply will not do in this period to postulate a continuous stream of language resurfacing with more or less the same meaning, as does Viroli. (on France, op. cit, pp. 69-94).

At this point virtue was a crucial frame of reference. In *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu wrote:

Political virtue is the renunciation of oneself, which is always difficult ... This virtue can be defined as love of the laws and the *patrie*. This love, requiring continual preference for the public interest to one's own, gives all particular virtues: they are only this preference. ... Love of the *patrie* leads to the goodness of morals, and good morals lead to love of the *patrie*.²⁸

Montesquieu was of course influenced earlier by Bolingbroke, and the 1750 translation by Thiard de Bissy of Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King* was obviously important as it went through four editions that year. Bolingbroke wrote,

The true image of a free people, governed by a PATRIOTIC KING, is that of a patriarchal family, where the head and all the members are united by one common interest... instead of abetting the divisions of his people, he will endeavour to unite them, and to be himself the centre of their union.²⁹

Unity not factional division was the theme. Drawing on the English writers at the turn of the century, who themselves drew on Harrington, he stresses community, using the metaphors of the body politic and the family. Bolingbroke's real target is faction and corruption, but he makes little mention of virtue – wisely, one might say. The abbé Coyer used Bolingbroke when he wrote a *Dissertation sur le vieux mot de Patrie* in 1755. Like the abbé Duguet, whom we will consider later, he extends the old meaning from 'a land where one was born and bred' to that of an ideal community in which despotism and corruption no longer exist, a land of concord and virtue:

A vast field in which each can reap according to his needs and his labour. It is a land that all its inhabitants have an interest in preserving, that no one wants to leave, because one does not abandon one's happiness. It is a nursemaid, a mother who cherishes all her children, who makes distinctions between them only in so far as they distinguish themselves, a mother who desires only opulence and modest wealth but no poor.³⁰

²⁸ Book IV, chapter 5.

²⁹ Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King: With respect to the constitution of Great Britain. By a person of quality* (London, 1740), p. 78.

³⁰ G.F. Coyer, *Dissertations pour être lues, la première sur le vieux mot de Patrie* (The Hague, 1765 edition), p. 19.

He speaks of citizens, and complains that:

Today we say kingdom, state, France and never the *patrie*... France brings to mind only a piece of the world divided into so many provinces, watered by so many rivers. State says nothing more than a society of men who live under a certain government, happy or unhappy. Kingdom signifies (I will not say what those stern republicans used to say, those who made so much noise in the world about their victories and their virtues) a tyrant and slaves; let us say better than they, a king and his subjects. But *Patrie* that comes from the word *Pater*, suggests a father and his children.³¹

Cicero, he says, preferred the word. Such references to the classics were of course usual in this period. It is through the classical republican tradition in France that other connotations can be given to *patrie*. In particular, examples and comparisons are drawn from the classics: the examples of Lycurgus, Cincinnatus, Brutus, in Plutarch, Livy and Cicero. Yet figures as diverse as Saint Louis, the abbé Suger, Michel l'Hôpital, Sully, and Colbert will all receive patriotic eulogies as French heroes recast in a classical mould.

Rather than fill several pages with quotations from the many dictionary definitions and pamphlets that refer to the *patrie*, let us highlight the key and recurring elements. In the *Encyclopédie* in 1765 the chevalier de Jaucourt wrote – compiled is surely the word – his entry as follows:

The philosophe knows that this word [*patrie*] comes from the Latin *pater*, which represents a father & children, & consequently that it expresses the meaning we attach to that of family, of society, of free state, of which we are members, & whose laws assure our liberties and our wellbeing. There is no *patrie* under the yoke of despotism. ... The love that we bear it leads to goodness of morals, & goodness of morals leads to love of the *patrie*; this love is the love of the laws and of the wellbeing of the state, a love singularly appropriate for democracies; it is a political virtue, through which one renounces oneself, by preferring the public interest to one's own; it is a sentiment, & and not the product of knowledge; the lowest man in the state can have this sentiment as can the head of the republic.

Patriot: he who in a free government loves his *patrie*, & puts his happiness and his glory towards succouring it with zeal, according to

³¹ Coyer, *Dissertations*, pp. 13-14. Note that the concluding parenthesis after 'virtues' radicalizes the text or titillates the reader considerably and is deliberately misplaced: it grammatically should go after 'they' – though the grammar becomes a little hazy. This is an example of the authorial strategies I explore more fully below.

his means and capacities. ... To serve the *patrie* is not a chimerical duty, it is a real obligation.

According to the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* in 1771, 'patriotism must be based upon great principles and great virtues'.

The concepts of equality and fraternity are inherent in the concept of patriotism, this powerful sentiment that springs from love of humanity. The social morality so much in vogue goes against special privileges and all, even the king, should obey the laws. Most authors say that there can be no *patrie* without good laws, and would have agreed with Mathon de la Cour in 1787, that genuine patriotism is rarer than a simple love of one's country, it is 'disinterested', it is 'an ardent desire to serve our compatriots', 'to contribute to the general wellbeing' above all it is a virtue: true patriotism presupposes a society in which all orders are virtuous.³²

Daniel Mornet of course described the wide diffusion of a social and patriotic morality, but he did not go into the reasons for it.³³ But the 'why' is exactly what needs to be explained. If patriotism was not yet an ideology, what is it about the language of *patrie* that facilitates this diffusion in so many different contexts? Is it its ambiguity that allows its use in all sorts of situations? Is it because it was not a fixed concept but a semantic field? Is it because it served as a sort of ideological umbrella under which could shelter writers of different persuasions whose differences might otherwise have been more glaring? Part of the answer lies in all of these suggestions.

In the 1750s and 1760s there is little evidence that the language of *patrie* was employed by the popular classes, although Shanti Singham finds some Jansenist women in the 1770s claiming to the police to be *patriots* (in defiance or defence?), and the *parterre* at Belloy's play *The Siege of Calais* in 1765 could certainly react with enthusiasm to the sentiments expressed.³⁴ The authors of the hundreds of pamphlets that make use of these concepts are no different from the usual run of authors in the public debates of the late ancien régime. They come from the clergy, the aristocracy and the *bonne bourgeoisie*, and were often men of letters, many of whom sought official posts. The constant

³² M. Mathon de La Cour, *Discours sur les meilleurs moyens de faire naître et d'encourager le patriotisme dans une monarchie* (Paris, 1788), p. 14. A quotation from 1787 is legitimate, because there is no significant evolution of the definition between 1770 and 1787. It is the associations and what people do with the terms, that change.

³³ Mornet, *Les Origines intellectuelles*, pp. 258-65.

³⁴ Singham, 'A conspiracy of twenty million Frenchmen'; for the reaction to *The Siege of Calais* see the *Mémoires Secrets pour servir à l'histoire de la république des lettres*, 36 vols (London, 1781-9), vol 2, (1765), pp. 152 ff.

references to the ancients presuppose an educated audience that had an education in a Jesuit or Oratorian school. *Philosophes*, Jansenists, protestants, employees and critics of ministers and financiers, lawyers and magistrates all make use of the concept, or concepts of *patrie* and patriotism. Mostly these authors are far from being original thinkers in the sense of developing key concepts. Many draw upon or are inspired by more theoretical writers like Fénelon, Duguet, Bolingbroke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau who set the intellectual agenda. These more philosophical writers wrote analytically but with engagement, and were in part responsible for the revival of the classical republican ideas of *patrie* in the context of new language and debates. But added to a classical republican form was a religious and political context, the possibilities of virtue redefined, the rise of sensibility, and crucially the complexities of expression in a French context.

3 The chief components of patriotic discourse

If we should take care not to assume that devotion to the *patrie* was a real sentiment capable of motivating people, a more rewarding tack is to consider its relation to a number of key streams of thought that it encompassed. However, before proceeding further, a brief consideration of how to conceptualize the problems of writing the history of languages is indispensable. Recently historians of the revolution have been keen to distance themselves from the notion of discourse put forward by Michel Foucault and employed in particular by Keith Baker and François Furet.

The problem is that Baker's and Furet's framework of explanation focuses on 'discourses' defined in a certain way, namely as historical assemblages of concepts and language that are largely *unconsciously* experienced by individuals and social groups. In this view language is the matrix that constitutes individuals, and all culture and politics becomes a play of languages and concepts that compete. Individuals we have traditionally seen as exercising agency are demoted to the role of 'actors': as Furet said, 'Robespierre was the purest mouthpiece of revolutionary discourse'.³⁵ They adopt a kind of dialectical vision of

³⁵ François Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*, trans E. Forster (Cambridge, 1981), p. 61. Furet differs from Baker in that he sees the role and agency of language as immeasurably more important in the revolution as opposed to the ancien regime, but to argue this he needs to have the key discourses of 1789 labelled as new. In the cases of virtue and *patrie* this is clearly mistaken, as they appear in their 'revolutionary' form from around 1750.

history in which competing discourses are the stuff of politics and the motor of history, what I have called elsewhere neo-Hegelianism.³⁶ This raises the question of how far the users of the language were aware of the discourses, and consequently able to manipulate them. This problem of agency and the degree to which discourses are discernible to the 'actors', and therefore the degree to which they are able to exploit, modify and manipulate them as a part of personal, institutional, authorial or political strategies for example, is a key issue for my analysis of the language of *patrie*, and I very much share these concerns.

Nevertheless, rather than abandon the notion of discourse altogether, let us retain a concept that serves a useful purpose in terms of historical explanation – provided that we are allowed to define it differently more along the lines of Pocock, Skinner and Bourdieu. In exploring the *habitus* and politics that were an essential context for the expression of social and political ideas during the ancien régime, it has always been my aim to stress how far individual agency was important in choices and expression. I therefore want to make a distinction between putative wider discourses that operate on (at least) a semi-conscious level within individuals, playing a part in constructing them as it were, and historical streams of language and associated concepts that can be apprehended by individuals who then employ them with some degree of discernment.³⁷

³⁶ 'Old regime politics and the new interpretation of the French Revolution', *Renaissance and Modern Studies*, 33 (1989), 1-20. Furet marks the primacy of discourse from 1789, but Baker extends this philosophic perspective to ancien régime politics.

³⁷ The political language, or languages, of early-modern Europe may be regarded as continuous streams of associated concepts, and studied as such since they have a history. Some of these discourses structured the consciousness of people in the eighteenth century. There was clearly a discourse on nature, on sentiment, on equality, on monarchy, on sexuality, on morality, on virtue ... and even one on patriotism. None of these was self-contained, so to speak; they tend to relate to one another directly or by association: the body and the state for example; or political authority and paternal authority. They overlap and intermingle. Definitions are altered or twisted, to suit the purpose of the writer or speaker - the *parole* operates on and within the *langue*. Words may be invented or given new meanings. Yet, none of these words or concepts is without roots, and all can be situated in previously existing discourses. I would not want to suggest that discourse had some kind of objective reality that can be reified, nor that the loose but identifiable assemblages of words and concepts did not overlap with others in very slippery ways: but focusing on certain such discourses does help historians to grapple with the problem of social and political consciousness in the past. See especially J.G.A. Pocock, 'The state of the art', in *Virtue, commerce, and history* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 1-36, and 'The concept of language and the *métier d'historien*:

It was always hard to believe that these eighteenth-century lawyers, historians, and scholars were not far more aware of language than we give them credit for, as all had acquired an education in rhetoric that we lack today. Moreover, if the unconscious discourses are not precise, and by their very nature have highly ambiguous and historically conditioned ranges of meanings, it becomes difficult to argue that individuals are effectively structured by the inherent logic or meanings of the language, because that supposed logic is either non-existent or ambiguous. In fact, what might seem surprising is the degree to which writers seem to subversively contradict modern linguistic determinism, using different discourses in different situations and blithely drawing on apparently contradictory elements to make often ambiguous cases. More persuasively therefore we might argue that the educated lawyers and men of letters (for example) usually knowingly appropriate the language in order to exploit it for their own ends. We can see this process at work with the language of patriotism.

In order to explain the nature of *patrie*, it is also helpful to make a further distinction between ideology, discourse and rhetoric. By ideology I mean a set of principles that is capable of motivating people. By rhetoric I do not mean to dwell here on the five elements of the construction of an argument, but to suggest words, tropes or language that are employed strategically to create an effect that helps you achieve your aims. Rhetorical strategies are about how you negotiate your way within a context that might be ideological, but also social, religious, cultural, political. Ideology, language and rhetoric are all inseparable from strategies, as we can only trace language in use, and all usage has strategies – even dictionaries in this period contain strategies.³⁸

Language is nearly always imprecise because old and new meanings and usages co-exist. From Machiavelli to the Revolution, Renaissance humanists, classical republicans, *philosophes*, magistrates, lawyers and churchmen, used many of the same words but often with different senses attached to them. Moreover, writers were perfectly capable of employing the language of their opponents not only to engage with them but also to blur distinctions. Sometimes the distinctions were blurred because writers became trapped in the logical possibilities of the language, such that their arguments became less than coherent, open to further challenge, and generative of further

Some considerations on practice', in A. Pagden, ed., *The languages of political theory in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 19-40.

³⁸ Jean-Claude Waquet, *La Conjuraison des dictionnaires: Vérité des mots et vérités de la politique dans la France moderne* (Strasbourg, 2000).

debate. So we must recognize that individual agency is conditioned and modified by the fact that although discourses have no absolutely fixed direction, they can have an inherent tendency or logical predisposition to develop in certain ways.

One advantage of focusing on the use of language in terms of rhetorical strategies is that the emphasis is more on the writer, and on the choices that have been made. We can ask why has this particular word been used, what were the intentions of the author, what was the political background, the context, and what choices were available. Of course, in practice, these three aspects -- discourse, ideology and rhetorical strategy -- tend to shade into one another. Thus, a strategic rhetorical argument that is successful may well later be firmed up into a conscious ideology. In the light of these reflections, it makes sense to ask how far was the language of *patrie* and patriotism employed as a rhetorical strategy to enter or win arguments, and what was it that made it so useful?

We must begin with the key elements that led to the formation of a patriotic discourse.³⁹ As numerous writers stressed, love of the *patrie* was the first virtue. It is no coincidence that the wider use of the concept of *patrie* coincides with the transformation of the concept of virtue, with which it is so closely linked in texts. But what exactly was virtue? As Marisa Linton has shown, it was itself one of the most important discourses in eighteenth-century France, and very complex.⁴⁰ At the beginning of the century virtue already contained a multiplicity of meanings, which writers could draw upon. The three Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity, with the recent addition of chastity, differed from the classical or pagan virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. For the Romans 'virtue' meant that quality which befits a man – particularly manly courage. Manly virtue implied moral courage; kingly virtue implied acting in the best interests of his subjects; noble virtue could be that of the warrior, or of service or politeness or civility.⁴¹ Civic virtue stemmed from the classics and was in tension with Christian virtues.

³⁹ To anticipate a little on my later argument, on the question of whether the language of *patrie* was necessarily republican or royalist, the question must be whether these categories fit clearly: either/or is *une question mal posée*. It is precisely the attempts to make the disparate elements of the discourse fit together for strategic reasons, in spite of their potential contradictions, that added to the potential for debate.

⁴⁰ *The Politics of Virtue in Enlightenment France* (Basingstoke, 2001). The following discussion of virtue draws on this study.

⁴¹ The noble patriotism of which Labatut speaks under Louis XIV can be interpreted as drawing mostly upon virtue as courage in the service of the king, who

Between 1745 and the 1750s virtue was transformed, with three books being especially significant. Diderot's 1745 translation of Shaftesbury's *Inquiry concerning virtue and merit* was important.⁴² Shaftesbury wrote in the natural law tradition going back to the Ancients, refined by medieval theologians, then by Grotius and Pufendorf. His significance here is his rejection of Locke's pessimism about human nature. He thought instead that people had an innate moral sense and attraction towards virtue. It was an harmonious social vision in which there was no original sin. Diderot's translation brought these ideas of natural virtue to the attention of Rousseau and François-Vincent Toussaint, whose *Les Moeurs* saw 16 editions in 1748, over 20 more up to 1777. Toussaint's morality was not Christian and the book was full of social criticism of the sort that would inspire writers in the debate over noble virtue. He was against the *honnête homme* as being without real virtue and of course he was himself bourgeois. He undermined the traditional concept of noble virtue as public service (with echoes of classical republicanism and even Jansenism) in his attack on the *honnête homme*.

Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* raised the key issue of the role of honour in a monarchy, and of virtue in a republic. In the light of the outcry from some quarters that he implied that nobles had no virtue, he wrote famously, in his Preface to the 1757 edition, to 'clarify' his position:

What I call *virtue* in the republic is love of the *patrie*, that is to say love of equality. It is not a moral virtue, nor a Christian virtue; it is a *political* virtue; and the latter is the spring that moves a republican government, just as honour is the spring that moves monarchy. I have therefore called *political virtue* love of the *patrie* and of equality. I have had new ideas; it was necessary to find new words, or give new meanings to old ones. Those who have not understood this have had me say ridiculous things, that would be revolting in all countries in the world, because in all countries in the world, people want morality.

But of course, he did mean that republican virtue was morality. His political virtue was harder than Shaftesbury's, more classical republican therefore. Many readers chose to draw out the republican moral side to his argument (even though he defended nobility): love of

incarnated the *patrie*. Vauban's 'patriotism' would have been a reference to his concern for the community in the mould of a Roman general such as Cincinnatus.

⁴² Denis Diderot, *Principes de la philosophie morale; ou Essai de M. S*** sur le mérite et la vertu. Avec réflexions*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. J. Assézat and MM. Tourneux (Paris, 1875-7), vol 1.

equality, civic virtue, *patrie*. His attack on the commercial nobility had raised the question of honour; his championing of antique virtues, and his denigration of luxury, also in part set the agenda for subsequent writers in what took off as distinct debates that were to be justified by the appeal to patriotism.

Thus, by 1748 the ‘man of virtue’ (and it was a gendered concept) was increasingly seen as an ideal of social and political conduct. The concept of virtue provided the moral justification of the *patrie*. Unless the citizens of the *patrie* had virtue the *patrie* could not exist, but whilst the citizens retained their virtue then the *patrie* could not be overwhelmed - its home was in their hearts. The virtuous citizen possessed integrity. He was independent, open, and ‘incorruptible’, both in public and in private life. Above all, he was a citizen, devoted to his *patrie*, and to his fellow citizens. This devotion was not necessarily incompatible with his loyalty to the monarchy, but it was based on the assumption that the monarch also served the best interests of the *patrie*.⁴³ Above all, a man of virtue should put the interests of all the community – the *patrie* – above his own self-interest. He should be benevolent. For this patriotic ideal, the remodeling of charity as *bienfaisance* was to be increasingly significant from the 1760s. *Bienfaisance* was active natural virtue – acts of kindness and tangible help towards others, motivated by genuine sympathy. It became a kind of secularized morality that to some extent superceded the traditional idea of Christian charity.⁴⁴

With such a secular context it might seem that the new virtue that underpinned *patrie* was incompatible with religion. Nevertheless, within the debate on virtue, the Jansenists were important for some significant developments in the concept. Their Augustinianism brought them close to Stoicism, a philosophy no doubt suitable for their status as persecuted bearers of truth. Although Jansenists regarded the pagan virtues as a manifestation of pride, *amour-propre*, they were also deeply suspicious of the consequences for one’s salvation of any belief in the Christian virtues. As Marisa Linton writes: ‘The very difficulty of attaining true virtue in Jansenist theology had the effect of returning the debate to the political and social, rather than the spiritual, arena.’ In 1673 Pierre Nicole had argued that the consequences of actions

⁴³ Therein would lie the possibility of a future conflict between patriotism and royalism.

⁴⁴ On *bienfaisance*, see C. Duprat, *Pour l’amour de l’humanité. Le temps des philanthropes, la philanthropie parisienne des Lumières à la monarchie de Juillet*, (2 vols, Paris, C.T. H. S., 1993), vol. 1, and Linton, *Politics of Virtue*, esp. pp. 68-71 and 110-12. *Bienfaisance* was more compassionate than antique benevolence.

inspired by *amour-propre* or false virtue, could nevertheless be good, indeed indistinguishable from the effects of true virtue.⁴⁵ Thus the social and political applications of Jansenist concepts of virtue could be seen as not so very different from the more obviously secular notions, perhaps even not far removed from Helvétius's materialist concept of virtue as socially utilitarian.

La vertu in Jansenist thought first meets *la patrie* in the influential work of Duguet, whose *Institution d'un prince* was written probably in 1713 but published in 1739, again in 1743 and 1750.⁴⁶ Duguet gave the term moral virtues to what in the language of classical republicanism would have been called 'political virtues', such as love of the *patrie*. Because he needed to defend the Jansenists's right to worship, he took the important step of distinguishing the moral virtues from Christian ones. The former are a rough draft of the latter, and by learning to love one's *patrie* and by being virtuous citizens in this life, people prepare themselves to 'become citizens of another *patrie*'. According to Duguet it is the king who serves the nation which exists outside himself and is independent of him. Duguet's concept of a 'republic' is compatible with monarchy, providing that the monarch serves the *bien public*, dispenses justice, maintains equality, rewards virtue and punishes vice, defends his people and keeps them happy. A prince 'must inspire in his subject the love of all the virtues of which the good of the state depends', the first and foremost of these virtues is 'love of the *patrie*'.⁴⁷

Although *patrie* was deeply influenced by secular virtues, it nevertheless was also associated with religion, in terms of both the theology and the religious politics of the time. Here again, Jansenism was important in three linked ways: the first, as we have just seen, was the theology with its notions of virtue, and the need for charity towards

⁴⁵ For the quotation, Linton, *Politics of Virtue*, p. 47. Dale K. Van Kley, 'Pierre Nicole, Jansenism, and the Morality of Enlightenment Self-Interest', in Alan. C. Kors and Paul J. Korshin, eds, *Anticipations of the Enlightenment in England, France and Germany* (Philadelphia, 1987), pp. 69-85. In England, thanks to Mandeville, self-love became quickly bound up with a debate on private vices, public interest, in which the pursuit of self-interest, traditionally a vice, is portrayed as beneficial to society and culture. Although some French writers began to take up this idea, classical republicanism continued to be more important in France and 'unvirtuous' luxury was generally condemned until it became part of a debate in the 1750s.

⁴⁶ Jean Soanen, 'Sur l'amour de la patrie' from 1683 is cited by Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, but it is pure Cicero and St Augustine and not redefining it. For St Augustine charity was a powerful virtue linked to love of the country, see Viroli, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁴⁷ Jacques-Joseph Duguet, *Institution d'un prince, ou Traité des qualites, vertus et des devoirs d'un souverain*, 4 vols, London, 1750, vol. 2, pp. 255-60. He recommends the Roman model of virtues for emulation.

the community. Second, its ‘Figurist’ ecclesiology propelled it into combats in the public sphere in which it was prepared to use arguments that were both a transfer to the secular sphere of theological positions (such as conciliarism), and newer arguments (from Locke or Rousseau for example). Third, it is interesting to note here that several authors who later made contributions to the spread of the notion of *patrie*, were once or always Jansenists. There is Duguet himself, then Charles Rollin (who was later honoured as a *grand homme de la patrie*), with his work on education, and his huge, mythifying and influential compilation *Histoire romaine* of 1738-41, that immediately became the classical studies reference point;⁴⁸ Toussaint who wrote *Les Moeurs*; Daniel Bargeton and Jacob-Nicolas Moreau, influential government publicists, while we should not forget that Rousseau and Montesquieu both had a keen interest in Jansenist theology. Later, after the Maupeou coup in 1771, about two thirds of the anti-Maupeou *libelles* were written by Jansenists, and they employed patriotic rhetoric in defence of the parlements against despotism. But the question remains, that even if we accept that there was a strong religious background, was the concept of *patrie* at this time inherently sacred? Our discussion of the role of secular virtue in conceptions of the *patrie* must caution us against this. However, the issue is extremely thorny, and it is best to regard the question as undecided and in need of further work, as there is evidence for and against.⁴⁹

If questions remain over the religious elements, there is no doubt that the popularity of classical republicanism – and indeed the renewed hugely important vogue for classical antiquity in general – coincided with the rise of the language of *patrie*. It was not just a question of the political theories of republicanism, but of an idiom, a reference point, a source of examples for emulation, and a canon of taste. This reinforced

⁴⁸ Charles Rollin, *Histoire ancienne...* (13 vols, Paris, 1730-1738); *Histoire romaine depuis la fondation de Rome jusqu'à la bataille d'Actium, c'est-à-dire, jusqu'à la fin de la République, par M. Rollin, ancien recteur de l'Université de Paris* (8 vols, Paris, 1742), (expanded 1748-52 into 16 volumes). His *Traité des Études* (4 v. in-12, Paris, 1726) was also very influential indeed.

⁴⁹ Bell's argument draws upon A. Sepinwall's work on the regeneration of the *patrie* in the 1780s, the concept of regeneration being important, his own stress on the resort to a model of proselytising the nation during the revolution, and the argument that there is a quasi-religious ‘cult’ of the nation in the 1790s. Against this interpretation is the fact that the concept of *patrie* in the 1750s was decidedly secular, drawing on classical republicanism, non-Christian *bienfaisance* and love of humanity. But even here some ambiguities were present, with for example the true *patrie* being for some writers Heaven and the fact that *patrie* could be used by writers for religious ends. On a number of occasions Bell links ‘sacrality’ and *patrie* without further evidence.

strongly the resonance of what was of course in its origins a classical republican concept. There was a marked increase in interest in classical antiquity during the 1730s and 1740s, with many titles being published, of which Charles Rollin's were the most popular. Moreover, as Chantal Grell has shown, royal patronage was behind the revival of the image of Sparta by men of letters and artists.⁵⁰

Many writers espoused the antique virtues of the classical world, which were still to be emulated even if they were no longer entirely appropriate. A prize winning discourse of 1755 by the abbé Millot appeals to the example of an ancient city:

For ornament she had simply citizens... virtue alone rules... A single maxim, in this respectable place, governs all minds; that is that the laws must be obeyed; a single object commands all thoughts and all desires; it is the *patrie* ... it is Sparta.⁵¹

Finally, it is important to remember that patriotism was defined as *love* of country: it was therefore a sentiment. It was precisely in the 1740s and 1750s that sensibility underwent an intensification and the 'true patriot' naturally reflected this sensibility. Sensibility came to France via English writers such as Richardson and Shaftesbury. The cult of sensibility escalated from the 1750s onwards, was modified by Rousseau and by Diderot amongst others, and reached its height in the 1780s.⁵² Sensibility signified genuine, natural sympathy with others. It was an innate emotion: anyone who listened to their own heart could feel the happiness that comes from helping others.⁵³ There were

⁵⁰ Chantal Grell, *Le dix-huitième siècle et l'antiquité en France* (2 vols, Oxford, 1995), vol. 2, pp. 547 ff.

⁵¹ C.F.-X Millot, *Discours académiques sur divers objets*, par M. l'abbé Millot (Lyon, 1760), pp. 25-6. See also esp. pp. 1 and 15. Millot was a protégé of the maréchal de Noailles, who was involved with the Pompadour faction and its support for the political economists round Gournay.

⁵² On English sensibility, see Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London, 1986). On the links between sensibility, virtue, *bienfaisance* and *patrie* that developed in France in the mid-century, see Linton, *The Politics of Virtue*, chapter 2.

⁵³ A. Vincent-Buffault, *The History of Tears. Sensibility and Sentimentality in France* (Basingstoke, 1991), p. 36: 'In enlarging the circle of the exchange of tears, one could see a certain philosophy of human sentiments being sketched out, which demanded that we should be moved by the sorrows of others through expressive signs. In novels, this social aptitude was translated by precise situations. They illustrated the notion of sociability which was used in the writings of the eighteenth century, whose shape was vast if not vague. Its semantic field associated it with nature, with virtue with happiness: sociability was natural: 'Virtue is no more than sociability', and finally, sociability was a tendency to consider the happiness of others to be as important and indispensable as one's own happiness. ... The manifestation of emotion

countless literary and artistic depictions of sensibility, showing its effects in the lives of individuals. But sensibility also had political implications – particularly through the language of *patrie*. The language of sensibility made it possible for people to articulate their feelings for the community of their fellows – for the *patrie*. Within this sensibility, maternal love became an important analogy for love of country. As Rousseau wrote:

It is education that must give souls a national form, and so guide their opinions and tastes that they become patriots by inclination, by passion, by necessity. A child, opening its eyes, should see the *patrie*, and till death should see only that [*la patrie*]. Every true republican imbibed with his mother's milk the love of its *patrie*: that is to say, of the laws and liberty. This love makes up his entire existence; he sees only the *patrie*, he lives only for it; as soon as he is alone, he is nothing; as soon as he no longer has a *patrie*, he no longer exists, and if he is not dead it is the worse for him.⁵⁴

In sum, these various tendencies or currents all provide an essential context for the discourse on *patrie*. The potential for ambiguity was heightened by the fact that the concepts and vocabulary of any particular discourse carry with them various elements of their previous history, in terms of definitions and associations. This creates the opportunity for ambiguous understandings and rhetorical manipulations.

4 Patriotic language as a field of discourse

If *patrie* can be linked closely to broader currents that were themselves ambiguous in their potential, it can also be described as a field of discourse that evoked in writers repeated associations with key words and concepts. The quotations I have used above when defining *patrie* do in fact enumerate many of the key words that come up frequently in the debate or discourse, often in the same sentence or

was developed to the point of invading writings where one might not expect to find it.' It certainly invaded the concept and language of *patrie*, though more after 1770 than before.

⁵⁴ 'Considerations sur le gouvernement de Pologne et de sa réforme projetée', April 1772, in *The Political Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau*, ed. C.E. Vaughn (New York, 1962), volume 2, p. 437. This passage is also cited by Joan Landes in her *Visualizing the Nation* (Ithaca & London, 2001), in an interesting passage on love, sentiment and the *patrie*, pp. 140-2.

paragraph.⁵⁵ *Patrie* is associated with *bien public, république, nation, société, communauté, citoyen, liberté, égalité, lois, roi, vertu, and bienfaisance*. Of these associations, most remained constant, but *nation* in this early period was invoked far less frequently than it was to be later, in the 1780s.

Nonetheless, many ambiguities existed: *Liberté* was ambiguous because it implied Montesquieu's concept of political liberty on the one hand, or the old regime notion of the liberties of corporate bodies thus lending itself to the defence of the venality of offices of the exiled magistrates of the Paris Parlement in 1771. It could be exploited in defence of the old parlement against the new, after the magistrates, those *pères de la patrie*, had been deprived of their legitimate property. But you could be a *patriote* in 1771 and be in favour of the Maupeou coup, as in the *Réflexions d'un vieux patriote sur les affaires présentes*.⁵⁶ The linking of *patrie* and *lois* was usual, and there was no *liberté* without obedience to the laws. This makes the notion especially useful as a restatement of the parlement's older position that the king must respect the laws he has made. As d'Holbach says in his *Ethéocratie*:

True patriotism can only be found in countries where free citizens, governed by equitable laws, are united and seek to merit the esteem and affection of their fellow citizens.⁵⁷

There was a similar ambiguity in the word *république*, which could refer to the *res publica* under any government that assured the respect for the laws, thus even a monarchy, and a real republic of virtue with no king, which was of course a dangerous position to advocate openly under the ancien régime. A patriot was more likely to exercise *bienfaisance* towards his fellow citizens than Christian charity, but it was easy to re-label the latter as the product of patriotism.⁵⁸

The ambiguities could be exploited as a rhetorical strategy, as will be shown later. In so far as a general political ideology was secondary to the concerns of the political authors, who usually had specific tactical gains or interests in mind, it may be that there was little desire

⁵⁵Several of these associations are discussed by N. Elie-Lefebvre, 'Le débat sur l'idée de patrie et sur le patriotisme, 1742-1789', *Mémoire pour la maîtrise*, Université de Paris, published in microfiche form, consulted in B.N.

⁵⁶Np., nd, 1771.

⁵⁷d'Holbach, *Ethéocratie*, p. 268.

⁵⁸Michael Kwass also notes some ambiguities in *despote, liberté, république* in financial rhetoric in his *Privilege and the Politics of Taxation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 161-70.

to clarify the obscurities. It is also evident from a number of writings and speeches in the period from 1755 to 1770, written from different points of view, that some authors were attempting to tie down the meanings and implications to suit their various purposes.⁵⁹

In this brief sketch, rather than explore these connected ideas in depth, two points must be stressed. First, there is certainly coherence in these associations, and we are justified in saying that the language of *patrie* serves to bring together in a new way a number of contemporary and previously existing discourses. In many ways their amalgamation only made sense in the context of a debate without which it made little sense: the debate over despotism, the denial of rights of citizenship and the duties of citizens. There is of course a history to the attack on despotism, to the concept of virtue, to the references to republicanism, for example, that not only goes back to the Renaissance and the Ancients and reflects the Reformation, and English and Dutch thought and experience, but a history whose meaning was loaded by contemporary struggles over Jansenism and the parlements within a political culture of absolute monarchy. To label this simply ‘classical republicanism’ would be reductionist and unhelpful, implying a purpose and direction that was not in fact always clear. It is important to not to forget the political context if we are to understand the resonances of patriotic language. However, the debate over despotism only emerged with real clarity in 1771, so will be explored in another publication exploring how the language of *patrie* developed its more cutting edge in the light of circumstances. The second point is that none of these component discourses was so precisely defined that writers were confined to one definition and one definition alone. Many of these terms were themselves much debated and were the object of much ambiguity.

Although patriotic virtues were part of a discourse that made most sense in opposition to despotism, absolute monarchy was not itself a despotism – though some thought it risked degenerating into one. Thus ironically and perhaps surprisingly when viewed from a later perspective, in politics it was the monarchy that first enlisted the concept for its own ends. *Patrie*, as used by royal propaganda, was intended to show that the French state was not a despotism, that the king was the head of a community, was well-loved and devoted to the interests of his people, the *bien public*. Nevertheless in the long run it was hard to argue the case for royalist patriotism without raising in the

⁵⁹ Such attempts to appropriate the term *patriote* between writers of quite different persuasions were still much in evidence in the late 1780s, with titles like *Le vrai patriote français* (Anon., 1788) seeing the light of day.

reader's mind the question of whether the king incarnated the *patrie*, or whether he was subordinate to it. Moreover, any despotic act was likely to fatally undermine the intended association. But although the notion of *patrie* in the 1750s and 1760s could be said to lend itself theoretically to criticisms of royal policy, it was at this stage very far from being an ideology of opposition. At this point, although drawing upon some general definitions, it still operated as a semantic field in which debate took place. It was possible in the 1750s for example to claim to be a patriot and have diametrically opposed views on the question of the ecclesiastical immunities, the role of the nobility in state and society, or luxury.

The elasticity and ambiguity of the discourse allowed users to make their varied and particular arguments. Yet when people try to make cases, they tend to come up against the inherent contradictions that stem in part from the ambiguous concepts they use. Many claimed to be royalist patriots from 1750, although even then the king was not seen as personally patriotic or virtuous (with the scandals of kidnapped children, his numerous young mistresses). There was a contradiction between the king being above the laws, and a *patrie* that can only exist where there are good laws to which he is subordinate. Then it was tempting to portray the magistrates of the parlements as 'pères de la patrie', representing the nation... but in fact they appeared to be privileged and selfish, therefore not good citizens, and so their claim to patriotism did not fit with modern citizenship in which the individual was supposed to sacrifice himself for the public good. This image of the patriotic magistrate seemed true in the 1750s and 1771, but less so in 1780s, after years of espousing the seigneurial cause, until the image made a triumphal comeback with the exilings of 1787-8.⁶⁰ Reformers stressed the need for patriotism in citizens, but were citizens to emulate a modern or antique model? Jansenism stressed the Nation, as a semi-secularized church persecuted by despotism, but Jansenists had doubts about the possibility of true virtue, which undercut the possibility of a virtuous republic. The Enlightenment promoted the *patrie* as a community promoting civilization, but does not civilization undermine virtue? Finally, attempts to link the notion of *patrie* to the nation were undercut on two sides: the ambiguity of the notion of community meant that *patrie* referred equally to locality and province, so it was hard to transfer in practice to the new idea of the nation; secondly, that though the link to nation could be made fairly easily against an outside

⁶⁰ See Bailey Stone, *The Parlement of Paris, 1774-89* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1981); Clarisse Coulomb, *Les Pères de la Patrie. La Société parlementaire en Dauphiné au temps des Lumières* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 2006).

enemy in wartime, there was the cosmopolitan element of the definition which implied the pacifism of a *patrie* beyond the nation.

One of the main reasons the concept of *patrie* is so important for writers is that they had no right to intervene in the political sphere, so they had to resort to various stratagems to do so, even if they had ministers to back them. During the *ancien régime* no public space was legitimate for discussing that royal policy, so censorship and police activity drove writers to authorial strategies. In a context in which different (and often competing) institutions were involved in the policing of texts, even if they were approved by individual ministers, it was wise to subscribe to such strategies in which one stated very clearly that one was prompted by a virtuous impulse too strong to resist: love of the *patrie* by a good citizen. Personal strategies for advancement frequently included an appeal to the tropes of patriotism, to legitimise a position (as in the case of Bolingbroke); in the case of a religious faction, those involved might seek to combine the secular and religious virtues in a new kind of patriotic virtue, which might effect a ‘succès de scandale’ (as with the Jansenists). In many cases the literature that refers to patriotism was published legitimately with at least ‘permission tacite’, and written by seekers for place or favour, or those who had put their pens at the service of factional manoeuvres. That was the reality of publishing at the time. Writers on political economy often sought places from the *contrôleur général*; everyone who wrote was keen to avoid exile or imprisonment for discussing what was regarded as ‘the king’s business’ of policy, which meant that motives had to be disguised. As a public sphere developed, often encouraged by the state as well as by cultural developments and interested parties, authors’ strategies altered over time. As Greg Brown has so well demonstrated, authors in this period operate within the *habitus*, the codes, and would conform to them.⁶¹

Thus we have to consider more closely how strategies may have related to the articulation of arguments in the public sphere.

⁶¹ Gregory Brown, *Field of Honour: Writers, Court Culture and Public Theater in French Literary Life from Racine to the Revolution* (Columbia University Press/EPIC, 2002. <http://www.gutenberg-e.org/brg01>). See the Introduction, esp. p. 11, and chapter 3. The Introduction has a distinguished survey of critical approaches to authors and authorship. His work stresses the extent to which writers choose their discourses.

5 Usage of language: rhetoric and strategy

To further clarify my notion of rhetoric and strategy, let us ask how was it that an apolitical sermon, delivered by the abbé Boismont on the inauguration of a ‘maison royale de santé’, on 15 March 1782, could employ the following language:

You are placed at this moment between your *patrie* and your religion: the *patrie* to which you owe everything... religion from which you hope for everything... Let us proclaim with confidence, in the midst of this equally patriotic and Christian assembly, that one can be a citizen in a monarchy, that it is one’s country that one loves in the head of the State... It is to this respect, to this cult, to this love of the *patrie* that I call you, Christian audience; and do not think that I am here speaking a language foreign to the pulpit.⁶²

Clearly, not only pamphlets and lawyers’ briefs contained subversive language.⁶³ We might use this sort of evidence to show how widespread the terms had become by the 1780s, and that is certainly an important point. But it is more complicated. We must ask what is Boismont *doing* here? He is playing language games: in a forum in which it is easy to go too far (as is so well portrayed in a scene of the recent film *Ridicule*), he is treading a fine line between shock and interest. In a sermon on *bienfaisance*, he plays on an old definition of the true *patrie* as being in heaven, appears to adopt one side in the debate over monarchy and patriotism, but subversively appeals to secular notions of patriotism and, in this instance, secular *bienfaisance* instead of Christian charity. As the film *Ridicule* shows, sermons and eulogies delivered before the court were an opportunity to get noticed, and further one’s advancement. A show of eloquence, verbal dexterity, rhetorical flourishes and daring combinations of ideas could be crucial for a career in such a forum. This example, though from after 1770, serves to show that the use of patriotic language was subject to exploitation in complex ways that are sometimes hard to understand without a micro-history of the context.

⁶²Abbé de Boismont, Sermon pour l’assemblée extraordinaire de charité... le 13 mars 1782, reprinted in Migne, *Collection ... des Orateurs sacrés*, LXV, cols 743-5. See also the study by the abbé A. Rosne, ‘Une cause de la décadence de la chaire au XVIIIe siècle. Les prédicateurs du panégyrique de Saint Louis devant l’Académie française’, *Revue du clergé français* (1897), 113-34.

⁶³Sarah Maza’s book on the *causes célèbres* is pioneering study that can be read in the context of the present article as an exploration of the rhetorical strategies of lawyers: *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The causes célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993).

That context would include an investigation of the author's background, his factional associations, and the precise reasons for publishing at that time. It would also recognize that there are different types of writings using *patrie*. Some texts attempt to define the characteristics of *patrie* and *patriote*: principally prize essays, political philosophy, academic discourses, dictionary definitions. Others exhort readers to adopt a patriotic sentiment, to be motivated by it: plays, works of art, eulogies, representations and these tend to bend the concept to fit certain positions, as in royal patriotism or republicanism (meaning at this time more stress on citizenship in a mixed monarchy). Then there is the appeal to *patrie* as a legitimising rhetoric, justifying intervention in the public sphere. But whatever category of patriotic writing they chose, authors employed rhetorical strategies. So, as Quentin Skinner asked of Bolingbroke, what are they doing when they choose to use this discourse in a rhetorical fashion?

To answer this question, let us now turn to political uses of the terms and briefly consider the range of strategies used in pamphlets of the 1750s and 1760s. In 1750 and 1751 during the debate on Machault's *vingtième*, which in May 1749 withdrew fiscal privileges from everyone including the clergy, about 50 pamphlets were published on the question of the King's right to legislate against the immunities of the Catholic Church in France from direct taxation and on the legitimacy of fiscal immunities.⁶⁴ Machault enlisted the support of Jansenist authors, who employed two themes already dear to them, namely that the Church was subordinate to the state, and that the defence of ecclesiastical wealth did not stem from conscience but from an unseemly attachment to worldly wealth. The debate was stimulated by the 72 year-old Jansenist lawyer Daniel Bargeton, in his *Lettres, ne repugnat vobis bono*, which were composed at the personal request of Machault and read by the king.⁶⁵ He argued along different lines from other contributors, 'wrote them only for his *patrie*' and dedicated them 'to the best and dearest of all *patriotes*, [the King]'. In his *Lettres*, Bargeton appeals to natural law and contract theory, saying that the

⁶⁴ See M. Marion, *Machault d'Arnouville. Etude sur l'histoire du contrôle général des finances de 1749 à 1754* (Paris, 1892, repr Geneva, 1978), Chapters 10 & 11, but esp. pp. 262-302: 'La campagne de brochures, l'opinion publique'. Most pamphlets are collected in *Ecrits pour et contre les immunités prétendues par le clergé de France* (London, 1751). The pamphlet in question was *Examen impartial des immunités ecclésiastiques*, 1751.

⁶⁵ *Lettres ne repugnat vobis bono et hanc spem, dum ad verum pervenietis, alite in animis...*, London, 1750. On Bargeton and the circumstances of publication, see Marion, op. cit, and E. Testu de Balincourt, *Daniel Bargeton, Avocat au Parlement 1678-1757* (Nîmes, 1887) BN 8° Ln ²⁷ 37491.

clerical state does not allow clerics to renounce their irreversible character as men, as members of the state and subjects that they have contracted to 'at the moment of their birth'. He uses the words *loi naturelle*, *citoyen*, *patrie*, *despote*. Perhaps surprisingly, these dangerous concepts were tolerated in the pamphlet by the King and Machault, who paid him 3000 livres, for his suitably anonymous work. It was duly condemned by the Paris parlement on 1 June, three weeks after publication, making it even more popular, going through four editions that year.⁶⁶ The idea of *patrie* is clearly used to establish a moral claim that overrides fiscal exemptions:

We are all members of a society which gives us the same rights and which imposes the same obligations. (*Lettre* 1, p. 4) The word *patrie* is synonymous with State ... *Patrie*, a term of sentiment, reminds the heart of the rights of Society over all men, and of the duties towards it (p. 8). The idea of exemption from all taxes is therefore in contradiction with the first sense of State and *patrie*, with the sacred duties it imposes, with the first sentiments that each citizen owes to them as the price for the security and happiness that they provide for him (pp. 9–10). The religious state does not relieve churchmen of their irreversible character as men, as members of the State and as Subjects that they contracted by their birth (p. 29).

Bargeton appealed to historical evidence to support his argument. Another pamphlet in this debate used Bolingbroke, Boulainvillier and Mezeray, with contract theory, to defend noble privileges against despotism.⁶⁷ What may seem surprising, is that an anonymous pamphlet in favour of noble immunities, the *Examen des deux ouvrages*, 1751, also argued that society was based on a social contract, that the king holds sovereignty by consent, and has a sacred duty to maintain constitutional laws. He here employed Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* arguments. Like contract theory, from its first use in political pamphleteering, *patrie* could be used in a variety of arguments.

In fact, it was issues of finance and economics that first led to wider use of the notion of *patrie* and patriotism in the early to mid 1750s. In 1748, the conspicuous consumption of the wartime financiers

⁶⁶ This condemnation is at once a reminder to the historian not to infer that a condemnation necessarily implied disfavour, and a clue as to why authors felt the need to justify their interventions even when they had ministerial support. There were at least 4 editions in 1750.

⁶⁷ Stefan Noelke was working in the early 1990s on this debate with Roger Chartier and Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, for his German thesis. His seminar paper at the IHR, London, 9 March, 1992 was entitled 'The problem of legitimate government: the debate on the *vingtième*, 1749-51'. I have been unable to trace any publication.

contrasted with the need to levy more taxes, to revive the old debate of the immorality of luxury and excessive profit. Montesquieu's attack on luxury in *The Spirit of the Laws* not only provoked debate but set a challenge to a new government policy.

Many of the texts in the 1750s that employ a patriotic justification for their arguments can be traced back to the deliberate policy of successive finance ministers and the more liberal publishing policies promoted by Madame de Pompadour who was in close alliance with Machault from 1750 and Malesherbes, director of the *Librairie* from 1750 to 1763.⁶⁸ Several scholars have recently shown that Machault employed the circle of Vincent de Gournay to further a policy of deliberately opening up financial and economic issues to public debate. This coincided with Madame de Pompadour favouring the publications of the *philosophes*, especially from 1750.

The Gournay Circle of fifteen authors, responsible for about forty economic publications in the 1750s, wanted to promote economic and social reform and were convinced that open discussion of political economy was the best method to arrive at sound governmental policies.⁶⁹ It is hard to see their policies as stemming from genuine patriotism, as most were seekers of government place and favour, and tended to cease publication upon achieving it. Nevertheless, they couched their projects in the language of patriotism. Fourbonnais appealed to patriotism on the very first page of his (anonymous) *Le Négociant anglois* (1753). In 1755, G.M. Butel-Dumont published his translation of John Cary, as *Essai sur l'Etat du commerce d'Angleterre*.

⁶⁸ The fact that Madame de Pompadour was so closely connected to potentially reprehensible financiers may account for the nice distinctions often made between patriotic finance and decadent luxury – with her protégés of course being useful.

⁶⁹ Antoine Murphy, 'Le développement des idées économiques en France, 1750-1756', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 33 (1986), 521-541; Joël Félix, *Finances et politique au siècle des lumières: le ministère de Laverdy, 1763-1768* (Paris, 1999), Chapter One; Michael Kwass, *Privilege and the Politics of Taxation*, pp. 213-52, esp. sections on the circulation of texts and the ideas and rhetoric of literature on taxation; Robin Ives, 'Political publicity and political economy in eighteenth-century France', *French History*, 17, 1 (2003), 1-18; Loïc Charles, 'French Political economy and the making of public opinion as a political concept (1750-1763)', at http://library.stanford.edu/depts/hasrg/frnit/pdfs_gimon/charles.pdf; A. Skornicki 'L'Etat, l'expert et le négociant: le réseau de la "science du commerce" sous Louis XV', *Genèses*, 4, no. 65 (2006), 4-26. John Shovlin, *Political economy*, pp. 44-8, but in error on hostility to Pompadour, p. 47. See also the abbé André Morellet, *Mémoires inédits de l'Abbé Morellet*, 2 vols, Paris 1821, pp. 36-48. It is quite clear from the autobiography of Dupont de Nemours, that for him getting a job was everything, and patriotism nothing, in 1763-4. See *The Autobiography of Du Pont de Nemours, translated and with an introduction by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese* (Wilmington, Delaware, 1984), chapters 11-14, esp. p. 254.

His preface ends by explaining that he had done it ‘only to comply with honourable orders. It was published quickly only in deference to these same orders, & not to deny [a duty to] the *patrie*, to which eminent persons have esteemed this *Essay* to be useful in the present circumstances.’⁷⁰

Amongst these aspiring *philosophes* and seekers of posts around Gournay and Malesherbes was none other than the abbé Coyer, author of the *Dissertation sur le vieux mot de patrie* cited earlier. His *La Noblesse commerçante* of 1756 was also intended to provoke debate. Far from being a convinced patriot, he is reputed to have written the work in only two months and not to have believed his own arguments: he was a man of letters and controversialist.⁷¹ His role as a minor *philosophe* was to render the debate fashionable, making it suitable for salon talk. The *Dissertation* is a particularly rhetorical exercise. As with Moreau later in the year, part of his rhetorical justification for writing was the claim that no one was interested in patriotism – and this after the term had been extensively used for at least five years in debates! (It also elaborates on the same claim made earlier by Duguet.) Other contributors to the *La Noblesse commerçante* debate were well aware of this worldly literary element and poked fun at it.⁷² The arguments themselves have been examined at length by Jay Smith, but here it is important to stress that both sides appealed to patriotism as a reason for publishing and as a justification of their views. Thus the chevalier d’Arcq wrote *La noblesse militaire ou le patriote français* as an attack on the radical view of a patriotic but commercial nobility. He argued that, ‘In a monarchy this inequality (of honour) far from being

⁷⁰ Anon (2 vols, London [Paris?], 1755), vol. 1, p. 24.

⁷¹ See the letter from the abbé Trublet to Malesherbes, which speaks of the ‘thèse de l’abbé Coyer, thèse et opinion que je n’ai jamais approuvée malgré ma déférence pour mon ami et compagnon Mr de Gournay. Soyez bien sûr que l’abbé Coyer n’est pas lui-même de l’avis qu’on lui a fait soutenir. Ce n’est qu’un jeu d’esprit de sa part. On lui a présenté l’occasion de faire une brochure ingénieuse; il l’a saisie’. Trublet to Malesherbes, 14 août 1756 in Jean Jacquart éd., *Correspondance de l’abbé Trublet* (Paris, 1926), p. 67-8, as cited by L. Charles, ‘French political economy’ p. 8. See also J. Shovlin, op. cit., p. 59n, and Skornicki ‘L’Etat, l’expert et le négociant’, p. 11-12.

⁷² His opponents did not fail to criticize his lightness of approach on such weighty matters. ‘Un homme qui nous a fait rire sur le mot de *Patrie*, devoit nous amuser sur *le Commerce*... Une personne qui vous connoît, me mande que votre Ouvrage vous avoit occupé deux mois, tout au plus. Ce terme suffit pour bien écrire... mais non pas pour bien penser, quand on réfléchit à la hâte. Le préjugé qu’on vous avoit prié de détruire, exigeoit du travail.’ *Lettre a l’Auteur de La Noblesse Commerçante, A Bordeaux, le 1 Juin 1756*. Police inspector d’Héméry’s Journal called *La Noblesse commercante* ‘une jolie plaisanterie’: Murphy, ‘Le Développement’, p. 528.

pernicious is necessary to its conservation'. In responding to Coyer he was not to be outdone on patriotism:

As a zealous citizen, a faithful subject, I make no distinction in my heart between the Prince and the *patrie*, nor between private interest and the interest of the State. On a subject that principally concerns the Nobility, I have the right to speak; and when this same subject concerns the whole nation in general, I can do so as a free man, & as a citizen I must do so. (pp. 4-5)

Commerce and finance were still dangerous areas to write about and continued to be so.⁷³ Thus the same authorial strategies are to be found in the 1763 debate over Roussel de La Tour's *Richesses de l'Etat*, which also generated about fifty responses. One example from several begins thus:

Since the topic of taxes is now discussed by everyone, I shall take the liberty of resolving your doubts, not in an ironic style with dialogues, I shall do so as a true Patriote who wants to contribute in some way to the general good.⁷⁴

In 1763 contrôleur général Bertin asked Jacob-Nicolas Moreau to write against *Les Richesses*. Like Coyer and like many others refuting Roussel, Moreau was from 1755 a ministerial publicist. Brought up in a Jansenist milieu, he had previously been a Jansenist pamphleteer writing against the church and in favour of the parlement.⁷⁵ His hugely

⁷³ Patriotism was not the only defensive strategy employed. Most of the works published by the Gournay circle, and the responses, were published anonymously, abroad or with a foreign imprint.

⁷⁴ Anon, *Résolution de Doutes modestes sur la possibilité du Système établi par l'Écrit intitulé: la Richesse de l'Etat* [BM Lyon 364247]. In *La Patrie vengée ou la juste balance* (Anon, BM Lyon 364244, pp. 1-2), the author defended Roussel and accused his detractors, who were now setting themselves up as political censors and reformers of the government, of being 'enfants dénaturés que la Patrie rougit d'avoir dans son sein'. Knowing that in fact these detractors were ministerial writers for the most part, one discerns the play of an ironic humour here. In the same year the author of an *Épître au parlement de France*, wrote: 'Je joins mes cris au cri universel. J'ai pensé que de vaines clameurs ne suffisoient pas, et qu'il étoit du devoir d'un Citoyen de mettre au jour ce qu'il sçavoit des dépradations dont les ennemis intérieurs de l'État se rendent journellement coupables dans les campagnes' (p.3). A *Supplément à l'anti-financier* claims (p. 2.) 'Je ne romps le silence, que parce qu'il me rendoit coupable envers mon Roi et ma Patrie: elle m'est chère; dès que je crois pouvoir la servir, la négliger, ce seroit trahison'.

⁷⁵ See J.-N. Moreau, *Mes Souvenirs*, ed. C. Hermelin (2 vols, Paris, 1898-1901), I, ch 2-4, pp.14-64. For 'archiparlmentaire et archijanséniste' see p. 44. See also E. Dziembowski, "Les débuts d'un publiciste au service de la monarchie: l'activité

popular series of letters published as *L'Observateur hollandais* of late 1755 was designed to excite outrage at the injustices of English treaty violations and the death of Jumonville.⁷⁶ *Patrie* however is a subtext, perfidious Albion the theme, readability the style.

The French write very little to defend the interests of their *Patrie*. They discuss it as they do women they like. They begin by joking over the criticisms made of them: they end up fighting for them.

In his second letter we see a fairly transparent explanation of ministerial policy with regard to the stable of pamphleteers. He points out how little of real interest is published in Paris:

Oh my friend, what a quantity of learning wasted for humanity! How many discussions from which the *Patrie* will gain nothing! When will this likeable and generous nation accustom its imagination to amusing itself with subjects worthy of the employment of reason? When will the love of the *Patrie*, that lives in the heart of every Frenchman, lend its warmth to so many souls wasting themselves on dry and frivolous questions? And lastly, if the French need quarrels, when will they have no object but the good of the State, and no other motive than to serve it?

In his third letter he identifies Nations with their inhabitants, in order to argue that their actions were not simply royal policy but due to their inhabitants, and like the Jansenists in a memoir of 1730 describes kings as 'chefs des Nations'.⁷⁷ In his fourth letter we find him employing some of the key words in the patriotic discourse.

Born a Dutchman, I am neither the enemy of England, nor the defender of the rights of France. It is as a philosophe, as an impartial commentator on politics, as a citizen of the world, that I understand

littéraire de Jacob-Nicolas Moreau pendant la guerre de sept ans", *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, 4 (1995), 305-22 and Moreau's two contributions to the *Richesses* debate.

⁷⁶ On Jumonville, see Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, pp. 78-85. For discussion of the arguments, see Dziembowski, *Un Nouveau patriotisme*, esp. pp. 367-9, 434-8.

⁷⁷ In 1730, Chancellor Daguesseau left a commentary on the *Mémoire des quarante avocats* (which was written by a Jansenist) highlighting their language. "Le roi est donc réduit à la qualité de chef de la nation, et la France devient la République de Pologne ou d'Angleterre", he noted. When he sees the phrase 'le parlement est le dépositaire de l'autorité publique', he notes, 'le parlement n'a jamais parlé ainsi'. The magistrates and peers were called the 'Patrices et les assesseurs du trône'. Says Daguesseau, 'Nous voilà encore en Pologne et le Roy n'est que le chef de la République.' Bibliothèque de Port Royal, Collection Le Paige, volume 17, p. 15.

the interests of Nations: it is as a man that I take the liberty of judging what seems to me to be fair or unfair in men's conduct. [p. 53]

In the same year came a more modern definition of *patrie* and patriotism, but put to royalist use. *Le patriote anglois* defined patriotism as a virtue and the essential basis of society, necessary for a citizen. But this citizen subordinated his own interest to the common good and should therefore be anti-English!⁷⁸ Especially as war had just broken out.

As is well known, after the Damiens affair the anti-*philosophe* counter-attack made it briefly more difficult to publish new ideas, but the publication of patriotic Anglophobia was not affected during the war. This is also a period when in spite of the French Academy of Painting's resistance to the Pompadour faction, her extensive artistic patronage was used to further the virtuous art of Greuze.⁷⁹ From the later 1750s the Pompadour faction with the duc de Choiseul promoted the reform of agriculture through Physiocracy and foundation of 'patriotic' agricultural societies, and the freeing of the grain trade⁸⁰. These initiatives were steeped in justificatory patriotic rhetoric. Hardly had the agricultural societies been set up, than they fell foul of L'Averdy's policy of stricter censorship. The Physiocrats had a much more difficult time from the administration than the Gournay circle, and after the *Richesses* debate in 1764 L'Averdy forbade publication on fiscal and economic matters. By this point however patriotic rhetoric was to be found in a wide variety of publications, as it was now related to the education debate and a campaign of eulogies of patriotic heroes.

The ministerial promotion, through the Academy from 1758, of a series of eulogies of great men of the *patrie* was echoed from 1777 by d'Angiviller's artistic patronage of the same theme in sculpture and history painting, well analysed by Annie Jourdan, David Bell, Jean-Claude Bonnet and several art historians.⁸¹ Promoting royal patriotism

⁷⁸ *Le patriote anglois, ou réflexions sur les hostilités que la France reproche à l'Angleterre, et sur la réponse de nos ministres au dernier mémoire de sa M.T.C. Ouvrage traduit de l'anglois de John Tell Truth, par un avocat au parlement de Paris* (à Genève, 1756).

⁷⁹ Tom Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-century Paris*, New Haven and London, 1985, pp. 126-74.

⁸⁰ On these see Shovlin, *Political economy*, chapter 3.

⁸¹ See Francis H. Dowley, 'D'Angiviller's Grands hommes and the Significant Moment', *The Art Bulletin*, 39, 1957, pp. 259-77; Annie Jourdan, *Les Monuments de la Révolution française*, Amsterdam, 1993, pp. 25-60; Jean-Claude Bonnet, 'Le culte des grands hommes en France au XVIIIe siècle ou la défaite de la monarchie' *Modern Language Notes*, 116, 4 (2001), 689-704; David Bell, 'Canon Wars in eighteenth-

was a mixed success. It of course popularized the language, but as with any campaign under a regime of censorship, the attempt to promote royal patriotism was bound to fall foul of two problems. First, numerous writers took the opportunity to publish on this theme, and second, the government's aims were subverted! People began to praise the 'wrong sort' of patriotic hero, and to use the language of eulogies to explore differences of policy as incarnated by different heroes in the past. Thus a eulogy of Colbert or Henri IV as a patriot took on new meaning.⁸²

6 Language and motivation

If Moreau is a good illustration of the rhetorical strategies surrounding *patrie*, and the ministerial policy of promoting debate, the question of Protestant and Jansenist strategies of usage in the political debates of the time can take us a little nearer to understanding the considerable gap between the use of the language and concepts and 'real' or 'true' motivation. Patriotism had been a justification for Court de Gébelin's text of 1751, *Le patriote français et impartial*, and his 1756 *Lettre d'un patriote sur la tolérance civile des Protestants de France*. Although the latter uses the key words of the discourse such as 'bien public', 'bonheur de l'Etat', 'félicité des citoyens', and notes the 'esprit de patriotisme' 'qui réside dans le Conseil de notre Monarque Bien-aimé', it also speaks also of monarchical *gloire* and the utility of the Protestant commercial ventures, and here *patrie* means merely homeland. But of course this was precisely his argument: France was the Huguenots's *patrie* in the old sense, their natural focus of loyalty even during a war with a Protestant nation. There was nothing to fear and civil liberties should be accorded.

The Jansenist exploitation of patriotic language is an interesting case study. It is now well known that the Jansenist movement was largely responsible for putting several of the component discourses of *patrie* firmly back on the political agenda. The Jansenists were fighting a struggle against what they defined as despotism, because for them despotism was the persecution of their true religion, which meant that the policy was one of tyranny and the abuse of the laws (which was pretty much the same thing). In fact, as Catherine Maire has shown, the

century France: The Monarchy, the Revolution and the "Grands hommes de la patrie", *ibid.*, pp. 705-38 (and Chapter 4 of *Cult of the Nation*), Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, pp. 189-98.

⁸² See Bell, *Cult of the nation*, pp. 136-9.

lawyers and magistrates of the small but effective *parti janséniste* that Van Kley, Bell and I have identified were motivated by Figurism.⁸³ This belief in the relationship of the old testament to the new, and of the immediate relevance of the prophecies, made them feel that the conversion of the Jews, – now read non-Jansenists – was imminent. Politics and religion thus had a desperate interest and urgency for them. Their strategy was to revive all and any constitutional arguments, be they from conciliarism or the sixteenth century, and apply them to politics. This in fact meant applying the theories to the parlement, and this they did from 1730, as I have shown elsewhere. Cardinal Fleury controlled the excesses of parlementaire Jansenism quite well, but from 1750 the affairs of the *Hôpital général*, the *vingtième* and the refusal of sacraments provided new opportunities.

However, at first they did not exploit the idea of patriotism, even though their own Duguet and Rollin had helped revive it. True, Daniel Bargeton employed the notion in 1750 against ecclesiastical immunities, and the abbé Chauvelin, a prominent Jansenist magistrate in the Paris parlement, wrote a popular pamphlet, but it did not figure in the parlementaire campaign against the refusal of sacraments.⁸⁴ The Jansenist mentor, Le Paige, wrote the *Lettres historiques sur les parlements* (1753) without reference to *patrie* (but much to nation). He helped write the *Grande remontrances* of 1753, and indeed all the main remonstrances were written by Le Paige and/or Durey de Meinières. Even the Besançon parlement's remonstrances were written by Le

⁸³ For the identification of a *parti janséniste* among the magistrates in the 1720s and 1730s, see P.R. Campbell, 'The conduct of Politics in France in the time of the cardinal de Fleury, 1723-1745', PhD thesis, London, 1985; and for the lawyers D.A. Bell, 'Les Stratégies d'opposition sous Louis XV: l'affaire des avocats, 1730-1', *Histoire, Economie, Société*, 9, 4, 1990, pp. 567-90; On the *parti janséniste* considered more widely in the 1730s and 1740s, Peter. R. Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Regime France, 1720-1745*, London 1996. For the 1750s, see Dale Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France, 1757-1765* (New Haven, 1975), and his *The Damiens Affair and the unraveling of the ancien régime, 1750-1770* (Princeton, 1984); and Julian Swann, *Politics and the parlement of Paris, 1754-1774* (Cambridge, 1995). Their culture of political intervention and publicity stemmed from the Figurist theology of bearing witness: see C. L. Maire, *De la cause de Dieu à la cause de la Nation. Le jansénisme au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, 1998, and, more briefly, Campbell, *Power and Politics*, chapter 9 on 'The parti janséniste in the 1720s and 1730s', esp. pp.200-3 summarising Figurism. For the Jansenist lawyers running the *Hôpital général* in 1750, who included Daniel Bargeton (see below), see H. Légier Desgranges, *Madame de Moysan et l'extravagante affaire de l'Hôpital général, 1749-1758* (Paris, 1956).

⁸⁴ For difficulties with the rhetoric of virtue and the magistrates, see M. Linton, 'The rhetoric of virtue and parlements, 1770-1775', *French History*, 9 (1995), 180-201.

Paige.⁸⁵ We all know how much reference is made to *nation*, *constitution*, *lois fondamentales*, in these documents. But this is still the language of the 1730s, and *patrie* is not prominent. In 1771, after the Maupeou coup, they made great use of patriotic associations in the pamphlet campaign. So why did they use *patrie* relatively infrequently in politics in the 1750s and 1760s?

In seeking an answer, we might draw upon an explanation that Quentin Skinner gave in his attack on the Namierite interpretation of Bolingbroke's motives. Skinner suggested that instead of believing that opposition was motivated simply by the desire for fortune and place, genuine beliefs were indeed involved, but that it was important for Bolingbroke to choose from among all those principles available the one that was best suited to his purpose.⁸⁶ In the case of the Jansenists, we must ask whether their failure to use it systematically might be explained along the same lines. In the 1750s although they could have easily portrayed themselves as patriots, the rhetoric of *patrie* was not necessary for the Jansenists in their struggle over the sacraments, because they had a very successful long-standing set of arguments that they had developed around 1730: the appeal to the defence of parliamentary jurisdiction over the church, with the parlement speaking for the nation and defending the laws against despotism.⁸⁷ Many of the themes overlap with patriotism of course, and no doubt prepared the way for it, but they seem to have avoided the word at this point.

However, an explicit example of the use of *patrie* by the Jansenists is to be found in the *Lettre d'un patriote* of 1757. It is patriotic because it is against faction, as was Bolingbroke. In this instance the faction is the Jesuits. Written probably by Jean-Pierre Grosley it is an attempt to pin the blame for the Damiens assassination attempt on the Jesuits.⁸⁸ The magistrates were those already familiar 'tendres pères de la patrie' and the letter was described as follows by Durey de Meinières in his notes:

A curious and interesting piece that describes the general consternation created by this dreadful event, the testimonies of zeal, of loyalty, and of

⁸⁵ On this affair see J. Swann, 'Parlements and political crisis in France under Louis XV: The Besançon affair, 1757-1761.', *Historical Journal*, 37, 4 (1994), 803-828.

⁸⁶ Q. Skinner, 'The principles and practice of opposition', esp. pp. 108-113.

⁸⁷ This strategy was first analysed by the present writer in 'Les crises parlementaires et les jansénistes, 1727-1740. Aux origines d'une forme de conflit politique: magistrats, avocats et évêques', in *Jansénisme et Révolution, Chroniques de Port-Royal* (1990), 147-62.

⁸⁸ For the wider context see Dale Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair*.

love for the person of the King, that Messieurs of the Parlement offered over this sad event, offering to resume their functions and the offices they had resigned from; and the piece brings together an infinite quantity of circumstances and facts that we were not told of because they would have revealed the accomplices and proved that the Jesuits had the main role in this attempt on the King's life. The design to attribute it to several members of the Parlement and to the supposed *parti janséniste*, was neither true nor plausible in the light of the evidence, and this alone would be capable of making suspicion fall on members of the clergy unhappy at the sight of their diminishing credit with the collapse of the Bull Unigenitus.⁸⁹

The argument was entirely disingenuous since Durey and Grosley were both members of that same *parti janséniste* and Le Paige may well have had a hand in writing it, as he did in almost all their publications. It does however reveal the cynical use of the *patriote* label for limited, highly specific, political purposes.⁹⁰ The appeal to 'ideology' is motivated not so much by 'real' ideological divisions as by tactical considerations.⁹¹ It was not until after the Maupeou coup in

⁸⁹ Collection Durey de Meinières, B.N., Ms fr., 7573, fol. 5.

⁹⁰Durey de Meinières was the brother-in-law of Madame Doublet, whose salon produced Bachaumont's *Mémoires secrets*. The abbé de Chauvelin also attended the meetings of this 'Parish' which met in the Temple, where Le Paige happened to live. On this group, see R.S. Tate, *Petit de Bachaumont: his circle and the Memoirs secrets*, vol LXV of *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* (Geneva, 1968). Strangely enough, Saint-Hilaire, another Jansenist magistrate, when exiled in Bourges in 1753, received a letter that proves that Mably was a respected authority for him and Lambert, also a Jansenist, on the parlement's history, as was Le Paige. What I am suggesting is that the 'Conferences sur le droit public', held in the early 1740s by Henri de Révol, and those held by Durey de Meinières in the 1750s, saw the exploitation of both philosophic and Jansenist ideas, often linked to a common stream like Boulainvilliers and Fénelon, and to the anti-despotic tradition revived especially since 1685. It is by no means unusual to find the patriotes of 1771-1775 referring to both Mably and Le Paige; Maultrot a Jansenist might quote Locke; Montesquieu was almost certainly influenced by his friend the Jansenist abbé Pucelle in the 1730s. For the relationship between Jansenism and Enlightenment, see M. Cottret, *Jansénisme et Lumières* (Paris, 1998), and on Jansenism and *patrie*, see 'Contre Maupeou', pp. 143-78.

⁹¹ There can be no doubt that Le Paige's motivation was almost exclusively religious. An example of this frame of reference is to be found from Le Paige himself, writing in January 1755, in a page of tiny hand for his own notes. These private reflections were hardly in keeping with the Enlightenment or indeed the published arguments of Le Paige. 'Voilà une révolution singulière dans nos affaires. le silence ordonné: le roi punissant les évêques: mais qu'est-ce que tout cela? si la paix en pouvait naître, si la bulle étoit rejetée pour toujours, si la doctrine mauvaise étoit proscrite et bannie; si la vérité triomphoit; si les chimères du jansénisme ne subsistoient plus; si les cœurs enfin devenoient remplis de l'esprit de charité et d'unité; nous pourrions dire que [nos] maux ne sont plus; et nous n'aurions plus qu'à saluer de tres loin les beaux

1771 that the Jansenists exploited patriotic rhetoric to the full in their attack on 'despotism', thereby playing an important role in developing its potential as an opposition discourse.⁹² This episode provides another example of the way contingency was to interact with the language, providing opportunities for use and thus facilitating a significant evolution of the discourse. At what point writers believed their own rhetoric is a problem to address in a future history of patriotism for the period from 1771 to 1792. Certainly there was a fascinating interaction after 1770 between the political contingencies and the potential for radicalism within the discourse.

Indeed, well before the Maupeou coup provided the occasion for an outpouring of oppositional patriotic rhetoric, another strand of patriotic discourse was already developing. In 1762 the expulsion of the Jesuits, educational order *par excellence*, created the opportunity for a national debate on education. Chiming in with the publication of Rousseau's *Emile*, the theme attracted many writers who justified their intervention in terms of patriotism. What was new was the stress on positively forming patriotic virtues through systematic education. This was no longer the aspiration of a Mentor, or an advisor to princes like Duguet, whose advice to princes might be adopted by any virtuous citizen through self-fashioning. It was a far more prescriptive form of patriotic writing, and prefigures projects for patriotic education during the Revolution.⁹³ This debate helps create a clearer association within patriotic discourse with the need to education virtuous citizens of the republic and will of course help to transfer the advice for princes to

jours du salut d'israel, et les benedictions qui doivent le suivre, comme étant reservées pour une generation bien distante de nous. et de la tant de prodiges opérés depuis 24 ans, et qui continuent plus que jamais se trouveroient vains. mais nous n'en sommes pas la et ce que nous voyons nous laisse entrevoir l'avenir, ... c'est proprement ici les soldats renversés dans le jardin des olives - au seul nom de jesus de nazareth, mais qui ne s'en releveront pas moins pour le perdre, et pour consommer l'oeuvre du messie.' L.P. 535, no. 62. A more telling statement of his religious vision and motivation would be hard to find. Are we dealing with doublethink, a rigid separation between public and private discourses, or religious motivation pushing him to marshal a new set of semi-secular arguments?

⁹² The extent of Jansenist participation in the campaign of brochures has been revealed by Dale Van Kley, in 'The religious origins of the patriote and ministerial parties in pre-revolutionary France: Controversy over the Chancellor's constitutional coup, 1771-1775', *Historical Reflections/Réflexions historiques*, 18, 2 (1992), 17-63. For an analysis of their arguments, see D. Echeverria, *The Maupeou Revolution*, pp. 37-124.

⁹³ See Jay Smith, *Nobility reimagined*, pp. 186-93 and an interesting study of more local projects by William Scott, 'Anxieties and aspirations: Problems of educational reform on the eve of the French Revolution' *SVEC*, 378 (1999), 229-270.

love their *patrie* to all future citizens, an argument that was to have an important future during the revolution. The latent anti-despotic tendency within the language of patriotism emerged more clearly when Maupeou provided the opportunity. The recurrence of this opportunity with Lamoignon's coup, after fifteen more years of public exposure to patriotic rhetoric, may well have been crucial in turning a discourse into an ideology. That is a process that merits further investigation.