Cultures of Power in Europe during the Long Eighteenth Century

Edited by
Hamish Scott and Brendan Simms

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This original volume seeks to get behind the surface of political events and to identify the forces which shaped politics and culture from 1680 to 1840 in Germany, France and Great Britain. The contributors, all leading specialists in the field, explore critically how 'culture', defined in the widest sense, was exploited during the 'long eighteenth century' to buttress authority in all its forms and how politics infused culture. Individual essays explore topics ranging from the military culture of central Europe through the political culture of Germany, France and Great Britain, music, court intrigue and diplomatic practice, religious conflict and political ideas, the role of the Enlightenment, to the very new dispensations which prevailed during and after the French Revolution and the Napoleonic watershed. The book will be essential reading for all scholars of eighteenth-century European history.

HAMISH SCOTT is Wardlaw Professor of International History at the University of St Andrews. His recent publications include *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756–1775* (2001) and *The Birth of a Great Power System, 1740–1815* (2006).

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For Tim Blanning

Contents

Preface

In April 2007, Professor T. C. W. Blanning – Tim to all his friends and now to the scholarly community as well – will celebrate his sixty-fifth birthday, improbable as this will seem. In order to mark this occasion, to celebrate his enormous contribution to the study of modern European history, and to convey a sense of the immense regard in which he is universally held, it was decided to publish a volume of essays dedicated to him and written by some of his many friends and admirers. It takes its cue and also its starting point from Tim's celebrated *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford University Press, 2002). Contributors were asked to extend the perspectives of that seminal book, and to explore critically how 'culture' (defined in the widest sense) was exploited during the 'long eighteenth century' to buttress authority in all its forms and how politics infused culture. Coherence was also sought by a decision to concentrate on the period – the long eighteenth century – which has been the principal focus of Tim's own scholarship and on the areas which his work has particularly illuminated: the German-speaking lands, France and Britain. While this, together with the period selected for consideration, had the unfortunate effect of excluding some friends and colleagues who would have been obvious contributors, it was inevitable given the realities of present-day publishing. Tim's renowned openness to all subjects and all approaches encouraged us to produce a volume which fully reflected the various uses to which the concept of 'culture' has been put.

The essays published in this volume were first given as papers at a highly enjoyable conference held in Cambridge in September 2005, and were revised for publication in the light of discussions and comments at this gathering. We are grateful to the contributors for their willingness to revise their essays in the interests of the volume's overall coherence and for their remarkable ability to deliver their essays by the due date: a tribute, in many case, to the good habits inculcated by Tim's doctoral supervision. The conference was funded by the German Historical Institute, London, and we are deeply indebted to its Director, Professor Hagen Schulze, for

this extraordinary generosity, which is only the latest example of the Institute's remarkable support of scholarship in the British academic world. Its Deputy, Dr Benedikt Stuchtey, very kindly attended the Cambridge conference. The Trevelyan Fund of the University of Cambridge also made a generous grant to cover the travel expenses of the participants. At the Press we are indebted to Bill Davies who did much to get the project off the ground and to his successor Michael Watson who smoothed the passage to publication. Nancy Bailey has applied her electronic wizardry to the production of a finished manuscript, while Christopher Riches made the Index: we are grateful to them both. In the planning stages, Derek Beales provided important advice, while Nicky Blanning furnished decisive, if for a time covert, assistance, and Tom, Lucy and Molly kept us all enchanted. We owe most to Tim, however, both for providing the excuse for this academic stock-taking on Blanning's eighteenth century, and for his scholarship and celebrated generosity, both professional and personal, from which all the contributors have frequently benefited. Celebration of his birthday is accompanied with our best wishes for many more years of personal happiness and scholarly productivity.

HAMISH SCOTT
BRENDAN SIMMS
April 2006

Contributors

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Historical Journal 41 (1998) and 'Novel Narratives, New Research: The French Revolution after the Bicentennial', *Historical Journal* 40 (1997). He is currently preparing his Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (2005) on 'The French Revolution and the *secret du roi*: Diplomatic Tradition, Foreign Policy and Political Culture in Later Eighteenth-Century France (1756–1792)' for publication as a monograph.

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Painting and the New Houses of Parliament at Westminster, 1834–51', *Historical Journal* 47 (2004) and 'Prince Albert, Fresco Painting, and the New Houses of Parliament', in J. Davis and F. Bosbach, eds., *Prinz Albert – ein Wettiner in Großbritannien/Prince Albert – a Wettin in Britain* (Munich, 2004). She is currently preparing her Cambridge doctoral thesis (2005), on the relationship between art and taste, state and nation in Germany and England between 1789–1858, for publication.

1 Introduction: culture and power during the long eighteenth century

James J. Sheehan
Stanford University

In December 1774, seventeen-year-old Carl August, Prince of Saxe Weimar, met the celebrated young author Johann Wolfgang Goethe in a Frankfurt hotel room. The meeting was cordial, indeed the two men got along together so splendidly that, less than a year later, Goethe accepted the prince's invitation to move to Weimar, where he would spend the rest of his long and incredibly productive life.

I begin with this familiar scene – so beautifully rendered and analysed in Nicholas Boyle's distinguished biography of the poet – because it neatly captures several of the motifs in the complex relationship between culture and power in the eighteenth century.[1] First and most obvious is the persistent significance of the court, whose seductive blend of artistic possibilities and political influence led Goethe to disregard his father's opposition and take up residence in Carl August's small Thuringian state. Second, there is the new significance of public culture, reflected here in Goethe's position as literary celebrity, which had caused a member of the prince's entourage to seek out the author of *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and which would make Goethe such an attractive presence in Carl August's entourage. Both prince and poet needed one another, both acquired prestige and a kind of power from the other's presence. Court and public were not just alternative sites of cultural practice, they often worked together, each reinforcing the other.

Just behind the surface of this meeting of poet and prince, court and public, we can see some of the difficulties involved in understanding the relationship between eighteenth-century culture and power. Consider, for example, how difficult it is to fit Goethe into any of the usual social categories – he remains a *Bürger* among courtiers, a courtier among *Bürger*, a civil servant, a 'favourite' and, most of all, a citizen of the republic of letters. Goethe's relationship to German nationalism is no

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[1] Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*. Vol. I. *The Poetry of Desire (1749–1790)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 194ff.

less perplexing. He is a great national poet, someone, in Friedrich Mei-
necke's phrase, who taught Germans who they were. But he was never
comfortable with national rhetoric and often contemptuous of patriotic
enthusiasts. And what about Goethe's political views? At once attracted
and repelled by power, critical of both the old regime and its revolution-
ary opponents, insider and outsider, Goethe's politics, like so much else
about him, remained elusive and unsettled. T. S. Eliot once commented
that 'Goethe was about as unrepresentative of his age as a man of genius
can be.'[2] But in one way Goethe was exemplary, and that is of the rich-
ness and complexity of the period with which the essays in this volume
are concerned.

I

The major source of inspiration for these essays is the work of T. C. W.
Blanning. Let me begin with a few words about Tim Blanning's schol-
arly career, concluding with a discussion of his magisterial *The Culture of
Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789*, which was
published by the Oxford University Press in 2002.

   The first things to be noted is that Blanning is a *European* historian.
This was apparent in his first book on Joseph II, but it was much more
evident in the two books that established his reputation: *Reform and Rev-
olution in Mainz* (published by Cambridge University Press in 1974)
and *The French Revolution in Germany* (published by Oxford University
Press in 1983). It is of great significance, I think, that Blanning began
with the Rhineland. This is, after all, an intensely European place, not
least because it has been the scene of so many conflicts over regional
and national identity. By studying the Rhineland Blanning was able to
approach German history from the west and French history from the
east, confronting in the process some of the central problems of each
without being the captive of either. (What French historian, for exam-
ple, would have dared to begin a book entitled *The French Revolutionary
Wars* with the battle of Rossbach, Frederick the Great's victory in 1757?)
Blanning has contributed to both German and French historiography,
but has never been just a 'German' or 'French' historian nor has he ever
been confined by their conventional wisdoms.

   Consider, for example, the quotation with which his Mainz book
begins: 'The contrast between Germany and Western Europe in modern
history has long been a subject of historical interpretation and research.'

[2] Quoted from ibid., p. 7 in T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture:
   Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 98.

This sentence, from Hajo Holborn's influential essay on 'German Idealism in the Light of Social History', takes us directly to what is immediately recognizable as the *Sonderweg*, the historiographical conviction that Germany followed a 'special path' to modernity.[3] And yet Blanning travels this path to a destination quite different from most of its adherents: he finds not the usual failed German modernization, but rather 'the astonishing ability of the political and social establishment in Germany to absorb, adapt, and even utilize progressive and potentially disruptive forces'.[4] In a number of ways, Blanning cuts against the grain of scholarly orthodoxy: in contrast to German nationalist historians, he recognizes the value and viability of the Holy Roman Empire (he was, in fact, among the first modern scholars to insist on the empire's positive role as a source of order and stability in central Europe). In contrast to Protestant historians, he does not dismiss traditional Catholic piety or overlook the progressive elements within the Rhenish Church; and in contrast to a variety of democratic and Marxist historians, he did not magnify or distort the influence of the members of the Mainz Jacobin club. His comment on the latter issue is characteristic:

In view of this rejection of the Revolution by most of the inhabitants of the city, the disproportionate amount of attention lavished by historians on the Clubists is explicable only in terms of the ease with which they can be adapted to suit various historiographical schools.[5]

In *The French Revolution in Germany*, Blanning once again tries to drive a stake through the heart of German Jacobinism, which, vampire like, keeps struggling to emerge from the historiographical crypt. This book, while narrower chronologically than his study of Mainz, examines many of the same themes for the Rhineland as a whole. Deeply researched and vigorously written, it documents the wanton destruction of traditional institutions, the ruthlessness of the revolution's anti-clericalism and the increasingly despotic face of the revolution abroad. The revolution, Blanning argues, governed the Rhineland not through the power of its ideas or the promise of its programme, but with brute force. French rule rested on the army: 'without it, the revolutionary regime could not have lasted a week'.[6] Here we have that familiar figure in German historiography, 'the revolution from above', imposed not by Prussian autocrats but by French democrats. It is not a pretty picture.

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[3] *Reform and Revolution in Mainz*, p. 1. Holborn's essay is available in *Germany and Europe: Historical Essays* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970).
[4] Blanning, *Reform and Revolution in Mainz*, p. 3.
[5] Ibid., p. 295.   [6] *The French Revolution in Germany*, p. 206.

The next phase of Blanning's scholarship was directly about the French Revolution and the Revolutionary Wars. In part this was a natural extension of his work on the Rhineland, in part he may have been irresistibly drawn into the historiographical vortex created by the bicentennial celebrations of 1789. Blanning wrote three books on various aspects of the revolution and edited one of the best collections of articles inspired by the bicentennial.[7] His books on the Revolutionary Wars are beautifully done, examples of his range as a scholar and his versatility as a writer. *The French Revolutionary Wars* is surely the best introduction to the subject in English. These works, like his earlier books on the French Revolution in Germany, reveal the repressive violence at the core of revolutionary expansionism.

Of particular interest for an understanding of the development of Blanning's ideas is his brief survey of the revolution, published in the Studies in European History series in 1987. Designed to introduce students to the literature on a major historical topic, the volume's theme is captured by the subtitle, *Aristocrats versus Bourgeois?* From the opening paragraph the abiding presence in the book is Alfred Cobban, whose inaugural lecture of 1954, 'The Myth of the French Revolution', began a long struggle to displace the Marxist framework which had, with varying degrees of orthodoxy, shaped historians' views of the revolution's origins and meaning. Blanning clearly shared Cobban's distrust of ideological retrospection, as well as his belief in the primacy of politics.[8]

A decade later, Blanning published a second edition of *The French Revolution*. Its new subtitle, *Class War or Culture Clash?*, pointed to the tectonic shift in historiographical interest from social to cultural analysis. The Cobbanite presence remains, but it now shares space with Habermas and, perhaps even more importantly, François Furet. In a new section on 'The Public Sphere and Public Opinion', Blanning casts 'a friendly but critical eye' on political culture as an explanation for the events of 1789.[9]

Blanning's adoption of the cultural approach was qualified in at least two ways, both important for establishing the link between his studies of the French Revolution and *The Culture of Power*. First, Blanning does

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[7] *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (London: Longman, 1986); *The French Revolution: Aristocrats versus Bourgeois?* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1987); *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787–1802* (London: Arnold, 1996). The edited volume is *The Rise and Fall of the French Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), a collection of seventeen articles on the revolution originally published in the *Journal of Modern History*.

[8] See Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution* (2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[9] *The French Revolution: Class War or Culture Clash?* (2nd edn, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), pp. 23ff.

not abandon qualitative distinctions in assigning historical significance to ideas and objects. Thus while he acknowledges the role of the underground literature examined by Robert Darnton, he is not prepared to replace the works of Rousseau, Voltaire and Diderot with those of some obscure pornographer or pamphleteer. Second, Blanning never loses sight of the abiding importance of power, especially military power, in shaping political events. Thus while he uses the work of historians like Lynn Hunt and Keith Baker, he does not let political discourse take on a life of its own. The hard realities of political violence and international conflict are always present. We can see, therefore, in Blanning's critical engagement with the rich historical literature on the French Revolution the origins of the themes that he will so brilliantly examine in *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture*.

The Culture of Power is divided into three parts: 'Representational Culture', 'The Rise of the Public Sphere' and 'Revolution'. There is a certain Hegelian quality about this triad: each stage at once replaces and sustains its antecedent, following the dialectical process that Hegel calls *Aufhebung*, a lifting up, which of course involves both retention and removal.

The opening section on 'Representational Culture' is a rare example of historical writing that is at once a splendid introduction for the novice and a source of surprise and delight for the expert. Blanning moves across Europe – with particular emphasis on France and the German lands – and across genres – with particular emphasis on music and the visual arts. He finds just the right balance between the general and the particular, the prominent and the forgotten, sacred and profane. Despite the richness of its material, the first section is also the most cohesive of the three. In part this is because representational culture was a European phenomenon, nourished by the powerful influence of Versailles, patronized by a multilingual aristocracy, and created by an international elite of artists who moved freely from court to court. But the cohesiveness of representational culture also comes from the court itself, which represents the fusion of political and cultural authority, personified by the prince, around whom the life of the court is supposed to revolve. 'The whole state', as Bossuet once wrote, 'is in the person of the prince.'[10]

Something extraordinarily important happens to European politics when this ceases to be true: when the state can no longer be represented in the prince's person, it must be imagined; that is to say, it becomes the projection of what we know on to what we don't, what we can see on to what we can't. In the modern world, all political communities are

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[10] Quoted in Keith Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 225.

'imagined communities' because all of them extend beyond what we can see and apprehend. The site where the political imagination operates – and where a new kind of political culture is created – is the subject of Blanning's second section, 'The Rise of the Public Sphere'.

As the section's title underscores, Jürgen Habermas – a powerful presence throughout the book – is especially important here. As far as I have been able to discover, Habermas's name appeared for the first time in Blanning's *The French Revolution in Germany* (published in 1983), when he is listed – along with Treitschke, Marx, Barrès, Lenin and Rosenberg (an odd assortment to say the least) – as a source of categories 'from another time and place' that Blanning does not intend to impose on his material.[11] As we have seen, by the second edition of his survey of the French Revolution, Blanning had accepted Habermas's value in understanding the problem of political culture. In *The Culture of Power*, the conceptual framework has been – as Blanning tells us – strongly influenced although not dictated by *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*.[12]

In order to be transformed into a useful historical category, Habermas's idea of *Öffentlichkeit* needs three revisions. First, the chronology of his argument must be changed: the process he describes certainly began much earlier than he suggests. Second, the normative element in Habermas's account needs to be reduced – socially *Öffentlichkeit* was not, as Habermas suggests, so closely associated with the bourgeoisie, nor was it ideologically as 'progressive' and consistently secular as he claimed. Finally – and this point is made less often than the first two – the institutional dimensions of Habermas's argument need to be emphasized and the epistemological correspondingly downplayed. Within the evolution of Habermas's own thought, *Öffentlichkeit* is a stage in the emergence of the communications theory with which he tried to resolve problems of truth and value. In Habermas's original account, therefore, the epistemological function of *Öffentlichkeit* is more important than its social or institutional character. The historians – like Blanning – who use Habermas reverse this emphasis: a reversal that is already apparent in the translation of the

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[11] *The French Revolution in Germany*, p. 17. There follows a long quotation from Richard Cobb, whose distrust of methodological self-consciousness the Blanning of 1983 firmly endorsed.

[12] *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1962). It is significant that Habermas's book was not translated until 1989: *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989). There is a vast literature on the concept: for a good introduction, see the article by Dena Goodman in *History and Theory* 31:1 (1992) and the collection edited by Craig Calhoun, *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), which includes some retrospective reflections by Habermas himself.

key term. The rendering of *Öffentlichkeit* as 'public sphere' (or even more clearly in the French *l'espace public*) gives the notion of 'publicity' or, perhaps more accurately, 'publicness' greater institutional weight than the German term would suggest.

Habermas's great service is to encourage us to remember that culture is not just a set of ideas or objects, but that it is an activity in which form and content have a complex relationship: the medium and the message are dynamically and creatively interrelated.[13] By making culture an activity, Habermas suggested a way to write a history of ideas that transcended both the abstractions of traditional intellectual history and the reductionist categories of Marxist analysis.

In Blanning's capable hands, the concept of a 'public sphere' becomes a way of illuminating the subtle interplay of commerce and communications in eighteenth-century culture. The core of this process was the rise of a reading public, at once the subjects and consumers of the century's great burst of literary innovation. But Blanning refuses to be trapped within his conceptual framework: he recognizes the continued importance of the court, the limits of social categories like 'the bourgeoisie' and the need to recognize the aesthetic merit of great works of literature, art and music. As in section one, Blanning is a splendid guide: clear and concise enough for the beginner, unfailingly original and provocative enough for the more experienced reader.

Blanning's final section, tersely entitled 'Revolution', is the longest, most original, most interesting, but also the most problematic of the three. There is no doubt that this section has the most difficult story to tell. The title of the section, like the closing date – 1789 – in the title of the book, sets the trajectory of the analysis towards the revolution in France. But Blanning must continue to manage the differences among the three national experiences at the centre of his account – Prussia, Britain and France. He must also retain his focus on the relationship between culture and power – unified by the court in his first section, refracted into public opinion in his second and now necessarily part of the revolutionary crisis that brought the old regime to an end.

The keystone in the interpretive arch that supports this section is nationalism. At the end of the second section, Blanning provides this forecast of what is coming: 'As the next chapter will show, this great upheaval [that is, the French Revolution], which affected every part of

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[13] Much the same idea informed the work of Marshall McLuhan, whose *Gutenberg Galaxy* appeared in 1962, the same year as Habermas's *Strukturwandel*. McLuhan, who was once so famous that he appeared in a Woody Allen movie, is now largely forgotten, at least by historians.

Europe, did not come like a clap of thunder in a clear sky, but was a specifically French reaction to a general European phenomenon – the emergence of nationalism.'[14]

I am not sure that Blanning's concept of nationalism is sturdy enough to bear the structural weight he puts upon it. It seems to me that it works rather well in his discussion of Britain, where the monarch is able to capture the patriotic mood and create a political culture that will enable Britain to emerge triumphant from its long struggle against revolutionary France. It is also true that the French monarchy's inability to mobilize nationalism was one – but only one – of the most significant reasons for the disasters that engulfed it after 1789. Nationalism works least well in explaining the German case, where national consciousness within the public sphere has a much more complicated relationship with political authority. Throughout German-speaking Europe, the state remained more important than the nation until well into the nineteenth century.

Looking back over Tim Blanning's scholarly work beginning with his study of Joseph II in 1970 and by no means ending with his *Culture of Power* in 2002, one is struck by its variety, range and intellectual power. He writes with equal authority about operas and battles, ideas and events, social movements and great men. Throughout his work there are some recurrent themes, such as the importance of religion, the centrality of politics and the decisive significance of power, especially military power. There are recurring opinions, of which Professor Blanning has an abundant supply. And there is also a characteristic tone that is gently – and sometimes not so gently – ironic. Above all, Blanning's work is united by what William James once called 'temperament', those deeply rooted elements of character and conviction that nourish our intellectual life. Blanning's scholarship is animated by his temperament, which is – and again I take my terms from William James – tough minded enough to see the world as it is, but also tender minded enough to appreciate the importance of imaging how the world might be and, above all, sensible enough to know the difference between the two.

II

In their range and variety, the essays in this volume reflect the breadth of Tim Blanning's scholarly interests. Like Blanning's teaching and research, the essays are European in scope, extending from Britain to the Hungarian lands of the Habsburg Monarchy. Chronologically, they span the 'long eighteenth century' from Christopher Clark's account of King Frederick's

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[14] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 182.

coronation in 1701 to Emma Winter's examination of King Ludwig of Bavaria's reign that ended, unhappily, in 1848. The subjects covered include music and military institutions, court intrigue and diplomatic practice, religious conflict and political ideas. While the editors have made no effort to provide a comprehensive portrait of the century, the contributions convincingly demonstrate its richness and diversity.

The essays are joined by a common interest in culture.

Although historians – since Herodotus – have long written about culture, cultural history has been significantly revitalized in the past two decades. One of the primary examples of this new vitality is the historiography of the eighteenth century and especially the historiography of pre-revolutionary France. There are many reasons for this, but the most important is surely the collapse – at once political, ideological and historiographical – of Marxism and the social interpretations it sustained. Instead of trying to establish the social origins of politics, historians began to search for its cultural sources and manifestations. This search can take many forms, some inspired by the so-called 'linguistic turn', others by a renewal of interest in religious ideas and institutions, still others by work on the family, gender and sexuality.[15] Tim Blanning, as we have seen, was influenced by these developments when he prepared a new edition of his introductory survey on the French Revolution. Their impact can also be seen in many of the essays in this volume.

Raymond Williams once wrote that 'culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language.'[16] If 'power' is not one of the other two, then it certainly belongs on a list of the top ten. Both words have been used to refer to a bewildering variety of historical phenomena, whose importance no one would question, but whose precise meaning is persistently elusive. One is tempted to say about culture and power what St Augustine said about time: I know what they mean until someone asks me to explain them. But while no one would doubt the complexity of these concepts, we should not overlook the difficulties packed into that simple conjunction 'and', which raises the question of the relationship between the two, between the symbolic, moral and aesthetic realm of culture and the contentious, often violent world of power.

There is no simple, straightforward way to define the relationship between culture and power. Ideas, values and symbols are not merely reflections of deeper political realities, an ideological superstructure built

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[15] For an early survey of this work, see Sarah Maza, 'Politics, Culture and the Origins of the French Revolution', *Journal of Modern History* 61 (December 1989), pp. 704–23.

[16] Quoted in William Sewell, *Logics of History Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 156. Sewell's Chapter Five, 'The Concept(s) of Culture', is a brilliant discussion of the term and its uses.

to justify or conceal what really matters. Nor does culture constitute an autonomous reality of its own: the world may be many things, but it is not only a text. Beyond these extremes – in which, I suspect, few people have ever really believed – is to be found the question that recurs throughout this volume: how do people's struggles for influence and survival shape – and how are they shaped by – their language and rituals, art and ideas, symbols and ceremonies? As the essays collected here demonstrate, the best place to look for answers to this question is in those particular historical situations, where men and women struggle both to understand and to master the world around them. Understanding and mastery – culture and power – appear to be inseparable, each one enhancing or limiting the other. Our primary concern should be to see how this happens.

Although all of the essays treat some aspect of eighteenth-century culture, 'culture' turns out to be elastic enough to embrace an extremely diverse set of concerns. Roughly speaking, the authors' uses of the term can be divided into three groups:

In the first, culture is regarded as a particular sort of activity: the coronation rituals analysed by Christopher Clark, the ideas about power described by Joachim Whaley, the two Mozart operas discussed by Mark Berry and the artistic policies traced by Emma Winter. These activities do not, of course, float in the air: all of the authors link their subjects to individual ambitions, social institutions and political structures. Nevertheless, these forms of culture stand out from the institutional landscape, even as they are shaped and supported by it.

In the second group of essays, culture is used to mean a mentality, a set of deeply rooted notions about how institutions should and do work. Peter Wilson, for instance, defines 'military culture' as 'the values, norms, and assumptions that encourage people to make certain choices in given circumstances'. In this sense, culture is how particular organizations establish their goals and select alternative strategies to meet them. Hamish Scott's 'diplomatic culture' and Brendan Simms's 'strategic culture' belong in this category, as does the 'confessional conscience' manifested by the village choir in James Melton's microhistory of Hofgastein. This kind of culture often has explicit formulations – in training manuals or rules of conduct, for example – but it is most powerfully transmitted through the communal practices and intimate encounters on which every cohesive institution depends. These implicit, often routine forms of cultural communication teach people what it means to be a soldier, diplomat, British statesman or member of the Protestant minority in an Alpine market town.

The remainder of the essays use culture in a broader, more inclusive sense, that is, to refer to what some of the authors call 'political culture',

others, 'public culture' and a few, the 'public sphere'. This is the sort of culture that, as Andrew Thompson shows, sustained Britain as a 'confessional state', encouraged the crisis in the Parlement of Paris described by Julian Swann and prepared the way for the dramatic abolition of the nobility on 19 June 1790 that is the subject of William Doyle's contribution. The most prominent historical residues of this culture are the works of its most articulate representatives, works like Beaumarchais's *Marriage of Figaro*, whose subversive message was heard by nearly 100,000 people during its first run in Paris in 1784. But the influence of these individual books or plays, even extraordinarily popular ones like *Figaro*, depended on their relationship to a deeper, more pervasive, but also more elusive set of values and assumptions. Establishing the social dimensions and political implications of this relationship is perhaps the important challenge confronting students of political culture.

Several essays show the persistent importance of the court in the eighteenth century. 'Courts', Christopher Clark reminds us, 'are places where power and culture merge.' His analysis of the coronation of 1701 uncovers the rich symbolic meaning and practical significance of the Prussian Elector's efforts to mark his assumption of a royal crown and title. The courts were also, as Hamish Scott points out, the place where old regime statesmen learned their craft and established the connections on which their diplomacy depended. Munro Price looks carefully at the French upper nobility, whose attitudes were shaped by the microcosm of court intrigue as well as the larger realm of political ideas and values. Maiken Umbach emphasizes the significance of the court culture in the smaller German states for the creation of those values and ideas she calls *Bürgerlichkeit*, that form of moral sensibility that appealed to both princely patrons and the artists they supported. As we see in Emma Winter's essay, the complex interaction of court and public that Price found at Versailles and Umbach discovered at German courts like Dessau is even more strikingly apparent in Ludwig I's Munich, where the monarch lavished resources on art to glorify the dynasty and to promote German cultural values.

The court's political and cultural role depended on the ambitions and abilities of the ruler. Among the Hohenzollern, Frederick I was the first and also the last eighteenth-century king to be obsessed by dynastic ritual: neither Frederick's son nor his grandson cared much for the ceremonial dimensions of kingship. Personality also contributed to the toxic atmosphere at the French court on the eve of the revolution, where the weakness of the monarch and the deeply rooted unpopularity of his queen helped to alienate some of those closest to the throne.

Among eighteenth-century rulers, no one had a more remarkable personal style than the Emperor Joseph II. In contrast to Prussia's

Frederick I, who amplified his power with ceremonies and symbols, Joseph struggled to master the details of statecraft, including, as Derek Beales chronicles, the reception of tens of thousands of individual petitions, both in Vienna and during his travels around the Habsburgs' scattered domains. There was something medieval about this personal manifestation of royal power, but at the same time, the scale of Joseph's activity makes it a public act: if, as Beales writes, 'the public sphere is taken to embrace all interaction between government and people which involves exchanges of views, then, at least in the monarchy under Joseph II, petitioning was a major element in it'.

The persistent significance of the court is one reason why it is a mistake to associate the growth of the public too closely with the rise of some mythical 'bourgeoisie'. Another is the continued vitality of the aristocracy, which appears again and again in these essays. That aristocrats dominated the officer corps, the diplomatic service and the political elite is to be expected. But they were also important as patrons of the arts and as active participants in the public sphere. *Bürgerlichkeit* was a moral not a social category; its adherents included both noblemen and commoners. In fact, everywhere in Europe aristocrats were among the chief consumers of new political and literary works. It was, as William Doyle notes, the court nobility that persuaded Louis XVI to lift his ban on the production of Beaumarchais's play, which they and their fellow aristocrats then rushed to see. Surely when they applauded the denunciation of Count Almaviva's feckless immorality, they did not imagine that, just six years later, a revolutionary National Assembly would vote to abolish hereditary nobility forever.

Religion, which has always been an important theme in Tim Blanning's work, is a central theme in several essays. James Melton's painstaking re-creation of the Protestants' 'counterfactual inversion' of the Corpus Christi procession in an Alpine village shows us people's willingness to confront the power of both the community and the state. This challenge to what Melton calls 'the unity of creed and community' signalled the intensification of confessional animosity that would result in the expulsion of the region's Protestants just a few years later. If Melton follows religious divisions into the village community, Andrew Thompson shows how important religion remained in British public life. The eighteenth-century British state, he concludes, may not have been confessional, but it was most definitely Protestant, animated by a language of 'broad Protestant interest' shared by High Church Anglicans as well as dissenters.

In contrast to those who see the so-called 'Westphalian system' as composed of secular, sovereign states, Thompson shows the persistence of confessional issues in determining British foreign policy. In Britain, as

elsewhere, religious commitments and dynastic interests brought together international and domestic politics. This blend of religion and dynasty was part of the background to Frederick's coronation in 1701 and, as Brendan Simms argues, it remained a key to eighteenth-century Britain's strategic culture. Among the most significant effects of the French Revolution was to substitute ideology for religion in the linkage between domestic and foreign affairs, a point precociously made in Edmund Burke's 'Letters on the Proposals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France' of 1796, which is cited with approval in Gary Savage's essay on political culture and French foreign policy.

Although this volume is self-consciously European in scope, it is worth noting how many of the authors are drawn into debates about the grand narratives of national histories. Clark, Wilson, Whaley and Umbach are all engaged with the German *Sonderweg*, about which they are all, to some degree, sceptical. Thompson and Simms both participate in the debate about eighteenth-century Britain that has been recently reinvigorated by the work of Jonathan Clark. And of course for all the authors on French subjects, the question of revolution's origins retains its magnetic power. On the basis of the essays by Swann, Price, Doyle and Savage, one can say that François Furet was only partially correct when he famously wrote that the French Revolution was over. It is perhaps significant that the essays that do not easily fit into national narratives – Melton, Evans, Beales and Berry – all have to do with the Habsburg Monarchy. Emma Winter's focus on Bavaria represents a clear break with conventional national categories, signalling a new interest in German states outside Prussia.

Taken together, these essays do not provide a grand narrative for the long eighteenth century. Indeed their overall impact is to undermine rather than advance any single interpretation of power and culture. There is more than enough material here to shake any overarching theory of change: class analysis, secularization or modernization in all its many guises. Habermas's 'public sphere' is used by some authors, but ignored or implicitly criticized by others. Even Tim Blanning's *Culture of Power* is sometimes called into question. This is, I think, an absolutely appropriate tribute to a scholar who has always celebrated the messy but fascinating specificity of historical experience.

2   When culture meets power: the Prussian coronation of 1701

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I

On 18 January 1701, Frederick III, Elector of Brandenburg and Duke of Prussia, was crowned 'King in Prussia' in the city of Königsberg. The splendour of the event was unprecedented in the history of the House of Hohenzollern. According to one contemporary report, 30,000 horses were required to relay the Electoral family, their retainers and their luggage, all packed into 1,800 carriages, along the road to the place of coronation. The ceremony itself began on the morning of 18 January in the audience chamber of the Elector, where a throne had been erected specially for the occasion. Dressed in a scarlet and gold coat glittering with diamond buttons and a crimson mantle with an ermine lining and attended by a small gathering of male family members, courtiers and senior local officials, the Elector placed the crown on his own head, took his sceptre in hand and received the homage of those present.

He then passed into the chambers of his wife, whom he crowned as his queen in the presence of their household. After representatives of the Estates had rendered homage, the royal couple processed to the castle chapel in order to be anointed. Here they were greeted at the entrance by two bishops, one Lutheran and one Reformed (Calvinist), both of whom had been appointed to their offices specifically for this purpose – in deference to the bi-confessional character of the Brandenburg-Prussian state (in which a Calvinist dynasty ruled over a population of Lutheran subjects). After some hymns and a sermon, a royal fanfare of drums and trumpets announced the highpoint of the service: the king rose from his throne and knelt at the altar, while the Calvinist Bishop Ursinus wet two fingers of his right hand in oil and anointed the forehead and the right and left wrists (above the pulse) of the king. The same ritual was then performed upon the queen. To the accompaniment of a musical acclamation, the clergymen involved in the service gathered before the throne and rendered homage. After further hymns and prayers, a senior court

official stood up to announce a general pardon for all offenders, excluding blasphemers, murderers, debtors and those guilty of *lèse-majesté*.[1]

Courts are places where power and culture merge. Nowhere is this convergence more splendidly enacted than in the dramatic performances of a royal coronation. But on what terms is the partnership between culture and power contracted? Is culture an essential, indeed an unconscious, substance that wells up through the ritual performances that embellish the court's public life? Or is it better understood as a repertoire of discrete symbolic instruments deployed by those who hold or lay claim to power, in order to achieve highly focused and intentional effects? Historical writing on royal ritual has generally been informed by two opposed points of view. The first, derived largely from the theoretical and interpretative writings of anthropologists, proceeds from the axiom that culture is best understood as 'a deeply sedimented essence attaching to, or adhering in, particular groups', or as the 'primordial values or traits' of a specific community.[2] Viewed in this light, the coronation ritual appears as a system of meanings that can be read synchronically and analysed like a text, a 'seamlessly coherent script or master narrative that actors follow'.[3] The second point of view arises from an acknowledgement of the artificiality of much royal ritual, its quality as a thing made at a specific time to meet a specific purpose. From this perspective, coronation rituals appear as exercises in propaganda, whose function is to project authority and win allegiance.[4] The focus is on manipulation, change and specificity

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[1] For descriptions and analyses of the coronation, see Peter Baumgart, 'Die preußische Königskrönung von 1701, das Reich und die europäische Politik', in Oswald Hauser (ed.), *Preußen, Europa und das Reich* (Cologne and Vienna, 1987), pp. 65–86; Heinz Duchhardt, 'Das preußische Königtum von 1701 und der Kaiser', in Heinz Duchhardt and Manfred Schlenke (eds.), *Festschrift für Eberhard Kessel* (Munich, 1982), pp. 89–101; Heinz Duchhardt, 'Die preussische Königskrönung von 1701. Ein europäisches Modell?' in Heinz Duchhardt (ed.), *Herrscherweihe und Königskrönung im Frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Wiesbaden, 1983), pp. 82–95; Iselin Gundermann, 'Die Salbung König Friedrichs I. in Königsberg', *Jahrbuch für Berlin-Brandenburgische Kirchengeschichte* 63 (2001), pp. 72–88; Iselin Gundermann (ed.), *Via Regia. Preußens Weg zur Krone. Katalog der Ausstellung des Geheimen Staatsarchivs Preußischer Kuturbesitz* (Berlin, 1998); Werner Schmidt, *Friedrich I. Kurfürst von Brandenburg, König in Preußen* (Munich, 1996), esp. pp. 103–41.
[2] Sherry B. Ortner, 'Introduction', *Representations* 59 (1997), pp. 1–13, here pp. 8–9.
[3] Lisa Wedeen, 'Conceptualising Culture: Possibilities for Political Science', *American Political Science Review* 96 (2002), pp. 713–28, here p. 716. In this passage, Wedeen is characterising the work of Clifford Geertz, esp. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, 1973), *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology* (New York, 1983) and *Negara: The Theater State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton, 1980). On Geertz and historical practice, see William H. Sewell, Jr, 'Geertz, Cultural Systems, and History: From Synchrony to Transformation', *Representations* 59 (1997), pp. 35–55.
[4] Andrew D. Brown, 'Civic Ritual: Bruges and the Counts of Flanders in the Later Middle Ages', *English Historical Review* 11 (1997), pp. 277–99, here pp. 277, 280, 294.

rather than continuity and universality.[5] In contrast with the synchronic methodology of classical anthropology, this approach adopts a diachronic perspective in which each ritual performance is seen as one link in a chain of causes and consequences extending through time.[6] Ritual enactments are not the artefacts of a seamless and embedded tradition, but inventions that reflect processes of political change.[7] The appearance of antiquity and timelessness that marks much royal ritual is precisely that, an appearance contrived to shroud the artificiality of the proceedings in a mantle of continuity and thereby to assimilate the institution of monarchy to a transcendent order of things.[8]

These are clearly not mutually exclusive insights. Most significant ritual events can be profitably illuminated from both perspectives. The coronation rite of 1701 with which this chapter is concerned was a semiotically complex event superabundantly charged with the traditional attributes of royalty and it was certainly text-like, in that it explicitly invited metaphorical and allegorical readings. On the other hand, it was also a manifestly artificial, rootless thing that had to be manufactured in great haste to meet the needs of a particular moment. To a greater extent perhaps than any other major European coronation, it was fashioned to address the exigencies of a dynamic and threat-rich international environment.

Indeed, it may be that we can only make sense of the coronation ritual of 1701 if we move away altogether from an essentialist notion of culture as connoting fixed group traits. The drawback of this approach, as the political scientist Lisa Wedeen has observed, is that it does not allow for agency; participant actors are captives of a script ordained by culture. Wedeen advocates a dynamic analysis of 'semiotic practices' that would focus on 'processes of meaning-making' in which the intentions and strategies of actors interact with language, ritual and other symbolic systems.[9] Her open-ended, pragmatically oriented approach seems especially well fitted to an event that drew deeply on the symbols and logic of

[5] See Dougal Shaw, 'The Coronation and Monarchical Culture in Stuart Britain and Ireland, 1603–1661' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2002), p. 8.

[6] Sewell, 'Geertz, Cultural Systems, and History', p. 40.

[7] David Cannadine, 'Introduction', in David Cannadine and Simon Prince (eds.), *Rituals of Royalty. Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 1–19, here p. 4; on the inventedness of certain modern British rituals of royalty, see David Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the "Invention of Tradition", c. 1820–1977', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, Canto edn, 1992).

[8] Clifford Geertz, 'Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power', in Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clark (eds.), *Culture and Its Creators: Essays in Honor of Edward Shils* (Chicago, 1977), pp. 150–71, here p. 153.

[9] Wedeen, 'Conceptualizing Culture', pp. 713, 716.

traditional European kingship, but was at the same time highly purposive and manipulative.

This chapter aims to make sense of the Prussian coronation of 1701 by tracing in it the fault-lines where the demands of power met the imperatives of culture. In doing so, it seeks to relate the insights generated by historical analyses of the coronation to the larger issues addressed by this book. The first half of the chapter focuses on the genesis of the coronation as a politico-cultural artefact designed to convey a specific set of meanings. The second part examines the functionality of the coronation in diachronic perspective. This was a ceremonial without precedent and without a direct successor in the territory in which it was enacted. And yet, as I argue below, the afterlife of the coronation of 1701 within the political culture of the Brandenburg-Prussian monarchy was more vibrant than its historical singularity would suggest.

II

In terms of the proportion of territorial wealth consumed, the coronation of 1701 must surely be the most expensive single event in the history of Brandenburg-Prussia. Even by the standards of an age that revelled in courtly ceremonial, the Prussian coronation was unusually splendid. The government levied a special crown tax to cover its expenditures, but this brought in a total of only 500,000 talers – three-fifths of this amount were paid out for the queen's crown alone, and the royal crown, a helmet of precious metal studded over its entire surface with diamonds, accounted for the rest and more besides. Reconstructing the total cost of the festivities is difficult, since no integrated account survives, but it has been estimated that around six million talers were spent in all for the ceremony and attendant festivities, about twice the annual revenues of the Hohenzollern administration.

The coronation was singular in another sense too. It was entirely custom-made: an invention designed to serve the purposes of a specific historical moment. The designer was Frederick I himself, who was responsible for every detail, not only of the new royal insignia, the secular rituals and the liturgy in the castle church, but also for the style and colour of the garments worn by the chief participants, the dramaturgy of the processions, the decoration of the thrones and their canopies. There were experts to advise on monarchical ceremonial. Foremost among these was the poet Johann von Besser who served as master of ceremonies at the Brandenburg court from 1690 until the end of the reign and possessed a wide-ranging knowledge of English, French, German, Italian and Scandinavian courtly tradition and custom. But the key decisions always fell

to the Elector. 'To tell the truth', a friend of the monarch observed in his memoirs, 'these gentlemen [the senior courtiers and state secretaries and master of ceremonies] were only involved as a formality, since the king himself saw to almost everything.'[10]

The ceremony that resulted was a unique and highly self-conscious amalgam of borrowings from historical European coronations, some recent, others of older vintage. From the English coronation ritual he borrowed, among other things, the practice of dedicating the eve of the ceremony to the induction of new members into a semi-clerical 'knightly order'. For the Order of the Bath, whose Knights gathered in the Tower on the evening before the coronation, Frederick substituted the Order of the Black Eagle, whose members were men distinguished by their services to the Prussian throne. The practice of presenting the king crowned and in full regalia for the rite of anointment had been the rule in Denmark since 1665 and the decision to have the king crown himself was probably made in emulation of the Swedish coronation ceremony of 1697.[11]

Frederick designed his coronation not only with a view to its aesthetic impact, but also in order to broadcast what he regarded as the defining features of his kingly status. The form of the crown, which was not an open band, but a metal helmet closed at the top, symbolised the 'all-embracing power' of a monarch who encompassed in his own person both secular and spiritual sovereignty. The fact, moreover, that the king, in contrast to the prevailing European practice, crowned himself in a separate ceremony before being acclaimed by his Estates, pointed up the autonomous character of his office, its independence from any worldly or spiritual authority (save that of God himself). A description of the coronation by Johann Christian Lünig, a renowned contemporary expert on the courtly 'science of ceremony', explained the significance of this step. 'Kings who accept their kingdom and sovereignty from the Estates usually only . . . mount the throne *after* they have been anointed: . . . but His Majesty [Frederick I], who has not received His Kingdom through the assistance of the Estates or of any other [party], had no need whatever of such a handing-over, but rather received his crown after the manner of the ancient kings from his own foundation.'[12]

The arrangements for the royal anointment were also highly distinctive. Above all, it was separated entirely from the formal act of coronation, which was performed by the king upon his own person in his own

[10] Rudolf Grieser (ed.), *Die Denkwürdigkeiten des Burggrafen und Grafen Christoph zu Dohna (1665–1733)* (Göttingen, 1974), p. 212.

[11] Duchhardt, 'Die preußische Königskrönung', p. 88.

[12] Johann Christian Lünig, *Theatrum ceremoniale historico-politicum oder historisch- und politischer Schau-Platz aller Ceremonien etc.* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1719–20), vol. II, pp. 100, 96.

chambers some time before the ecclesiastical part of the ceremony began, so when the king and his wife arrived at the Königsberg Schloßkirche, they were already crowned monarchs. Those involved in planning the ceremony were all agreed that the anointment must be administered by a bishop, but there were no serving bishops in Prussia, except for the court chaplain Jablonski, who ministered to the community of the Moravian Brothers in Berlin. Frederick could simply have ordered that bishops be ordained in time for the coronation, but he chose instead simply to appoint the two bishops out of the fullness of his sovereign power. Indeed his initial stipulation was that these elevations would be temporary, the episcopal titles lapsing after completion of the coronation formalities. Even the act of anointment itself was custom-designed to meet the new king's needs. It was the king, not his bishops, who gave the order to proceed with the anointment, so that one can speak without exaggeration of an act of 'self-unction' by the monarch.[13]

Given the recent history of Brandenburg and Ducal Prussia, the importance of these symbolic gestures is obvious enough. The Great Elector's struggle with the Prussian Estates and particularly the city of Königsberg was still a memory with the power to disturb – it is a telling detail that the Prussian Estates were never consulted over the coronation and were only informed of the forthcoming festivities in December 1700. As for the curious arrangements surrounding the unction, these too were charged with political meaning. The appointment of two bishops – one Lutheran and one Reformed – specifically for the coronation gave graphic expression to the monarch's claim to sovereign authority over both 'official' Protestant confessions: at a time when Lutheran hostility to the Calvinist court was still a problem, especially in a deeply Lutheran city like Königsberg, this was an important signal. By leaving the rite of anointment until after the coronation was an accomplished fact, moreover, Frederick reinforced the autonomy of the new foundation: had the unction been administered before or during the coronation, this might have been construed as signifying the dependence of the king upon the assent of the Estates, as represented in the persons of the two bishops and their clerical assistants.

Indeed, one of the most striking things about the coronation ceremony was what one might call its semiotic density. Every detail of every event was designed to broadcast a specific reading of the ceremony. The crown itself was packed with symbolic devices signifying power, glory and fullness of sovereignty. The throne canopies were decorated with a redundant profusion of royal attributes. A recurring figure was the eagle,

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[13] Hans Liermann, 'Sakralrecht des protestantischen Herrschers', *Zeitschrift der Savignys-tiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 61 (1941), pp. 311–83, here pp. 333–69.

the king of birds, surmounted by a crown, and bearing in its right claw a wreath of laurels signifying the power of royal justice and in its left claw a brace of thunderbolts signifying the justice of royal punishment. Even the prodigious fireworks orchestrated outside the city walls on 26 January combined mass entertainment with heavy-handed symbolism. The show began with three ascending rockets, the 'sign that a king is arriving'. There followed a sequence of fiery 'machines': in the first, the king was seen sitting on his throne with two floating angels holding the crown above his head; the second revealed Atlas bearing a globe of the world with floating sword and sceptre, and so on.[14]

Many details of the ceremony derived from the traditional representative culture of European royalty. Trumpets and drums, whose fanfares were heard in the chapel, were the traditional heralds of royalty. Images of two persons or angels placing a crown or garland on the head of a third person seated between them can be traced back into antiquity and had been used to represent the bestowal of royal dignity since the Middle Ages. The greeting of the royal procession at the door of the church likewise invoked a practice of great antiquity as did the unction itself and the alternation of sung texts and prayers throughout the service.[15] Yet it would be going too far to say that the authors of this festivity were working within an inherited tradition, for the design of the coronation ritual and its accoutrements was in fact an extravagant exercise in bricolage. The know-how that informed the ceremony was not rooted in a 'common knowledge' implicitly shared by all the participants; it derived rather from the printed canon of 'Ceremonialwissenschaft', the highly mediated and rationalised 'science of ceremony' that was enjoying a boom in the last decades of the seventeenth century. In works of this kind, the spectrum of European ceremonial usages was presented in encyclopaedic compass and detail.[16] From this resource, fragments of diverse 'traditions' were assembled, modified and recombined in such a manner as to achieve a

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[14] Anon., *Volkommenes Diarium des gantzen Verlauffs, was von dem 23 Decembr. Anno 1700, bis auff den 31 Januarii 1701 vorgegangen, wie auch das zur Krönung verfertigtes Feuerwerck, so den 26. Januarii Anno 1701 . . . in Königsberg angezündet worden* (Königsberg?, 1701), p. 8.

[15] Joachim Ott, *Krone und Krönung. Die Verheißung und Verleihung von Kronen in der Kunst von der Spätantike bis um 1200 und die geistige Auslegung der Krone* (Mainz, 1998), pp. 120, 212.

[16] See Milos Vec, *Zeremonialwissenschaft im Fürstenstaat. Studien zur juristischen und politischen Theorie absolutistischer Herrschaftsrepräsentation* (Frankfurt/Main, 1998); Jörg Jochen Berns, 'Der nackte Monarch und die nackte Wahrheit. Auskünfte der deutschen Zeitungs- und Zeremoniellschriften des späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhunderts zum Verhältnis von Hof und Öffentlichkeit', *Daphnis* 11 (1982), pp. 315–45; Berns, 'Die Festkultur der deutschen Höfe zwischen 1580 und 1730. Eine Problemskizze in typologischer Absicht', *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift* 65 (1984), pp. 295–311.

highly focused array of effects. This was not the deeply anchored 'cultural system' that Geertz discerned in the rituals of the Javanese theatre-state. The coronation of 1701 did not grow out of or cohere into a homogeneous cultural fabric, nor did it express the collective unconscious of an ethnic or political community. It was a highly instrumental act, designed and executed by the late seventeenth-century's equivalent of a modern event-management agency. It was, to borrow Ernst Cassirer's characterisation of twentieth-century myth, 'an artificial thing fabricated by very skilful and cunning artisans'.[17]

Interestingly enough, the makers of the coronation were proud to acknowledge this aspect of the spectacle. It has often been observed that coronation rituals falsely assert their continuity with an ancient past in order to adorn themselves with an authority that transcends time. The illusion is created that it is the rituals that are speaking through the actors, not the other way around. But the designers of the Prussian coronation adopted an openly instrumental approach to their task. It was essential, the Prussian envoy in Warsaw wrote in June 1700, that a bishop be engaged to oversee the ecclesiastical part of the proceedings and that these include an anointment of some kind, since omitting these features might jeopardise the Elector's future claim to the coveted title *Sacra Regia Majestas*.[18] The use of a bishop along the lines seen in the recent Swedish coronation, another advisor suggested, 'will give a great effect' (*donnera un grand lustre*).[19] Publicists and councillors alike were quick to point out that the function of the anointment was purely symbolic. This was not a sacrament, but merely an edifying spectacle designed to elevate the spirits of those present.[20]

The publicity surrounding the Prussian coronation of 1701 stressed precisely the newness and artificiality of the royal foundation. To be sure, there was some talk in the summer of 1700 of the 'discovery' in the works of the sixteenth-century geographer Abraham Ortelius, that Prussia (meaning the Baltic principality of Prussia) had been a 'kingdom' in ancient times, but no one seems to have taken this seriously.[21] Even

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[17] Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth and the State* (New Haven, 1950), pp. 281–2.
[18] Werner, Brandenburg Resident in Warsaw, Report of 10 June 1700, in Max Lehmann, *Preussen und die katholische Kirche seit 1640* (9 vols., Leipzig, 1878–1902), vol. I, p. 465.
[19] Father Vota to the Elector of Brandenburg, in ibid., p. 468.
[20] Johann von Besser, *Preußische Krönungsgeschichte oder Verlauf der Ceremonien auf welchen Der Allerdurchlauchtigste Großmächtigste Fürst und Herr Friderich der Dritte – die königliche Würde des von Ihm gestifteten Königreichs preußen angenommen und sich und seine Gemahlin . . . durch die Salbung als König und Königin einweihen lassen* (Cölln/Spree, 1702), p. 19.
[21] The discovery was said to have been made by Werner, the Prussian representative in Warsaw, see Father Vota to the Elector of Brandenburg, Warsaw, 15 May 1700, in Lehmann, *Preussen und die katholische Kirche*, vol. I, p. 463.

Johann von Besser's effusive coronation chronicle stated only that this was 'a belief held by some'. Instead of submerging the new king in an imagined continuity, the publicists celebrated him as a self-made monarch. There was no talk of blood or ancient title. The remarkable thing about the new king, Besser observed in a foreword addressed to Frederick I, was that 'Your Majesty came to His Throne entirely through His own agency and in His own land.' It was a matter of pride that the Prussian monarch had acquired his throne 'neither by inheritance nor by succession, nor through elevation, but rather in an entirely new way, through his own virtue and establishment'.[22] We find the same theme in more private contexts: in a memorandum of 1704 retrospectively assessing the acquisition of the royal title, the trusted councillor Heinrich Rüdiger von Ilgen, whose attitude to the project had initially been ambivalent, praised the king for the 'industry', 'care' and 'zeal' he had shown in pursuing his goal, despite the scepticism of his councillors and the resistance he had encountered abroad.[23]

The publicists found a model for this self-made monarchy in the kingly foundations of the Hebrew Bible. The coronation liturgy included a sermon on a text from the Book of Samuel, the prophet and anointer of kings, and the prayer of anointment stated expressly that the Prussian king received this sign as the 'divine mark', by which God had shown the kings of His people that it was He who had established them.[24] An analogous argument resonated in the essays of the Halle jurist Johann Peter von Ludewig, a zealous advocate of the new crown, who observed that 'the supreme power of sovereigns comes from God: and the right to the royal throne falls . . . to those princes who submit themselves to the laws of the Lord of heaven and earth. These are the words of the spirit of truth: that God establishes kings.'[25] The crown, in other words, was legitimated in terms of a Prussian variation on the divine right of kings.

It would be mistaken to see these declarations as inaugurating a new approach to government in Brandenburg-Prussia founded upon a principled commitment to absolutism. This emphasis on the unmediated, divinely instituted character of the new monarchy was a tactical device focused on the international environment. It was essential to the

[22] Johann von Besser, *Preußische Krönungsgeschichte*, pp. 3, 6.
[23] Memorandum by Ilgen to Frederick I, 1704 in Lehmann, *Preussen und die katholische Kirche*, vol. I, pp. 548–59, here pp. 548–9.
[24] Anon., *Volkommenes Diarium*, p. 3.
[25] Johann Peter von Ludewig, 'Cron-würdiger Preußischer Adler', in Cassander Thücelius, *Des Heiligen Römischen Reichs Staats Acta* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1715), pp. 753–4, cited in Liermann, 'Sakralrecht', p. 366.

prospective monarch and his councillors that the new foundation be viewed as an entirely independent political entity. To be sure, the Prussian envoys entrusted with pressing the monarch's case in Vienna did initially propose that the emperor might be persuaded to 'create' the new Prussian crown, thereby reviving the ancient king-founding power of the imperial office, whose reputation as the pre-eminent crown of Christendom was in steep decline by the end of the seventeenth century. It seems, moreover, that this argument may have played an important role in overcoming the emperor's early objections to the new foundation.[26] But it is clear that the Elector never in fact intended to accept a crown from the hands of the emperor. Were he to do so, he observed in a marginal comment of 1699, he would be a mere 'vassal-king' (*Lehenskönig*) who would be 'caught up in the affairs of the entire [Holy Roman Empire]'.[27]

Hence the importance of the fact that the crown was to be founded in Prussia, which lay outside the empire, rather than in the Brandenburg heartland of the Hohenzollern state. 'Everyone knows', the British envoy George Stepney had reported to James Vernon, Secretary of State for the northern department in 1698, 'the value this Elector sets upon . . . the absolute soveraignety wherewith he possesses the Ducal Prussia, for in that respect he exceeds in Power all other Electors and Princes of the Empire, who are not so independent but derive their grandeur by investiture from the Emperor, for which reasons, the Elector affects to be distinguished by some more extraordinary title than what is common to the rest of his colleagues.'[28] In their representations to the court in Vienna, Brandenburg's envoys thus pursued a double track: the possibility of an imperial 'creation' was dangled before the emperor, but at the same time it was made clear that the Elector laid claim to the right to elevate himself to kingly status by virtue of his sovereign title in Ducal Prussia.

Emperor Leopold was initially hostile to the idea of an elevation and he would almost certainly have refused to collaborate, had it not been for the pressures generated by Austria's deepening involvement in the conflict over the Spanish succession. In 1701, as so often before, Berlin owed its good fortune to international developments. The epochal struggle between Habsburg and Bourbon was about to enter a new and bloody phase, as a coalition of European powers gathered to oppose French designs to place a grandson of Louis XIV on the vacant Spanish throne. Anticipating a major conflagration, the emperor saw that he would have

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[26] Alfred Francis Pribram, *Oesterreich und Brandenburg 1688–1700* (Prague and Leipzig, 1885), pp. 156–7.

[27] Ibid., p. 137.

[28] Stepney to James Vernon, 19/29 July 1698, National Archives [NA] SP 90/1, fo. 32.

to make concessions in order to win Frederick's support. Wooed with attractive offers from both sides, the Elector decided to align himself with the emperor in return for the 'Crown treaty' (*Krontraktat*) of 16 November 1700. Under this agreement, Brandenburg-Prussia undertook to supply a contingent of 8,000 men to the emperor and made various more general assurances of support for the House of Habsburg. The Viennese court agreed, for its part, not only to recognise the foundation of the new title, but also to work towards its general acceptance, both within the Holy Roman Empire and among the European powers.[29]

Even after the emperor had agreed in principle, however, care had to be taken to ensure that the wording of any agreement would make it clear that the emperor was not 'creating' (*creieren*) the new royal title, but merely 'acknowledging' (*agnoszieren*) it. A much-disputed passage of the final agreement between Berlin and Vienna paid lip service to the special primacy of the emperor as the senior monarch of Christendom, and added that the Elector would not have taken the step of 'arrogating' or proclaiming the royal title without first securing the 'approval' of the emperor. But the treaty also made it clear that the Prussian crown was an entirely independent foundation, for which the emperor's approval was a courtesy rather than an obligation.[30]

Equally important was the independence of the new crown from any Polish claims. Only in the reign of Frederick's father had Ducal Prussia been detached – under the stipulations of the Treaty of Wehlau (19 September 1657) – from the suzerainty of the Polish commonwealth. There was vociferous opposition to the crown in some parts of the Polish political elite. Many in Warsaw feared that the title would encourage the new king to go further and declare himself master not only of Ducal Prussia, but also of its 'Royal' Prussian neighbour, still subject to the authority of the Polish crown.[31] The very name of Prussia, according to the Italian-born Jesuit Father Charles Maurice Vota, who offered his services as an advocate of the Elector's elevation, inspired many Poles with lively horror; only when these 'chimerical apprehensions' were 'exorcised' would it be possible to secure the commonwealth's acquiescence.[32] It was for this very reason that the Elector and his advisors played with a range of alternative titles; *Rex Borussiae Septentrionalis* (King of North Prussia) was one; another was the bizarre *Rex Vandalorum* (King of the Vandals),

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[29] For the text of the so-called 'Krontraktat' of 16 November 1700, see Theodor von Moerner, *Kurbrandenburgs Staatsverträge von 1601 bis 1700* (Berlin, 1867), pp. 810–23.

[30] Ibid., p. 814.

[31] On Polish concerns, see Father Vota to the Elector of Brandenburg, Warsaw, 27 April 1700, in Lehmann, *Preussen und die katholische Kirche*, vol. I, p. 460.

[32] Father Vota to the Elector, Warsaw, 8 May 1700, in ibid., pp. 459–63, here p. 462.

which would surely have done little to allay the anxieties of Brandenburg's neighbours. One of the reasons for adopting the title *Rex in Borussia* or 'King in Prussia' was that it disarmed Polish suspicions by underscoring the territorial limits of the new kingdom, while at the same time freeing the new crown from any Polish claims pertaining to Ducal Prussia's royal counterpart.

The establishment of the royal title brought a massive expansion of the courtly establishment and a great unfurling of elaborate ceremonial, much of it with an overtly historical and commemorative dimension. There were splendid festivities to mark the anniversary of the coronation, the birthday of the queen, the birthday of the king, the conferral of the Order of the Black Eagle (an honour invented to mark the coronation itself), the unveiling of a statue of the Great Elector. For the foreign envoys posted in Berlin, this quantum leap in courtly splendour meant that life became much more expensive – a consequence of the coronation that is universally overlooked. In a report filed in the summer of 1703, the British envoy extraordinary (later ambassador) Lord Raby noted that 'my equipage, which in London was thought very fine, is nothing to those that are here'.[33] The British despatches of this period are filled with complaints at the inordinate expense involved in maintaining appearances at what had suddenly become one of Europe's most formal courtly venues. Apartments had to be refurnished, servants, carriages and horses kitted out to a more exacting and costly standard. 'I find I shall be no gainer by my embassy,' Raby dolefully commented in one of many veiled pleas for a more generous allowance.

Perhaps the most dramatic expression of the new taste for elaborate ceremonial was the regime of mourning that followed the death of the king's second wife, Sophie Charlotte of Hanover, in February 1705.[34] The queen had been visiting her relatives in Hanover at the time of her death; a senior court official was ordered to take two battalions of Brandenburg troops to Hanover and bear the corpse back to Berlin, where it was to lie exposed on a bed of state for six months. Strictest orders were given that the 'deepest mourning that is possible' should be observed throughout the king's dominions.[35] All who came to court were ordered to cover themselves in long black cloaks, and all apartments, coaches and equipages, including those of the foreign envoys, were to be 'put into

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[33] Lord Raby to Charles Hedges, Berlin, 30 June 1703, PRO SP 90/2, fo. 21.
[34] For a detailed analysis of the mourning rituals observed after the death of the queen, see Uwe Steiner, 'Triumphale Trauer. Die Trauerfeierlichkeiten aus Anlaß des Todes der ersten preußischen Königin in Berlin im Jahre 1705', *Forschungen zur brandenburgischen und preußischen Geschichte* 11 (2001), pp. 23–53.
[35] Raby to Harley, 3 February 1705, PRO SP 90/3, fo. 183.

deep mourning'.[36] Here again, it is worth citing Lord Raby in a report to Secretary of State Robert Harley:

The court was in deeper mourning that ever I saw in my life [Lord Raby reported], for the women all had black head clothes and Black veils that cover'd them al over, so no face was to be seen. The men all in long black cloakes and the rooms all hung with cloath the top as well as the bottom, and but four candles in each room, so that one could hardly distinguish the king from the rest but by the height of his cloake, which was held up by a gentleman of the bedchamber.[37]

III

Was the Prussian royal title, with all the pomp and circumstance that attended it, worth the money and effort spent acquiring and living up to it? The most famous answer to this question was a scathing negative. For Frederick's grandson, Frederick II, the entire exercise amounted to little more than an indulgence of the Elector's vanity, as he explained in a remarkably spiteful portrait of the first Prussian king.

He was small and misshapen, his expression was proud, his physiognomy vulgar. His soul was like a mirror that throws back every object . . . He mistook vanities for true greatness. He was more concerned with appearances than with useful things that are soundly made . . . He only desired the crown so hotly because he needed a superficial pretext to justify his weakness for ceremony and his wasteful extravagance . . . All in all: he was great in small things and small in great things. And it was his misfortune to find a place in history between a father and a son whose superior talents cast him in shadow.[38]

It is certainly true that the first Prussian king took great pleasure in magnificent festivities and elaborately choreographed ceremonies. Already as a child he had taken inordinate pleasure in clothes, hats, gloves and daggers. He had so many jewels, he boasted to a relative, that he had no idea what to do with them all.[39] When the French ambassador commented admiringly on his jewellery and added that there was surely no other potentate in Europe – with the exception of the King of France – who could deck himself in such finery, Frederick replied with

[36] Raby to Harley, 7 February 1705, PRO SP 90/3, fo. 190.
[37] Raby to Harley, 10 February 1705, PRO SP 90/3, fo. 195.
[38] Frederick II, 'Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la maison de Brandebourg', in J. D. E. Preuss (ed.), *Oeuvres de Frédéric II, roi de Prusse* (33 vols., Berlin, 1846–57), vol. I, pp. 1–202, here pp. 122–3.
[39] Frederick I to Electress Sophie of Hanover, Charlottenburg, 6 September 1712, in Ernst Berner (ed.), *Aus dem Briefwechsel König Friedrichs I. von Preussen und seiner Familie* (Berlin, 1901), p. 287; for other examples of the king's preoccupation with jewels and other outward signs of status, see pp. 35, 71.

the disarming ingenuousness of the nouveau riche that the jewels on the coat he was wearing had been valued at over one million talers. It may well be, as Walther Koch observed long ago, that this love of display was driven in part by the psychological needs of a man who had survived the death of a more talented and charismatic elder brother.[40]

But the emphasis on personal foibles is misplaced. Frederick I was not the only European ruler to seek elevation to kingly status at this time – the Grand Duke of Tuscany had acquired the right to be addressed as 'Royal Highness' in 1691; the same right was acquired during the following years by the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine. More importantly from Berlin's perspective, a number of rival German dynasties were angling for a royal title during the 1690s. The Elector of Saxony converted to Catholicism in order to get himself elected King of Poland in 1697 and negotiations began at around the same time over the possible succession of the Electoral House of Hanover to the British royal throne. The Bavarians and the Palatine Wittelsbachs were likewise pursuing (ultimately futile) plans to capture a royal title, either by elevation or, in the latter case, by securing a claim to the 'royal throne of Armenia'. In other words, the coronation of 1701 was no isolated personal caprice, but part of a 'wave of regalisation' that was sweeping across the still largely non-regal territories of the Holy Roman Empire at the end of the seventeenth century.

Royal title mattered because it still entailed privileged status within the international community. Since the precedence accorded to crowned heads was also observed at the great peace treaties of the era, it was also a matter of potentially grave practical importance. In a long memorandum drawn up for the king in 1704, the Secretary of State, Rüdiger von Ilgen, drew attention to this aspect of the elevation. The king's father, Elector Frederick William, Ilgen observed, had already pressed for the right to be acknowledged on a level footing with the royal crowns in international negotiations, but without success. The consequences could be seen at the Peace of Rijswijk (1697), where a 'notable difference' was made between the royal and the 'Brandenburg-electoral' ministers. Indeed the Brandenburg-electoral ministers had to put up with the fact that the republics of Venice and the Netherlands and even the Italian princes refused to yield to them in the order of precedence, and, to make matters worse, received preferential treatment in many other matters.

The elevation in status was thus of great importance, not only for ceremonial reasons, but because of the 'real advantages' that could be

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[40] Prince Karl Emil, the family favourite, died on campaign in 1674; see Walther Koch, *Hof und Regierungsverfassung. König Friedrich I. von Preußen (1697–1710)* (Breslau, 1926), pp. 2–3.

secured through precedence. After all, Ilgen recalled, there were many 'weighty and important affairs' of Brandenburg that had received insufficient attention or could not be brought into effect, simply because disputes over precedence made it impossible to orchestrate negotiations with the right partners, to accept and pay visits or even on occasion to attend conferences and congresses. Henceforth, he concluded, it would be possible for the kings's ministers to concentrate on 'the real content of their mission' rather than wasting their time in pointless skirmishing over questions of rank.[41]

In any case, the recent growth of interest in the early modern European courts as political and cultural institutions has heightened our awareness of the functionality of courtly ritual. And here it is apposite to cite that celebrated scholar of the mechanics of cultural power T. C. W. Blanning: 'The power of states to command the obedience of their subjects at home and to assert their interests in the international arena . . . is not just a question of military might and the means to finance it. Power depends as much on perception as reality.'[42] Courtly festivities had a crucial communicative and legitimating function.[43] No royal establishment exemplified this maxim more dramatically than the court of Louis XIV, the supermonarch of seventeenth-century Europe, whose importance as a model for Frederick III/I (and many of his German colleagues) can scarcely be overestimated. Sumptuous court festivals, Louis XIV remarked to the Dauphin, pleased the subjects and gave foreigners 'an extremely useful impression of magnificence, power, wealth and grandeur'. Montesquieu, who grew up in the reign of the Sun King, observed that 'magnificence and splendour' were not just the playthings of monarchs, but 'part of their power'.[44] As the philosopher Christian Wolff observed in 1721, the 'common man', who depended upon his senses rather than his reason, was quite incapable of grasping 'what the majesty of a king is'. Yet it was possible to convey to him a sense of the power of the monarch by confronting him with 'things that catch his eye and stir his other senses'. A considerable court and court ceremonies, he concluded, were thus 'by no means superfluous or reprehensible'.[45]

[41] Memorandum, Ilgen to Frederick I, 1704, in Lehmann, *Preussen und die katholische Kirche*, vol. I, pp. 548–59, here p. 559.

[42] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002), p. 5.

[43] See Barbara Stolberg-Rilinger, 'Höfische Öffentlichkeit. Zur zeremoniellen Selbstdarstellung des brandenburgischen Hofes vor dem europäischen Publikum', *Forschungen zur brandenburgischen und preußischen Geschichte* 7 (1997), pp. 146–76.

[44] Both citations are from Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, 1997), p. 5.

[45] Christian Wolff, *Vernünfftige Gedancken von dem Gesellschafftlichen Leben der Menschen und insonderheit dem gemeinen Wesen zu Beförderung der Glückseligkeit des menschlichen*

Courts were also linked with each other through family diplomatic and cultural ties; they were not only focal points for elite social and political life within each respective territory, but also nodes in an international courtly network. The magnificent celebrations of the Prussian coronation anniversaries, for example, were observed by numerous foreign visitors, not to speak of the various relatives and envoys who could always be found at court during the season. The international resonance of such events within the European court system was further amplified by published official or semi-official accounts, in which scrupulous attention was paid to details of precedence, dress, ceremony and the splendour of the spectacle. The same applied to the elaborately ritualised observances associated with mourning. The orders issued following the death of Queen Sophie Charlotte were not primarily intended to lend expression to the private grief of the bereaved, but rather to send out signals about the weight and importance of the court where the death had occurred. These signals were directed not only to a domestic audience of subjects, but also to other courts, which were expected to mark their acknowledgement of the event by entering into various degrees of mourning. So implicit were these expectations that Frederick I was furious when he discovered that Louis XIV had decided not to put the court at Versailles into mourning on Sophie Charlotte's account – a deliberate snub designed to convey his displeasure at Berlin's policy in the War of the Spanish Succession.[46] Like the other ceremonies that punctuated life at court, mourning was part of a system of political communication. Seen in this context, the court was an instrument whose purpose was to document the rank of the prince before an international 'courtly public'.[47]

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the coronation ritual of 1701 is the fact that it did not become the foundation stone of a tradition of sacral coronations in Prussia. The crown prince, the future Frederick

Geschlechts (Frankfurt, 1721), p. 466. On the importance of display and 'reputation' for the contemporary legitimation of monarchy, see Jörg Jochen Berns, 'Der nackte Monarch und die nackte Wahrheit', in August Buck, Georg Kauffmann, Blake Lee Spahr and Conrad Wiedemann (eds.), *Europäische Hofkultur im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg, 1981), pp. 607–12; Andreas Gestrich, 'Höfisches Zeremoniell und sinnliches Volk: Die Rechtfertigung des Hofzeremoniells im 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert', in Jörg Jochen Berns and Thomas Rahn (eds.), *Zeremoniell als höfische Ästhetik in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Tübingen, 1995), pp. 57–73; Andreas Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit: Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1994).

[46] Linda and Marsha Frey, *Frederick I: The Man and His Times* (Boulder, CO, 1984), p. 225. According to the British ambassador, over 20,000 foreign visitors attended the queen's funeral in June 1705; Raby to Harley, PRO SP 90/3, fo. 333.

[47] See A. Winterling, *Der Hof der Kurfürsten von Köln 1688–1794: eine Fallstudie zur Bedeutung 'absolutistischer' Hofhaltung* (Bonn, 1986), pp. 153–5.

William I, had never been enthusiastic about the pomp and circumstance of the new court and his resistance to it stiffened as he matured into adulthood. There was a prolonged struggle over the arrangements for his betrothal to Sophie Dorothea of Braunschweig-Lüneburg in July 1706. The crown prince begged his father to dispense with any ceremony and to perform the rite in the relatively small palace chapel, but the father insisted on elaborate festivities and a celebration in Berlin Cathedral. As a concession Frederick I allowed the official festivities to be cut back from twenty-two to only eleven days. There were magnificent processions from city to city, in which the young couple were greeted by formations of artisans and arms-bearing burghers in rich livery, costly fireworks and a huge 'Thier-Hetze', in which animals of various species were goaded to tear each other to death before a vast crowd of spectators.[48] All this did nothing to disarm the crown prince's antipathy to courtly spectacle: 'I really am glad this is all over', he commented after the termination of the festivities, 'for it bores me so much.'[49]

Once he had himself acceded to the throne in 1713, Frederick William dispensed entirely with a coronation ritual of any kind, and laid an axe to the tree of his father's court establishment. Having scrutinised the financial accounts of the royal household, the new king embarked on a drastic cost-cutting campaign. Two-thirds of the servants employed at the court – including the chocolatier, a brace of castrato singers, the cellists, composers and organ-builders – were sacked without notice; the rest had to put up with salary reductions of up to 75 per cent. A substantial quantity of the jewels, gold and silver plate, fine wines, furniture and coaches accumulated during his father's reign was sold off. The lions of the royal menagerie were presented as gifts to the King of Poland. Most of the sculptors engaged during Frederick's reign promptly left Berlin when they were informed of their revised conditions of employment. A sense of panic gripped the court. In a report filed on 28 February 1713, the British envoy William Breton observed that the king was 'very busye cutting off pensions and making great retrenchments in his civill list, to the great grief of many fine gentlemen'. The queen dowager's household had been especially hard hit and 'the poore maids [had] gone home to their friends with heavy hearts'.[50] The weeks following the accession must have been

[48] Anon., *Die große Preußisch- und Lüneburgische Vermählungsfreude . . . bey . . . Vermählung . . . Fridrich Wilhelms, Cron-Printzen von Preussen, mit Sophie Dorothea aus dem Kur-Hause Braunschweig-Lüneburg . . .* (Berlin, 1707), pp. 3, 15–33, 38.
[49] Koch, *Hof und Regierungsverfassung*, p. 72.
[50] Will. Breton to Earl of Strafford, Berlin, 28 February 1713, PRO SP 90/6; Carl Hinrichs, 'Der Regierungsantritt Friedrich Wilhelms I.', in Hinrichs, *Preussen als historisches Problem*, ed. Gerhard Oestreich (Berlin, 1964), pp. 91–137, here p. 106.

particularly traumatic for Johann von Besser, who had served Frederick III/I as his master of ceremonies since 1690. As his life's work collapsed around him, he was unceremoniously struck from the state list. A letter he sent to the new king requesting consideration for another post was tossed into the fire on receipt. Besser fled Berlin and subsequently found employment as an advisor and master of ceremonies at the still sumptuous Saxon court in Dresden. Frederick II inherited his father's dislike of dynastic ostentation and did not restore the ceremony of coronation. As a consequence, Brandenburg-Prussia became a kingdom without coronations. The defining ritual of the accession remained, as in earlier times, the oath of homage in Königsberg of the Prussian Estates and in Berlin of the other Estates of the Hohenzollern dominions.

It is clear nonetheless in retrospect that the acquisition of the kingly title inaugurated a new phase in the history of the Brandenburg polity. The fact that he dispensed with much royal ritual and ceremonial apparatus did not mean that Frederick William set no store by his kingly status. On the contrary, the title was very frequently invoked by the king himself and was clearly crucial to his sense of who he was. The turn away from ritual was a revolution in styles, not a repudiation of kingship. The same can be said with even more emphasis of Frederick the Great, who styled himself from the early years of his reign 'le roi philosophe' and fashioned one of Europe's most charismatic and memorable models of kingship. In any case, it is worth noting that the rituals associated with the coronation remained dormant within the collective memory of the dynasty. The Order of the Black Eagle, for example, was resurrected in the 1840s during the reign of Frederick William IV, and the original conferral ceremonies were reconstructed from the archives and reintroduced. King William I chose upon his accession in 1861 to dispense with the homage (which many contemporaries judged to be obsolete) and instead to revive the practice of self-coronation in Königsberg. 'The rulers of Prussia', he told the assembled deputies of the *Landtag* (Prussian parliament), 'receive their crown directly from God. I will therefore tomorrow take the crown from the table of the Lord and set it on my head. That is the meaning of kingship by the grace of God, and herein lies the sacredness of the crown, which is inviolable.'[51] It was this same monarch who scheduled the proclamation of the German Empire in 1871 in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles to fall on 18 January, the anniversary of the first coronation. The cultural resonance of the coronation ritual within the life of

[51] Anon., *Die Krönung zu Königsberg am 18. October 1861* (Berlin, 1873), p. 40; Liermann, 'Sakralrecht', p. 380; on this recourse to 'tradition', see also David E. Barclay, *Frederick William IV and the Prussian Monarchy 1840–1861* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 73–4, 287–8.

the dynasty was thus more enduring than its sudden abandonment after 1713 might suggest.

The subordinate place of religion – and of religious personnel – in the coronation ritual also broadcast an important signal. Since the conversion of Johann Sigismund in 1613, the Hohenzollerns had been a Calvinist dynasty that ruled a largely Lutheran population. The tension between the agents of central authority and the holders of provincial privilege that we associate with the age of European 'absolutism' thus acquired a confessional colouring in the Hohenzollern lands. This was particularly the case in Prussia, where the Elector's mainly Calvinist councillors confronted an entrenched Lutheran cultural and political elite. In assigning his two appointed bishops – one of each confession – to parallel but subordinate roles in the coronation ceremony, Frederick expressed the claim of the new crown to impartial authority over both territorial confessions. In so doing, he broke with the policy of his predecessor, the Great Elector, who had repeatedly (but unsuccessfully) pressed the Lutheran clergy to accept a union with the Calvinists, and confirmed the emergence of the Brandenburg-Prussian monarchical state as a supra-confessional entity committed to neutrality in interconfessional relations, an idea of profound importance for the evolution of the territory's political culture.

The coronation of 1701 also signalled a subtle shift in the relationship between the monarch and his spouse. Of the seventeenth-century wives and mothers of the Brandenburg electors, several had been powerful, independent figures at court. The most outstanding individual in this respect had been Anna of Prussia, wife of Johann Sigismund, a spirited, iron-willed woman who responded to her husband's intermittent drunken rages by throwing plates and glasses at his head. Anna maintained her own diplomatic network and virtually ran a separate foreign policy. In the darkest years of the Thirty Years' War, it was the Elector Palatine's wife Elisabeth Charlotte and her mother Louise Juliane, rather than George William himself, who managed the delicate diplomatic relationship between Brandenburg and Sweden.[52] In other words: women at court continued to pursue interests informed by their own family networks and quite distinct from those of their husbands. The same can be said of Sophie Charlotte, the intelligent Hanoverian princess who married Frederick III/I in 1684, but who spent long sojourns at her mother's court

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[52] Schultze, *Mark Brandenburg*, vol. IV, *Von der Reformation bis zum Westfälischen Frieden* (1535–1648), pp. 206–7; Gotthard, 'Zwischen Luthertum und Calvinismus', p. 93; on the later marginalisation of the consort, see Thomas Biskup, 'The Hidden Queen: Elisabeth Christine of Prussia and Hohenzollern Queenship in the Eighteenth Century', in Clarissa Campbell-Orr (ed.), *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 300–32.

in Hanover (she was staying there when she died in 1705) and remained an advocate of Hanoverian policy.[53] She was an opponent of the coronation project, which she saw as damaging to Hanoverian interests. (She demonstrated her lack of enthusiasm on the day by taking demonstrative pinches of snuff during the proceedings.)[54]

Against this background, it is clear that the coronation set the relationship between the Elector and his spouse within a new framework. It was the Elector who crowned his wife, having first crowned himself, and thereby made her his queen. The element of subordination was made explicit in Besser's commentary on the coronation. 'The crowns of kings', he wrote, 'are their kingdoms; the crowns of queens, however, are their kings: who are not merely, as are all husbands, called the crowns of their spouses, but also in a real sense bestow a part of the brilliance and majesty of their title upon their spouses.' As if this were not clear enough, Besser drew a parallel with the marriage between the ancient Persian king Ahasverus who married the Jewish commoner Esther and thereby elevated her to queenship.[55]

This was, of course, a mere symbolic detail without practical consequences and since there were no further coronations in the eighteenth century, it was not re-enacted. But the ceremony nonetheless signalled the beginning of a process by which the dynastic identity of the wife would be partially merged into that of her husband, the crowned head of a royal household. The concomitant masculinisation of the monarchy, coupled with the fact that the House of Hohenzollern now enjoyed a clear pre-eminence among the Protestant German dynasties from which spouses were recruited, narrowed the freedom of movement available to the 'first ladies' of Brandenburg-Prussia. Their eighteenth-century successors were not without personal gifts and political insight, but they would not develop the kind of autonomous weight in politics that had been such a striking feature of the previous century.

There were also changes in the tone of social life at court. The courtly milieu of Frederick William I was a cheaper, rougher and much more masculine scene that its predecessor. At the centre of the monarch's social life was the 'Tabakskollegium' or 'Tobacco Ministry', a group of between eight and twelve councillors, senior officials, army officers and assorted visiting adventurers, envoys or men of letters who gathered in the evenings with the monarch for general conversation over strong drink and pipes of

[53] Frey and Frey, *Frederick I*, pp. 35–6.
[54] Carl Hinrichs, *Friedrich Wilhelm I. König in Preußen. Eine Biographie* (Hamburg, 1941), pp. 146–7; Baumgart, 'Die preußische Königskrönung', p. 82.
[55] Besser, *Preussische Krönungsgeschichte*, p. 22.

tobacco. The tone was informal, often crude and non-hierarchical. The subjects of discussion ranged from Bible passages, newspaper reports, political gossip, hunting anecdotes to more risqué matters such as the natural aromas given off by women. Participants were expected to speak their minds, and hefty arguments and even fistfights sometimes broke out; indeed, these appear on occasion to have been encouraged by the monarch himself. It was a far cry from the previous reign, when the queen sometimes sat in on this intimate circle, whose members were forbidden to speak too loudly or too softly and were discouraged from laughing.[56] Under Frederick William I, women were pushed to the margins of public life. A visitor from Saxony who resided in Berlin for several months during 1723 recalled that the great festivities of the courtly season were held 'according to the Jewish manner' with the women separated from the men, and observed with surprise that there were many dinners at court at which no women appeared at all.[57] The masculinisation that had tentatively announced itself in the ceremony of the coronation had by now transformed the social life of the court.

Finally, the new title had a psychologically integrating effect: the Baltic territory formerly known as Ducal Prussia was no longer a mere outlying possession of the Brandenburg heartland, but a constitutive element in a new royal-electoral amalgam that would first be known as Brandenburg-Prussia, later simply as Prussia. The words 'Kingdom of Prussia' were incorporated into the official denomination of every Hohenzollern province. It may have been true, as opponents of the coronation project were quick to point out, that the sovereign of Brandenburg already possessed the fullness of royal power and thus had no need to adorn himself with new titles. But to accept this view would be to overlook the fact that things are ultimately transformed by the names we give them. 'To name a thing', Leibniz sagely observed in a memorandum supporting Frederick's enterprise, 'is to complete its essence.'

IV

The coronation of 1701 did not represent the unconscious encoded expression of a collective disposition, nor was it a metaphor, 'upon which are inscribed the tacit assumptions that either legitimise a political order

[56] Koch, *Hof und Regierungsverfassung*, p. 96.
[57] Gustav Schmoller, 'Eine Schilderung Berlins aus dem Jahre 1723', *Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preußischen Geschichte* 4 (1891), pp. 213–16. The author of this account is Field Marshal Count von Flemming, who spent the months of May and June 1723 in Berlin.

or hasten its disintegration'.[58] Even that elegant paradigm of the 'invented tradition', so brilliantly launched by Hobsbawm and Ranger in 1982, fails to capture the particularity of the Prussian coronation. For the 'traditions' invoked in the ceremony were not invented, but assembled from within a common European canon. More fundamentally, the coronation and the pamphlets and literary propaganda that accompanied it made no attempt to create an illusion of tradition, but rather celebrated the novelty of the Prussian ceremony, as the fruit of stupendous effort and astute diplomacy. The complexity and semiotic density on display throughout the ceremony were not the outgrowth of cultural 'deep structures' but of a strikingly purposive and self-conscious play with surface effects.

Yet the artificiality and singularity of the ceremony should not be taken to imply that the coronation was politically or culturally insignificant, or irrelevant to the later evolution of the Brandenburg polity. The functionalism so explicitly invoked in the official publicity and among the political elite was important precisely because it distinguished the fact of Brandenburg-Prussia's 'real' status as a power among powers so clearly from the contingent cultural devices employed to solemnise it. These latter could be cast aside in an era that prized austerity and repudiated pomp, only to be selectively revived when public taste called for more expansive cultural expressions of sovereign power.

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[58] Sean Wilentz, 'Introduction. Teufelsdröckh's Dilemma: On Symbolism, Politics and History', in Wilentz (ed.), *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics since the Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania, 1985), pp. 1–10, here p. 3.

3 Military culture in the Reich, c. 1680–1806

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The subject of military culture has been neglected in recent writing on war and eighteenth-century central European society. A great deal is now known about the material conditions of German soldiers and their relationship to civilians, but this has yet to filter through to discussions of what might be considered military culture that is still presented through the paradigm of standing armies and absolutism.[1] The primary focus is on Prussia as the defining German military power. The Hohenzollern monarchy is widely regarded as the most heavily militarised of all the old regime great powers. Military power not only created the state, but shaped its economic and social development, fostering a slavish subservience to authority and veneration of martial values, according to the influential 'social militarisation' thesis of Otto Büsch.[2] The secondary focus is on the so-called 'petty particularism' (*Kleinstaaterei*) of the lesser principalities that are often perceived as debased, yet still more extreme versions of Prussia. Examples include Landgrave Ludwig IX of Hessen-Darmstadt and Duke Carl Eugen of Württemberg who dressed and drilled their 'miniature armies' in the Prussian manner. Better known are the 'Hessians' or auxiliaries from six principalities, including Hessen-Kassel, who fought for Britain against the American Revolutionaries and have long been regarded as the archetypal mercenaries of petty despots.[3] In short,

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[1] For guides to the literature, see D. Hohrath, 'Spätbarocke Kriegspraxis und aufgeklärte Kriegswissenschaften', *Aufklärung* 12 (1997), pp. 5–47; P. H. Wilson, 'War in Early Modern German History', *German History* 19 (2001), pp. 419–38; M. Hochedlinger, '"Belli gerant alii?" On the State of Early Modern Military History in Austria', *Austrian History Yearbook* 30 (1999), pp. 237–77.

[2] O. Büsch, *Militärsystem und Sozialleben im alten Preußen 1713–1807. Die Anfänge der sozialen Militärisierung der preußisch-deutschen Gesellschaft* (Berlin, 1962: English translation 1995); M. Kitchen, *A Military History of Germany from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day* (Bloomington, IN, 1975); G. A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army 1640–1945* (Oxford, 1955). See also V. G. Kiernan, 'Foreign Mercenaries and Absolute Monarchy', *Past and Present* 11 (1957), pp. 66–86.

[3] E. J. Lowell, *The Hessians and Other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War* (New York, 1884); F. C. G. Kapp, *Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika (1775 bis 1783)* (2nd edn, Berlin, 1874); H. D. Schmidt, 'The Hessian Mercenaries: The Career of a Political Cliché', *History* 43 (1958), pp. 206–12.

military culture is defined as 'militarism' and state power as despotic 'absolutism'.

These interpretations are largely retrospective, viewing the past from the perspective of later, especially twentieth-century events in what is generally a search for the origins of subsequent phenomena. The most notorious product of this approach is the *Sonderweg* thesis, or notion that German historical development somehow deviated from the 'normal' European pattern down its own special path towards world war and the Holocaust. It is no coincidence that the arguments about the social basis of Prussian absolutism and the pernicious influence of its disproportionately large army advanced by Hans Rosenberg and others that form the basis of the *Sonderweg*, reappear in the standard view of absolutist Prussia and its army.[4] The shadow of later events also hangs over other, less polemical interpretations, since everyone knows that the army of old regime Prussia faltered in its first clash with revolutionary France at Valmy in September 1792 and was then convincingly defeated by Napoleon at the twin battles of Jena and Auerstädt in 1806. With the knowledge of this demise, it has been customary to apply the standard biological metaphor to the development of Prussian absolutism and its standing army. Both were 'born' in the reign of the Great Elector, Frederick William (1640–88), and experienced their troubled adolescence under King Frederick William I (1713–40) whose harsh schooling guided their future growth. Reaching maturity during the first half of Frederick II's reign (1740–86), Prussia flexed its muscles in four wars against Austria that saw it capture Silesia and achieve great power status. Signs of approaching old age appeared in the last of these conflicts, the War of the Bavarian Succession (1778–9), before senility set in after the great king's death in 1786 so that the Prussia that Napoleon faced was but a shadow of its former self.[5]

This standard model of absolutism also underpins Jürgen Habermas's structural transformation of the public sphere that argued that monarchical control of political debate was challenged in the later eighteenth century by the growth of an alternative arena of Enlightened discourse fuelled by social and economic change. Military culture scarcely featured in Habermas's original thesis, or in subsequent discussions of it, but all the elements are there in the broader writing on armies and absolutism. Standing armies are regarded as the creations of absolute monarchs who

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[4] W. W. Hagen, 'Descent of the *Sonderweg*: Hans Rosenberg's History of Old-Regime Prussia', *Central European History* 24 (1991), pp. 24–50; H. Rosenberg, *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience 1660–1815* (Cambridge, MA, 1966).
[5] This scheme is most explicit in H. Schnitter/T. Schmidt, *Absolutismus und Heer* (Berlin, 1987).

also shaped their culture by determining their social basis and fostering specific martial values. Armies were allegedly commanded by aristocrats allied with the crown who saw their rank as compensation for the loss of political autonomy and regarded the army as a guarantee for their continued exploitation of peasant labour. The rank and file are depicted as foreign mercenaries or peasant conscripts held in the ranks by brutal discipline. This form of military organisation was subject to Enlightened critique as an alien element in society; a situation that appears corroborated by the widespread public apathy in Prussia following the French invasion and victories at Jena and Auerstädt.

Other models present broadly similar interpretations, because they also relate military culture to state power. The focus is on the officers as state agents, reducing military culture to a transition from the warrior ethos of independent knights, through the mercenary calculations of 'military enterprisers' to the professionalised officer corps of the absolutist standing armies.[6] This model appears convincing because it fits wider interpretations of cultural change under absolutism. One of these is Gerhard Oestreich's influential 'social discipline' thesis that argues that the growth of centralised states transformed human behaviour through a two-stage process. In the first phase, the state disciplined its own staff, integrating, in the case of the army, the previously autonomous mercenary commanders into its wider network of bureaucratic surveillance and control. Once the state was sure of its own servants, wider social disciplining became possible as the officers and officials enforced regulations upon soldiers and subjects.[7] Norbert Elias's civilising process is a second model that matches the customary emphasis on officers as the carriers of military culture. Elias argued that the creation of royal courts and other aspects of the early modern state shifted the emphasis from external coercion through the threat of punishment to internalised self-discipline as individuals adopted modes of behaviour best suited to achieving socially desirable goals.[8] Elias and Oestreich's models offer some useful insights,

[6] R. Wohlfeil, 'Ritter – Söldnerführer – Offizier', in J. Bärmann, ed., *Geschichtliche Landeskunde*, vol. III (Wiesbaden, 1966), pp. 45–70; F. Redlich, *The German Military Enterprizer and his Workforce* (2 vols., Wiesbaden, 1964–5). See also S. Wilson, 'For a Socio-Historical Approach to the Study of Western Military Culture', *Armed Forces and Society* 6 (1980), pp. 527–52; M. Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York, 1971), and his 'Professionalization of Military Elites', in Janowitz, *On Social Organization and Social Control* (Chicago, 1991).

[7] G. Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State* (Cambridge, 1982).

[8] N. Elias, *The Civilising Process* (Oxford, 1994), and his *Die höfische Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt/M., 1983). Further discussion and critique in W. Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 'Disziplin oder Distinktion? Zur Interpretation der Theorie des Zivilisationsprozesses von Norbert Elias', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 50 (1998), pp. 217–37; J. Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern Court* (Amsterdam, 1995).

but both suffer from substantial flaws. The most important of these for present purposes is that the emphasis on the state and aristocracy reinforces the customary paradigm of absolutism and standing armies that largely reduces military culture to an ill-defined 'militarism'.[9] Militarism is of limited utility since its usual definitions imply value judgements about the 'improper' authority of soldiers over civilians. Recent work on the public sphere has identified numerous problems with Habermas's model, making it timely to reconsider the nature of military culture and state power.[10]

Military culture is better understood as a form of institutional culture, with 'culture' defined as the values, norms and assumptions that encourage people to make certain choices in given circumstances.[11] Early modern Europe was an age of institution-building with armies as one of the most important of these, yet military culture is curiously absent from the most recent study of early modern institutional culture.[12] Institutions vary considerably, but all share five key elements shaping their culture that can also be applied to armies. They require a mission that defines their purpose and legitimises their actions and existence. They must define their relationship to the state and to other institutions. Their recruitment of members gives them a social basis and a relationship to wider society. They have an internal structure that embodies norms and assumptions that guide their members' behaviour. These can be both official rules about how the institution is supposed to function, and informal strategies and practices that may be at variance with these procedures. Finally, they require resources to survive, not simply material ones, but also knowledge and technology.

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[9] See E. Willems, *A Way of Life and Death: Three Centuries of Prussian-German Militarism* (Nashville, 1985) for an example of this pitfall. See also the influential work by G. Ritter translated as *The Sword and the Sceptre: The Problem of Militarism in Germany* (4 vols., London, 1972–3) and the discussion in V. R. Berghahn, *Militarism: The History of an International Debate 1861–1979* (Leamington Spa, 1981).

[10] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002); A. Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit. Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1994); J. V. H. Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001); M. Schaich, *Staat und Öffentlichkeit im Kurfürstentum Bayern der Spätaufklärung* (Munich, 2001); J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA, 1989).

[11] For helpful discussions of institutional culture, see J. S. Ott, *The Organizational Culture Perspective* (Chicago, 1989); A. M. Pettigrew, 'On Studying Organizational Cultures', *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (1979), pp. 570–81; D. C. Pheysey, *Organizational Cultures: Types and Transformations* (London/New York, 1993); R. H. Hall, *Organizations: Structures, Processes, and Outcomes* (4th edn, Englewood Cliffs, 1989); D. Katz/R. L. Kahn, *The Social Psychology of Organizations* (2nd edn, New York, 1978).

[12] A. Goldgar and R. I. Frost, eds., *Institutional Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2004).

State power

The importance attached to absolutism requires us to begin by clarifying the nature of state power in central Europe. Prussia is a misleading starting-point since it obscures the powerful influence of the Reich, or Holy Roman Empire. Prior to the annexation of parts of Poland after 1772, most Prussian territory lay within the Reich which still exercised formal jurisdiction over 43 per cent of its land and 55 per cent of the population in 1806. Part of the explanation why the Reich has been excluded from the standard paradigm of German state power and military culture is that it not only lacked a permanent army, but contemporaries questioned whether it was a state at all.[13] Closer examination reveals, however, that the Reich's fragmented sovereignty exercised considerable influence on both state power and military culture, and this not merely in the smaller principalities, but also in Prussia, and the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy, that other great central European colossus that stands somewhat in the Hohenzollern's historiographical shadow.

This can be seen when we examine the how central Europeans responded to the fundamental question of political legitimacy. There were of course considerable differences in how royal power was discussed across Europe. Nonetheless, it is possible to draw a broad contrast between debates in western, southern and northern Europe, and those within the Reich. Most European monarchs sought to buttress claims for unfettered royal authority by referring to divine and hereditary rights, and the rhetoric of the 'mysteries of state' that implied that the common good was best served by trusting ultimate authority in an impartial king, standing above the petty squabbles and self-interest of lesser mortals. These arguments were supplemented over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by increasing reliance on supposedly rational 'reasons of state' that were in turn transformed into 'national interests' at the turn of the nineteenth century. Though subject to its own scholarly controversy, these royalist arguments can be labelled for our purposes as 'absolutism'.

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[13] For the contemporary debate on the Reich and the issue of state power, see B. Roeck, *Reichssystem und Reichsherkommen. Die Diskussion über die Staatlichkeit des Reiches in der politischen Publizistik des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1984); H. Gross, *Empire and Sovereignty: A History of the Public Law Literature in the Holy Roman Empire 1599–1804* (Chicago, 1973). Further useful discussion in W. Brauneder, ed., *Heiliges Römischen Reich und moderne Staatlichkeit* (Frankfurt/M., 1993). For the central European understanding of monarchy see H. Dreitzel, *Absolutismus und ständische Verfassung in Deutschland* (Mainz, 1992), and his *Monarchiebegriffe in der Fürstengesellschaft* (2 vols., Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1991). For the debates on the Reich's political character, see P. H. Wilson, 'Still a Monstrosity? Some Reflections on Early Modern German Statehood', *Historical Journal* 45 (2) (2006), pp. 565–76.

Absolutism was disputed from three directions: Estates and other representative bodies claiming to act on behalf of the population; social and corporate groups like the nobility and clergy exercising less formal influence, such as through the royal court; ordinary people shaping events through protest and passive resistance.[14] This contest over the moral high ground of the 'common good' produced two conceptions of monarchy. One was the more exclusive, unfettered exercise of power by an absolute monarchy whose behaviour might be guided by laws, but was not bound by them. The other was the mixed form where the crown held the initiative, but shared the exercise of at least some sovereign rights with various formal intermediary bodies like parliaments and law courts.

These arguments were conducted in modified form within central Europe because of the complex nature of the Reich. It was accepted that the Reich was an empire, but some disputed whether it was a monarchy, rather than a federation or an aristocracy in which the emperor was simply primus inter pares. The imperial title was elective rather than hereditary, and constituted the practical expression of the medieval political ideal of a single Christendom. The Reich claimed direct descent from ancient Rome as the fourth, or last monarchy prophesied in the Book of Daniel. This imperial ideology had little impact on international relations after 1648, but had nonetheless profoundly shaped the political structure of central Europe. Monarchy meant the emperor as sovereign overlord of a host of other rulers all exercising lesser rights that had come to be known as 'territorial sovereignty' (*Landeshoheit*) through their association with specific lands within the Reich. These lesser territorial rulers were arranged in a feudal hierarchy that bound them not only to the emperor, but also collectively to the Reich as an overarching political framework. At the pinnacle were the seven electors, one of whom ruled Bohemia that constituted a distinct kingdom within the Reich. Then followed around 85 secular and ecclesiastical principalities that had been joined by 226 counts and prelates as junior partners in the sixteenth century.[15] Rule in these principalities followed monarchical lines, although around a third were governed by clerics elected by the local cathedral or abbey chapter.

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[14] M. A. R. Graves, *The Parliaments of Early Modern Europe 1400–1700* (Harlow, 2001); W. te Brake, *Shaping History: Ordinary People in European Politics, 1500–1700* (Berkeley, 1998).

[15] The counts and prelates had declined to 139 by 1792, chiefly through the promotion of some to full princely status and the inheritance and absorption of others into various electorates and principalities. For new interpretations of the Reich and its political structure see H. Neuhaus, *Das Reich in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1997); K. O. Frhr. v. Aretin, *Das alte Reich 1648–1806* (3 vols., Stuttgart, 1993–7); P. H. Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire 1495–1806* (Basingstoke, 1999), and *From Reich to Revolution: German History 1558–1806* (Basingstoke, 2004).

Alongside these were around 51 imperial free cities governed as civic republics, plus another 350 families of imperial knights grouped into 15 'cantons', or autonomous aristocratic corporations, that were excluded from most imperial institutions, but, like the cities, were nonetheless *reichsunmittelbar*, or subject to no other lord than the emperor.

The Reich's fragmented sovereignty considerably complicated the central European debate on legitimate authority and, with it, the discussion of state power and the use of force. While employing absolutist rhetoric in disputes with their own Estates (*Landstände*) within their territories, the electors and princes joined the cities in presenting themselves collectively as the imperial Estates (*Reichsstände*) charged with safeguarding the common good by preventing the emperor's abuse of authority. The latter's position was more complex still since he was simultaneously overlord of the Reich, ruler of one of its constituent territories and so also a *Reichsstand*, and, as territorial ruler (*Landesherr*) faced territorial Estates who contested his unrestrained exercise of power in his own domains. A number of medium- and long-term factors ensured that development was uneven across the Reich, so that some princes and electors had more practical power than others, while the emperor's authority and that of the collective imperial institutions varied according to region.[16]

The territorial Estates had seen their powers curtailed more severely than either the emperor or the princes by the later seventeenth century. The Estates had been firmly excluded from any say in military matters when the collective defence structure of the Reich was established at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Thirty Years' War saw their virtual exclusion from matters of territorial defence, as imperial law was revised by 1654 to oblige them to grant taxes towards the upkeep of soldiers and military installations required for common defence. The experience of prolonged warfare between 1672 and 1714 enabled most princes to convert this into the ability to determine taxation and recruitment levels without reference to their Estates.[17] However, this situation remained uneven across the Reich, particularly where the Estates secured imperial

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[16] For this with particular reference to the use of armed force, see H. Münkler, *Im Namen des Staates. Die Begründung der Staatsraison in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt/M., 1987); J. Kunisch, *Fürst – Gesellschaft – Krieg. Studien zur bellizistischen Disposition des absoluten Fürstenstaates* (Cologne, 1992); P. H. Wilson, *Absolutism in Central Europe* (London, 2000), and 'War in German Thought from the Peace of Westphalia to Napoleon', *European History Quarterly* 28 (1998), pp. 5–50.

[17] For a useful, if biased, discussion with numerous examples see J. J. Moser, *Von der Landes Hoheit in Militär Sachen* . . . (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1773). For an overview of German military development in the context of imperial politics, see W. Schulze, *Reich und Türkengefahr im späten 16. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1978); P. H. Wilson, *German Armies: War and German Politics 1648–1806* (London, 1998).

recognition for agreements with their princes, leaving open the possibility that one of the two imperial supreme courts might intervene to curb excessive princely demands, as in eighteenth-century Württemberg and Mecklenburg.

The princes were the principal beneficiaries of these developments, but their ability to exercise legitimate authority, particularly in matters of war and peace, remained partially restricted. One reason was that they lacked sufficient resources for fully independent statehood, had they even desired it. Territories such as Saxony or Bavaria that exercised considerable influence within the Reich were comparatively small in European terms. The same was true of the Hohenzollern monarchy for much of its existence prior to the later eighteenth century. Material factors grew more significant as the century progressed, as the military expansion of other European powers marginalised the German princes. At least eight electorates, bishoprics and duchies had mustered armies of 10–20,000 men apiece between the 1680s and 1720s, or roughly comparable with late seventeenth-century England, Denmark or Portugal. However, this had required an extreme effort and had only been possible thanks to the slow demographic recovery following the Thirty Years' War and increased levels of taxation. The acceleration of population growth from the 1730s eased the burden somewhat, but created other problems in its wake at a time when territorial rulers faced the legacy of indebtedness after the prolonged wars of 1672–1714. The financial problems were compounded by renewed warfare in the mid-eighteenth century, made worse by the fact that much of it was fought within the Reich, unlike the earlier conflicts that had been kept mainly to its periphery by the system of collective security. Coupled with the inflexibility of German corporate society, this forced the medium and smaller princes to disengage from European military competition after the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763.

Some statistics illustrate this point. The overall size of central European military establishments rose from 48,700 in 1650 to peak at 343,000 in the final stages of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14), or roughly equivalent to those maintained by France across the same period. Numbers declined somewhat after 1714, but rose again to over 430,000 by 1735, now considerably higher than the French military establishment. Overall numbers then stabilised at about 420,000, before climbing in the last two decades of the century to 798,700 by the eve of the French Revolutionary Wars. The proportion maintained by the medium and smaller territories had remained constant at between 40 and 50% until 1714, when it fell to 30 to 40%, declining to under 30% from the 1740s, before dropping to 13% by 1792. Meanwhile, the Habsburg army had grown from 33,000 in 1650 to 497,700 by 1792, while that of the Hohenzollerns

experienced an even more dramatic increase from 700 to 195,000 over the same period.[18]

These changes in the size and structure of German armies were simultaneously a cause and a consequence of the changing place of central European rulers within the international system. German princes already possessed significant military and alliance rights prior to the Peace of Westphalia that codified some of the more significant ones.[19] The more frequent exercise of these rights after 1648 stemmed in part from a new understanding of the princes' position as autonomous rulers rather than the emperor's local agents. However, it also derived from greater anxiety at the ambiguity of their international position in a Europe that was subdivided into increasingly more distinct sovereign states. These pressures stimulated a desire among some princes to enhance their position within the Reich by acquiring a higher place in its formal hierarchy, for instance an electoral title. More significantly, it encouraged others to seek royal titles, either based on their existing possessions, or through marriage, conquest or election elsewhere. Such ambitions propelled princes to capitalise on their strategic location, military resources and influence within imperial politics to seek foreign sponsors, not least because, as the Hohenzollerns discovered, new royal titles only acquired full legitimacy once they were recognised by other European monarchs. The ability of most princes to engage in such activities was severely restricted by their lack of substantial territories or resources, and by their geographical location that placed them in locations with little chance of expansion. The Hohenzollerns were fortunate in this respect as their territories were clustered mainly in the north-east next to Sweden and Poland, both of which were in decline by 1700 and offered scope for conquest and expansion.

The growth of Prussia and Austria as distinct central European great powers should not obscure the fact that both retained much of the Reich's political culture, especially the belief that political legitimacy rested on the adherence of those in power to recognised legal and moral norms.[20] While

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[18] Compiled from the tables in P. H. Wilson, 'Warfare in the Old Regime 1648–1789', in J. Black, ed., *European Warfare 1453–1815* (Basingstoke, 1999), p. 80, and Wilson, *Reich to Revolution*, p. 226.

[19] E. W. Böckenförde, 'Der Westfälische Friede und das Bündnisrecht der Reichsstände', *Der Staat* 8 (1969), pp. 449–78; D. Götschmann, 'Das jus armorum. Ausformung und politische Bedeutung der reichsständischen Militärhoheit bis zu ihrer definitiven Anerkennung im Westfälischen Frieden', *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte* 129 (1993), pp. 257–76.

[20] W. Schmale, 'Das Heilige Römische Reich und die Herrschaft des Rechts', in R. G. Asch and H. Duchhardt, eds., *Der Absolutismus – ein Mythos?* (Cologne, 1996), pp. 229–48; J. Engelbrecht, 'Staat, Recht und Konfession. Krieg und Frieden im Rechtsdenken des

territorial law became increasingly distinct thanks to its codification in the eighteenth century, it derived ultimately from imperial law. Princes used their status as imperial Estates to justify tax and recruitment demands from their own subjects. The Reich offered a protective framework that was appreciated by the smaller and weaker principalities, particularly as these were overshadowed by the disproportionate growth of Austria and Prussia. Though not averse to seizing specific advantages for their own dynasty, most princes wanted to preserve the basic imperial framework as essential to their own status and autonomy in an uncertain international environment.

These concerns sustained both the emperor's own authority and the wider collective imperial framework into the eighteenth century. The emperor remained formal overlord over the entire Reich after 1648, but was obliged to exercise some important sovereign rights in conjunction with the imperial Estates through common institutions, notably the imperial diet, or *Reichstag*, that remained in permanent session after 1663. This collective exercise of state power was expressed as the formula of *Kaiser und Reich* and covered key legislative, judicial, diplomatic and military functions. However, the imperial title was in practice monopolised by the Habsburgs between 1438 and 1806, and so was associated with the dynasty with the most territory and largest army of all central European rulers. Possession of the title was far from automatic. The Habsburgs had to negotiate with the electors to ensure each succession and there remained the possibility that these might choose another German prince or even foreign ruler instead. The experience of two prolonged inter-regna, 1657–8 and 1740–2, together with the election of the Bavarian Wittelsbach as Emperor Charles VII (1742–5), underlined the fact that Habsburg supremacy could not be taken for granted. Consequently, the trend towards the merger of Habsburg and imperial institutions that had still been perceptible in the early seventeenth century was reversed from the 1640s as the dynasty sought to insulate their own possessions against any potential loss of the imperial title. This trend became pronounced with the death of the last male Habsburg in 1740 and the subsequent War of the Austrian Succession. Though the Habsburgs recovered the imperial title for Maria Theresa's husband, Francis Stephen, in 1745, they failed to persuade the rest of the German princes to back their defence of their dynastic possessions against a hostile European coalition. The

Reiches', in H. Lademacher and S. Groenveld, eds., *Krieg und Kultur* (Münster, 1998), pp. 113–28; P. H. Wilson, 'War, Political Culture and Central European State Formation from the Late Middle Ages to the Early Nineteenth Century', in N. Garnham and K. Jeffery, eds., *Culture, Place and Identity* (Dublin, 2005), pp. 112–37.

Monarchy's internal reform programme that was fully underway by 1748 was intended to ensure there would not be a repeat of the earlier crisis by making the Habsburg's dynastic empire fully self-sufficient from the Reich.[21]

These developments ensured that state power remained fragmented and multiple in central Europe, where a variety of different authorities claimed individually, or collectively, to exercise the legitimate use of armed force in the eighteenth century. The most senior of these was formally the emperor who retained the ability to act unilaterally despite the imposition of constitutional constraints. The emperor had been obliged not to embark on a war or conclude a foreign alliance without the Reichstag's knowledge and agreement since 1495.[22] These restrictions were related to the juridification of conflicts within the Reich through the mechanism of the Public Peace that required all disputes between imperial Estates and between them and their subjects to be submitted to arbitration through the imperial supreme courts. An elaborate institutional and legal framework was developed between 1495 and 1570 to both constrain war-making and encourage peaceful conflict resolution. As supreme judge and war lord, the emperor stood partially above this framework. Moreover, the Public Peace legislation permitted the use of force in self-defence, while the rules were intended to regulate behaviour between Christians, leaving the emperor considerable scope in his dealings with the Ottoman Turks. The decision of Emperor Leopold I (1658–1705) to seek the Reichstag's approval for formal declarations of war against France in 1689 and 1702 had little to do with further constitutional constraints imposed at the Peace of Westphalia. He had begun defensive military operations already in the first case, while in the second his army had launched an offensive in Italy prior to the formal declaration of war. The Reichstag's participation simply lent greater legitimacy to operations that were already underway.[23]

Formal involvement of the Reichstag invoked the formula of *Kaiser und Reich* and imposed certain constraints on imperial operations. However, in practice the emperor could circumvent these as the Reich lacked its own permanent army and relied on soldiers from the territories during

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[21] For accessible, modern overviews see M. Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence 1683–1797* (London, 2003); T. Winkelbauer, *Ständefreiheit und Fürstenmacht. Länder und Untertanen des Hauses Habsburg im konfessionellen Zeitalter* (2 vols., Vienna, 2003).

[22] J. J. Schmauss and H. C. Senckenberg, eds., *Neue und vollständige Sammlung der Reichsabschiede* (4 vols., Frankfurt/M., 1747), II: 12; J. C. Lünig, *Corpus juris militaris* (2 vols., Frankfurt, 1723), I: 381–7.

[23] C. Kampmann, 'Reichstag und Reichskriegserklärung im Zeitalter Ludwigs XIV', *Historische Jahrbuch* 113 (1993), pp. 41–59.

emergencies. The Habsburg monarchy always provided the largest contingent and its generals dominated the imperial general staff.[24] Nonetheless, the distinction between *reichisch* and *kaiserlich* only sharpened once the Habsburgs temporarily lost the imperial title in 1740, and Austrian and even Prussian (until 1795) troops continued to act as *Reichstruppen* into the French Revolutionary Wars.

The collective exercise of military power was further sustained by the regional level inserted into imperial politics by the network of *Kreise*, or imperial circles, interposed between superior imperial institutions like the Reichstag and the mass of individual territories. Established between 1500 and 1512, this structure grouped the territories into ten regions, each formally with its own convenors and assembly. The Habsburgs ensured that their lands formed two of these *Kreise*; something that both enhanced the autonomy of their dynastic empire, yet permitted participation at this level of imperial politics when it suited them. The two north-eastern *Kreise* largely ceased to function thanks to the rise of Prussia that made little use of these institutions after the 1730s. The other six functioned more or less effectively until the end of the Reich and provided a forum for the smaller territories to take defensive measures, fulfil their imperial obligations and act collectively in European politics.[25]

The territories constituted the other dimension of central European state power, but, as we have seen, varied widely in their capacity and the degree of their dependency on the Reich. All were entitled under imperial law to maintain troops and exercise other aspects associated with military authority (*Militärhoheit*) such as recruitment and disciplinary functions. Territorial forces could be used to advance dynastic objectives through participation in European conflicts. This was becoming the exclusive preserve of Austria and Prussia by the later eighteenth century, though the possession of modest forces ensured that medium territories like Bavaria, Hessen-Darmstadt, Baden and Württemberg remained attractive alliance partners to revolutionary and Napoleonic France and enabled them to make the transition from constituent parts of the Reich to sovereign members of the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806.[26] Defence remained the prime legitimate use of armed force and was generally associated with the

[24] H. Neuhaus, 'Das Problem der militärischen Exekutive in der Spätphase des alten Reiches', in J. Kunisch and B. Stollberg-Rilinger, eds., *Staatsverfassung und Heeresverfassung* (Berlin, 1986), pp. 297–346.

[25] W. Dotzauer, *Die deutschen Reichskreise (1383–1806)* (Stuttgart, 1998); H. Neuhaus, 'Reichskreise und Reichskriege in der Frühen Neuzeit', in W. Wüst, ed., *Reichskreis und Territorium. Die Herrschaft über die Herrschaft?* (Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 71–88.

[26] R. Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe: The War of the Third Coalition* (Westport, 2005).

fulfilment of obligations to imperial collective security and the maintenance of the Public Peace. Possession of even a few troops represented a visible demonstration of political autonomy that set the imperial Estates apart from the thousands of lesser aristocrats and towns. For this reason, the medium and minor princes refrained from completely disbanding their forces in the later eighteenth century, even though they had dropped out of an active role in European affairs. Finally, troops were useful for peacekeeping and maintaining law and order within territories, though the ability of rulers to use force to coerce their subjects remained restricted by imperial law and could, in extreme cases, still result in their deposition by the imperial courts. A good example is the Hanoverian and Brunswick invasion of Mecklenburg in 1719 to enforce a court verdict against Duke Carl Leopold who had used his own troops to silence opposition from his nobility.[27]

Military culture

The nature of central European state power ensured that defence constituted the primary military mission. All European rulers were concerned that their military actions appeared legitimate, particularly to their peers who, in this aspect, constituted the chief court of public opinion.[28] The supra-territorial imperial legal framework formalised this public sphere within the Reich, by providing a form of international law, as well as fora like the Reichstag and imperial courts to judge rulers' actions. Legitimacy was also a concern of ordinary soldiers since the completion of their institutional mission entailed breaking core social taboos against killing: soldiers risked becoming outcasts by crossing the moral and theological norms guiding the behaviour of settled society.[29]

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[27] M. Hughes, *Law and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Woodbridge, 1988); P. Wick, *Versuche zur Errichtung des Absolutismus im Mecklenburg in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1964). Other examples in W. Trossbach, 'Fürstenabsetzung im 18. Jahrhundert', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 13 (1986), pp. 425–54.

[28] K. Repgen, 'Kriegslegitimationen in Alteuropa. Entwurf einer historischen Typologie', *Historische Zeitschrift* 241 (1985), pp. 27–49; Gestreich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit*, pp. 78–90.

[29] On the values and norms of German society, including inhibitions against violence, see K. H. Wegert, 'Contention with Civility: The State and Social Control in the German Southwest, 1760–1850', *Historical Journal* 34 (1991), pp. 349–69 esp. pp. 366–7; P. Münch, 'Grundwerte in der frühneuzeitlichen Ständegesellschaft?', in W. Schulze, ed., *Ständische Gesellschaft und soziale Mobilität* (Munich, 1988), pp. 53–72; H. C. Rublack, 'Political and Social Norms in Urban Communities in the Holy Roman Empire', in K. v. Greyerz, ed., *Religion, Politics and Social Protest* (London, 1984), pp. 24–60; W. Schulze, 'Vom Gemeinnutz zum Eigennutz. Über den Normenwandel in der ständischen Gesellschaft der Frühen Neuzeit', *Historische Zeitschrift* 243 (1986), pp. 591–626.

The survival and development of the institution forms a secondary element in its mission that can in practice supplant the formal, primary mission. For an army to act in this manner, it needs to have a sufficient level of institutional development and cohesion so that it follows a common goal, rather than a disparate set of individual and group interests. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the princes and imperial institutions struggle to assert control over mercenaries and militiamen. Changes in warfare associated with the 'military revolution' placed a premium on drill and cohesion, since the new weapons and tactics were only effective when used en masse by large, well-trained and disciplined formations. While the authorities appreciated the advantages of cohesion, they also feared it, since it reinforced soldiers' corporate autonomy and identity. The practical and emotional bonds forged by serving together induced soldiers to identify with their comrades and their unit, rather than their, often unreliable, paymaster. The same cohesion that made them superior to feudal levies in battle, also enabled them to bargain more effectively with the authorities, for instance by refusing to disband until their pay arrears were met. Even when units were formally discharged, soldiers frequently stayed together, living by extortion until they were hired again. The princes reacted by using the framework of the Public Peace to assert control over the masterless soldiery. They agreed common disciplinary codes through the Reichstag, notably in 1570 and 1642, that included punishments for marauders and deserters.[30] These were integrated in other imperial and territorial legislation that attempted to restrict movement through a system of check-points and passes. The measures were revised and extended after 1648 to target bandits, marauders and the general itinerant population that in any case always included a significant proportion of deserters and former soldiers.[31] Like all disciplinary measures, these were only partially successful, contradictory and often counter-productive. Itinerants and others considered 'expendable' (*entbehrlich*) were often pressed into the ranks, particularly in wartime or

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[30] R. Baumann, *Landsknechte* (Munich, 1994); P. Burschel, *Söldner im Nordwestdeutschland der 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1994). Numerous regulations are printed in E. Frauenholz, ed., *Entwicklungsgeschichte des deutschen Heerwesens* (4 vols., Munich, 1936–40). J. G. Kulpis, ed., *Eines hochlöbl. Schwabisch. Creyßes alte und neue Kriegs Verordnungen und Reglements* (Stuttgart, 1737); J. F. Schultze, ed., *Compendium additionale über die churfürstlich brandenburgischen Kriegsartikel* (Berlin, 1686); Lünig, ed., *Corpus juris militaris*. Other south-west German examples can be found in the Hauptsstaatarchiv Stuttgart, A5: Bü.67; A211: Bü.484; C14: Bü.122, 123 and 123a; Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, manuscripts section, cod.milit. qt.28.

[31] U. Danker, *Räuberbanden im alten Reich um 1700* (Frankfurt/M., 1988); C. Küther, *Menschen auf der Straße* (Göttingen, 1983); E. Schubert, *Arme Leute, Bettler und Gauner im Franken des 18. Jahrhunderts* (2nd edn, Neustadt an der Aisch, 1990).

when regiments were being hired as auxiliaries to foreign powers. The same men were expected to patrol the countryside and assist in the policing of gypsies, beggars and others considered a threat by the authorities.[32]

The disciplinary measures were accompanied by other strategies designed to refocus soldiers' loyalty away from the horizontal plane of comradeship and upwards towards the territorial ruler. Soldiers lost the right to elect their immediate superiors early in the sixteenth century. Colonels were deprived of the power to appoint the junior regimental officers during the seventeenth century, and gradually lost control over many aspects of the internal management of their unit in the course of the next hundred years. The hierarchy of command lengthened as more intermediate ranks were introduced, while the ratio of officers to men increased as company sizes were reduced in the later seventeenth century while expanding the number of command positions. Uniforms that had initially reinforced unit identification and loyalty during the seventeenth century were standardised across entire armies, or at least the infantry from the 1670s as, for instance, the Austrians adopted pearl-grey coats, the Prussians blue and the Hanoverians red. The common colours identified soldiers as their ruler's men, something that became still more apparent once the princes themselves began wearing military uniform from the early eighteenth century onwards.[33]

Finally, the greater permanence of forces after 1648, and especially after the 1670s, also assisted the institutionalisation of armies. Military formations persisted beyond the length of service of their personnel and, during the eighteenth century, also frequently outlived them.[34] Formal procedures and informal patterns of behaviour became established and routine. This process was assisted by the character of German society as a complex web of corporate groups, loosely structured along functional lines, each with recognised customs, rights and privileges that were anchored in law and, in many cases, separate and partially autonomous jurisdictions. Military personnel were simply one among many such groups, identifiable by distinctive clothing, customs and their own martial law.

While it was promoted by the authorities in the interests of furthering their control, the institutionalisation of armies nonetheless created

[32] S. Kroll, 'Kursächsisches Militär und ländliche Randgruppen im 18. Jahrhundert', in S. Kroll and M. Kaiser, eds., *Militär und Gesellschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Hamburg, 2002), pp. 275–95.

[33] P. Mansel, 'Monarchy, Uniform and the Rise of the *Frac*', *Past and Present* 96 (1982), pp. 103–32.

[34] For the lineages of German regiments see G. Tessin, *Die Regimenter der europäischen Staaten im alten Régime* (Osnabrück, 1986).

new opportunities for a distinct collective identity and set of interests. Individual regiments and, on rare occasions, entire armies still mutinied, particularly when they were about to be transferred to the service of another ruler. While this could still be reconciled with loyalty to their original master, as in the case of the Saxon army that deserted virtually en masse after being pressed into Prussian service in 1756, other instances were clearly directed against the authorities.[35] Some of these mutinies were motivated by the fear that soldiers would lose pay or employment if their regiments were disbanded, or because they believed they were being sent on particularly dangerous missions far from home. Service in Hungary was particularly unpopular because of the high mortality rate from malaria. Other regiments mutinied in the 1770s and 1780s when they learned they were to serve in North America, or other places from where they felt they would have little prospect of returning home. Two Ansbach-Bayreuth regiments rebelled at Ochsenfurt in March 1777 when they thought they would make the entire voyage to America in the barges they were boarding to carry them down the River Main. Perhaps the most dramatic instance of an army acting to safeguard its own institutional interests was the coup carried out by the Württemberg army in 1737. A group of senior officers, supported by over half the regiments, marched on the duchy's capital to overturn the regency government established by the late duke and replace it with a new one that explicitly guaranteed the army would not be disbanded. Like most coups, this caused severe tensions within the army as the action was opposed by some key personnel who plotted an unsuccessful counter-coup later in the year.[36]

Discussion of the army's mission has already highlighted the importance of its relationship to the state for its military culture. However, as we have seen, state power was fragmented in central Europe between territorial rulers, the emperor and imperial institutions. The system of collective security entailed the despatch of individual territorial contingents to be combined into the imperial army. The weaker territories simply sent their few soldiers who joined those of neighbouring lands to form regiments organised through the regional structure of the *Kreise*. This process was consolidated by the imperial defence reforms of 1681–2 that

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[35] H. Höhne, *Die Einstellung der sächsischen Regimenter in die preußischen Armee im Jahre 1756* (Halle, 1926); W. Handrick, 'Der bayerische Löwe im Dienste des österreichischen Adlers. Das kurfürstliche Auxiliärkorps in den Niederlanden 1746–1749', *Militärgeschichtlichen Mitteilungen* 50 (1991), pp. 25–60; P. H. Wilson, 'Violence and the Rejection of Authority in 18th-Century Germany: The Case of the Swabian Mutinies 1757', *German History* 12 (1994), pp. 1–26.

[36] E. Städtler, *Die Ansbach-Bayreuther Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg 1777–1783* (Neustadt/Aisch, 1955); P. H. Wilson, *War, State and Society in Württemberg, 1677–1793* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 184–98.

were implemented by the six southern and western *Kreise* that decided to maintain their imperial contingents permanently in peacetime once the wars against France ended in 1714. While the territories provided the infantry and cavalry, the *Kreise* employed the general staff and specialist troops directly as their own establishment paid with regular cash contributions from their member territories. The Reich also maintained a small general staff, as well as three fortresses on its western frontier. This system created three distinct, yet overlapping military structures, each with its own authority, set of regulations, martial law, organisation and pay arrangements. Many medium territories were also integrated in all three structures, since they designated sections of their territorial forces as permanent *Kreistruppen*. This entailed surrendering part of their territorial military authority (*Militärhoheit*), because pay, discipline and promotion procedures were all subject to *Kreis* rather than territorial rules.[37] The larger territories refused to integrate their forces into the *Kreis* military structure, but still sent parts of their armies to serve under *Kreis* or Reich generals in wartime and for peacekeeping operations. Even Prussia remained within this system, deploying part of its army as its imperial contingent in the war against revolutionary France in 1793–5. Involvement in this operation stimulated renewed Prussian interest in other imperial institutions, notably the Reichstag since it was here that the appointment of the Reich generals was decided.[38]

The existence of three parallel military structures slowed the institutionalisation of the different armies at territorial level. It was common for officers to hold territorial, *Kreis* and even Reich ranks simultaneously, giving them three sets of masters. Imperial regulations continued to influence *Kreis* and territorial ones, encouraging a degree of standardisation and inhibiting the evolution of distinct territorial practice. The relatively frequent transfer of officers and other personnel between armies also disseminated ideas across the Reich and ensured notions of loyalty to a wider, if vaguely defined fatherland that transcended that to a particular prince.

Nonetheless, the territory remained the foundation for all military organisation since it was at this level that troops were recruited, trained, fed, clothed and housed. The exclusion of the territorial Estates from military authority was a major step towards creating a single princely monopoly of legitimate armed force. Territorial towns and villages

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[37] Examples in P. C. Storm, *Der schwäbische Kreis als Feldherr* (Berlin, 1974); B. Sicken, *Das Wehrwesen des fränkischen Reichskreises* (Würzburg, 1967); M. Plassmann, *Krieg und Defension am Oberrhein. Die vorderen Reichskreise und Markgraf Ludwig Wilhelm von Baden (1693–1706)* (Berlin, 2000).

[38] K. Härter, *Reichstag und Revolution 1789–1806* (Göttingen, 1992).

continued to maintain their own armed watchmen into the eighteenth century, but they had already been integrated into territorial militia systems in the sixteenth century. The militia had been subject to a similar disciplining process as the regular army, and had often been partially merged with it as a conscription system, as with the 'canton system' in Prussia. With the partial exception of the Habsburgs, no central European rulers maintained substantial naval forces, leaving the army as the sole armed institution.

State regulation and disciplining helped create soldiers as a distinct 'military estate' (*Militärstand*) within German corporate society. The army's social composition only superficially corresponded to the cliché of it as an expression of class structure. While it was a vehicle for social mobility, the actual number of ordinary men rising through the ranks was relatively small. Moreover, the proportion of aristocratic officers increased during the eighteenth century. However, many of these were ennobled commoners, particularly in the Austrian army, or the sons of patent nobles (*Briefadel*) rather than the feudal landlords implied by the standard interpretation of the Prussian army.[39] Like the civil administration, territorial armies recruited their officers from groups already allied with the princely dynasty, rather than through a wholesale alliance with the local aristocracy. A significant number of officers came from outside the territory, though most were from other parts of the Reich, and relatively few corresponded to the later image of the rootless cavalier.

While soldiers wore distinctive clothing and lived under separate jurisdiction, they were far from detached from the rest of society. The development of permanent armies led to the concentration of soldiers in those towns with princely residences or fortresses. However, relatively few men lived in barracks prior to the mid-nineteenth century, and even those that did frequently had their families with them. Barracks were in any case comparatively small and in close proximity to civilian housing. The cavalry generally remained billeted in the surrounding villages where they had better access to fodder for the horses.[40] Most men were recruited locally with generally no more than 10 to 20 per cent coming from outside the territory, and these largely from neighbouring lands. The belief that half or more of the Prussian army was composed of foreigners is a

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[39] M. Hochedlinger, 'Mars Ennobled: The Ascent of the Military and the Creation of a Military Nobility in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Austria', *German History* 17 (1991), pp. 141–76; P. H. Wilson, 'Social Militarisation in Eighteenth-Century Germany', *German History* 18 (2000), pp. 1–39.

[40] R. Pröve, *Stehendes Heer und städtische Gesellschaft im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1995); H. T. Gräf, 'Militarisierung der Stadt oder Urbanisierung des Militärs?', in R. Pröve, ed., *Klio in Uniform?* (Cologne, 1997), pp. 89–108.

myth, based on the fact that regiments designated any recruit coming from outside their 'canton' as an *Ausländer*. While Prussia did recruit a higher than average number of men from outside its own lands, it also allowed a greater proportion of its personnel to marry. As in other armies, two-thirds or more of the rank and file were given extended leave outside the exercise season, while even the permanent cadre was permitted to work as craftsmen and day labourers in their garrison towns.[41] Nonetheless, military service still impacted on men's lives. Rural recruits entered an urban environment and came into contact with men from distant lands, often speaking a different dialect. This was especially true of those regiments in the Prussian and Austrian armies that were raised and recruited by minor princes seeking influence with the Hohenzollerns and Habsburgs. These units were often stationed in far-flung parts of their respective monarchies, yet sent officers back to the original territory each winter to collect additional recruits.

The diversity of state power in central Europe was not matched by a similar variety in military organisation. All territories adopted essentially the same formal structures regardless of whether they were electorates, secular or ecclesiastical principalities, or imperial cities. The standard administrative units were the regiment and company, with higher formations only being introduced during the later eighteenth century. Units might vary in size with the minor territories maintaining regiments with companies that were both fewer and smaller than those of larger powers like Prussia and Austria. Yet, all followed the same general trends, changing their name from *Fähnlein* to *Kompagnie* from the 1640s, and gradually increasing the ratio of officers to men. The tendency for institutions in the same field to adopt similar internal structures has been labelled 'institutional isomorphism'.[42] It was influenced by a similarity in mission, as well as external factors such as common developments in weaponry and military theory. The overarching structure of the Reich also exerted considerable influence through the imperial military legislation that shaped territorial regulations. Within this pattern, certain armies emerged as models for others. The example of Prussia, especially following the victories of Frederick II in the 1740s, is well known. However,

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[41] See the contributions to B. R. Kroener and R. Pröve, eds., *Krieg und Frieden. Militär und Gesellschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Paderborn, 1996), and M. Winter, *Untertanengeist durch Militärpflcht? Das preußische Kantonsystem in brandenburgischen Städten im 18. Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld, 2005); P. H. Wilson, 'The Politics of Military Recruitment in Eighteenth-Century Germany', *English Historical Review* 117 (2002), pp. 536–58.

[42] P. J. DiMaggio and W. W. Powell, 'The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields', *American Sociological Review* 48 (1983), pp. 147–60.

the Habsburg army was more important across the period as a whole. It was not only consistently the largest central European force, but it was also associated with the imperial title and through this with the imperial military legislation and practice. The Habsburgs attracted a considerable number of volunteers from other armies, keen to gain experience and the chance of entering the emperor's service. The Habsburgs also straddled the entire region giving them a variety of enemies, notably the Ottoman Turks, and so provided a valuable opportunity to learn different techniques and borrow foreign practice.

Resources constitute the fifth element of institutional culture and are necessary for an army to carry out its mission and to sustain itself. The material aspect has been comparatively well studied in the literature on territorial finance that indicates the considerable burden of the standing army and its impact on fiscal development and on state intervention in social and economic life.[43] The psychological dimension has received less attention. Soldiers' confidence in their ability to complete their mission depends in part on their perception of their equipment and logistical support. It is also related to their status and self-worth. Low and irregular pay eroded morale and social standing. Soldiers were considered a poor catch by prospective parents-in-law and the recognition that they had little chance of supporting a family encouraged official attempts to restrict their chances to marry.[44] The belief that military service only attracted the dregs of society was not restricted to the lower ranks: the cycle of relatively low pay and status deterred nobles from joining the Elector of Mainz's army, for instance, despite otherwise strong traditions of service in its court and administration.[45]

Knowledge constituted another important resource. The educational attainment of eighteenth-century officers was mixed and a number certainly conformed to the cliché of the hard-drinking, gambling spendthrifts that feature in later literature. However, the German concept of nobility included that of learning, alongside lineage and martial values.[46] Many

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[43] Useful examples include P. C. Hartmann, *Geld als Instrument europäischer Machtpolitik im Zeitalter des Merkantilismus 1715–1740* (Munich, 1978); H. Caspary, *Staat, Finanzen, Wirtschaft und Heerwesen im Hochstift Bamberg (1672–1693)* (Bamberg, 1976); A. Schröcker, 'Heer, Finanzen und Verwaltung. Kurmainz im Pfälzer Krieg 1689 bis 1697', *Archiv für hessische Geschichte* NF31 (1971), pp. 98–114.

[44] J. Nowosadtko, 'Soldatenpartnerschaften. Stehendes Heer und weibliche Bevölkerung im 18. Jahrhundert', in K. Hagermann and R. Pröve, eds., *Landsknechte, Soldatenfrauen und Nationalkrieger* (Frankfurt/M., 1998), pp. 297–321.

[45] A. Störkel, 'Das Kurmainzer Militär beim Ausbruch der französischen Revolution', *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 84/85 (1989/90), pp. 143–66.

[46] M. Kaiser, '"Ist er vom Adel? Ja. Id satis videtur". Adlige Standesqualität und militärische Leistung als Karrierefaktoren in der Epoche des Dreißigjährigen Krieges', in F. Bosbach, K. Robbins and K. Urbach, eds., *Geburt oder Leistung?* (Munich, 2003), pp. 73–90.

central European nobles embraced education as a prerequisite for state employment already in the sixteenth century, and this was encouraged during the eighteenth century as part of the professionalisation of the officer corps. Noble cadet corps had been founded from the end of the seventeenth century in Brandenburg, Saxony, Württemberg and elsewhere. These were transformed from the mid-eighteenth century from finishing schools for young noblemen into officer training schools with formal curricula and examinations. The changes were in part in response to pressure from the officers who wanted to enhance their own prospects of promotion and foster a new professional ideal.[47] These activities encouraged participation in the Enlightened public sphere of the later eighteenth century. Rather than constituting the 'civilising of the military',[48] it simply reflected the broader engagement of state officials in public debates. Officers joined civil administrators in writing essays suggesting improvements in welfare and other beneficial reforms. They participated in Freemasonry and reading societies, and wrote plays and poetry. Ordinary soldiers engaged in some of these activities as well, at least letter writing and composing songs. Such involvement in literate culture did not preclude a parallel interest in professional matters, as soldiers wrote and discussed technical treatises, military history, and scientific developments relating to ballistics and weaponry.[49]

Conclusions

The preceding indicates that the relationship between military culture and state power in central Europe cannot be reduced to the standard paradigm of militarism and absolutism. Absolutism was merely one form of state power alongside other types of territorial rule and the overarching framework of the Reich. Military culture was not simply an extension of aristocratic culture through the nobles' predominance in the officer corps. Socially, the army constituted the 'military estate' alongside other corporate groups that cannot be reduced to anachronistic class categories. Instead, military culture needs to be interpreted as a form of institutional culture. It was closely related to state power at territorial level since it was here that the permanent military establishments were developed and

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[47] K. H. Frhr. v. Brand, *Kadetten* (Munich, 1981); R. Uhland, *Geschichte der Hohen Karlsschule in Stuttgart* (Stuttgart, 1953). See also the contributions to the two special issues of the journal *Aufklärung* 11 (1996), no. 2, and 12 (1997), no. 1.

[48] D. Hohrath and R. Henning, *Die Bildung des Offiziers in der Aufkärung* (Stuttgart, 1990), p. 61.

[49] F. K. Tharau, *Die geistige Kultur des preußischen Offiziers von 1640 bis 1806* (Mainz, 1968); C. E. White, *The Enlightened Soldier: Scharnhorst and the 'Militärische Gesellschaft' in Berlin 1801–1805* (New York, 1989).

maintained from the 1680s. Territorial rulers played a significant part in formulating the army's mission, regulating its relationship to other institutions and to society, shaping its internal structure and providing the necessary resources. However, these activities also took place within the wider imperial framework that exerted considerable influence into the 1720s. By then most territories had maintained forces continuously for over forty years and had built up a sufficient body of formal regulations and informal practices that they no longer needed to borrow directly from imperial legislation. Continued membership of the Reich encouraged a considerable degree of uniformity across the different territories and slowed the growth of the individual armies as fully distinct institutions. Nonetheless, institutional cohesion was growing more pronounced by the later eighteenth century with the spread of modern professional practices, such as recognised career paths, pension entitlements and safeguards against arbitrary dismissal. Paralleled by similar developments within the civil administration, the emergence of this distinct military culture was propelling politics away from dynasticism towards the impersonal state that transcended the lives of its rulers.[50] Though accompanied by friction, this process was evolutionary rather than revolutionary, since, as the involvement of officers in the broader enlightened public sphere suggests, change was promoted largely by those associated with the state rather than its external critics.

[50] B. Wunder, *Privilegierung und Disziplinierung. Die Entstehung des Berufsbeamtentums in Bayern und Württemberg, 1780–1825* (Munich, 1978).

4 Diplomatic culture in old regime Europe

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I

Writing about international relations and diplomacy during the 'long eighteenth century' has been dominated by the language and approach of great power rivalry. Ever since Leopold von Ranke's seminal essay of 1833 on 'The Great Powers', these decades have been studied in terms of the contested rise of new states.[2] The emergence of the Pentarchy (France, Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia) and the rivalries which accompanied it, have dominated eighteenth-century international history.[3] Significantly, this period saw the appearance of the very term 'great powers' as a way of defining and identifying the states which dominated Europe both individually and collectively.[4] It witnessed a second, related change in the political lexicon, as the word 'diplomacy' came to assume its modern meaning. When in the later seventeenth century the Maurist monk Jean Mabillon wrote his great study of historical method and the science of documents, *De re diplomatica* (1681), the word 'diplomatic' retained its traditional meaning: pertaining to the study of documents or diplomas.[5] The peaceful conduct of international relations was at this period known as 'négociations'. By the closing years of the eighteenth century the word 'diplomacy' had assumed its more familiar sense, that of

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[1] I am grateful to Dr Heidrun Kugeler, who is the author of a D.Phil. at the University of Oxford on '*Le parfait ambassadeur*: Theory and Practice of Diplomacy in the Century following the Peace of Westphalia' (2006), for generous assistance; she and Dr Derek McKay also commented very helpfully on a draft of this article. In the footnotes, eighteenth-century practice over spelling and accents has been retained.

[2] An English translation of Ranke's essay can be found in *The Theory and Practice of History: Leopold von Ranke*, eds. Georg G. Iggers and Konrad von Moltke (Indianopolis and New York, 1973), pp. 65–101.

[3] As they do for their most distinguished recent historian, Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1787–1848* (Oxford, 1994).

[4] H. M. Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756–1775* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 7–10 for the semantic shift; cf. Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System, 1740–1815* (London, 2006), for an extended study of the process.

[5] David Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises and Problems in Monastic History* (London, 1963), pp. 33–62, remains a good introduction.

the peaceful and continuous management of relations between states.[6] The precise point at which the change occurred remains elusive: but by the 1790s and perhaps even the 1780s, it had taken place.[7] When, in 1802, a collection of the treaties concluded by the new French Republic during its first decade of existence was published, the word 'diplomatic' was assumed to be in common usage.[8]

The semantic shift came at the end of a period of structural changes in the management of relations between Europe's states. It underlines the extent to which the established Rankean paradigm for international relations needs to be accompanied – though not replaced – by a second, complementary approach rooted in political culture: exactly the approach championed by Tim Blanning.[9] The long eighteenth century saw the establishment across large parts of Europe of a distinctive diplomatic culture, which was novel, became cohesive and homogeneous as it spread, and imparted considerable unity to the conduct of international relations. The culture itself became a distinct 'code' or 'language', which helped to unify the world of eighteenth-century diplomacy.[10] This *langue* was both a linguistic and a cultural phenomenon.[11] It constituted a specific form of discourse employed by diplomats alone, being, in the words of J. G. A. Pocock, one of the 'languages employed by specific communities

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[6] For explicit testimony to this, see G. de R. de Flassan, *Histoire générale et raisonnée de la diplomatie française* (2nd edn, 7 vols., Paris, 1811), I.1. Flassan's definition of diplomacy (ibid., I.12–13) is strikingly modern.

[7] In English-language scholarship it is usually asserted that the writings of Edmund Burke familiarised the term to anglophone readers, with references to 'civil, diplomatique [sic] and military affairs' in 1787 (*Annual Register*) and to the French regime's 'double diplomacy' in 1796 (*Letters on a Regicide Peace*): see p. vii, n. 2 of *Abraham van Wicquefort: The Embassador [sic] and his Functions* ed. Maurice Keens-Soper (Leicester, 1997) and the *Oxford English Dictionary* sub 'diplomacy'. Burke's sources, as in so many of his writings, appear to be French: see *Encyclopédie méthodique: économie politique et diplomatique* (4 vols., Paris and Liège, 1784–8), IV.814, 837; Lucien Bély, 'L'invention de la diplomatie', in Bély, ed., *L'invention de la diplomatie: moyen âge, temps modernes* (Paris, 1998), p. 11, n. 1. But earlier instances of similar usage can certainly be given: a diplomat was in origin simply someone who held a diploma. To give only one example, the editor of Dumont spoke of 'Cérémoniel diplomatique' as early as the 1730s: see below, p. 79. The whole issue clearly needs much fuller investigation. In this essay, the word 'diplomacy' is used throughout in its modern sense.

[8] *Code diplomatique*, ed. Portiez [de l'Oise], Tribun (4 vols., Paris, 1802), e.g. p. v. Cf. L. P. comte de Ségur, *Politique de tous les cabinets de l'Europe pendant les règnes de Louis XV et de Louis XVI* (3 vols., Paris, 1802), I.3, for another use of 'la Diplomatie'.

[9] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002).

[10] Lucien Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris, 1990), p. 748.

[11] For an interesting evocation of it, see the 'Avis aux jeunes diplomates' drawn up by a leading Russian official under Alexander I (1801–25), A. S. Sturdza, in *Oeuvres posthumes, religieuses, historiques, philosophiques et littéraires d'Alexandre de Stourdza* (5 vols., Paris, 1858–61), III.431–59, passim.

in their professional discourse, as articulating their activities and the institutional practices in which they were engaged'.[12] But it was also a code rooted in ceremonial forms and gestures, which defined the membership of a distinctive community made up of diplomats, statesmen and even rulers.

The principal changes can be indicated at the outset. Diplomats from every country came to behave in similar and even identical ways; to speak the same language – French – and even to correspond with their superiors in it, rather than their own native tongues; to be drawn overwhelmingly from the same social group, the nobility and especially its higher echelons; to spend a larger proportion of their time attending the royal court of the country to which they had been sent; and to identify with fellow-diplomats with whom they shared the same lifestyle, mores and set of socio-cultural values. In this way they became a distinct 'independent society', identified as such by the French foreign office functionary Antoine Pecquet in a work first published in 1737.[13]

II

The most satisfactory starting point for any exploration of political culture is Lynn Hunt's celebrated definition: 'the values, expectations, and implicit rules that expressed and shaped collective intentions and actions'.[14] It is concerned, in other words, with identifying and analysing norms of conduct and behaviour, exploring the infrastructure of assumptions and shared beliefs which shaped actions and in this way identifying structural changes, rather than focusing on the surface events, the actions themselves, as earlier generations of historians have usually done. Such an approach is particularly suited to the study of international relations. Sources exist, above all abundant surviving correspondence and numerous treatises produced at the time, which reveal the shared assumptions and convictions of individual agents within this international society and the common mentalities which resulted, and even explain how these norms became established. In recent years historians, particularly in France and Germany, have begun to apply the methodology and

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[12] See his 'The Concept of a Language and the *métier d'historien*: Some Considerations on Practice', in Anthony Pagden, ed., *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 19–38, at p. 23.

[13] *De l'art de négocier avec les souverains* (The Hague, 1738 edn), p. 104.

[14] Quoted by Blanning, *Culture of Power*, p. 4, from Hunt's *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (London, 1986), p. 10. For a more elaborate and linguistically rooted, though broadly comparable definition, see Keith Michael Baker, 'Introduction' to Baker, ed., *The Political Culture of the Old Regime* (*The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, vol. I, Oxford, 1987), p. xii.

techniques of social and cultural history and of anthropology, such as a concern with symbols and semiotics, to diplomatic history, with important results.[15] This present essay differs from such approaches, both in its methodology and in its focus upon the diplomatic corps, though it is certainly analogous to them.

Two distinct considerations facilitate such an enquiry. The first is the enclosed nature, by this period, of the diplomatic world and the international system of which it was part. Its reciprocal, precedent-conscious and self-perpetuating nature not merely facilitated but actually demanded the adoption of the norms of conduct and the unspoken assumptions, which lie at the heart of any approach rooted in political culture. External influences, what can loosely if not altogether accurately be styled 'public opinion' and even the nascent 'public sphere', exerted greater influence, particularly after the mid-eighteenth century. This was especially so in western Europe where newspapers and journals were being published on an increasing scale and where the extent of political debate and even participation was growing. Yet before the French Revolution, and to some degree until the generation before the First World War, the extent of such external influence upon policymakers and diplomats was always slight. The world of diplomacy was sealed off from the rest of society. Throughout the old regime, ambassadors and envoys were selected from the social and political elite, and their actions were directed by other members of that elite. They interacted predominantly with their own caste, albeit of another country in most cases.

Their world was also enclosed geographically and culturally. During the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries, French-style diplomacy spread to other countries, which adopted its practices and structures. Their established diplomatic traditions and practices were overlaid and sometimes even replaced by a francophone mode of conducting relations. Both resident diplomacy and the wider states-system were interactive in nature, ensuring that this distinctive culture spread

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[15] See the historiographical surveys by Ursula Lehmkuhl, 'Diplomatiegeschichte als internationale Kulturgeschichte: theoretische Ansätze und empirische Forschung zwischen Historischer Kulturwissenschaft und soziologischen Institutionalismus', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27 (2001), pp. 394–423, and Karina Urbach, 'Diplomatic History since the Cultural Turn', *Historical Journal* 46 (2003), pp. 991–7, while for the early modern period there is now Heidrun Kugeler, Christian Sepp and Georg Wolf, eds., *Internationale Beziehungen in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ansätze und Perspektiven* (Munich, 2006), especially the introduction by H. Kugeler, pp. 9–35. Three detailed studies in this genre are Claire Gantet, *La paix de Westphalie (1648): une histoire sociale XVII–XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 2001); Christian Windler, *La diplomatie comme expérience de l'autre: consuls français au Maghreb (1700–1840)* (Geneva, 2002) and, for a later period, Johannes Paulmann, *Pomp und Politik: Monarchengegnungen zwischen Ancien Régime und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Paderborn, 2000).

rapidly, becoming prescriptive and covering much of southern and western Europe, with an extension into central Europe, by the 1720s. As countries rose in political importance – for example, the Savoyard state[16] or Brandenburg-Prussia – or emerged from obscurity – Russia – and played a larger international role, they embraced this culture, with its foundations in Louis XIV's France, to a greater or lesser extent.[17]

A corollary is that the enclosed nature of the world of diplomacy actually facilitates the study of how this culture became established and was transmitted. Though it has not always been acknowledged or, if acknowledged, faced directly, one fundamental problem is how prevailing norms were created. Where diplomatic culture is concerned, however, the process can be identified. It was spread in three overlapping ways. The first was by immersion in the court societies in which many noble diplomats grew up and lived, as diplomacy itself assumed many of the characteristics of the aristocratic-courtly and cosmopolitan culture of the period. Secondly, ambassadors and envoys studied it before setting off on their first mission and, more importantly, were immersed in it in the course of their duties, as they encountered members of the host government and other diplomats. Finally, diplomatic culture was set down, usually by diplomats or officials who brought an insider's understanding to their subject, in a series of treatises published at intervals during the long eighteenth century, and these were widely studied by ambassadors and envoys.[18]

Though such writings had appeared intermittently since the fifteenth century, the publication of Abraham van Wicquefort's influential and long-lived *L'ambassadeur et ses fonctions* in 1681 established a new standard and an expanded subject-matter.[19] It was reprinted frequently

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[16] The duchy of Savoy-Piedmont presents an obvious problem of nomenclature, since during this period it secured the royal title which it had long craved through its acquisition of first Sicily (1714–20) and then Sardinia (1720 onwards). It is referred to in this essay as 'the Savoyard state'.

[17] The only important exception was the Ottoman Empire, which did not fully do so until the second half of the nineteenth century.

[18] There is a useful introduction, extending across the entire early modern period, by Maurizio Bazzoli, 'Ragion di stato e interesse degli stati: la trattatistica sull'ambasciatore dal XV al XVIII secolo', *Nuova rivista storica* 86 (2002), pp. 283–328. Two interesting examples, both written by diplomats, are the '*Embajada española*: An Anonymous Contemporary Spanish Guide to Diplomatic Procedure in the Last Quarter of the Seventeenth Century', ed. and trans. H. J. Chaytor, in *Camden Miscellany* XIV (London, 1926), and Louis Rousseau de Chamoy, *L'idée du parfait ambassadeur*, ed. L. Delavaud (Paris, 1912), completed in 1697.

[19] 2 vols., The Hague, 1681. Four years earlier he had published *Mémoires touchant les ambassadeurs et les ministres publics* (The Hague, 1677), which was reworked to produce the more famous treatise.

during the next half-century and was to prove remarkably influential.[20] Its enduring importance reflected the significant continuities in diplomacy. These were even more apparent in the contribution of international law to eighteenth-century diplomatic theory and culture. This was evident in the continuing attention paid to Hugo Grotius, *De jure belli ac pacis* (1625) and Samuel von Pufendorf, *De jure naturae et gentium* (1672), both of which long remained central to the diplomatic canon.[21] Yet it is the innovatory nature of the eighteenth-century treatises which is more striking.

This is especially true of two works by functionaries in the French foreign office: François de Callières's celebrated *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains* of 1716 and the treatise published in 1737 by Antoine Pecquet *fils*, *Discours sur l'art de négocier*, though this may have incorporated sections from a manuscript composed by his father, Antoine Pecquet, who had also been a *premier commis* (the equivalent of an Under-Secretary) and around 1720 seems to have drafted a manual which contained a section entitled 'De l'art de négocier'.[22] The writings of Callières and Pecquet differed from their most famous predecessor. Whereas Wicquefort – as his title made clear – had focused upon the role and especially the legal privileges of an ambassador, the two Frenchmen examined the role of a diplomat and particularly the negotiations he would be called upon to transact. This reflected wider changes in the decades around 1700. Though there were many imitators and numerous paraphrases of these treatises, the two most influential were the Prussian cameralist Jacob Friedrich Freiherr von Bielfeld's *Institutions politiques* (1760), the second volume of which contains an informative though highly derivative study of mid-century diplomacy, and the German jurist and international lawyer Karl von Martens's *Manuel diplomatique*, first published in 1822 and frequently revised in the course of the nineteenth century.[23]

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[20] E.g. the comments of J. F. von Bielfeld, *Institutions politiques* (2 vols., The Hague, 1760), II.143. A copy was to be found in every single eighteenth-century French ambassador's library for which an inventory has survived: Claire Béchu-Bénazet, 'La formation d'un ambassadeur au XVIIIe siècle: Vergennes', *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 101 (1987), pp. 215–25, at p. 219.

[21] The importance of what he styled 'Droit public' was emphasised by J. de La Sarraz du Franquesnay, *Le ministre public dans les cours étrangères: ses fonctions et ses prerogatives* (Amsterdam, 1731), 'Preface' and passim. See also below, p. 64.

[22] Further research is needed to clarify the question of authorship. For basic biographical information on the father and son, see Jean-Pierre Samoyault, *Les bureaux du secrétariat d'état des affaires étrangères sous Louis XV* (Paris, 1971), pp. 301–2, and Camille Piccioni, *Les premiers commis des affaires étrangères au XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1928), pp. 179–83 and 206–12.

[23] Bielfeld was first published in two volumes at The Hague in 1760; it was republished in three volumes (Leiden, 1767–72) incorporating the 'Political Gazetteer' anticipated

The influence of these manuals was immense and proved enduring.[24] When, in 1811, the director of France's foreign office archives, the comte Alexandre d'Hauterive, produced a guide for would-be ambassadors admitted to study there as the preparation for a diplomatic career, he prescribed Wicquefort (for the information it contained), Callières and Pecquet as the essential texts for the novice.[25] At around the same time, Russia's apprentice diplomats were expected to read Callières and, when it appeared, Martens's *Manuel diplomatique*.[26] A century earlier Russia's full entry into European diplomacy under Peter the Great had been accompanied by efforts to acquire and even to study European manuals: not merely Grotius and Pufendorf, but also Wicquefort and Callières. The Petrine diplomat P. V. Postnikov undertook in 1712 to translate *L'ambassadeur et ses fonctions* into Russian and seems to have completed the task, though it remained in manuscript, while the key adviser P. P. Shafirov's library contained a copy of *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains*. The emperor himself sponsored a Russian translation of Callières, though it had not been completed by the time of Peter's death in 1725. The task was resumed only under Catherine II (1762–96) when Russia again played an enlarged international role, and a Russian version was published in 1772, based upon the revised French edition of 1757.[27]

in the first edition. Wicquefort, Callières and Pecquet were the main and acknowledged sources for his discussion of 'négociation': *Institutions politiques*, II.143. Martens (1790–1863) was the nephew of the Göttingen professor and compiler of a well-known series of handbooks of international law and diplomacy, Georg Friedrich von Martens (1756–1821). His treatise was first published in Paris in 1822 with a full title which makes clear its exemplary nature: *Manuel diplomatique, ou précis des droits et des fonctions des agens diplomatiques; suivi d'un recueil d'actes et d'offices pour servir de guide aux personnes qui se destinent à la carrière politique*. Some two-thirds of the first edition consisted of specimens of the kind of written communications a diplomat would have to send. It was frequently republished during the nineteenth century under the title: *Guide diplomatique*.

[24] See the explicit testimony of Martens, *Manuel diplomatique*, p. vi. In the libraries of almost all eighteenth-century French diplomats which can be reconstituted, five key texts can always be found: Wicquefort, Callières, Grotius, *De jure belli*, Pufendorf, *De jure naturae* and Emer de Vattel, *Le droit de gens* (1758): Claire Béchu, 'Les ambassadeurs français au XVIIIe siècle', in Bély, ed., *L'invention de la diplomatie*, pp. 338–40.

[25] 'L'éducation d'un diplomate' (No editor identified), *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 15 (1901), pp. 161–224, pp. 215, 217. This fascinating manuscript was written by d'Hauterive (1754–1830), who had begun his diplomatic career during the old regime and was a foreign office *commis*, subsequently becoming director of the archives 1807–30. He also was responsible for the Ecole Diplomatique, which provided a severely practical training largely through the study of previous diplomatic correspondence. There is an informative article by Alain Meininger, 'D'Hauterive et la formation des diplomates', ibid. (1975), pp. 25–69.

[26] Patricia K. Grimsted, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy 1801–1825* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), p. 16.

[27] V. E. Grabar, *The History of International Law in Russia 1647–1917: A Bio-Bibliographical Study*, trans. W. E. Butler (Oxford, 1990), pp. 40, 47, 51, 133–5 and passim.

The Russian translation underlined the extraordinary and continuing influence of Callières's treatise. First published in 1716, it was translated into English that same year, into German the next year and into Italian by 1726.[28] Reprinted or revised French editions appeared in 1750 (London), 1757 (Ryswick) and 1766 (Brussels), while Pecquet was reprinted in 1764 and 1769.[29] Wicquefort had earlier been translated into English in 1716.[30] Though the establishment of French as the language *par excellence* of diplomacy did something to reduce the need for translations, the *Manuel diplomatique* would be translated into Russian as late as 1828.[31] These and similar treatises were crucial in establishing a relatively uniform diplomatic culture; they also enable its distinguishing characteristics to be identified.

III

The first was the establishment of French as the principal language of diplomacy.[32] It was part of a wider linguistic and cultural change: the final if gradual eclipse of Latin during the long eighteenth century and its replacement by French as the dominant language of educated elites across Europe.[33] French became the language of the court, the salon and the academy during and immediately after Louis XIV's reign (1661–1715), when France's cultural and political prestige reached new heights, and its spread was advanced by its central place in the intellectual world of the eighteenth century. It was spoken in particular by the continent's nobles as their second language and sometimes their first. By 1783 the Berlin Academy – with pardonable exaggeration – could set as the subject for one of its periodic essay competitions: 'What has made the French language universal?'[34]

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[28] The English edition was published in London in 1716, the German in Leipzig in 1717 and the Italian at Parma in 1726: François de Callières, *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains*, ed. Alain P. Lempereur (Geneva, 2002), pp. 211–12.

[29] Ibid., p. 211; Antoine Pecquet, *Discourse on the Art of Negotiation*, trans. Aleksandra Gruzinska and Murray D. Sirkis (New York, 2004), p. xxi.

[30] *The Embassador and his Functions*, now republished with an introduction by Maurice Keens-Soper (Leicester, 1997).

[31] Grabar, *The History of International Law in Russia*, p. 291.

[32] See most recently Marc Fumaroli, *Quand l'Europe parlait français* (Paris, 2001), esp. pp. 9–22. There is still much of interest in Ferdinand Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française* (13 vols., Paris, 1966–73 edn), vols. V–VIII passim. On the much narrower question of French in diplomacy, see Alexander Ostrower, *Language, Law and Diplomacy: A Study of Linguistic Diversity in Official International Relations and International Law* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1965), pp. 267–319.

[33] Françoise Waquet, *Latin or the Empire of a Sign: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (1998; Engl. trans., London, 2001), pp. 97–9.

[34] Albert Sorel, *Europe and the French Revolution: The Political Traditions of the Old Régime* (1885; Engl. trans., London, 1969), p. 181.

Its expansion added a new element to the established linguistic cock-tail. Exactly at mid-century the indefatigable Friedrich Carl Moser drew up his great compilation on the languages of public and courtly Europe.[35] Distinguishing between 'state' and 'court', he made clear that in every capital each category would normally have two tongues, which were recognised and employed, and that increasingly French was likely to be one of these. Though it might be dominant at court and in the chan-cellery, bilingualism and sometimes even linguistic pluralism remained a feature of Europe's old order. The obvious change was that it had replaced Latin as the main international language.[36] Its expansion was crucial for Europe's new diplomatic culture, both facilitating and accelerating its spread. More importantly the frontiers of francophone Europe in effect became the limits of the new diplomatic culture.

When Jean Dumont began to publish his famous collection of treaties in 1726, he adopted French as its language, since as he said 'at present it is the most widely used across Europe'.[37] A decade later Pecquet noted rather complacently that 'our language has become in some manner that of all Europe', though he went on to urge that other languages should be learned as well, since they broke down barriers and fostered good relations by pleasing a diplomat's hosts.[38] There was also a significant gain of confidentiality when an ambassador or envoy did not have to make use of an interpreter. In some states the continuing employment of foreigners also encouraged the adoption of French, though by mid-century more and more diplomats were natives of the country they served. By the early 1780s, when Wenck was composing the preface to the second edition of his collection of Latin treaties, he sombrely testified to the eclipse of that language, writing that in all instances French versions were provided since it was the 'preponderant' language for negotiations.[39]

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[35] *Abhandlung von den Europäischen Hof- und Staatssprachen, nach deren Gebrauch im Reden und Schreiben* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1750), esp. pp. 1–40; see now Guido Braun, 'Frédéric-Charles Moser et les langues de la diplomatie européenne (1648–1750)', *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (1999, part 3), pp. 261–78, for a useful introduction.

[36] As late as 1697 Chamoy had deemed a knowledge of Latin 'absolutely necessary since it was spoken almost everywhere': *L'idée du parfait ambassadeur*, pp. 23–4.

[37] Quoted by Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française*, v. 430. The first edition of Jean Dumont's celebrated treaty collection, *Corpus universel diplomatique du droit des gens*, was published in 8 vols.: Amsterdam-The Hague, 1726–31.

[38] *De l'art de négocier avec les souverains*, pp. xxvii–xxviii. This was in itself novel. Louis XIV's ambassadors might have known some Latin, but usually learned the language of their post when they arrived, if at all: William J. Roosen, 'The True Ambassador: Occupational and Personal Characteristics of French Ambassadors under Louis XIV', *European Studies Review* 3 (1973), pp. 121–39, esp. pp. 129–30.

[39] Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française*, VIII.834.

There were of course significant exceptions, regions where the penetration of French was incomplete and sometimes very limited indeed. In the area of south-eastern and Mediterranean Europe which was still under Ottoman influence, if no longer Ottoman sway, a form of pidgin Italian was in use until the 1830s. Within the Holy Roman Empire Latin long remained important and German, rather than French, was the dominant political language and would remain so after 1815. All the states of the Reich, including Brandenburg-Prussia, normally employed German in imperial affairs. More problematical is the extent of incorporation into this French-speaking world of those peripheral geographical areas: Russia in the east, the British Isles in the west, Spain, Naples and Sicily in the south. Detailed studies are lacking, and satisfactory generalisations difficult, but in general it seems to have been less complete than in the rest of Europe.

Spain and its Italian dependencies constitute a particularly difficult case. Towards the close of the seventeenth century Spanish was apparently the only language spoken in political society in Madrid.[40] The accession of France's Bourbon dynasty at the beginning of the eighteenth century undoubtedly helped French to make inroads, and one British ambassador claimed that it was employed in some diplomatic and royal correspondence.[41] It also seems to have been spoken, if not exclusively, at court, though particularly after the accession of Charles III in 1759 Italian was also important. But the contrary example of Spain, now primarily concerned to delay decline, may suggest that it was primarily rising, ambitious states – Austria, Britain, Savoy-Piedmont, Prussia, eventually Russia – which were becoming incorporated into this francophone diplomatic world. The wider trend, however, is not in doubt.[42] In the mid-1790s Baron Auckland, a leading British diplomat and former Under-Secretary of State, declared that 'Above all it is essential [for a would-be diplomat] to have studied and practised the French language, so as to be able to converse in it without embarrassment,' though he himself had not reinforced precept with example.[43] By the middle of the eighteenth century a diplomat would have to speak French on formal and informal occasions in most countries, whether at court or elsewhere; all negotiations and, from shortly after the Peace of Utrecht, the vast majority of treaties were also in that language, as were official manifestos and diplomatic notes.

[40] '*Embajada española*', p. 7.
[41] D. B. Horn, *The British Diplomatic Service, 1689–1789* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 136–7.
[42] Bielfeld, *Institutions politiques*, II.246.
[43] Quoted by Horn, *The British Diplomatic Service*, p. 129; cf. ibid., p. 138, for Auckland's own linguistic shortcomings.

The francophone nature of old regime diplomacy strengthened as time passed. Since a great deal of an ambassador's or envoy's duties would be transacted in that language, it became quite common to require him to report in French and to send his formal orders in that language too.[44] This would sharpen his linguistic skills and might increase his superiors' control over him; it would also further the training which governments sought to achieve through correspondence with their diplomats abroad. By the mid-eighteenth century French had been adopted by several national foreign services, in preference to their native tongues. It became the language of Prussian diplomacy from Frederick the Great's accession in early summer 1740, while by mid-century Denmark's diplomatic correspondence was largely in French.[45] The adoption of French could be incomplete: Dutch statesmen employed it in their private correspondence and in negotiations, though not when writing officially to the Republic's ambassadors.[46] There were also exceptions, above all the case of the Austrian Habsburgs who long favoured German, not least because of the amount of material concerning the Reich which their ministers and diplomats had to transact. At the court in Vienna Italian was widely spoken during the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries and Spanish enjoyed a vogue under Charles VI (1711–40). From mid-century, however, French became more important. The Habsburg foreign minister for four decades after 1753, Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz, used it to conduct private correspondence, and occasionally drew up formal instructions in that language.[47] By the 1820s, according to Martens, at Vienna only the affairs of the German Confederation were not transacted in French.[48]

The most interesting case in many ways is the Savoyard state, which was a linguistic hybrid.[49] Sundered by the Alps, it united French-speaking Savoy with Italian-speaking Piedmont, which was politically dominant, contained approximately three times as many people around 1700, and provided the majority of diplomats. By the eighteenth century Italian was established at court, though French was also spoken on occasions,

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[44] Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française*, VIII.819–23.
[45] With the important exception of the Reich, where German was still employed; the eighteenth-century Danish monarchy's complex claim to the Duchy of Holstein (which was part of the Reich) ensured that it took an active interest in imperial affairs.
[46] Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française*, VIII.190.
[47] E.g. those for Gottfried Freiherr van Swieten, sent as envoy to Berlin in late 1770: Sorel, *Europe and the French Revolution*, p. 182. This was explicitly declared to be because only French could be spoken in the Prussian capital.
[48] *Manuel diplomatique*, p. 162.
[49] Geoffrey Symcox, 'The Savoyard State: A Negative Case-Study in the Politics of Linguistic Unification', in *The Fairest Flower: The Emergence of Linguistic National Consciousness in Renaissance Europe* (Florence, 1985), pp. 185–91, provides a helpful sketch.

conforming to Moser's pattern of bilingualism.[50] From shortly after the Peace of Utrecht, diplomatic instructions and correspondence were almost entirely in French, as they had been for some Savoyard representatives since the later seventeenth century. There were exceptions: the ruler, Victor Amadeus II, corresponded with the marchese di Triviè in Italian during the Utrecht congress, while the instructions given to the Sicilian Giuseppe Osorio when he was sent to London in 1730 were also in that language. But even Osorio reported in French, conforming to the established trend in the Savoyard state and more widely in Europe. Revealingly, however, internal correspondence between government departments in Turin about matters such as the appointment and payment of diplomats continued to be written in Italian.

Full admission to this francophone diplomatic world required knowledge of its dominant tongue. The clearest example of the problems this might cause is that of eighteenth-century Russia, whose political emergence was slowed and at times impeded by a lack of sufficient native diplomats able to speak French and by the resulting problems encountered in adjusting to western-style diplomacy, as well as by a tenacious adherence to established customs and practices.[51] This led to a significant number of non-natives being employed as diplomats, and also to successive attempts, first under Peter the Great and then from Elizabeth's reign onwards, to send young Russian noblemen abroad to learn foreign languages and especially French – imitating the Grand Tour established elsewhere – and to acquire the rudiments of western-style diplomacy. They were attached to Russian embassies or increasingly sent to the famous School for Diplomats at Strasbourg founded by Jean Daniel Schoepflin: 152 Russians can be identified as having studied there during the eighteenth century. With the single exception of the emperor himself, every single member of Russia's delegation to the Congress of Vienna was a former student of the school.[52] The wider evolution by which eighteenth-century Russia became culturally part of Europe also helped to speed up

[50] Christopher Storrs, 'Savoyard Diplomacy in the Eighteenth Century, 1684–1798', in Daniela Frigo, ed., *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 210–53, at pp. 230 and 234. See more generally Frigo's own book: *Principe, ambasciatore e 'jus gentium': l'amministrazione della politica estera nel Piemonte del settecento* (Rome, 1991).

[51] David J. Taylor, 'Russian Foreign Policy, 1725–1739: The Politics of Stability and Opportunity' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of East Anglia, 1983), pp. 10–20 passim; cf. the views of an unnamed Danish diplomat in 1710, quoted in V. P. Potemkin, ed., *Histoire de la diplomatie* (French trans., 3 vols., Paris, 1946–7), I.264.

[52] Jürgen Voss, 'L'école diplomatique de Strasbourg et son rôle dans l'Europe des Lumières', in Bély, ed., *L'invention de la diplomatie*, pp. 363–72, at p. 371, together with his 'Les étudiants de l'Empire russe à l'université de Strasbourg au XVIIIe siècle', in Conrad Grau, ed., *Deutsch-russische Beziehungen im 18. Jahrhundert: Kultur, Wissenschaft und Diplomatie* (Wiesbaden, 1997), pp. 351–74.

this process, as a growing number of noblemen were educated by foreign tutors. At the end of the 1730s Russia was represented in London by a native diplomat who spoke fluent French and even some English,[53] while by Catherine II's reign the Russian Empire was emerging as a full member of Europe's diplomatic society.[54] By that point some routine correspondence was in French, while German was favoured by the significant number of diplomats who were natives of the Baltic Provinces, but Russian long remained predominant.[55]

IV

The French language did more than any other single factor to unify the diplomatic world of old regime Europe and to transmit its distinctive culture. To a significant extent its spread was a by-product of a second and better-known change: the establishment of resident diplomacy.[56] Within half a century – broadly the 1670s to the 1720s – most European states with the single exception of the Ottoman Empire began to maintain permanent and continuous diplomatic relations with each other, at the level of ambassador or envoy.[57] It led to the emergence of diplomatic corps in most capitals, where they constituted exactly the kind of 'independent society' identified by Pecquet.[58] Involvement in organising coalitions to oppose Louis XIV's France encouraged other countries to adopt French-style diplomacy, which most had experienced at first hand, either as allies

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[53] Prince Ivan A. Shcherbatov, minister 1739–42 and again 1743–6: Igor Vinogradoff, 'Russian Missions to London, 1711–1789', *Oxford Slavonic Papers* NS 15 (1982), pp. 46–79, pp. 49 and 54, n. 43.

[54] See H. M. Scott, 'Katharinas Rußland und das europäische Staatensystem', in Claus Scharf, ed., *Katharina II., Rußland und Europa: Beiträge zur internationalen Forschung* (Mainz, 2001), pp. 3–57, for this process. The extent to which early nineteenth-century Russia had become diplomatically part of Europe is evident from the 'Mémoire' submitted in November 1802 by S. R. Vorontsov to his brother A. R., the foreign minister, on the changes needed in the training of Russian diplomats: *Arkhiv Kniaza Vorontsova*, ed. P. I. Bartenev (40 vols., St Petersburg, 1870–95), XV.433–40; cf. X.177–8 for the context of this scheme.

[55] This is apparent from the substantial extracts from Russian diplomatic correspondence published in *Sbornik imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva* (148 vols., St Petersburg, 1867–1916).

[56] For up-to-date general accounts, see M. S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy 1450–1919* (London, 1993), ch. 2, and Linda S. and Marsha L. Frey, *The History of Diplomatic Immunity* (Columbus, OH, 1999), ch. 6, together with two informative collected volumes edited by Lucien Bély: *L'invention de la diplomatie* and *L'Europe des traités de Westphalie: esprit de la diplomatie et diplomatie de l'esprit* (Paris, 2000).

[57] Bielfeld, *Institutions politiques*, II.144, 147, for a contemporary view of its significance.

[58] See above, p. 60.

or victims.[59] In this way they came to admire and soon to emulate the supple, polished, more creative diplomacy which they encountered.

Louis XIV's diplomatic service – exactly like his court at Versailles and domestic regime, headed by the intendants – came to enjoy enormous prestige, while its sustained success ensured that it was copied by his rivals, who modified their existing structures and practices to take account of developments in France. These decades also saw a series of peace conferences at the end of major wars, following on the great congress which had produced the settlement at Westphalia in 1648: Nijmegen at the end of the Dutch War, Ryswick at the close of the Nine Years' War and, above all, the extended discussions at Utrecht which brought the War of the Spanish Succession to a close, and these also fostered the growth of reciprocal diplomacy as well as increasing admiration for the skill of French diplomats.[60] Such gatherings continued during the first half of the eighteenth century, with unsuccessful congresses at Cambrai (1724) and Soissons (1728–9) and meetings at Breda and Aix-la-Chapelle (1746–8) which produced a peace settlement at the close of the War of the Austrian Succession. The experience of extended political discussions – and the accompanying social interaction – with representatives of opposing states and with allies led to closer and more regular contacts, with enduring consequences.

Though resident diplomacy had a long history, the scale and nature of the contacts which evolved during the reign of Louis XIV were quite novel. The Thirty Years' War (1618–48) and, to a lesser extent, the religious conflicts of the previous century had interrupted its development. Its evolution from the 1670s was therefore the resumption of an earlier development, with its roots in Italy and western and southern Europe at the beginning of the modern period. France was the first major

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[59] This has been studied for the Austrian Habsburgs by Klaus Müller, *Das kaiserliche Gesandtschaftswesen im Jahrhundert nach dem Westfälischen Frieden 1648–1740* (Bonn, 1976), and Erwin Matsch, *Geschichte des auswärtigen Dienstes von Österreich (-Ungarn) 1720–1920* (2nd edn, Vienna, 1986), pp. 13–164 passim; for Sweden by the chapters in Sven Tunberg et al., *Histoire de l'administration des affaires étrangères de Suède* (1935; French trans., Upsala, 1940), pp. 73–363; and for the Savoyard state by Frigo, *Principe, ambasciatore e 'jus gentium'*, which covers a slightly later period: these remain the sole detailed studies. The best examination of the model itself is still C.-G. Picavet, *La diplomatie française au temps de Louis XIV (1661–1715): institutions, moeurs et coutumes* (Paris, 1930); for the eighteenth century there is a neglected and informative if rather Franco-centric study by Corneliu S. Blaga, *L'évolution de la diplomatie: idéologie, moeurs et technique*, vol. I: *Le dix-huitième siècle* (Paris, 1938).

[60] This has been illuminated by the seminal work of Lucien Bély: see his 'Méthodes et perspectives dans l'étude des négociations internationales à l'époque moderne', in Rainer Babel, ed., *Frankreich im europäischen Staatensystem der Frühen Neuzeit* (Paris, 1995), pp. 219–34, and his large-scale *Espions et ambassadeurs*, esp. ch. 4. For contemporary testimony, see La Sarraz, *Le ministre public*, p. 218.

state to adapt to the new-style resident diplomacy, and her political successes ensured that French techniques were copied. The reciprocal nature of diplomatic representation ensured this network would spread across Europe, and by the mid-eighteenth century the continent's capitals were linked by permanent representatives.[61]

In important ways Renaissance diplomacy had been quite different from its eighteenth-century successor, which was both more continuous and usually conducted by representatives of a much higher social standing. Noblemen and even great aristocrats had acted as diplomats in the past, but they had usually tended to take short, often 'glamour' missions: to arrange a dynastic marriage, to conclude an alliance, to negotiate a peace settlement. Resident missions had normally been filled by individuals of much lower social standing and sometimes foreigners. The great international lawyer, the Dutchman Grotius, had been Sweden's ambassador in Paris for three decades (1635–65).[62] By the later seventeenth century the employment of non-nationals was becoming unusual, in Sweden as elsewhere.[63] Traditionally a diplomat's main function had been to acquire the information that lubricated the wheels of government, and this long remained his principal function.[64] In the decades around 1700 the established distinction between such reporting and handling negotiations – the two functions identified by writers such as Callières – was gradually eroded.[65] Noblemen continued to head 'glamour' missions, but for the first time also began to serve in large numbers as resident diplomats.[66] The consequence was that during and immediately after the reign of Louis XIV diplomacy fully acquired the noble ethos which it would retain until the First World War.

V

This was the third dimension of the new diplomatic culture: the growing dominance of the social elite, evident from the final decades of the seventeenth century onwards, and, linked to it, the enhanced importance of the monarchical court. Earlier generations had emphasised the value

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[61] The great work of Enlightenment international law, Emer de Vattel, *Le droit de gens*, first published in 1758, makes clear how well established this was: 3 vols., Washington, 1916, Book 4, chs. 5–9, pp. 362–98, setting out its rules and conventions.

[62] Tunberg et al., *Histoire de l'administration des affaires étrangères*, p. 110.

[63] Ibid., pp. 228, 234: in 1723 the Chancery Ordinance formally reserved diplomatic appointments for native-born Swedes.

[64] In the later seventeenth century the '*Embajada española*' regarded actual negotiations as a minor dimension of an ambassador's duties: p. 27 and passim.

[65] *François de Callières: The Art of Diplomacy* eds. H. M. A. Keens-Soper and Karl W. Schweizer (Leicester and New York, 1983), p. 110.

[66] Chamoy, *L'idée du parfait ambassadeur*, p. 20; '*Embajada española*', p. 3.

of the humanist culture of the Renaissance for ambassadors, but it was now replaced by a concern with social origins and specific skills. It is striking that Wicquefort, in by far the best-known and most influential handbook of the age of Louis XIV, had set his face firmly against sending noblemen. His emphasis upon the need for professionalism made him sceptical about the value of birth alone. Except for purely ceremonial missions, Wicquefort did not think that nobles made good diplomats. On the contrary: they were too fond of war, and too full of their own importance and so given to private initiatives, rather than following their instructions in the way he deemed essential.[67]

If we move on four decades or so, to the diplomatic world described by Callières and Pecquet, the situation had changed completely.[68] Both assumed that only nobles could head missions, and that the world of diplomacy was dominated by the elite. Pecquet was quite explicit, declaring that only members of the nobility would make good ambassadors or envoys because they alone would have the appropriate education and, more importantly, would be familiar with the kind of court society which diplomats now inhabited.[69] They were endowed with the connections and the social poise to open doors, while the titles many possessed were intended to impress the courts to which they were sent, where these were viewed as additional marks of favour. This was linked to a wider evolution, as the burgeoning Grand Tour was beginning to internationalise the aristocratic elite in many continental countries and to break down the barriers between one national nobility and another.

A diplomat's primary task was still to represent his ruler, and a nobleman was best equipped to do this. These arguments were reinforced by two additional considerations: the absence, in many European countries, of a sizeable alternative social group from which ambassadors could be drawn, particularly as fewer and fewer churchmen were sent as diplomats except (in Catholic monarchies) to Rome, and the assumption that noble diplomats would expend their own considerable resources on their missions, which they viewed as strengthening their links with the ruler, as part of the service which their families had always provided and as opportunities for their own collecting and cultural patronage. Within an overwhelmingly agrarian economy, the nobility still controlled by far the greatest proportion of Europe's wealth, and a diplomatic mission required substantial private means.[70]

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[67] *L'ambassadeur et ses fonctions*, I.154–9, and II.7, 98.
[68] See also Chamoy, *L'idée du parfait ambassadeur*, pp. 18, 22; La Sarraz, *Le ministre public*, pp. 28, 91–6 passim.
[69] *De l'art de négocier avec les souverains*, pp. 46–7, 65, 102, 107–9, and passim.
[70] La Sarraz, *Le ministre public*, pp. 180–5, has an interesting discussion.

The change identified by the two French officials is borne out by studies of Europe's diplomatic corps, which were becoming more blue-blooded.[71] There were important exceptions: above all the Dutch Republic and the British state, with their distinctive social structures. Yet while most Dutch diplomats were drawn from the Regent oligarchy in the towns of Holland and Zeeland, some came from the nobility of the landward provinces; while Britain's diplomatic service contained a significant number of peers, largely in the major embassies.[72] The ranks of Prussia's diplomats contained an unusual number of non-Prussians and non-nobles, reflecting the complete primacy of military service for the elite after the reign of Frederick William I, while it took several decades for the numbers of native Russian noblemen serving as ambassadors and envoys to reach the level found in other countries. But elsewhere the general trend is clear. Nobles dominated the embassies and other missions of the European powers.[73] As in so much else, France took the lead. In the later seventeenth century members of the traditional nobility (*noblesse d'épée*), often with military service behind them, began to predominate.[74] *Epée* families were in any case attracted to service as ambassadors, and between 1648 and 1789 almost one-third of French diplomats – 104 out of around 350 – came from such lineages. By contrast less than one in eight – 40 in total – came from an administrative background in the *noblesse de robe*.

Most eighteenth-century diplomatic corps were dominated by noblemen from long-established families to an unprecedented extent, while any commoners were quickly ennobled. This is borne out by several detailed studies. During the period 1648–1740, 61 per cent of Austrian Habsburg diplomats holding the rank of resident or above were either imperial nobles or members of the *Herrenstand*, and a further 22 per cent were lesser noblemen or those recently ennobled; only 12 per cent can be styled bourgeois.[75] In the Savoyard state, out of 54 diplomatic appointments during these decades, 36 went to members of established noble families,

[71] Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs*, pp. 291–301 and 307–11, demonstrates that this was so for the period 1697–1715.
[72] Horn, *The British Diplomatic Service*, ch. 5 passim.
[73] This pattern is confirmed by the standard, if incomplete, list of diplomatic representatives for the period 1648–1815: L. Bittner, L. Gross and L. Santifaller, eds., *Repertorium der diplomatischen Vertreter aller Länder* (3 vols., Berlin, Zürich and Graz, 1936–65).
[74] Jean Baillou, ed., *Les affaires étrangères et le corps diplomatique français* (2 vols., Paris, 1984), I.184–6, 189; Picavet, *La diplomatie française au temps de Louis XIV*, pp. 73–119; Béchu, 'Les ambassadeurs français au XVIIIe siècle', in Bély, ed., *L'invention de la diplomatie*, p. 333.
[75] The calculation is by Klaus Maletkke, in Jean-Michel Boehler, Christine Lebeau and Bernard Vogler, eds., *Les élites régionales (XVIIe–XXe siècle): construction de soi-même et service de l'autre* (Strasbourg, 2002), p. 27; its unique source is the standard study by Müller, *Das kaiserliche Gesandtschaftswesen*, esp. pp. 180–215.

15 to lineages of more recent creation, while only 3 went to commoners and they were ennobled during their careers.[76] Spain's ambassadors and envoys were more high-ranking, even eclipsing those of their French ally where the key Paris embassy at least was concerned.[77] The Spanish diplomatic service was a noble redoubt: out of 167 ambassadors, envoys or chargés d'affaires who headed missions between 1700 and 1808, around 30 were grandees, in other words members of the aristocratic elite, who inevitably dominated the most prestigious embassies, while the remainder were drawn predominantly from the long-established and prominent noble families. By comparison relatively few *ducs et pairs*, the apex of the French nobility, became diplomats in the period 1648–1789, and those who did were usually sent to Rome. The extended absence from court made such missions unattractive to French aristocrats, who were inclined to view an embassy as an exile.[78]

The grip of the traditional nobility on Spanish diplomatic posts strengthened during the eighteenth century. In the period 1700–59 it provided 76 per cent of all diplomats; this figure rose to almost 86 per cent for the period after Charles III's accession. These men overwhelmingly had served previously either in the army or central government. Even the Spanish secretaries of embassies came from the lesser nobility.[79] One corollary, in Spain as elsewhere, was that a clear majority of these men lacked any relevant experience or training and took only one mission, which was likely to be short: over 60 per cent in the Spanish case, with almost half of all posts being held for less than four years. This inevitably militated against the development of professionalism or a career structure.[80]

The noble monopoly could result from a deliberate political strategy pursued for internal reasons. One example was the new Bourbon Kingdom of Naples, which came into existence only in 1734 and had to create a diplomatic apparatus *ab initio*. The new ruler, Charles VII – the future Charles III of Spain – set out quite deliberately to attach the powerful nobility to his regime by giving them a monopoly over such appointments.

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[76] Storrs, 'Savoyard Diplomacy', p. 245 for the figures; Frigo, *Principe, ambasciatore e 'jus gentium'*, pp. 119–52, for a detailed study of diplomatic appointments, confirming the dominance of the traditional nobility.

[77] Didier Ozanam, *Les diplomates espagnols du xviiie siècle: introduction et répertoire biographique (1700–1808)* (Madrid-Bordeaux, 1998), pp. 9–125, provides the fullest and most systematic study of any single country; Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs*, pp. 294–5; cf. Baillou, ed., *Les affaires étrangères*, I.184–5, for the situation in the French capital.

[78] Baillou, ed., *Les affaires étrangères*, I.184–5.

[79] Ozanam, *Les diplomates espagnols*, esp. pp. 31–3, 35–7, 75, 123. I have presented his figures in round numbers.

[80] Ibid., pp. 38, 47, 123.

In a pattern which could be found throughout Europe, members of leading families were awarded the prestige embassies – Madrid, Paris and Vienna – while lesser nobles were appointed to minor legations.[81] This reinforced, rather than overriding, the requirement that any representative of the ruler should be capable of representing his master and should have the social poise and dignity to fill such a post: which here, as elsewhere, suggested the choice of noblemen.

The fact that more than half of Spain's diplomats took only a single embassy highlighted one negative consequence of growing noble dominance throughout Europe. Though the Spanish figures may have been higher than elsewhere, the problem was ubiquitous. Since aristocrats usually lacked relevant experience and were unlikely to submit to the training that was desirable, their involvement militated against the establishment of more professional standards, believed essential by all theorists and many statesmen. In practice, however, the consequent problems were mitigated by sending experienced diplomats as part of the enlarged embassies becoming common at this time. These men, who were either members of the lesser nobility or were soon ennobled, brought experience and expertise, and conferred a degree of professionalism on eighteenth-century diplomacy. Though they carried out much of the day-to-day work of Europe's embassies, their role was eclipsed, at the time and since, by the great noblemen who occupied most of the important posts. In any case, the ethos of Europe's diplomatic services was established by the aristocratic ambassadors and percolated down through the other ranks.

The trend was reinforced by its corollary: in most countries the nobility also dominated the highest positions in the new and larger agencies set up at this time to handle foreign policy.[82] The growing volume of negotiations, as resident diplomacy became established, made such specialisation desirable; it also reflected a wider development, as governments evolved from their traditional judicial mode into more modern administrative structures. Once again France led the way, with the elaboration of a large and well-organised foreign office containing many more specialised personnel during the second half of Louis XIV's reign, and it served as the model for several European states.[83] Bourbon Spain's new rulers lost no time in creating a French-style Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs in

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[81] Maria Grazia Maiorini, 'Neapolitan Diplomacy in the Eighteenth Century: Policy and the Diplomatic Apparatus', in Frigo, ed., *Politics and Diplomacy*, pp. 176–209, esp. pp. 179, 193, 202–8; cf. the comments of the editor: 'Introduction', pp. 20–2.

[82] This is a central theme of Frigo: *Principe, ambasciatore e 'jus gentium'*.

[83] The best introduction remains John C. Rule, 'Colbert de Torcy, an Emergent Bureaucracy, and the Formulation of French Foreign Policy, 1698–1715', in Ragnhild Hatton, ed., *Louis XIV and Europe* (London, 1976), pp. 261–88.

1714. Though initially it merely administered policy, it slowly evolved into a specialised ministry of foreign affairs, which it had become by the later eighteenth century. The example of France also inspired developments in the Savoyard state, where a separate Secretary of State for foreign affairs was established in 1717; further reforms a generation later made Turin's foreign office one of the most modern and professional in Europe.[84]

The growing international pretensions of Russia and Prussia were evident in similar changes. In 1719 Peter the Great replaced the old Department of Embassies (*Posolskii Prikaz*) with a College of Foreign Affairs, which expanded rapidly. In Prussia the extensive reform of central administration carried through by Frederick William I involved the setting up of a Department of External Affairs (*Auswärtiges Amt*) in 1728. Five years later (1733) it became known as the *Kabinettsministerium*, though it was – in common with all Prussian government – still organised on a collegial basis. In some countries such reforms were delayed: Britain only acquired a single foreign secretaryship in 1782, while in the Habsburg Monarchy reforms introduced in 1742 and 1753 created a more modern State Chancellery (*Staatskanzlei*). Such changes were not ubiquitous and could be impermanent: the *Kabinettsministerium* lost power immediately upon Frederick the Great's accession, as the king made clear that he would act as his own foreign minister, while the College of Foreign Affairs suffered from the growing inefficiency of all Russian government in the mid-eighteenth century. The general trend is clear, however. In all important European states this period saw the emergence of specialised ministers responsible primarily for foreign affairs, supported by expanded and increasingly specialised staffs, often with appropriate training which was usually in law, and occupying designated buildings. Here too the wider effect of these changes was to reinforce the diplomatic culture which was becoming established, by ensuring more uniform practices and procedures were adopted.

These agencies were staffed by men drawn overwhelmingly from the nobility, whether from the traditional military lineages, or the more recently ennobled families who had risen through service, usually in royal government. This reinforced the noble ethos, apparent in the selection of personnel at every turn. Europe's diplomacy was becoming more aristocratic in a second sense, moreover, as it came to be suffused by the elite's social and cultural assumptions. It was due to the increasing and unprecedented role of courts in diplomacy.[85] This exemplified the continuing

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[84] Frigo, *Principe, ambasciatore e 'jus gentium'*, pp. 25–98 passim, for these developments.
[85] Jeroen Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles*: *The Courts of Europe's Dynastic Rivals* (Cambridge, 2003), ch. 6, esp. pp. 183, 199–200, 215.

importance of the royal court, emphasised by Tim Blanning.[86] At one level it resulted from the nobility's dominance of resident diplomacy. Nobles, accustomed to living at court in their own countries, expected to do so during their missions, which now lasted for several years rather than a few months. The long eighteenth century saw diplomats become a permanent feature of Europe's courts and the aristocratic societies which underpinned them. Though they were not admitted to every court gathering, they were permitted to attend a significant number. At most courts, moreover, diplomatic receptions and audiences were among the most frequent ceremonies.[87] Resident diplomacy ensured that its protocol had to be integrated into the established ceremonial of Europe's monarchies.[88] The courts of the rulers and of members of their families played a central role in diplomacy as the location where ambassadors and envoys could mingle with native aristocrats, ministers of the host government and even members of the ruling dynasty. Regular attendance at court – for those envoys whose diplomatic character and own social status were sufficiently exalted to secure admission, as was normally the case for representatives of leading states – was an essential dimension of their duties as well as a welcome social diversion.

This strengthened the noble dominance and aristocratic tone of old regime diplomacy. When Callières and Pecquet recommended the selection of noblemen, they were merely reflecting a widespread assumption that they would have to inhabit the same world in which they themselves had been educated and lived their lives. Resident diplomacy came to be an aggregate of all Europe's court societies.[89] The 'perfect ambassador' – which existed only in the minds of the more optimistic diplomatic theorists – was in this perspective the latter-day equivalent of Castiglione's famous courtier and was expected to possess very similar qualities. Pecquet's celebrated characterisation of the 'society' of diplomats was an extension of the kind of court society to be found in virtually all European monarchies, which was now transposed on to the world of international diplomacy.[90] He, like Callières, modelled their 'art of negotiation' on the

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[86] *The Culture of Power*, part 1.

[87] There is a suggestive study of the situation at Munich by Samuel John Klingensmith, *The Utility of Splendor: Social Life and Architecture at the Court of Bavaria, 1600–1800* (Chicago, 1993), esp. ch. vi; William Roosen, 'Early Modern Diplomatic Ceremonial: A Systems Approach', *Journal of Modern History* 52 (1980), pp. 452–76, has some useful reflections.

[88] See, e.g., for the case of Rome, Maria Antonietta Visceglia et al., eds., *Cérémoniel et rituel à Rome, XVIe–XIX siècles* (Rome, 1997), and for that of Spain, Christina Hofmann, *Das spanische Hofzeremoniell von 1500–1700* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1985).

[89] Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs*, p. 374.

[90] Marc Belissa, *Fraternité universelle et intérêt national (1713–1795): les cosmopolitiques du droit des gens* (Paris, 1998), pp. 103, 106–7.

psychological art of the courtier to manage men, control passions and (where necessary) dissemble. The resulting outlook was less the product of professional training than of acculturation. Diplomats, who had undergone the socialisation which was part of the upbringing of every aristocratic child, completed their *formation* at court, where the norms of conduct assumed final form.

It had one important consequence, which proved enduring. Questions of protocol and etiquette had always been important in diplomacy, since a ruler's personal honour and political standing were at stake, but they now achieved quite new levels of formality and precision. The ceremonial of embassy and court interacted, each becoming more complex as a result. It began with a series of well-known disputes between French and Spanish diplomats in the 1660s, and gathered pace thereafter. Broadly speaking, the highest-ranking representatives were sent to the more important courts, though there were exceptions. Everywhere, however, the social rank of diplomats, and their titles and other honours, further complicated the established problems of protocol and precedence. 'The interest of regard', as it was termed in the eighteenth century, was a central issue for all ambassadors, to be disregarded at their peril. Whether a diplomat was placed lower than a rival at a formal dinner or other such occasion, the thorny question of the honours due to particular ambassadors at certain courts, or the issue of the 'alternative', the practice by which – to secure equality of rank – one monarch was named first in one copy of any treaty and the other in the second copy: these were the issues which preoccupied diplomats throughout the eighteenth century and long after. What can be recognised to be happening, with the considerable benefit of hindsight, is that greater involvement and exposure to court life led to its etiquette fusing with established questions of diplomatic precedence to produce a more formalised, and also more complex, series of permutations.

Symptomatic of this development was the second and substantially expanded edition of Dumont's celebrated collection of treaties.[91] The bulky fourth and fifth volumes of this work – clearly intended to guide working diplomats within a system where precedent was the main guide to protocol[92] – were devoted to etiquette and bore the significant title, *Le cérémonial diplomatique des cours de l'Europe*. This was an early use

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[91] (Jean Dumont), *Supplement au Corps universel diplomatique du droit de gens* (5 vols., Amsterdam-The Hague, 1739). After the publication of the first edition (1726–31) its compiler determined to produce an enlarged and updated second edition, which would give full attention to ceremonial, but he died before the work was very far advanced. It was completed by another well-known publicist, Rousset de Missy. The 'Avertissement de l'éditeur du supplement' printed at the beginning of volume I makes clear the circumstances of the republication.

[92] A point explicitly made in the 'Avertissement de l'éditeur' at the beginning of the first volume (iv) devoted to ceremonial.

of the adjective 'diplomatique' in its modern sense and clearly qualifies established generalisations about the chronology of the linguistic shift that was in progress. More important, however, was its tabulation of diplomatic ceremonial in all its complexity and its incidental confirmation that such protocol had become very largely that of the court. This built on a substantial earlier literature, particularly in German and also linked to diplomatic theory.[93] Referred to in passing by the publisher as the *Corps diplomatique du cérémonial*, its first volume was devoted to the courts of the French Bourbons and the Austrian Habsburgs, and ran to 781 bulky folio pages. The second part – which weighed in at 860 folio pages – was devoted to the Papal court, that of the Spanish Bourbons and the other capitals of Europe, including Russia and even the Ottoman Empire. The two volumes were striking testimony to the new formality of reciprocal diplomacy by the mid-eighteenth century.

The documents it contained were very largely in French, and the whole compilation provides a guide to the diplomatic culture spreading across Europe. That culture was francophone, based upon continuous political relations, hierarchical in both its assumptions and personnel, aristocratic – or at least dominated by the ethos of the nobility – and located at court, as much as and perhaps more than in the offices of pro-tean departments of state. It was informal as much as formal and had come to be concessive and negotiatory in tone. The ambassador or envoy spent much of his time on an extended 'social round' of dinners, recep-tions, musical and theatrical events of all kinds, many of which took place at court or in the aristocratic society which surrounded this. These were quite crucial to his mission, and provided an opportunity to acquire infor-mation, to observe his rivals and the host government, and to insinuate ideas to the ministers of the court to which he was accredited and even to the ruler. Though these decades saw continuous negotiations of the mod-ern kind become part of a diplomat's duties, these always consumed far less time than informal contacts and social gatherings, and could be less important for the outcome of his mission. The political function of the social round was to permit the exchange of information: diplomats traded scraps of intelligence as commodities and in this way secured much of the news which filled their despatches.[94]

The crucial importance of a court society and an established diplo-matic round was best demonstrated by the example of eighteenth-century

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[93] See Milos Vec, *Zeremonialwissenschaft im Fürstenstaat: Studien zur juristischen und politis-chen Theorie absolutistischer Herrschaftsrepräsentation* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1998).

[94] Significantly, Martens, *Manuel diplomatique*, p. 106, spoke of the need for an 'échange' of information, while La Sarraz, *Le ministre public*, pp. 201–2, talked of the value of a 'Commerce' with fellow diplomats; cf. Anderson, *Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p. 43.

Prussia, where both were extremely attenuated and at times threatened to disappear altogether. This was particularly so after the Seven Years' War (1756–63), when the king effectively retreated to the garrison town of Potsdam and focused his energies and resources on restoring his shattered territories. During the reigns of his predecessors, a basic social round had existed at Berlin and, despite Frederick the Great's efforts to restrict it, continued throughout his reign, though always on an infinitely smaller scale than in other capitals: something upon which newcomers did not fail to comment.[95] 'Dull and insipid' was the British diplomat Hugh Elliot's decisive verdict.[96] This was correctly attributed to the poverty of the country and the people, as well as the royal disfavour towards such contacts, which radiated out from Potsdam.

By Frederick's final decade the two ministers formally responsible for Prussia's foreign policy gave relatively few dinners for the diplomatic corps, perhaps no more than five or six a year, and also did not open their own houses at all regularly in the evenings, while other officials and military commanders were even more stingy with their hospitality, giving only three or four dinners annually.[97] When Karl von Zinzendorf visited Berlin in 1770 he declared that the social round was far less extensive than at any major court through which he had passed: a significant verdict given his wide-ranging travels during the previous decade.[98] The contrast with Vienna was striking: Kaunitz held open house at least every week, welcomed visitors on a large scale and regularly gave more intimate dinners for foreign diplomats.[99] In Berlin, however, the life of a foreign representative was as bleak as the Brandenburg weather. Diplomats lived within a laager in the Prussian capital and only occasionally sallied out beyond its walls: one well-placed observer rightly declared that foreign representatives were kept behind a cordon sanitaire.[100] The only regular

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[95] Earl of Malmesbury, ed., *Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, First Earl of Malmesbury* (4 vols., London, 1844), I.97–8; Countess of Minto, *A Memoir of the Right Honourable Hugh Elliot* (Edinburgh, 1868), pp. 193–4, 202, 217, for the views of Robert Liston, who was successively secretary to Hugh Elliot (Britain's envoy extraordinary 1777–82) and chargé d'affaires during the latter's absence in 1779–80.

[96] Minto, *A Memoir of Hugh Elliot*, p. 202.

[97] See the Chevalier de Gaussen's account of diplomacy in Berlin, substantially published by F. Masson, ed., 'Berlin il y a cent ans', *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 5 (1891), pp. 28–65, at pp. 36, 38.

[98] Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna) (HHStA), Tagebuch Zinzendorf [the diary of Karl von Zinzendorf], vol. XV (1770), fos. 86 *et seq.*

[99] This emerges from ibid., vols. VIII–IX and XV–XVII, passim. This is an unparalleled source for one informal diplomatic society, that of Vienna, which is difficult in most capitals to reconstruct in any detail.

[100] Didier Thiébault, *Mes souvenirs de vingt ans de séjour à Berlin* (3rd edn, revised by A. H. Dampmartin; 4 vols., Paris, 1813), II.358–9.

dinners and receptions were laid on by fellow envoys and of these there were – according to the French chargé d'affaires in the 1770s – no more than one or two a week, despite a clear attempt by the diplomatic corps itself during the previous decade to establish the kind of social round found elsewhere, though with incomplete success.[101] The contrast with the situation at every other major court was striking. In Berlin most diplomats habitually dined at home, and grasped at the earliest opportunity for a transfer from the Prussian capital.

VI

The diplomatic culture of old regime Europe emerged and flourished during the century from the 1680s to the 1780s: from the world described by Wicquefort to that disrupted by the French Revolution. Yet, like other aspects of the old order, it proved surprisingly resilient, continuing long into the nineteenth century and, to some extent, until the First World War.[102] There is no doubt that the diplomats and foreign ministers of successive French regimes after the summer of 1789 were often very different figures from their eighteenth-century predecessors, which highlighted the growing divergence and, soon, clash between the established powers and the new French Republic.[103] Revolutionary diplomats were much less likely to be members of the nobility, which in any case was formally abolished in 1790. They dressed and spoke in different ways; more importantly, they behaved in a new manner. Emblematic was the celebrated conduct of Sieyès who in the summer of 1798 appeared at the formal 'ceremony of homage' for the new Prussian king, Frederick William III, clad in a red, white and blue Roman toga and challenged the monarchical ceremonial taking place around him by his severely republican pose.[104] Here, as elsewhere, the French Revolution and its agents were consciously reacting against the world of the eighteenth century and its dominant political culture, a challenge most clearly articulated during

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[101] These efforts are apparent from Gaussen's journal: 'Berlin il y a cent ans', passim.

[102] After this essay had been drafted, I was fortunate enough to attend a conference at the German Historical Institute London in September 2005 on 'The Cultural History of Diplomacy 1815–1914', organised by Markus Mößlang and Torsten Riotte: see the summary of its proceedings in the *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute London* 28: 1 (2006), pp. 120–6. The forthcoming publication of the papers given at this conference will open up the nineteenth-century trajectory of the subject.

[103] There are lively, overlapping accounts of this by Linda S. and Marsha L. Frey, '"The Reign of the Charlatans is Over": The French Revolutionary Attack on Diplomatic Practice', *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993), pp. 706–44, and *The History of Diplomatic Immunity*, ch. viii.

[104] Brendan Simms, *The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797–1806* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 90.

the Assembly debates in spring 1790. The old regime world of diplomacy, wars and positive international law was to be replaced by peaceful co-existence, mutually enriching trade and an international legal system embodying the universal rights of man.[105]

The sea change was especially apparent to a diplomat like James Harris, Earl of Malmesbury, who had been the leading British ambassador of the later eighteenth century. In the mid-1790s he was plucked from semi-retirement and sent by the ministry of William Pitt the Younger to negotiate with the Directory, notably at Lille in the summer and autumn of 1797. Harris, the polished, subtle diplomat of the old order, was acutely conscious of encountering a quite new political world. He identified two particular differences. The first was the absence of social events at which diplomacy could be pursued by other means, the kind of gatherings which had been integral to the diplomatic world of eighteenth-century Europe with which he was familiar. Instead Harris met the French representatives in isolated, intermittent and always formal conferences. Secondly, he found a notable lack of give-and-take in his discussions: his French counterparts, he reluctantly concluded, were actually his adversaries who stated and then held to their demands, whether political or territorial. The growing military success of revolutionary France was part of the explanation for this, and Harris's mission – the success of which was always improbable – was ended by the even more intransigent approach adopted by the Directory after the Fructidor coup. But its failure also was testimony to the breakdown of the old diplomatic order. The concessive world of eighteenth-century diplomacy, conducted by ambassadors who were members of the same international society, had collapsed, to be replaced by a much more confrontational and grasping approach.[106] The leading exponent of this would soon turn out to be none other than Napoleon Bonaparte.

Though the breach with the old regime was undoubted, it did not prove enduring. When peace was restored at the end of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and a genuine if incomplete attempt made to restore much – though far from all – of the old order, its distinctive diplomatic culture was also restored. This was done, in a way which was deeply ironical, by a group of rulers, statesmen, ambassadors and envoys who began by excluding defeated France – temporarily as it proved – from their deliberations and who intended to make the world safe from French power in the future, but conducted their negotiations, formal and informal, in French and drew up the final peace treaty in that same language.

[105] Belissa, *Fraternité universelle et intérêt national*, p. 7 and passim.
[106] *Malmesbury Diaries*, III.309, 506, 556, 563–4.

The Congress of Vienna in 1814–15 was at one level a profoundly eighteenth-century diplomatic occasion, with its glittering social round, extensive informal negotiations and periodic formal conferences: though it was quite unprecedented in its scale and in the presence in the Austrian capital of so many rulers and foreign ministers, as well as their ambassadors and other diplomats. This was why an eighteenth-century aristocrat like the Prince de Ligne was so comfortable attending its gatherings.[107] It was a self-conscious return to a dynastic world which, at times during the two previous decades, many of its participants feared had been lost forever. Exactly as, a hundred years before, the Congress of Utrecht had accelerated the development of a European diplomatic culture, so now the gathering in Vienna encouraged and deliberately fostered the restoration of that same culture. One of the neglected achievements of the Congress System after 1815 was to codify diplomatic arrangements and in so doing to perpetuate many of the practices of eighteenth-century European diplomacy, which embodied its distinctive culture and did something to mitigate the brutal realities of the competitive states-system.[108]

The nineteenth-century diplomatic world, at least down to the 1870s and 1880s, remained that of old regime Europe: concessive, negotiatory, francophone, dynastic, focused on the court as much as the chancellery, dominated by members of the nobility who were expected almost everywhere to possess a private income to support their careers. Only in the France of the Third Republic from the 1880s onwards did the nobility's grip slacken and then disappear. Everywhere, family ties and the exercise of patronage remained the keys to appointment and advancement. Karl von Martens's celebrated manual, deeply eighteenth-century in its contents and assumptions[109] and frequently reprinted, remained the political lexicon of all diplomats until the final decades of the new century. The relatively small size of most foreign services fostered and enhanced the importance of tradition and esprit de corps within the caste of diplomats, who everywhere saw themselves as upholders of tradition, the keepers of a sacred flame. The nineteenth century did see important changes: the geographical extension of the states-system to areas beyond Europe with

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[107] Philip Mansel, *Le charmeur de l'Europe: Charles-Joseph de Ligne (1735–1814)* (Paris, 1992), pp. 259–70. Ligne of course died in December 1814, worn out by the social demands of the congress.

[108] This was accomplished by the 'Règlement on the Precedence of Diplomatic Agents', 19 March 1815, with an addition concluded on 21 November 1818: Clive Parry, ed., *The Consolidated Treaty Series* (231 vols., Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1969–86), LXIV.1–3; LXIX.385–6.

[109] See esp. *Manuel diplomatique*, pp. 9–10.

consequent innovations at the periphery, the need to deal more and more with commercial and economic questions as well as political and strategic ones, the increasing role in some states of the new forces of public opinion and press, above all the introduction of the telegraph which increased the velocity of communications and consequently the workload, while reducing the extent of individual initiative expected of a diplomat. Factors such as these, together with the growing nationalism apparent after mid-century, gradually eroded the international culture of diplomacy.

The real end of the diplomatic old regime and the distinctive culture at its heart was to be the First World War and the peace conference at Versailles which followed: exactly as, a generation ago, Arno Mayer argued for the persistence of a noble-dominated old regime suffering its final eclipse between the 1880s and 1920s.[110] One final circumstance epitomises the tenacity with which this traditional world endured. When the British diplomat-lawyer Sir Ernest Satow produced his famous *Guide to Diplomatic Practice* in 1917 with an eye towards the coming peace congress, he prefaced his key chapter (ix) on how a 'diplomatist' should conduct himself with an extended quotation – in French – from none other than Callières's famous work, noting with mandarin understatement that the French official's 'observations, though made two centuries ago, have much to commend them'. Satow subsequently described *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains* as 'a mine of political wisdom'.[111] The enduring importance of this treatise – which was to be translated into Polish in 1929 and into Japanese as late as 1978, and is once again being used to train French diplomats in 'negotiation theory'[112] – underlined the remarkable endurance of the diplomatic old regime and of the culture which did so much to sustain it.

[110] *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (New York, 1981).
[111] Fourth edition, edited by Sir Neville Bland (London, 1968), pp. 91–6, at p. 91. A. F. Whyte's translation, or as he described it 'an English rendering', of Callières appeared in 1919, two years after Satow's first edition: *The Practice of Diplomacy* (London, 1919); ibid., p. xxiv, for the second quotation.
[112] Callières, *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains*, ed. Lempereur, p. 212.

5 Early eighteenth-century Britain as a confessional state

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As Tim Blanning has reminded us, 'the eighteenth century was the Protestant century in England' and 'the triumph of Protestant Christianity permeated English culture in the eighteenth century, however much freethinking contemporaries such as Hume and Voltaire chose to ignore it when discussing the English national character'.[1] But was eighteenth-century Britain, as opposed to simply England, a confessional state or merely a Protestant one and does it, to put it bluntly, actually matter if was both, one or neither?

I

The most serious and sustained attempt to show that the idea of the confessional state is pertinent within the British Isles emanates from Jonathan Clark's *English Society*, which burst on to the historiographical scene in 1985. While the first edition of that work was a precision strike designed to awaken English historians from their Whiggish dreams, the second edition, with its doorstop appearance and Germanic doctoral dissertation length, was more akin to carpet bombing in its attempts to bludgeon opponents to accept Clark's contention that the way in which eighteenth-century English history is studied needs to be substantially revised and reconceptualised. The 2000 edition stretched the boundaries of the 'long eighteenth century' even further back – it now encompasses 1660 to 1832.[2] To put it crudely, Clark argues that eighteenth-century British history has far more in common with what came before it, with the dynastic and religious ideas of the seventeenth century, than with the growth of radicalism and democracy in the nineteenth century. Instead of looking

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[1] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002), p. 288 and pp. 289–90.
[2] J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 1985) and Clark, *English Society, 1660–1832* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 2000).

for a steady progress to modernity, the key sin of Whig/Marxist historians of old, Clark privileges the survival of traditional structures and principles.

Most of the debate about Clark's ideas has been between historians whose primary interest is the study of the British Isles. Some of the contours of this debate are addressed first but the bulk of the chapter seeks to apply insights drawn from continental historiography and discusses both foreign and domestic policy. While Jeremy Black has considered the interaction of religion and foreign policy on previous occasions, the present piece advances a generally more positive vision of the impact of confessional ideas on both popular and, crucially, official thinking about foreign policy in the early eighteenth century.[3]

The idea of a confessional state was part of Clark's broader vision of England as an Ancien Regime or Old Order. Both the specific emphasis on the importance of religion and the more general claims about Britain and the Old Order have come under attack. Joanna Innes, for example, attacked Clark's use of the term 'Ancien Regime', arguing that Clark had fallen foul of his own strictures against anachronistic vocabulary by using a term that only emerged after 1789 to describe the whole of the eighteenth century.[4] Frank O'Gorman's criticisms are broader: he complains that even before Clark, historians had become aware of the traditional nature of some aspects of eighteenth-century society; he deplored Clark's unwillingness to define what he meant by 'Ancien Regime' and then went on, adopting Pierre Goubert's definition, to show how in socio-economic terms eighteenth-century England was not an 'Ancien Regime', even if France was.[5]

Yet Clark and his critics have, in many ways, been talking at cross-purposes: there is, for example, no commonly accepted definition of what a 'confessional state' might look like. Clark has consistently contended that he is primarily concerned with the legal structures and ideological outlook of the eighteenth-century British government. His emphasis on religion as part of 'public doctrine' in the eighteenth century is of a piece with such other exponents of Peterhouse history as Edward Norman and

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[3] See Jeremy Black, 'The Catholic Threat and the British Press in the 1720s and 1730s', *Journal of Religious History* 12 (1982–3), pp. 364–81 and Black, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole* (Edinburgh, 1985), ch. 6. For a more extensive treatment of the historiography of confession and foreign policy, see Andrew C. Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest, 1688–1756* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 16–18 and 25–42.

[4] Joanna Innes, 'Jonathan Clark, Social History and England's "Ancien Regime"', *Past and Present* 115 (1987), pp. 180–1.

[5] Frank O'Gorman, 'Eighteenth-Century England as an *Ancien Régime*', in Stephen Taylor, Richard Connors and Clyve Jones, eds., *Hanoverian Britain and Empire* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 25–7.

the late Maurice Cowling.[6] While Clark has talked about what people thought or believed or were supposed to think or believe, his critics have rounded on what contemporaries actually did. Alan Gilbert's statistical work has been deployed to illustrate the declining reach of the Anglican Church in the eighteenth century.[7] Population growth and an archaic parish network meant that more and more Britons were outside the reach of the established Church. As O'Gorman puts it, the idea of a confessional state 'trembles on the verge of a powerful ecclesiastical nostalgia' which 'may have meant much to the religious intelligentsia of the Anglican Church and, to some extent, the paid officials of the Hanoverian regime but it meant considerably less to the mass of the people'.[8] Social historians have pointed to the manifold ways in which Anglican claims for hegemony did not mirror experience at a grass-roots level. Clark, by contrast, maintains that 'the idea of a "confessional state" does not depend on a uniformly successful popular morality or piety, any more than it requires denominational uniformity'.[9]

Clark can rightly claim that he has never suggested that what he was interested in was what people did as opposed to what their superiors thought they should do – as Innes points out, *English Society* offers both a critique of existing social history and suggestions for its modification.[10] Clark could also argue that ideas of the 'confessional state' rely more on the perspective from above than below. Yet Clark's case is not without its weaknesses. His linkage of Anglicanism to the confessional state is problematic. If we take Clark's broader chronology of 1660 to 1832, it is notable how uneven the Restoration was in ecclesiastical terms throughout the British Isles after 1660.[11] Furthermore, if not just England but Britain is considered, the situation becomes more complicated still – and there is very little justification for not doing so in the eighteenth century as the Anglo-Scottish union of 1707 and the Anglo-Irish union of 1800 meant that by the end of the Clark epoch there was but one parliament within the Atlantic Archipelago. The unity of Clark's long eighteenth

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[6] The link is alluded to in the title of John Morrill's review of *English Society*, 'Public Doctrine', *Times Higher Education Supplement* 690 (24 January 1986), p. 21. Clark himself is less happy with this link. See J. C. D. Clark, 'On Hitting the Buffers: The Historiography of England's Ancien Regime: A Response', *Past and Present* 117 (1987), p. 197, n. 9.

[7] Alan D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England* (London, 1976), chs. 1–2. Both O'Gorman, 'Eighteenth-Century England', p. 32, n. 24 and Innes, 'Jonathan Clark', p. 181, n. 48 draw explicitly on Gilbert.

[8] O'Gorman, 'Eighteenth-Century England', p. 32.

[9] Clark, *English Society* (2nd edn), p. 34. Unless otherwise stated, references to *English Society* are to the second edition, as it embodies the fullest expression of Clark's views.

[10] Innes, 'Jonathan Clark', p. 168.

[11] For an introduction to the Restoration in one of three kingdoms, see I. M. Green, *The Re-establishment of the Church of England, 1660–1663* (Oxford, 1978).

century is more apparent in an English than a British context. Admittedly in England there was an Anglican state Church ruling over a largely Anglican (at least in a nominal sense) population. In Scotland, though, the state Church was ecclesiologically Presbyterian after 1688 and theologically closer to Calvinism than its counterpart south of the border. In Ireland, the state Church was, like in England, Episcopalian but it clearly did not command the assent of the Catholic majority that still made up about 80 per cent of the population. Moreover, the establishment of an Episcopalian, Church of Ireland ascendancy was an ongoing process. It was only in 1704 that an Irish Test Act was passed, three decades after the equivalent English legislation. William III was reluctant in the early 1690s, despite his reputation, to act too harshly against his new Catholic subjects in Ireland (he was keen to ensure that he did not risk alienating Emperor Leopold, a key ally against Louis XIV) but anti-Catholic legislation was the price to be paid for control of the Irish parliament. The penal laws helped secure the position of the Church of Ireland but there was also resentment about the increasing interference of an English government in Irish affairs, be it in legislative terms or in the disposal of patronage on the Irish bench and peerage.[12] Consequently, although there is some validity to Clark's arguments within a purely English context, consideration of all the constituent parts of the British Isles poses serious difficulties for Clark's model. The idea of an English confessional state makes more sense than that of a British confessional state, at least in a domestic context.

One reason why debate over Clark's thesis has caused so much heat but cast so little light is because it evokes two fundamentally incompatible versions of what eighteenth-century Britain was like. Clark, following his mentor Sir Herbert Butterfield, wanted to combat the (in his view) all-pervasive Whiggish narrative of British history – the Glorious Revolution as but one step along the path towards the inevitable triumph of parliamentary democracy. Despite Sir Herbert's best efforts, the publication of his *Whig Interpretation of History* in 1931 did not herald the immediate demise of progressivist tendencies in British historical writing and there was still work to be done when Clark and his fellow revisionists began to remove the taint of progress from all aspects of British historiography in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Instead of looking optimistically to

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[12] See Jim Smyth, 'The Communities of Ireland and the British State, 1660–1707', in Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill, eds., *The British Problem* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 246–61, Wout Troost, *William III* (Aldershot, 2005), ch. 13, Thomas Bartlett, *The Fall and Rise of the Irish Nation* (Dublin, 1992), chs. 1–3 and James I. McGuire, 'The Irish Parliament of 1692', in Thomas Bartlett and D. W. Hayton, eds., *Penal Era and Golden Age* (Belfast, 1979), pp. 1–31.

the endless march of history as a path from the worse to the better, Clark remains profoundly sceptical about change. For Clark, Whiggery, in both its political and its historiographical forms, distorts our vision of the eighteenth century. The corrective lenses of Toryism and tradition make us see properly and it is those two 'Ts' and not a third often associated with Clark – Thatcherism – that enable us to understand his position properly. Respect for existing institutions and patterns of thought comes through forcefully on almost every page of *English Society*. Change is not just bad – it's heterodoxy, literally a sin. Thatcherism, whatever else it was, was not a respecter of existing institutions.

Clark's opponents, by contrast, have tended to come from among those who are, at the very least, Whig fellow-travellers. Only three of the most important can be briefly mentioned here. John Brewer's initial historiographical intervention pre-dates Clark's. In *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, Brewer argued that British popular politics underwent fundamental transformation in the 1760s. The implication was that the origins of the radicalism that led to British Jacobinism and eventually to more successful forms of radicalism in the nineteenth century were to be found in the protest and commotion surrounding John Wilkes. Moreover, the use of the market made by Wilkes and others led Brewer, along with Neil McKendrick and Sir Jack Plumb, to suggest subsequently that Britain had undergone a consumer revolution in the eighteenth century.[13] How could a society of such capitalist vibrancy be regarded as traditional or religious? If this critique of Clark, which Brewer has developed and deepened since 1985, were not enough, Brewer has a second line of attack. Not only was Britain a fundamentally capitalist and modernising society in the eighteenth century, its state was 'fiscal-military' and not confessional. Brewer shows how useful the customs and excise, in particular, were as agents of state power.[14] Admittedly, Brewer's analysis of the (relatively large) eighteenth-century British state was a notable departure from the classic nineteenth-century liberal paradigm of the small, non-interventionist state but the result was remarkably similar to the old Whig tale. The British state was notably more efficient and implicitly superior to its continental counterparts.

Paul Langford entitled his volume of the Oxford History of England covering 1727 to 1783 *A Polite and Commercial People* and the title indicates the generally progressive nature of the narrative. Langford observed

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[13] John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976) and Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (London, 1983).
[14] John Brewer, *Sinews of Power* (London, 1989).

of Clark's work in his bibliography that although it had been 'derided by scholars', it was 'not without insight'.[15] Yet Langford avoided any mention of confessional state theories in his own chapter on the constitution and his emphasis on the commercial nature of Hanoverian England's economy and society reflects a different set of priorities to Clark's.[16] The late Roy Porter's work displays a similar incomprehension of Clark's *Weltanschauung*. England was the birthplace of Enlightenment and, while the British edition of his antepenultimate work was given the simple title *Enlightenment*, the American edition had the much grander title of *The Creation of the Modern World* to entice an American audience. One of the key features of Porter's English Enlightenment was its secularising nature – his ninth chapter is entitled simply 'Secularizing' and opens with the gambit that 'the long eighteenth century brought an inexorable, albeit uneven, quickening of secularization, as the all-pervasive religiosity typical of pre-Reformation Catholicism gave way to an order in which the sacred was purified and demarcated over and against a temporal realm dominating everyday life'.[17] Brewer, Langford and Porter belong together as advocates of Whiggish secularisation. Eighteenth-century Britain looked forward to the modern (and necessarily secular) future.[18]

Despite the overt hostility between Clark's and his opponents' visions, they share one crucial premise. The Tories were the religious party and the Whigs were the secular party. They offer competing visions of which of these historical views was in the ascendant but they agree on the central principle that the process of modernisation and religion are incompatible. Yet it is this seeming area of agreement that offers the chance to open up a different vision of why religion and confession were important to the eighteenth-century British state.

While the Whigs were not religious in quite the ways the Tories were (less interest in divine right and passive obedience, for example), neither were they the secularising proto-radicals that both Clark and Porter would have us believe. The importance of this insight can be appreciated by thinking about the more general political complexion of the long eighteenth century. Taking simply the short 'long eighteenth century' of 1688 to 1832, the period 1688 to 1714 is commonly agreed to represent a 'rage of party'. Despite the efforts of both William III and Anne to

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[15] Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People* (Oxford, 1989), p. 742.
[16] Ibid., ch. 14.
[17] Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World* (New York, 2000), p. 205.
[18] For a similar diagnosis of the historiographical problems, see B. W. Young, 'Religious History and the Eighteenth-Century Historian', *Historical Journal* 43 (2000), pp. 849–68.

rule without party, the clash between Whig and Tory was fierce both in the constituencies and in central government. The year 1710 saw a clear Tory victory on the back of an election dominated by issues of religion and war and peace. Yet the Tory hold on power was short-lived. Despite the understandable reluctance of George I to place all his political eggs in the Whig basket – the Whigs' reputation as king-killers and republicans had even reached Hanover; George's mother, Sophia, had got to know her Stuart cousins very well when they were in exile after her uncle Charles I's execution – when the Hanoverians arrived in Britain, they rapidly had little choice but to turn to the Whigs. George I was disinclined to back a Tory administration after what he viewed as the Tory betrayal of the other members of the grand alliance through the separate Peace of Utrecht in 1713.[19] A rebellion in Scotland in favour of the Stuart pretender in 1715 and the effective Whig propaganda campaign to persuade George that the Tories were all Jacobites worked wonders. Tories were proscribed at court and a thorough purge of local government followed. Despite several occasions on which Tory hopes of an end to proscription were raised (notably at George II's accession in 1727 and then again in the early 1740s), the Whigs maintained their political dominance until George II's death in 1760. By this point, there is general agreement that the Tories, as a politial party and organisation if not as a body of ideas, had disappeared. Although some have seen Pitt the Younger and Edmund Burke as the intellectual founders of modern Toryism, neither of them would have been happy with the Tory label. It was the early nineteenth century before political Toryism reappeared, at least in name. In short, to find supporters of a confessional state in the early eighteenth century, it is vital to look closely at the Whigs if only because they were the people in power for the vast majority of the time.[20]

II

However, before exploring the nature of the relationship between Whig thought and the confessional state further, it is worth thinking about the idea of a confessional state on a slightly broader canvas. The idea of the Church existing as a support for the state was far from unique to Britain. Supporters of Gallicanism asserted the importance of the independence

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[19] Ragnhild Hatton, *George I* (London, 1978), pp. 119–20.

[20] For an interesting introduction to aspects of official Whig thinking, see Reed Browning, *Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Court Whigs* (Baton Rouge, 1982). Three of the five figures that Browning discusses in detail (Benjamin Hoadly, Thomas Herring and Samuel Squire) were Anglican clergy. The importance of defending the Protestant succession comes across clearly in Browning's work on Whig thought.

of the French Church from papal interference and W. R. Ward draws an explicit link between the Erastianism of both the French Church and the Church of England.[21] More generally, secular rulers, both Protestant and Catholic, wanted to profit from the advantages that divine support offered as a means to legitimate their regimes, so British discussions can usefully be placed in a broader European context.

More particularly, some specific borrowing from German historiography indicates a different way to approach discussion of the merits of confessional thinking for understanding the eighteenth-century British state. The linkage of Ancien Regime and the confessional state provides the point of departure. Criticisms of the Clark thesis have concentrated on the use of the former more than the latter – it has been assumed that somehow the two ideas do indeed need to be considered as a package. Yet this is not necessarily so. The point can best be illustrated by characterising critiques of Clark in a slightly different way. Debate has become overly focused on the merits or otherwise of an Anglo-French comparison to the detriment of all other European points of reference. Was England more or less modern than France? Innes and O'Gorman, like most British historians, have answered this question with a resounding 'more'.[22] Their conclusion is eminently defendable but it also reveals a limited comparative perspective. Events in France after 1789 undoubtedly made it an important reference point for those across the Channel. During the second Hundred Years' War, France was also the significant 'other' against whom the British tended to define themselves, yet this does not mean that modern historians should similarly restrict their fields of vision. Mention the idea of a 'confessional state' or, more precisely, 'Konfessionalisierung' to a German historian and the response is likely to be slightly different from that of a 'Clark: for and against' debate.

For Clark could have found significant support for some of his ideas from the work of Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard, much of which was appearing by the time *English Society* was first published. 'Confessionalisation' theory has played a prominent part in historiographical debate about early modern Germany over the past two decades. A number of regional studies have been used to weigh the merits of the confessionalisation approach. It is not necessary to accept the theory in its entirety to realise that certain features of it have more general relevance. Put briefly, the essential features of confessionalisation theory are as follows: confessionalisation was a process that is observable to a greater or lesser extent

[21] W. R. Ward, *Christianity under the Ancien Régime, 1648–1789* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 12.
[22] O'Gorman, 'Eighteenth-Century England', pp. 28–30 and Innes, 'Jonathan Clark', pp. 194–200.

in nearly all territories within the Holy Roman Empire after 1555. It was not a distinctively Protestant experience and, indeed, there were marked differences between Lutheran and Calvinist territories. Moreover, such modern traits as individualism and rationality were also present within the so-called 'Counter Reformation'. The process of confessionalisation led to the creation of separate social groups through a variety of means from propaganda and discipline to education and language. The state played a significant role in directing this activity.[23] In most territories secular rulers took control of religious issues and attempted to use control of this sphere as part of a concerted attempt to assert their own authority and provide legitimacy for their rule. The rise of social discipline has also been seen as part of the rise of absolutism.[24] According to Schilling, confessionalisation was not part of an old or traditional world-view. Instead it was a key stage in the evolution of the modern state and the means whereby the state could appear as an independent actor on the political stage.[25] When German historians talk about confessionalism, they are interested in the experience of the general population but they are also concerned, as Clark is, to think about the way in which the experience of the people was shaped by legal and social expectations. Clark could, therefore, draw some theoretical comfort from German thinking on confessionalism. One of the most important features of German writing on the topic, for example, has been the emphasis placed on the role of the state as the body that drove forward the confessionalisation process. On the other hand Schilling, particularly, makes links between the confessional state and the transition to modernity which sit uncomfortably with Clark's general approach. Clark is, after all, reluctant to regard eighteenth-century Britain as being a 'modernising' state. More generally, British historians have been reluctant to link the Anglican Church, as opposed to dissenting Protestantism, to modernisation and reform.

Yet using a strictly Germanic definition of the confessional state in Britain poses problems. Both Britain as a whole and even its constituent parts were multi-confessional. While the established Church was defended both legally and politically, after 1689 and the final failure of

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[23] Among Schilling's many contributions to this field, two of particular relevance are Heinz Schilling, 'Nationale Identität und Konfession in der europäischen Neuzeit', in Bernhard Giesen, ed., *Nationale und kulturelle Identität* (Frankfurt/Main, 1991), pp. 192–252 and Schilling, 'Confessionalization in the Empire: Religious and Societal Change in Germany between 1555 and 1620', in Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society* (Leiden, 1992), pp. 205–45.

[24] For an able summary of a complex German literature, see R. Po-chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation* (London, 1989), passim and p. 3.

[25] Heinz Schilling, 'Lutheranism and Calvinism in Lippe', in R. Po-chia Hsia, ed., *The German People and the Reformation* (Ithaca, 1988), p. 265.

comprehension, there was toleration of Trinitarian dissent under the provisions of what became known as the Toleration Act. Protestant pluralism was a fact of life. Yet attempts to remove the civil and political restrictions on non-Anglicans, whereby the holding of political office was dependent on being a communicant member of the Church of England, met with little success. Campaigns to remove the Test and Corporation Acts faltered in the face of a parliament now almost exclusively Anglican in the late 1710s and again in the 1730s and even later in 1787 and 1790.[26] One reason for this was that Robert Walpole resisted the more Broad Church Whig politics of Stanhope and Sunderland to ensure that his brand of conformist and Anglican Whiggery held sway.

Parliament and local government provide somewhat contradictory evidence about the existence of the confessional state. On the one hand, attempts were made to weaken the social position of the Anglican Church, particularly in the 1730s, but these were largely resisted. There was clearly an Anglican majority in the Commons. The number of MPs who were either dissenters themselves or closely connected to dissent declined as the century went on. The presence of twenty-six Anglican bishops in a House of Lords of less than 200, together with Anglican magnates, meant that there was a substantial and influential group prepared to defend the rights of the Church of England and establishment. Yet the nature of British political society meant that there was also space for disagreement, even within parliament. At a local level, there were ways round the legal restrictions placed on non-Anglicans. The practice of Occasional Conformity was one – Protestant dissenters would communicate once a year within the Anglican Church to obtain the necessary sacramental qualification for office and then attend the chapel, rather than the church, for the rest of the time. Tories had outlawed the practice in the parliament of 1710 but this legislation was repealed by Stanhope and Sunderland in 1718–19. More generally, James Bradley has shown how dissenters were able to maintain political influence and power in certain areas, regardless of the official legal position.[27]

Outside England, the pressures on a British confessional state were always more pronounced. Military victories in North America had driven out the French from Canada during the Seven Years' War. The need to

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[26] Insight into attempts at reform can be gained from the following: G. M. Townend, 'Religious Radicalism and Conservatism in the Whig Party under George I: The Repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts', *Parliamentary History* 7 (1988), pp. 24–44, G. M. Ditchfield, 'The Subscription Issue in British Parliamentary Politics, 1772–79', *Parliamentary History* 7 (1988), pp. 45–80.

[27] James E. Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism* (Cambridge, 1990), chs. 1–3.

stop the natives becoming too restive, especially when their cousins to the south were moving towards open revolt, led eventually to the Quebec Act in 1774. Not only did the Act recognise French legal structures, but it also brought toleration of the Catholic Church in Quebec and granted permission for it to collect tithes.[28] More importantly, and closer to home, the situation in America brought into question the longer-term sustainability of anti-Catholic legislation in Ireland. An English Catholic Relief Act was passed in 1778 with the Irish situation largely in mind. Defeat at Yorktown precipitated a crisis and, under Grattan's parliament, many of the penal laws were repealed (although Catholics were not granted the vote).[29] Pitt the Younger thought that it would be impossible to hold the line against claims for full rights for Catholics. Other members of the elite in both England and Ireland increasingly shared his view. George III and his son both thought otherwise but Catholic emancipation was eventually achieved in 1829.

Thus, taken together, the evidence for a confessional state at the domestic level is ambiguous.[30] The higher echelons of English society remained resolutely Anglican but the picture was complicated both by Protestant dissenters in the localities and by challenges to Anglicanism outside England. Yet turning from the domestic sphere to consider foreign policy provides a different and more positive assessment of the influence of confessional ideas.

III

In relation to foreign policy, Clark's model is arguably not overly ambitious but rather too narrow. How so? What was it that the eighteenth-century state did? Certainly, it was concerned with maintaining internal order and its own legitimacy in the eyes of its subjects but, as Tim Blanning has reminded generations of undergraduates, Weber's famous Janus-faced definition of the state is not just about internal security but

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[28] The fascinating attempts made by Anglicans to deal with the problematic relations between Church and state in an imperial context are ably dealt with in Peter Doll, *Revolution, Religion and National Identity* (Madison, 2000).

[29] Bartlett, *Fall and Rise of the Irish Nation*, chs. 6–8. There are two important essays in Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, eds., *Protestantism and National Identity* (Cambridge, 1998) about Ireland – Tony Barnard, 'Protestantism, Ethnicity and Irish Identities, 1660–1760' (pp. 206–35) and Ian McBride, '"The Common Name of Irishman": Protestantism and Patriotism in Eighteenth-Century Ireland' (pp. 236–61).

[30] I should record my debt to Stephen Taylor for drawing my attention to his 'Un état confessionnel? L'église d'Angleterre, la constitution et la vie politique au XVIIIe siècle', in Alain Joblin and Jacques Sys, eds., *L'identité anglicane* (Artois, 2004), pp. 141–54.

external sovereignty.[31] Putting it another way, and adopting one of Professor Ferguson's *bon mots*, the eighteenth-century state was a warfare not a welfare state.[32]

So how might the realm of foreign affairs offer comfort to advocates of the confessional state model? Brendan Simms has suggested that in Britain the confessional nature of the state was a barrier to reform and actually served to prevent military mobilisation during the Napoleonic Wars.[33] Simms's further comment that the progress of Catholic emancipation was intimately connected to more general concerns about national efficiency also shows the strains that the confessional state was put under by war.[34] Yet there were also powerful reasons why aspects of British foreign policy, for the earlier eighteenth century at least, had a strongly confessional tone.[35] The evidence and reason for this lie in the nature of the British monarchy.

While later Whiggish historians drew a variety of lessons from 1688, one of the most important and most overlooked was the positive decision of the English political nation to privilege confessional identity over place of birth when it came to choosing monarchs. William III was a Protestant, as was his wife Mary, and that was what counted. The Bill of Rights (1689) excluded Catholics from the succession. Their exclusion was confirmed by the Act of Settlement (1701) that rested the succession in Sophia, Dowager Electress of Hanover and her Protestant heirs. In 1714 the last of the Stuarts, Anne, James II's daughter, died, and Georg Ludwig, Elector of Braunschweig-Lüneburg and Archtreasurer of the Holy Roman Empire, succeeded to the British thrones. George I, as he became in his new dominions, was neither a crusader nor a zealot, although he had won his spurs fighting to defend the Empire against the Turk in the 1680s.[36] Yet neither was he indifferent to Protestant concerns and, even had he wanted to be, his position made it almost impossible

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[31] See Max Weber, 'The Profession and Vocation of Politics', in Weber, *Political Writings* ed. Peter Lassman and Ronald Spicer (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 310–11: 'a state is that human community which (successfully) lays claim to the *monopoly of legitimate violence* within a certain territory, this "territory" being another of the defining characteristics of the state'.

[32] See Niall Ferguson, *The Cash Nexus* (London, 2001), ch. 1 with the suggestive title, 'The Rise and Fall of the Warfare State'.

[33] Brendan Simms, 'Reform in Britain and Prussia, 1797–1815: (Confessional) Fiscal-Military State and Military-Agrarian Complex', in T. C. W. Blanning and Peter Wende, eds., *Reform in Great Britain and Germany* (Oxford, 1999), p. 99.

[34] Ibid., pp. 92–3.

[35] For the importance of confessional ideas for the conduct of British foreign policy under Anne, see Jens Metzdorf, *Politik – Propaganda – Patronage* (Mainz, 2000).

[36] For George I's life prior to his succession to the British thrones, see Hatton, *George I*, chs. 1–4.

for him to ignore confessional issues.[37] Hanoverian elevation to electoral status had partially come about because the emperor was looking for a firm ally against Brandenburg in north-west Germany. The Hanoverians, for all their protestations of loyalty to the emperor and *Reichspatriotismus*, were not, however, unquestioning followers of Vienna's lead. Drawing on support from Protestants within the empire was an easy way to increase the profile of the new electorate. Moreover, with Augustus the Strong deciding in 1697 that Warsaw was worth a mass, there was a potential vacancy for leader of the empire's Protestants and both Georg Ludwig and his Prussian relations were interested in applying. The claim of the Guelphs to the bishopric of Osnabrück in alternation with a Catholic prince, and Hanover's position close to a number of ecclesiastical territories, like Hildesheim, meant that there were strong local reasons to be seen to be on the right side of confessional questions.[38]

Yet the value of Guelph Protestantism was more than merely local. Across the Channel, it was the alpha and omega of the Hanoverian claim to the throne – contemporaries spoke not of the Hanoverian succession but of a more generalised Protestant succession, independent of a particular dynastic affiliation.[39] Hence, it is hardly surprising that the Hanoverians were keen to be seen as Protestants both to remind their new subjects of their legitimacy and to ensure that there was clear blue water between them and their rivals, the Stuarts. Consequently Protestantism remained at the heart of justifications of Hanoverian monarchy so long as the Jacobite threat existed, that is until at least the 1750s.

Confessional rights could be defended domestically but they could also be defended in the foreign political sphere and it is this aspect of the confessional state that Clark has overlooked. In many ways, attention to foreign policy provides more convincing evidence over a longer period for state action in the interests of confession. The foreign policy of the early Hanoverians is littered with occasions when confessional concerns can be said to have played an important, and indeed crucial, part in decision-making. Particularly after 1714, when the British crowns were linked by a dynastic union to the Hanoverian electorate, confessional politics loomed large because the confessional divide was still so crucial to relations between princes in the Holy Roman Empire. The old story of 1648 marking the end of 'wars of religion' in Europe contains an element of truth but it also ignores the manifold ways in which confessional rivalry and tension continued to affect politics within central Europe.[40]

[37] Georg Schnath, *Geschichte Hannovers im Zeitalter der neunten Kur und der englischen Sukzession, 1674–1714* (4 vols., Hildesheim, 1938–82), III.61–2.
[38] Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, pp. 51–4.   [39] Ibid., p. 60.   [40] Ibid., pp. 18–23.

The Westphalian settlement had provided a means to bring confessional disputes within a legal framework, such as through the provision that henceforward confessional disputes were to be debated directly between the confessional bodies rather than through the Reichstag's three colleges. Protestants and Catholics no longer confronted each other across the battlefield but across the courtroom. Indeed, some historians have argued that confession was so important within the eighteenth-century Empire that it is appropriate to speak of a 'reconfessionalisation' of politics, although this work has, thus far, not been applied to Hanover.[41] The nature of confessional conflict had changed but it had not disappeared.

The link with Hanover provides a partial explanation of why British foreign policy became concerned with confession – Hanover was interested in the defence of Protestantism so Britain was by extension. This characterisation of the Hanoverian link provides a much more positive assessment of the links between the two territories than is usually found in the literature – confession was something drawing the two together, despite other pressures that were pushing them apart.[42] Yet there were other compelling reasons why British foreign policy was concerned with confession.

One of these relates to the advantages of influence. By the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, Britain could justifiably claim to be the most powerful Protestant power in Europe. Emphasising Protestant credentials could be a means to cement alliances with other Protestant powers – shared belief was, for example, one of the things that helped support the alliance with the United Provinces in the first half of the eighteenth century, despite continuing trade rivalries.[43] But more fundamental than that, there was a widely held attitude among the British Whig elite that Britain had a particular role to play in relation to the more general European system. Britain, it was argued, had always played the role of the balancer in Europe. Ideas of the balance of power have often been associated with the early Enlightenment and Newton's mechanistic view of

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[41] Gabriele Haug-Moritz, 'Kaisertum und Parität: Reichspolitik und Konfession nach dem Westfälischen Frieden', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 19 (1992), pp. 445–82, Haug-Moritz, 'Corpus Evangelicorum und deutscher Dualismus', in Volker Press, ed., *Alternativen zur Reichsverfassung in der Frühen Neuzeit?* (Munich, 1995), pp. 189–207 and Dieter Stievermann, 'Politik und Konfession im 18. Jahrhundert', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 18 (1991), pp. 177–99.

[42] See Andrew C. Thompson, 'The Confessional Dimension', in Brendan Simms and Torsten Riotte, eds., *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714–1837* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 161–82.

[43] Hugh Dunthorne, *The Maritime Powers, 1721–1740* (New York, 1986), pp. 323–4.

the world, applying eternal laws to the practice of statecraft, but balance of power ideas could have confessional implications as well.[44]

The reason why a balance of power was desirable within Europe was that it would prevent one power from becoming overpowerful and dominating the entire system to the detriment of all others. Modern theorists might talk about the dangers of hegemony or a unipolar system. Contemporary British writers (and some German thinkers, interestingly centred on the University of Göttingen in the Hanoverian Electorate) talked instead of the dangers of universal monarchy.[45] Such writers looked to both the ancient and the recent past to find examples of the dangers of universal monarchy. In the more recent past, they could also find evidence of British efforts to prevent it. The figures most often associated with the universal monarchist threat were the Emperor Charles V, Philip II of Spain and Louis XIV of France. This trinity of rulers were all, to a greater or lesser extent, bogeymen within Protestant Europe. The memory of Louis XIV's persecution of Protestants was particularly fresh and was vigorously maintained by a vibrant Huguenot diaspora outside French borders. There was an intimate connection in the minds of eighteenth-century Protestant writers between universal monarchy and Catholicism.[46] Even when thinking about the ancient world and the perceived Roman desire to achieve dominance throughout Europe, the linguistic connection was made between the ancient Roman Empire and the modern Roman Catholic Church. Attempts to dominate and control, to persecute and attack, were characteristic of both popish and universal monarchist views of the world. Moreover, the only powers likely to be capable of achieving universal dominion were Catholic ones (at least before the rise of Prussia). Consequently, the maintenance of a balance of power within Europe and the concomitant result that the universal monarchist threat was contained not only preserved peace but also contributed to the survival of Protestantism more generally. In the age of Enlightenment, it was feared that, given half the chance, Catholic rulers would seize the chance to destroy Protestantism, even if that sort of

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[44] See Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, ch. 1 for a more extensive discussion of the literature, both contemporary and modern.

[45] After its foundation in 1737, the University of Göttingen provided an important conduit for British ideas into Germany. See Thomas Biskup, 'Britain and Göttingen', in Simms and Riotte, eds., *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History*, pp. 128–60.

[46] This had not always been the case. Steve Pincus has shown ('The English Debate over Universal Monarchy', in John Robertson, ed., *A Union for Empire* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 37–62) how universal monarchy had been applied by some to the Protestant Dutch in the seventeenth century. Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, pp. 36–9 shows how the discourse of universal monarchy had become more exclusively anti-popish by the eighteenth century.

apocalyptic confessional struggle was no longer on the agenda of Protestant powers. Enlightenment values, such as toleration and the barrier to a ruler interfering in matters of conscience, had to be spread from Protestants to the wider world.

There are a number of examples of confession playing a prominent part in determining the way that the Hanoverian monarchs and their British and German ministers reacted to diplomatic incidents. Unsurprisingly, several of these incidents arose from struggles within the Reich, where confession was still an important source of tension between princes and peoples. When the Elector Palatine evicted the Protestants from the Heiliggeistkirche in Heidelberg in September 1719, his actions sparked a major crisis within the empire.[47] The ripples from events in Heidelberg were widely felt. A resolution of the religious disputes became an important element of Anglo-Austrian relations and William, Earl Cadogan's mission to Vienna in 1720 was partly prompted by the need to sort out conflicts in the Palatinate. The defence of the Protestant interest within the empire also featured in Anglo-Swedish relations. Part of the justification for the reversal of an anti-Swedish/pro-Russian policy in the Baltic at the end of the Great Northern War was about the need to preserve Sweden as a Protestant power both within the Baltic and as a guarantor of Protestant rights within the Reich itself.

Evidence of such modes of thinking has been neglected previously because it does not appear as neat policy statements. Instead, it is necessary to reconstruct attitudes from remarks and asides in a wide variety of official and semi-official material. Yet the evidence is there to show that those at the heart of the 'policy machine' regarded confessional issues as important both for the formulation of policy and as a means to determine what the likely results of a particular action would be. Diplomats who had served within the Reich tended to be more aware of confessional issues than others. Charles, Baron Whitworth (1675–1725) began his career as secretary to George Stepney, envoy to Berlin, and subsequently had commissions at the Reichstag in Regensburg, the court of Peter the Great and various other north European capitals before becoming envoy to Berlin and, finally, one of the British representatives at the Congress of Cambrai (1723–5). His correspondence, both official and private, provides a wealth of references to confessional concerns.

When serving at the Reichstag in early 1703, when the emperor wanted the Reich to declare war on France in what was to become the War of the Spanish Succession, Whitworth commented to Sir Charles Hedges,

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[47] The events surrounding the Heidelberg crisis are discussed in greater detail in Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, ch. 3.

Secretary of State for the southern department, more than once that
it was widely believed that conflict would be used by the papacy as an
opportunity to attack Protestantism more generally.[48] Hedges had ini-
tially suggested to Whitworth that the papacy was interfering to assist the
Elector of Bavaria.[49] The assumption that the papacy frequently had a
hand in stirring up trouble for Protestant powers was both widespread
and long-lived. When the dispute broke out in Heidelberg over the fate
of the Heiliggeistkirche, once more both British and Hanoverian officials
were quick to blame the Holy See. James Haldane, who had been sent by
George I to Heidelberg in an attempt to resolve the crisis by diplomatic
means, reported to Whitworth rumours that the pope had written to the
Elector Palatine to commend his zeal in attacking Protestant rights.[50]
Whitworth had already expressed concerns to James Stanhope, Secre-
tary of State for the northern department, that the disturbances in the
empire might be used by Augustus, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland,
to undermine the position of his Saxon Protestant subjects.[51] George I
suggested to François Pesme de Saint Saphorin, a Vaudois Protestant
in George's service as a British diplomat in Vienna, that the papacy
had stirred up trouble in Germany to ensure that the emperor's atten-
tion was distracted from Italy, where the papacy wanted to use Spanish
power as a counterweight to Habsburg influence.[52] The detrimental influ-
ence of the papacy was also evident in George's comment to Rudolf von
Wrisberg, his Hanoverian representative in Regensburg, that the blame
for the continuation of the crisis lay not with the emperor but with those
of his advisors who had the pope's, rather than the emperor's, interests
at heart.[53]

There is now a considerable body of work that looks at the ways in which
the political culture of eighteenth-century Britain was anti-Catholic or,
to use contemporary parlance, anti-popish in tone.[54] Yet it is less readily
acknowledged how much such attitudes penetrated all levels of society.

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[48] Whitworth to Hedges, Regensburg, 16 April 1703, British Library, London (here-
after BL), Additional Manuscripts (hereafter Add. MSS) 37350, fos. 145v–146r and
Whitworth to Hedges, Regensburg, 23 April 1703, ibid., fo. 162.
[49] Hedges to Whitworth, Whitehall, 26 March 1703, ibid., fo. 112r.
[50] Haldane to Whitworth, Heidelberg, 8 November 1719, BL, Add. MSS 37376, fo. 393r.
[51] Whitworth to Stanhope, Berlin, 2 November 1719, very secret, National Archives, Kew
(hereafter NA), State Papers (hereafter SP) 90/10.
[52] George I to St Saphorin, St James's, 11 December 1719, Niedersächsisches-
hauptstaatsarchiv, Hannover (hereafter NdHStA), Calenberg Brief (hereafter CB) 11,
1626, fo. 21.
[53] George I to Wrisberg, St James's, 19 April 1720, NdHStA, CB 11, 1649:1, fo. 61r.
[54] Linda Colley, *Britons* (New Haven, 1992), ch. 1 and passim, Colin Haydon, *Anti-
Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England* (Manchester, 1993). For a series of responses
to the Colley thesis, see Claydon and McBride, eds., *Protestantism and National Identity*.

Aristocratic elites were not immune to them, even if they may have begun to move away from them by the end of the eighteenth century.

Beyond distrust of the pope and all his doings, confessionally conditioned thinking could also be seen in assessments of how both Catholic and Protestant powers would or should act. British ministers accepted that it was impractical to conduct a policy based solely upon alliances with fellow-Protestants but this did not mean that they either liked alliances with Catholics or thought that much reliance could be placed upon them. George I had concluded the Triple Alliance with France and the United Provinces in late 1716 and the alliance survived during the period of Louis XV's minority. Despite the alliance, George I was unwilling to use one of the standard means of further securing good relations with France by permitting a marriage between his granddaughter and Louis XV. His confession, he told the French ambassador, would not permit the match.[55] The British also suspected that other powers would try to use confessional ideas to undermine their alliance with France. In 1726, after the Spanish and Austrians had reached an understanding in the first Treaty of Vienna in April 1725, Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle and Secretary of State for the southern department, was particularly worried. He suspected that both the Spanish and the Austrians would use confessional arguments to entice the French away from Britain. He told Thomas Robinson, secretary of the mission in Paris, that William Stanhope, a British diplomat in Spain, had heard that plans of alliance for a war of religion against Protestants had been forwarded from Madrid to Paris.[56] Robinson was also warned to monitor closely the activities of Austrian diplomats in Paris for similar reasons.[57] William Stanhope in Spain also surmised that one reason behind the conclusion of the original agreement between Spain and Austria was that it would allow the emperor to apply more pressure to Protestants within northern Europe in both the empire and Poland.[58] Confessional relations had remained poor in the empire after the trouble in Heidelberg in 1719, with Protestants at the Reichstag in Regensburg producing ever longer lists of complaints against Catholics. They had reached a new low in 1724 following the execution of several leading Protestant officials at Thorn in Poland after a scuffle at a Catholic procession had escalated into a full-scale riot.[59] Alliances with

[55] Newcastle to H. Walpole, Whitehall, 1 March 1725, BL, Add. MSS 32742, fo. 308r and Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, pp. 10–11.
[56] Newcastle to Robinson, Whitehall, 13 January 1726, BL, Add. MSS 32745, fo. 50.
[57] Newcastle to Robinson, Whitehall, 22 February 1726, ibid., fo. 215r.
[58] W. Stanhope to Newcastle, Cienpozuelos, 21 May 1725, BL, Add. MSS 32743, fo. 211r.
[59] The connections between the incident in Thorn and earlier confessional difficulties are discussed in Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, ch. 4.

Catholic powers were matters of convenience, rather than the product of shared interest, and it was uncertain whether they could be maintained over the longer term.

Relations with Protestants were sometimes fraught with difficulties as well. At various points, British and Hanoverian diplomats complained that their colleagues from Sweden, the United Provinces or Prussia were not doing enough to promote the defence of the Protestant interest, although the Dutch, in particular, were seen as important supporters of the Protestant succession in the early eighteenth century.[60] Such complaints were understandable but did little to challenge broader expectations about how Protestant powers should act. More fundamental was the arrival on the international scene in 1740 of a monarch who displayed a studied disregard for confessional concerns in politics and who looked at the world in a thoroughly *Realpolitik* manner. Frederick the Great was unwilling to play the role that George II had allocated to him – supporter to George's lead in imperial affairs, with George extending his avuncular beneficence to his younger relation. When John Carmichael, the third Earl of Hyndford, was sent to negotiate a settlement between Prussia and Austria, following the outbreak of war in Silesia, he accused Frederick directly of endangering the Protestant religion by diverting attention away from the key matter of containing France. Frederick responded that religion was 'the least concern of Princes' thus making clear where his own priorities lay. Yet Hyndford's retort that while Protestant princes were not generally bigots, Catholic princes often let their beliefs get the better of their interests is also an interesting insight into the way in which British diplomats looked at the world.[61] Hyndford also added, perhaps realising that more strategic arguments would carry weight with the new Prussian monarch, that if France and Russia were to ally, all the powers between them would be threatened.[62] Frederick's betrayal of his Protestant heritage was the subject of frequent comment from British officials.[63]

Frederick's accession, therefore, created problems for a confessionally informed foreign policy. Within broader attempts to conceptualise international relations prior to 1740, discussion had tended to focus on whether an Anglo-Dutch or Anglo-Prussian alliance should form the

[60] Ragnhild M. Hatton, *Diplomatic Relations between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic, 1714–1721* (London, 1950), p. 239.
[61] Extract of Hyndford to Harrington, Berlin, 26 December 1741, BL, Add. MSS 23809, fos. 288–9.
[62] Ibid., fo. 289r.
[63] See, for example, Trevor to Robinson, Hague, 30 March 1742, BL, Add. MSS 23810, fo. 262r or Newcastle to Robinson, Hanover, 16 July 1748, private, BL, Add. MSS 32813, fos. 33–4 or Newcastle to Keith, Whitehall, 31 May 1751, very secret, BL, Add. MSS 32828, fos. 61–2.

keystone of British diplomacy. It was accepted that there would also have to be alliances with either the Habsburgs or the Bourbons to prevent either power achieving European hegemony. Yet diplomats were also aware that the prevention of universal monarchy was an active, as opposed to static, process so these alliances would be subject to change. There was much less willingness to contemplate an end to Protestant alliances. Unfortunately the decline of Dutch power and Frederick's attitudes considerably reduced the viability of placing either the United Provinces or Prussia at the heart of a British system from the 1740s onwards.[64]

The broader point is to demonstrate that confessional interests were an important part of foreign-policy making. The emphasis needs to be not just on a simple account of incidents where confession can be said to have influenced a particular decision but instead on a more nuanced version of events that takes into consideration outlook, aspiration and expectation. In this sense, there was a neat match between rulers and ruled in early Hanoverian Britain. Both sides were concerned to see the Protestant succession maintained and Protestant rights defended in Europe, at least if the rhetoric of such material as parliamentary speeches, addresses to the throne and pamphlets and sermons is to be believed.

The importance of the Protestant succession to a domestic audience was mentioned earlier but it had, of course, international ramifications as well. The eighteenth century has often been seen as dominated by wars of succession. To the list of usual suspects from the Spanish to the Bavarian could be added quite legitimately the War of the British Successions, starting in 1688 and going on to perhaps 1718 or even beyond.[65] The Stuarts' Catholicism – and their refusal to conform to acquire the throne despite the hopes of their English supporters – combined with their exile status, made them almost entirely dependent on the support of other Catholic powers if they were to achieve a longed-for return to the throne.[66] Consequently, ensuring that the Stuarts remained diplomatically isolated was a high priority for British diplomacy. Careful negotiation and hard bargaining were used to prevent French, Spanish or Austrian support for them. One by one, agreements were reached between Britain

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[64] Anglo-Dutch relations in this period are ably charted in Dunthorne, *The Maritime Powers*. Dunthorne claims (p. 323) that the decline of the threat to the Protestant succession was one reason why the alliance was weakened after 1740.

[65] Mark A. Thomson, 'The Safeguarding of the Protestant Succession, 1702–18', in Ragnhild Hatton and J. S. Bromley, eds., *William III and Louis XIV* (Liverpool, 1968), pp. 237–51.

[66] For an excellent survey of the international aspects of Jacobitism in the immediate aftermath of 1688, see Edward Gregg, 'France, Rome and the Exiled Stuarts, 1689–1713', in Edward Corp with contributions from Edward Gregg, Howard Erskine-Hill and Geoffrey Scott, *A Court in Exile* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 11–75.

and these powers with specific clauses disavowing support for the Jacobites. The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) and the Triple Alliance both contained provisions that committed France to recognising the legitimacy of the Protestant succession in Britain and forcing the Jacobite court to leave French territory. British acceptance of the Pragmatic Sanction in the second Treaty of Vienna (1731) was conditional on assurances that the emperor would not help the Jacobites. There was also a constant awareness that alliances with Catholic powers could be undermined by the threat of Jacobite support. Moreover, the fear often surfaced that an alliance between two Catholic powers contained secret clauses favouring the Jacobites. Thus the first Treaty of Vienna in 1725 created a panic in St James's that not only was there a risk of a Austro-Spanish marriage with the concomitant chance that a multiple monarchy on the scale of Charles V would result but that both sides had agreed to support the Pretender in his attempts to reverse the Protestant succession.[67] The Jacobites themselves believed that alliances between the major Catholic powers could only be of benefit to them and placed considerable hopes on a reconciliation between France and Spain in the 1720s and 1730s.[68] Securing the Protestant succession and preventing a Jacobite return were central planks of British foreign policy in the early eighteenth century and both were intimately connected to confessional thinking. Moreover, although later Whig historians tended to dismiss the Jacobites as both reactionary and ultimately bound to fail,[69] contemporary Whig ministers were less sanguine about their position. The eagerness with which British ministers devoured any intelligence from diplomats abroad about the movements of the Pretender or his agents suggests that they remained concerned even in the 1750s.[70]

IV

As several other contributions to this volume have noted, the interaction between the representational culture of the court and the new arena

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[67] Thompson, *Britain, Hanover*, pp. 118–20.

[68] Jeremy Black, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole* (Edinburgh, 1985), pp. 141–3.

[69] The systematic destruction of such ideas is one of the more valuable aspects of the recent revival of interest in Jacobitism.

[70] For a general account of British ministerial response to the Jacobite threat, see Paul S. Fritz, *The English Ministers and Jacobitism between the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745* (Toronto, 1975). Evidence of ministerial concern in the 1750s can be observed in the following references: Rochford to Newcastle, Turin, 12 August 1752, BL, Add. MSS 32839, fo. 185 (news of comings and goings at Pretender's court), Holdernesse to Albermarle, Whitehall, 6 December 1753, secret, BL, Add. MSS 32847, fo. 156 (Prussian support for Jacobite plotting) and Robinson to Albermarle, Whitehall, 20 June 1754, BL, Add. MSS 32849, fo. 270 (rumours of Pretender being gravely ill and instructions to observe his family's activities closely).

of the public sphere remains a fruitful area for research and one that Tim Blanning has considered at some length in his recent work.[71] While some historians have argued that the British court had lost its primacy, at least in cultural terms, more recent work has suggested a different perspective.[72] The present essay contributes to this debate, if indirectly, by showing how important the British court remained as a centre of power for the discussion and formulation of foreign policy. It also shows how debates about policy were shaped by the prevailing culture, which still placed considerable emphasis on confessional concerns, and therefore how the monarchy was at the heart of understandings of a confessionally aware state in Britain in the eighteenth century. It is also important to stress the extent to which the political culture of the Whig elite, who dominated government in the first half of the eighteenth century, was shaped by confessional concerns. In this sense, neither Clark's Anglican Toryism nor the secularising Whiggism of Brewer, Langford and Porter adequately captures what motivated those at the heart of government. Men such as Newcastle and Whitworth may have been gradually becoming more aware of the new world of commerce (both were certainly involved in the negotiation of commercial treaties at various stages of their careers) but they also wanted to ensure that Protestantism was preserved and that the legal structures that had been put in place to maintain the Protestant interest both within the British Isles and on mainland Europe were upheld. To attempt to force either of them to be representatives of the coming world of the nineteenth century or the lost world of the seventeenth is unhelpful.

One of the questions that still remains, however, is related to the exceptionalism or otherwise of the British states. Was there, in other words, a British *Sonderweg*, as the old Whig narrative argued, that means it is unhelpful to adopt models more often used to understand the history of continental Europe to explain British history in the eighteenth century? This question is particularly relevant for the present argument because although it has been argued that there is a need to move beyond the model of an Ancien Regime that draws inspiration from eighteenth-century France, what has been put in its place both in terms of confessionalisation theory and the importance of foreign policy for state formation draws heavily on Germanic historiography. Tim Blanning's own approach

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[71] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, parts I and II.
[72] Contrast John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (London, 1997), ch. 1 with Hannah Smith, *Georgian Monarchy* (Cambridge, 2006). The importance of the court in late eighteenth-century Britain comes through forcefully in the work of Clarissa Campbell Orr. See, for example, Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of Great Britain and Electress of Hanover: Northern Dynasties and the Northern Republic of Letters', in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe, 1660–1815* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 368–402.

in *The Culture of Power* suggests that there is much to be gained by contrasting the variety of responses to the growth of the public sphere in Britain, France and Prussia. For the specific issue of confession, it is worth drawing attention to Jeremy Black's observation that the idea of having a monoconfessional state or a national Church was relatively common throughout Europe in the eighteenth century but it became more difficult to sustain as time went on.[73] Black draws attention to attempts in both Petrine Russia and Maria Theresa's Austria to defend a unitary Church and yet also remarks on the problems that territorial expansion caused for the eighteenth-century state. British difficulties in North America have been mentioned already but it should also be remembered that Frederick the Great's invasion, and subsequent retention of Silesia, meant that for the first time a substantial number of Catholics fell under Prussian rule and the issue of a multi-confessional state had to be faced. More generally, the move from absolutism to Enlightened absolutism often seems to have been marked by the rejection of the monoconfessional model – once the state itself has been raised to a position of abstraction in its own right, the support of a single Church for a monarch perhaps ceased to be as important. In a more general survey of the relationship between Church and state in eighteenth-century Europe, Nigel Aston argues that while by 1790 the ties between Church and state had loosened, they had not disappeared and the idea of the confessional state retains a utility in describing Church–state relations in the period.[74] If anything, it was the impact of revolution on Europe in the 1790s that transformed the struggle from one between confessions into a battle between the forces of Christianity and the irreligion of the revolutionaries.[75]

So where, to conclude, does this leave the question of Britain as a confessional state in the eighteenth century? Borrowings from German historiography both magnify and undermine Clark's picture of the confessional state. By expanding the terms of reference to include the critical area of foreign policy – and thus drawing on the eminent Hintzean tradition of seeing foreign affairs as crucial for state formation – there seem to be good reasons for endorsing Clark's conclusion, at least in part, that Britain was a confessional state. Yet awareness of the German literature on confessionalisation also draws attention to some of the limits of Clark's argument. For Schilling and Reinhard, Protestantism needs to

[73] Jeremy Black, 'Confessional State or Elect Nation? Religion and Identity in Eighteenth-Century England', in Claydon and McBride, eds., *Protestantism and National Identity*, pp. 64–74.

[74] Nigel Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe, c. 1750–1830* (Cambridge, 2002), ch. 4.

[75] Ibid., ch. 5.

be subdivided into its Calvinist and Lutheran flavours and it is here that Clark's argument starts to look more suspect. In these terms, Britain was multi-confessional throughout the bulk of the period with which Clark is concerned because of both the existence of a separate establishment in Scotland and effective toleration in England. Critically, part of the importance of the foreign political ideas with which this chapter has been concerned lay in their non-denominationalism. The language was definitely one of a broad Protestant interest, encompassing both dissenters and foreign Protestants, and not a narrow Anglican one. Admittedly there was a spectrum of views and some were keen to emphasise, and in increasingly forceful terms as time went on, the superiority of Anglican Protestantism over all others – the High Church perspective. But there was also a more Whiggish and Low Church perspective that looked across the boundaries of establishment to stress common Protestantism. While the eighteenth-century British state was not *sensu stricto* confessional, it was most definitely Protestant both at home and abroad.

6 'Ministers of Europe': British strategic culture, 1714–1760

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During the past twenty years historians have once again begun to look at eighteenth-century British history in its European context.[1] Much of the discussion centres on the question of whether or not eighteenth-century Britain was an 'ancien régime' on continental lines.[2] There has also been important work on Britain's role in the European state system.[3] Yet many historians remain reluctant to integrate the implications of Britain's great power status for their subject. Jonathan Clark, who first sparked the 'ancien régime' debate, pays very little attention to foreign policy, concentrating instead on high politics and religion.[4] His second broadside, *Revolution and Rebellion*, included only a brief belated acknowledgement of its importance.[5] This trend has been accentuated by the current

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[1] Some historians, of course, always did: Wolfgang Michael, *Englische Geschichte im 18. Jahrhundert* (5 vols., Berlin, Basel and Leipzig, 1896–1955); and Ragnhild Hatton, *George I: Elector and King* (London, 1978). For recent attempts to place British history in its European context see: Eckhart Hellmuth (ed.), *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990); John Brewer and Eckhart Hellmuth (eds.), *Re-thinking Leviathan: The Eighteenth-Century State in Britain and Germany* (Oxford, 1999); T. C. W. Blanning and Peter Wende (eds.), *Reform in Great Britain and Germany 1750–1850* (Oxford, 1999); and most recently Stephen Conway's inaugural lecture 'Continental Connections: Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century', *History* 90, 299 (2005), pp. 353–74. The urbane and erudite canter by J. S. Bromley, 'Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century', *History* 66 (1981), pp. 394–412, is concerned mainly with cultural and intellectual links.

[2] See J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 1985), p. xiii, and passim, esp. ch. 6; Joanna Innes, 'Jonathan Clark, Social History and England's "ancien regime"', *Past and Present* 115 (1987), pp. 165–200. There are a few scattered foreign-policy references in the second edition, *English Society, 1660–1832: Religion, Ideology and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 67, 93, 107.

[3] Especially by Jeremy Black, *The Foreign Policy of Walpole* (Edinburgh, 1985) and *A System of Ambition: British Foreign Policy, 1660–1793* (Harlow, 1991); H. M. Scott, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of the American Revolution* (Oxford, 1990).

[4] See Clark, *English Society*, passim; Jonathan Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1986). A point also made by Innes, 'Jonathan Clark', p. 199 and Andrew C. Thompson, above, pp. 86–92.

[5] See Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion*, pp. 77–8.

historiographical preoccupation with the imperial dimension to eighteenth-century British history. Peter Marshall, for example, speaks of 'a nation defined by empire'.[6] Kathleen Wilson has written of a 'sense of the people' which was primarily imperial and colonial. Yet as one recent critic has noted, Wilson's very stimulating work makes virtually no reference to the 'world of European politics' within which the imperial themes she described were played out.[7]

This is surprising, because the European balance of power, and Britain's position within it, rather than taxation, popular unrest, confession, elections or colonial expansion, was the central political preoccupation of eighteenth-century Britain. It was by far the largest single subject of debate in parliament.[8] Virtually all of the king's speeches at the opening of the session, which were written by his ministers, and approved by him, primarily concerned foreign policy. From 1714, Britain was dynastically and geopolitically linked to the European mainland through the Personal Union with Hanover.[9] Foreign policy was thus central to shifting high-political fortunes, and especially to royal favour; most ministries before 1760 rose or fell on the strength of their perceived performance in defence of Britain's European position. The apparatus of the fiscal-military state so memorably discussed by John Brewer was primarily designed to sustain Britain's international role, not to defend against domestic rebellion.[10] Much contemporary British political thought centred on Britain's position within the state system.[11] European treaties, subsidies, wars and the balance of power generally also loomed large in the emerging public sphere.[12] Trade with Europe far outstripped that with overseas until

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[6] Peter Marshall, 'A Nation Defined by Empire, 1755–1776', in Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer (eds.), *Uniting the Kingdoms*: *The Making of British History* (London, 1995), pp. 208–22.

[7] See Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715–1785* (Cambridge, 1995) and *Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2002). For the critique see Bob Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2002), p. 105, and Conway, 'Continental Connections', pp. 353–5.

[8] *Pace* Jeremy Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 234, who says that parliament was 'dominated by local issues'.

[9] On this see now Brendan Simms and Torsten Riotte (eds.), *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714–1837* (Cambridge, 2007).

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

[11] As Istvan Hont has recently shown in *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), pp. 6, 11, 15–17, 53, 79, 81, 87 and passim.

[12] E.g. Bob Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, pp. 7–9, 15–16 and passim; M. John Cardwell, *Arts and Arms: Literature, Politics and Patriotism during the Seven Years War* (Manchester, 2004), pp. 2, 13, 22 and passim.

very late in the century.[13] Finally, the threat of Jacobitism was interpreted principally in the context of its success in securing great power backers: Spain in 1719, Russia throughout the 1720s and of course France in the 1730s, 1740s and 1750s.[14]

The British elite thus had to think systematically about Europe and Britain's relationship to it. This chapter attempts to look at the resulting 'culture of intervention' in eighteenth-century Britain; for reasons of space, popular views, which in many ways mirrored and interacted with those of ministers and members of parliament, will have to be left to one side.[15] This chapter will interpret the concept of political culture in its broadest sense. It will not be about strategy *per se*, but rather about the emergence of a hegemonic strategic concept which crowded out or suppressed, and in some cases converted, rival visions. The focus will not be so much on institutions and instruments, though these will be considered, as on the underlying assumptions. It borrows from the concept of 'strategic culture', which Jack Snyder defined as 'the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to . . . strategy'.[16] In so doing, this chapter also develops an insight from Tim Blanning's seminal *The Culture of Power*, which stresses that it was 'the success of the British and Prussian states in adapting their political cultures, which enabled them to achieve success in war'.[17] It will suggest that the emergence of a coherent 'strategic culture' in Britain was an important part of its success in the pre-1763 European state system.

The question of eighteenth-century British grand strategy – and the role of Europe in it – has been the subject of considerable debate. For much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was interpreted

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[13] The figures cited in Elizabeth Boody Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697–1808* (Oxford, 1960), esp. pp. 17–18, make this very clear.

[14] On this see the very perceptive remarks by Jeremy Black, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole* (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 138; and most recently Rebecca Wills, *The Jacobites and Russia, 1715–1750* (East Linton, 2002), p. 3 and passim.

[15] But see Cardwell, *Arts and Arms* and Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, passim.

[16] See Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations* (Rand, Santa Monica, 1977), R-2154-AF, p. 8, where the term was first coined. For the most recent discussion see the issue of the *Oxford Journal of Good Governance* 2/1 (March 2006), edited by Asle Toje, which is entirely devoted to the concept of 'strategic culture', especially the article by Ken Booth, 'Strategic Culture: Validity and Validation', pp. 25–8. I am extremely grateful to Mr Asle Toje of the Centre of International Studies, Cambridge, for sharing his knowledge of 'strategic culture' with me and particularly for letting me read his unpublished paper 'The Small State Strategic Culture, or Conceptualising Europe's Strategic Frailty', February 2006.

[17] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), p. 3.

in terms of Britain's unstoppable naval and colonial destiny. Here the seminal texts were Alfred Thayer Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*, which spoke of an England (sic) 'defended and nourished by the sea', and Julian Corbett's more nuanced *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy*.[18] By contrast, Herbert Richmond's naval study of the War of the Austrian Succession stressed the importance of the European theatre.[19] Significantly, Richmond was himself a navy man. In the mid-1930s, Richard Pares penned his classic article on 'American versus Continental Warfare', identifying a strategy which paid colonial dividends in the Seven Years' War.[20] More recently, Hamish Scott has drawn attention to a long-standing and hegemonic view of the importance of the 'Old System' – the alliance with the Dutch and Austrians to curb the French – in British policy until well into the second half of the eighteenth century.[21]

All the same, there has been a marked reluctance among some historians to reflect in any structured way on eighteenth-century British strategy. The very notion of 'strategy' has been dismissed as anachronistic. Thus Richard Middleton argues that 'The concept of "strategy" was limited at the time. The word itself is not to be found in Johnson's dictionary.'[22] The doyen of British naval historians, N. A. M. Rodger, claimed not long ago that 'it is important to understand that strategy in the modern sense did not really exist', the term being a nineteenth-century borrowing from the French. 'Eighteenth-century British statesmen did not know the word, and consequently had no distinct concept of the thing.'[23] This scepticism reflects a broader revisionist historiography, which tends to stress the contingent over the structural. Thus if Jeremy Black has on occasion allowed for 'continuities . . . in terms of the modern concept of strategic culture' in eighteenth-century thinking about foreign policy,[24] he has

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[18] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783* (Boston, 1890), p. 291; Julian S. Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy* (2 vols., London, 1907).

[19] See H. W. Richmond, *The Navy in the War of 1739–48* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1920), I, pp. xix, 93–4, 138–9, and passim; vol. II, p. 190 and passim. See also his *The Navy as an Instrument of Policy, 1558–1727* (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 358–9, 362.

[20] Richard Pares, 'American versus Continental Warfare, 1739–1763', *English Historical Review* 51 (1936), pp. 429–65.

[21] H. M. Scott, '"The True Principles of the Revolution": The Duke of Newcastle and the Idea of the Old System', in Jeremy Black (ed.), *Knights Errant and True Englishmen: British Foreign Policy, 1660–1800* (Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 55–91.

[22] Richard Middleton, *The Bells of Victory: The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry and the Conduct of the Seven Years' War 1757–1762* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 23.

[23] N. A. M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649–1815* (London, 2004), p. 259.

[24] See Jeremy Black, 'Recovering Lost Years: British Foreign Policy after the War of the Polish Succession', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 15/3 (2004), p. 469.

more usually inclined towards trenchant 'Tory' ripostes to all notions of 'strategies' and 'systems'. In an elegant formulation, Black dismissed the 'Whig' view of Europe and international affairs as 'a mechanistic viewpoint in thrall to Newtonian physics, with clear-cut national interests that could be readily assessed and balanced'. He has more sympathy with the 'Tory attitude', which 'drew on a coherent intellectual and moral philosophy. It was inherently pessimistic about the possibilities of creating trust and workable collective systems, and inclined to assume that any settlement of differences would be precarious, if not short-term.'[25] This picture is reinforced by the nature of the surviving source material. The principal protagonists, the Secretaries of State for foreign affairs, Lord Townshend, Lord Carteret, the Duke of Newcastle, less so William Pitt, were avid correspondents in foreign affairs, but their communications tended to deal with the cut and thrust of policy, not with its underlying principles. Thus Karl Schweizer speaks of the 'relative rarity of coherent commentaries on strategy by eighteenth-century British politicians'.[26]

By contrast, this chapter postulates a coherent 'system' to eighteenth-century British mainstream thinking about foreign policy. It argues that a coherent British grand strategy towards Europe did exist, and that it can be reconstituted from the private correspondence, official dispatches, pamphleteering activities and, not least, parliamentary statements. For it was often in the set-piece debates in the House of Commons and the Lords that the otherwise unspoken assumptions – which underlie the cut and thrust of routine diplomatic dispatches or hurried private notes – were openly articulated. Here the purpose of the exercise is not to parse every sentence – parliamentary reporting was as incomplete as it was unreliable[27] – but to reconstruct the recurring conceptual structures that transcended the immediate context.

I

Let us start with a simple fact. The British elite knew about Europe, and knew more as the eighteenth century progressed. A considerable number had fought there during the War of the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV, and were to do so again in the 1740s and 1750s.[28] Some of them studied

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[25] Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy*, p. 196.

[26] Karl W. Schweizer, 'An Unpublished Parliamentary Speech by the Elder Pitt, 9 December 1761', *Historical Research* 64 (1991), p. 93. In a similar vein sees also Black, *Collapse of the Anglo-French Alliance*, p. 87.

[27] See Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy*, pp. 137–63.

[28] A point made in Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1986), pp. 2–3.

there, including William Pitt, who spent time at the University of Utrecht. Many more went on the Grand Tour.[29] British statesmen – eventually including the usually inert Duke of Newcastle – frequently accompanied the king to Hanover.[30] British diplomats and soldiers served in Europe. British newspapers and imported foreign gazettes reported in great detail on European developments.[31] As a result the British elite was remarkably well informed. This comes across very clearly in the parliamentary sphere where the embarrassing gaffe or manifest geographical ignorance was rare, at least before 1760.[32] At the same time, the early eighteenth-century British foreign-policy establishment was in many respects part of a broader European elite. Two of the most prominent experts of the time, Luke Schaub and St Saphorin, were foreign-born and routinely reported to London in French from their diplomatic posts; in the latter case, English documents had to be translated into French before he could read them.[33] Few British statesmen picked up as much European language and culture as Carteret did at Westminster School,[34] but most could get by in French. Indeed, French rather than the German of myth, seems to have been George I's favoured language of deliberation with Carteret.[35]

Contemporary vocabulary reflected the centrality of Europe, most strikingly in the use of the words 'empire' and 'electorate'. By the nineteenth century, these terms had acquired their present-day meanings. To our protagonists, however, as Jeremy Black pointed out in an inspired passage, 'the empire meant the Holy Roman Empire'.[36] One might add

[29] See Jeremy Black, *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Stroud, 1992).
[30] See Uta Richter-Uhlig, *Hof und Politik unter den Bedingungen der Personalunion zwischen Hannover und England* (Hanover, 1992), pp. 43–4.
[31] See Jeremy Black, 'The Press and Europe', in his *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London and Sydney, 1987), pp. 197–244; Graham Gibbs, 'Newspapers, Parliament and Foreign Policy in the Age of Stanhope and Walpole', in *Melanges offerts à G. Jacquemyns* (Brussels, 1968), pp. 293–315, esp. p. 295.
[32] For the traditional view of an 'ignorant' parliament see C. H. Firth, 'The Study of British Foreign Policy', *Quarterly Review* 226 (1916), pp. 470–1. Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy*, p. 146, also p. 170 and passim. On the high quality of parliamentary speeches see also Schweizer, 'An Unpublished Parliamentary Speech by the Elder Pitt, 9 December 1761', p. 92.
[33] See for example Townshend to St Saphorin, 9 March 1722, Whitehall, Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover (hereafter NHStA), Hann. 91 St Saphorin Nr 1/II, fo. 16 for the forwarding of George's speech to parliament, 'a laquelle Monsr Colman vous servira d'interprete'.
[34] Williams, *Carteret and Newcastle*, p. 9.
[35] See e.g. Carteret to Newcastle, 22 August 1721, Whitehall, British Library (hereafter BL), Additional Manuscripts (hereafter Add. MSS) 32686, fo. 185, which quotes verbatim an exchange between the author and George I.
[36] Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy*, p. 86. Interestingly, the most recent study of the eighteenth-century British conception of empire makes only glancing reference to the

that to eighteenth-century British statesmen the 'Electorate' was in most contexts not something whose votes they periodically sought, but the Electorate of Hanover, to which Britain was bound by dynastic union and to which their monarch regularly repaired. When Lord Hervey, the diarist and courtier, said of Queen Caroline that 'whenever the interests of Germany and the honour of the Empire were concerned, her thoughts and reasonings were often as imperial as if England had been out of the question',[37] it is clear that he was referring to central Europe, not overseas. Likewise, when the Duke of Newcastle spoke of 'The liberties of the Empire, in opposition to France',[38] it was the German princes he was concerned with. In short, the world British statesmen inhabited – certainly before 1760 – was still a firmly Eurocentric one.

Of course, there were those who attacked the British strategic consensus on Europe and espoused a naval and insular destiny in its stead.[39] This discourse had a long pedigree, but it exploded with renewed force in the 1730s in the popular and parliamentary clamour for a maritime war against Spain.[40] These currents were famously summed up by the former Secretary of State and arch-Tory Bolingbroke in his tract on *The Idea of a Patriot King*, which was originally penned in 1738. 'The situation of Great Britain,' Bolingbroke wrote, 'the character of her people, and the nature of her government, fit her for trade and commerce . . . The sea is our barrier, ships are our fortresses, and the mariners, that trade and commerce alone can furnish, are the garrisons to defend them.' 'Great Britain', he continued, 'is an island.' She should avoid continental wars and devote 'a continual attention to improve her natural, that is her maritime strength'. He concluded that 'Like other amphibious animals, we must come occasionally on shore; but the water is more properly our element, and in it, like them, as we find our greatest security, so we exert our greatest force.'[41] Throughout the post-1714 period, these themes formed the

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fact that the term had connotations other than the colonial: David Armitage, 'The British Conception of Empire in the Eighteenth Century', in Franz Bosbach, Hermann Hiery and Christoph Kampmann (eds.), *Imperium/Empire/Reich. Ein Konzept politischer Herrschaft im deutsch-britischen Vergleich. An Anglo-German Comparison of a Concept of Rule* (Munich, 1999), p. 92.

[37] Cited in A. W. Ward, *Great Britain and Hanover: Some Aspects of the Personal Union* (Oxford, 1899), p. 133.

[38] See Newcastle's 'Considerations upon the present state of affairs', 1 November 1741, Claremont, BL, Add. MSS 35407, fos. 128–9.

[39] Daniel Baugh deals with this debate in 'Great Britain's "Blue-water" Policy, 1689–1815', *International History Review* 10/1 (1988), pp. 33–58.

[40] See Philip Woodfine, *Britannia's Glories: The Walpole Ministry and the 1739 War with Spain* (Woodbridge, 1998), esp. pp. 128–53.

[41] Bolingbroke, *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism and on the Idea of a Patriot King* with an introduction by A. Hassall (Oxford, 1926), pp. 116, 122.

staple of opposition attacks on British involvement in Europe. Continental engagement was dismissed as futile and un-British.[42]

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the very notion of a European balance and Britain's supposed role in it, should have been so controversial. As Walpole remarked in some exasperation in January 1734, 'really by some gentleman's way of talking, one would imagine that the ministers of England were the ministers of Europe . . . if any unforeseen accidents abroad, if the ambitions of any foreign prince or the misconduct of any foreign court produce any untoward effects or occasion any troubles or commotions in Europe, the ministers of England are immediately loaded with the whole; it is they who have done the mischief and they must answer for it'.[43] 'The balance of power', the anti-Walpolean Whig courtier and colonial enthusiast, the Earl of Halifax, announced in late January 1744, 'has a powerful sound, which many who never appeared to know or to consider its meaning, have employed to subject this unhappy nation to plunder, and to exact subsidies for the neighbouring powers.'[44] William Pitt the Elder expressed himself in similar terms while in opposition.

All the same, the prevailing elite sense was that Britain was an integral part of Europe, which could and should not cut herself off from developments there. They had come to that view during the Wars of the Grand Alliance from 1688 to 1713, when England – after 1707 Great Britain – had been the linchpin of the European effort against France. Thus in 1716 the Earl of Sunderland attacked the 'old Tory notion that England can subsist by itself whatever becomes of the rest of Europe', as one 'so justly exploded ever since the revolution [of 1688]'.[45] In 1752, the Duke of Newcastle justified the payment of subsidies to the Elector of Saxony on the grounds that Britain should not rely only on the 'wooden walls' of the navy.[46] In November 1755, the Lord Chancellor the Earl of Hardwicke observed that 'No man of sense or integrity will say that you can quite separate yourselves from the continent. A commercial kingdom must have connections there.'[47] A year later William Pitt, now in

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[42] E.g. William Cobbett (ed.), *The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803* (36 vols., 1806–20) (hereafter Cobbett), XIII, 6 December 1742, col. 913. For examples of navalist and anti-European rhetoric in popular ballads see Black, *America or Europe? British Foreign Policy, 1739–1763* (London, 1998), p. 60.

[43] Cobbett, IX, 23 January 1734, col. 208.

[44] Cobbett, XIII, 27 January 1744, cols. 587–8.

[45] Cited in Basil Williams, *Stanhope: A Study in Eighteenth-Century War and Diplomacy* (Oxford, 1932), p. 243.

[46] Cited in Black, *America or Europe?*, p. 122.

[47] Cited in Mitchell Dale Allen, 'The Anglo-Hanoverian Connection, 1727–1760' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 2000), p. 274.

government, told parliament that it 'must go as far as the interest of this country were combined with those of the powers of the continent, for combined they were'.[48]

On this view, island status was not enough to shield Britain from shifts in the European balance. In 1742, the MP John Perceval dismissed the 'new doctrine [which] has been taught and inculcated for some months past, that it is of no importance to this nation what may happen on the continent; that this country is an island intrenched within its own natural boundaries, that it may stand secure and unconcerned in all the storms of the rest of the world'.[49] Two years later he warned that if France succeeded in putting 'all Europe' into 'universal bondage', then 'our situation as an island will never balance our situation in such a neighbourhood'.[50] Likewise, Carteret lampooned those who called on Britons to 'disregard all the troubles and commotions of the continent, not to leave our own island in search of enemies, but to attend our commerce and our pleasures'. In fact, he argued, 'our own independence', was closely linked to the 'liberties of the continent'.[51]

This was because eighteenth-century Britain was not, *pace* its naval enthusiasts, generally believed to be an island in geopolitical terms. Thanks to the personal union with Hanover it had been a composite state since 1714, whose borders lay in north Germany as much as on the Channel, the Atlantic or the North Sea. Hanover, as the opposition Whig peer, the Earl of Chesterfield, complained in a famous pamphlet, 'robbed us of the benefit of being an island'.[52] As Ragnhild Hatton once pointed out, during this period Britain should more properly be called 'Hanover-Britain'.[53] Historians have tended to approach the Hanoverian connection in terms of whether or not it distorted British foreign policy for the personal ends of George I and George II.[54] It may be more helpful, however, to conceive of the relationship as a symbiotic one, in which the king and often his ministers tended to see British and Hanoverian interests as one and the same.

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[48] Cited in Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, p. 69.
[49] Cobbett, XII, 10 December 1742, col. 1047.
[50] Cobbett, XIII, 11 January 1744, col. 428.
[51] Parliamentary speech of 27 January 1744, in J. H. Plumb and Joel H. Wiener (eds.), *Great Britain: Foreign Policy and the Span of Empire* (New York, 1972), vol. I, pp. 85–6.
[52] *The Case of the Hanover Forces* (1742) cited in Harding, 'Dynastic Union', p. 183.
[53] Although the leading expert on the Personal Union insists that Britain and Hanover 'were always two distinct international realities': R. Hatton, *The Anglo-Hanoverian Connection 1714–1760* (1982 Creighton Lecture; London, 1982), p. 3.
[54] See e.g. Black, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole*, p. 29 and Pares, 'American versus Continental Warfare', p. 447, on the question of separating Hanoverian and general continental concerns.

A glance at both confidential correspondence and public rhetoric bears this out. Viscount Townshend, then Secretary of State for the northern department, argued in the early 1720s that there was nobody who did not see that 'the interests of His Majesty as King and Elector were inseparable and that his German affairs could not suffer without weakening his government here'. Even if 'His Majesty had two characters/identities, He was the same person and consequently had the same interest'.[55] Three years later Townshend reminded his correspondent that 'we all serve one master and the British as well as the German minister must obey his orders as they see fit to give us'.[56] In the early 1740s, Lord Carteret warned that 'all the weight and power' of Great Britain would be exerted in defence of the king's 'German dominions . . . whenever they shall be involved with England in the great and general cause'.[57] Likewise, in the Seven Years' War the Earl of Hardwicke argued that 'The case of Great Britain and Hanover [was] mixed and entangled.'[58] Indeed, when British statesmen had the opportunity to neutralise Hanover, as they did in 1726, 1741 and 1757, they declined to do so, mainly for strategic reasons. Hanover was integrated into – some said subordinated to – a common European strategy.[59] British and Hanoverian diplomats worked together closely, if not without friction, throughout the period, particularly under Townshend in the 1720s and the Newcastle–Muenchhausen partnership in the late 1740s and early 1750s.[60] In short, as the Tory Baron Bathurst put it in a mid-century pamphlet, Britain had a 'naturalized tenure among the Germanic body on the continent'.[61] Britain was perceived geographically and strategically not as an island but as a European state.

To many, therefore, the idea that Britain had the principal role to play in the maintenance of the balance of power was axiomatic.[62] Moreover, the balance was not self-perpetuating: it required active British management.

[55] Townshend to St Saphorin, 22 August 1721, Whitehall, NHStA, Hann. 91 St Saphorin Nr 1/I, fos. 102–3.
[56] Townshend to St Saphorin, 6 March 1724, Whitehall, NHStA, Hann. 91 St Saphorin Nr 1/II, fo. 220.
[57] Cited in Williams, *Carteret and Newcastle*, p. 127.
[58] Hardwicke to Newcastle, 11 September 1757, in P. C. Yorke (ed.), *The Life and Correspondence of Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1913) (hereafter Hardwicke), III, p. 176.
[59] See e.g. Carteret's remarks cited in Harding, 'Dynastic Union', p. 211; Williams, *Carteret and Newcastle*, p. 127.
[60] For examples of both cooperation and tension see Townshend to St Saphorin, 21 February 1724, Whitehall, NHStA, Hann. 91 St Saphorin Nr 1/I, fo. 216; ibid., 6 March 1724, fos. 219–20.
[61] *A Letter to a Friend concerning the Electorate of Hanover* (London, 1744), cited in Harding, 'Dynastic Union', p. 212.
[62] See in general terms Michael Sheehan 'Balance of Power Intervention: Britain's Decisions for or against War, 1733–56', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 7/2 (1996), pp. 271–89;

As one parliamentarian observed in mid-1730s 'though all the nations of Europe are equally concerned with us in preserving the balance of power, yet some of them may be blind to their own interest; nay it is very probable some of them always will'. Therefore, he argued, Britain should not 'neglect what is necessary for our own security' or refuse to contribute to maintaining the balance. One peer, Lord Cholmondeley, remarked in the House of Lords in April 1741, that it was up to Britain to rally Europe: 'till we take the lead, other powers will not stir'.[63] Likewise, the Whig MP Thomas Winnington justified the dispatch of troops to Flanders in April 1742 'because it will shew that we are not only willing but ready to join with those other powers of Europe, who ought to have as great an interest, and ought to have an equal concern for preserving a balance of power in Europe'.[64]

But Britain not merely had a calling to maintain the balance, it also had a clear interest in doing so. It was only the European balance, British diplomats, statesmen and members of parliament believed, that stood between Britain and the threat of 'universal monarchy',[65] which would not only destroy British commerce, but would bring in its train the return of the Stuarts and the subversion of the Revolution Settlement of 1688. As Carteret argued in December 1741, 'The liberty and repose of Europe is almost lost; after which we shall not keep ours long.'[66] It was for this reason that the 'liberties of Europe' and the 'Protestant cause' were often spoken of in the same breath. The European balance persuaded Britons, albeit grudgingly, to overcome their inhibitions about standing armies, dig into their pockets and endorse the annual Mutiny Bill, as well as demands for subsidies to continental powers.[67]

Admittedly, Sir Robert Walpole, who dominated British politics in the two decades before 1740, was a rather important exception. He was as much of a Tory in foreign policy as he was a Whig at home; he famously kept Britain out of the War of the Polish Succession. Yet throughout his long ascendancy, foreign policy tended to be dominated by the more interventionist Secretaries of State, especially the Duke of Newcastle, Townshend and Carteret, and the monarch himself. This was certainly true of the 1720s, though in the 1730s Walpole did assert himself more

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'The Sincerity of the British Commitment to the Maintenance of the Balance of Power, 1714–1763', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 15/3 (2004), pp. 489–506.

[63] Cobbett, XII, 9 April 1741, col. 149.

[64] Cobbett, XII, 29 April 1742, col. 614.

[65] On 'universal monarchy' in contemporary rhetoric see (re France) Carteret, in Cobbett, XIII, 1 December 1743, col. 129.

[66] Cobbett, XII, 4 December 1741, col. 227.

[67] E.g. Cobbett, XII, 10 December 1742, col. 942.

effectively. But even then, Walpole was less hostile to Hanover and ignorant of European affairs than is sometimes supposed.[68] And when Walpole fell in 1742 it was not for domestic reasons, but because he had been accused of the unforgivable sin of neglecting the European balance of power, by abandoning Austria in the face of a resurgent France. In the end, the prevailing culture of intervention proved too strong for him.

For much of the eighteenth century, certainly from the 1730s to the 1770s, British statesmen deemed the principal threat to the European balance to be France. In the 1720s, however, there were widespread fears of Austrian, Spanish and even Russian pretensions to 'universal monarchy', or at least regional hegemony in key areas such as the Baltic and the Mediterranean. In every case, with the single exception of Orthodox Russia, the antagonist was Roman Catholic. It is also true that in contemporary rhetoric, anti-popery, the Protestant cause and the balance of power were closely connected. But 'universal monarchy' was essentially a political, not a confessional, term. It had been, after all, applied to the Protestant Dutch in the seventeenth century, and it never prevented alliances with Catholic great powers, primarily Austria, but also France.[69]

II

All this required a very high level of conceptual flexibility from British statesmen and diplomats. Most of the time it made sense to view the territorial configuration of Europe as a system of barriers designed to contain France. The two Bourbon courts of Madrid and Versailles must be kept apart at all costs; never again should a French king be able to proclaim, as Louis XIV once had, that there were 'no more Pyrenees'. Piedmont-Savoy had to be bolstered to keep the French out of Italy; the Austrian presence there was to be nurtured. The British presence in Gibraltar and especially Minorca served to curb Spain, and after the breakdown of the *entente* in 1731, France as well. The loss of Naples and Sicily to a branch of the Spanish Bourbons after the Habsburg defeats in the War of the Polish Succession was therefore a major blow to Britain's

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[68] See the slightly two-edged account in Jeremy Black, 'An "Ignoramus" in European Affairs?', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 6 (1983), pp. 55–65 and Nick Harding, 'Sir Robert Walpole and Hanover', *Historical Research* 76/192 (May 2003), pp. 165–86.

[69] On the subject of religion and English/British foreign policy see Steven C. A. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650–1668* (Cambridge, 1996) and Andrew C. Thompson, 'The Protestant Interest and Foreign Policy in Britain and Hanover, c. 1719–1740' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2002), which was published as *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest, 1688–1756* (Woodbridge, 2006).

European policy. First of all, because it made the containment of French thrusts into Italy more difficult. Secondly, because it subverted Austrian power more generally and thus the balance of power as a whole.

Central Europe was equally if not more important. At first sight this may seem surprising. Britain had continuous diplomatic accreditation only to the two largest German states, Austria and Prussia,[70] and the level of representation was uneven.[71] In fact, the Holy Roman Empire was an important pillar of the European system; maintaining its integrity against French encroachments was a high priority in Whitehall. 'The Empire', Henry Pelham claimed in April 1741, 'may be considered as the bulwark of Great Britain, which if it be thrown down, leaves us naked and defenceless';[72] he was using the term in its non-colonial sense, of course. Similarly, George Doddington claimed that 'France knows very well, that the German Empire, when united, is a body too mighty for her to encounter.'[73] Critical to this unity was strong leadership from the emperor.[74] 'It is for the general interest of Europe', Newcastle wrote in the mid-1740s, 'that the Imperial Crown should be fixed in the House of Austria, late experience has, I think, sufficiently shewd. A weak emperor will be (and sooner or later must be) a French emperor.'[75] British elite opinion was correspondingly aghast when the territory of Lorraine, which many regarded as an outer rampart or 'barrier' for the empire, was lost to France.[76]

The resulting familiarity of British politicians with the complexities of the Holy Roman Empire is well documented. Thus Townshend was forced into the highways and byways of the *droit de non appellando* and other imperial arcana in the 1720s.[77] On other occasions, even Townshend had to admit defeat. 'I confess', he remarked *vis-à-vis* George I's obsession with the imperial investitures of Bremen and Verden, 'that I am not sufficiently familiar with the laws of the Empire and its particular constitutional structure.'[78] He did know enough, however, to recognise his own ignorance; he may, of course, merely have been tactfully suggesting to

[70] See Horn, *Britain and Europe*, p. 178.
[71] See D. B. Horn (ed.), *British Diplomatic Representatives, 1689–1789*, RHS, Camden Third Series, vol. XLVI (London, 1932), pp. 40–69.
[72] Cobbett, XII, 13 April 1741, col. 178.
[73] Cobbett, XIII, 6 December 1743, col. 259.
[74] See Horn, *Britain and Europe*, p. 198.
[75] Newcastle to Chesterfield, 22 February 1745, Newcastle House, in Richard Lodge (ed.), *Private Correspondence of Chesterfield and Newcastle, 1744–46* (London, 1930), p. 16.
[76] See the remarks of an anonymous parliamentarian in Cobbett, IX, 15 January 1736, cols. 981–2.
[77] See Townshend to St Saphorin, 7 November 1721, Whitehall, NHStA, Hann. 91 St Saphorin Nr 1/I, fo. 196.
[78] Townshend to St Saphorin, 20 June 1721, Whitehall, NHStA Hann. 91 Nr 1/I, fo. 48.

his master that this was a Hanoverian, not a British, matter. To the elder William Pitt, recommending the imperial jurist Samuel von Pufendorf to his nephew at Cambridge came quite naturally; he praised another learned tome 'relating to the Empire of Germany' as 'an admirable book in its kind, and esteemed of the best authority in matters much controverted'.[79] Pitt also showed a familiarity with German politics during the relevant parliamentary debates, at least when it suited him.[80]

Just across the Channel was the 'barrier' itself: here the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) had erected a ring of Dutch-garrisoned fortresses, backed up by the Austrian Habsburgs in present-day Belgium to prevent French troops from flooding into Flanders and towards the Dutch Republic. The progressive decline of the Dutch, and the steady loss of Austrian interest in maintaining the 'barrier', profoundly affected the way in which the British elite thought about Europe from the mid-1730s onwards.[81] As one ministerial pamphleteer argued towards the end of the War of the Austrian Succession, 'this island would be the seat of the war, if once our out-works on the continent were entirely in the possession of the enemy'.[82] The choice of words here is interesting: the first line of defence is not the Channel – the 'moat defensive to a house' of Shakespearian and navalist rhetoric – but the mainland itself. Ten years later, Newcastle lamented to Bentinck that he saw 'the great system upon the point of being dissolved – the court of Vienna is driving the Republick and with her this country from them, as fast as they can'. If the Dutch withdrew their garrisons from the Barrier towns, Newcastle continued, 'the system founded upon the Grand Alliance is at an end'.[83]

The greatest hindrance to the British strategic conceptualisation of Europe, however, was not necessarily the decrepitude of the barrier, but its redundance. This was most obviously the case in the two decades after the Utrecht treaty, when the elaborate system devised to contain France proved – rather like the guns at Singapore in 1942 – to be pointing the wrong way. During this period, British interests were threatened in the Baltic by Russia, in the Mediterranean by Spain, and in central Europe by the growing ambition of the Emperor Charles VI. In these circumstances, British policy had to be thrown into reverse. During the years

[79] See Thomas Pitt to Pitt, 12 October 1756, in W. S. Taylor and J. H. Pringle (eds.), *The Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, vol. I (London, 1838), pp. 176–7. Pitt to Thomas Pitt, 13 January 1756, Horse Guards, in Taylor and Pringle (eds.), *The Correspondence of Pitt*, I, p. 152.
[80] See Cobbett, XIV, cols. 965–7.   [81] See Horn, *Britain and Europe*, p. 56.
[82] Cited in Conway, 'Continental Connections', p. 358.
[83] Newcastle to Bentinck (copy), 17 December 1754, Newcastle House, BL, Add. MSS 32851, fos. 327–8.

immediately after Utrecht, Stanhope concluded an alliance with France (1716–31), boxed in Spain to the south through the Quadruple Alliance and, less successfully, sought to contain Peter the Great in the north. It is no coincidence that George I then became, as Jeremy Black has put it, something of a 'Protestant crusader' on behalf of the Protestant states in the empire against the emperor.[84]

In order to master the challenges thrown up by the state system, the British elite conceived of Europe in the round. This meant keeping an eye on several evolving local balances simultaneously. Some areas mattered much more than others, but each part of Europe was believed to be connected. Thus the Duke of Newcastle, the Secretary of State for the south, remarked in February 1725 that 'the affairs of the North and South are so interwoven together, that any stand or rub that happens in either place must in consequence affect the other'.[85] Soon afterwards, Townshend highlighted the link between the Mediterranean and the Baltic balances by observing that 'Tho the fire begins so farr off as Gibraltar, yet the train is so laid that the flame would soon reach to the north.'[86] In the same spirit, a decade later, Newcastle reported that George II had responded to French attempts to bring Sweden into the War of the Polish Succession with the observation that 'if Sweden was to take part in the war in the north that could not but influence the general affairs of Europe'.[87] Twenty years after that, the Secretary of State for the southern department, Thomas Robinson, articulated the complexity of the balance when he remarked that 'We can do nothing without the Dutch, the Dutch nothing without the Austrians, nor the Austrians anything without the Russians.'[88]

Nowhere was the interconnectedness of Europe more evident than on the dynastic front. Here Britain's assets were limited. As a Protestant power in a world dominated by the larger Catholic dynasties, there were relatively few options, and the conversion of the Saxon Elector to become King of Poland narrowed them still further. An Anglo-French marriage was mooted by Paris in the early 1720s, but turned down by George I largely for confessional reasons. A match with the Stadtholder in the mid-1730s was in part designed to shore up the increasingly moribund

[84] Jeremy Black, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of Walpole* (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 119.
[85] Cited in Chance, *Alliance of Hanover*, p. 1.
[86] Ibid., p. 492.
[87] Newcastle to Waldegrave (draft), 6 June 1734, Whitehall, BL, Add. MSS 32785, fo. 132.
[88] Cited in D. B. Horn, *Sir Charles Hanbury Williams and European Diplomacy, 1747–58* (London, 1930), p. 202.

Dutch.[89] Apart from Scandinavia, Britain was for the most part limited to unions with the middling and smaller German states. In the mid-1750s, for example, several marriages were mooted to bolster the defence of Hanover and – especially – the alliance with Prussia.[90] Of course, the traction provided by marriage should not be overestimated: the dismal state of Anglo-Prussian relations in the 1720s was caused by the mutual hatred between George I and his son-in-law, Frederick William I.

The potential threat from European dynastic marriages was enormous. In this period more than any other since, British statesmen and diplomats lived figuratively with almanacs, court calendars and royal genealogies in one hand and a map of Europe in the other. The greatest continuous dynastic headache facing Britain in the early eighteenth century was the Austrian succession. Ever since the early 1720s, it was probable that Charles VI would die without a male heir. Whether or not the daughters of his elder brother or – as Charles himself laid down in the Pragmatic Sanction – his own eldest daughter Maria Theresa succeeded was not important in itself. What was immensely significant was whether and under which circumstances the Habsburg inheritance would be passed on undivided, or partitioned. In the 1720s, when relations with Austria were abysmal, and a dynastic union with Spain in the offing, Britain was reluctant to endorse the Pragmatic Sanction and thus an immense Austro-Spanish conglomerate. By the 1730s, when it became imperative to shore up Austrian power in central Europe as a bulwark to France, there was no keener advocate of the Pragmatic Sanction. Clearly, some deaths and marriages mattered much more than others, depending largely on whether they changed the nature of the strategic map.

Looking at Europe in the round brought opportunities as well as challenges: one of the standard tactics of British statesmen in the 1720s was to attempt to mobilise the Ottoman Turks against the Russians. Thus Townshend instructed the British envoy to Constantinople in November 1725, Abraham Stanyan, that the Russians should be pinned down in Asia to make them 'less attentive and less enterprising to create trouble and uneasiness to the King on this side'.[91] Likewise in the mid-1750s, Russia was mobilised to deter Prussia from attacking Hanover. These examples show not so much that these strategies were subtle or well founded, but that British statesmen explicitly conceived of Europe and Britain's place in very broad terms.

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[89] See Veronica Baker-Smith, *A Life of Anne of Hanover, Princess Royal* (Leiden, New York, Cologne, 1995).

[90] On this see Muenchhausen to Newcastle (copy), 24 February 1756, Hanover, NHStA, Hann. 91 Muenchhausen I, Nr 22, fo. 40.

[91] Cited in Chance, *Alliance of Hanover*, p. 214.

There was, however, one serious barrier to integrated thinking in foreign policy: the division between the southern and northern Secretaryships of State. The Northern Secretary dealt with Austria, United Provinces, Prussia, Poland, the Holy Roman Empire, Denmark, Sweden and Russia. The Southern Secretary was responsible for France, Spain, the Italian states, Portugal, Switzerland and the Ottoman Empire. This could lead to a bifurcation in strategic vision, with the inevitable friction that entailed. Strictly speaking, neither of the secretaries was subordinated to the other. It has been claimed that the Southern Secretary, who until 1768 was also responsible for the colonies, was ex officio the more senior of the two.[92] This may be the case for most of Newcastle's later tenure in the 1730s and 1740s, but it would not be true for the 1720s, when Townshend was clearly the dominant figure. In some cases, responsibility was clear: bilateral relations with Prussia were always likely to be handled by the Northern Secretary; those with Portugal by the Southern Secretary. France, which was diplomatically heavily committed across Europe, was a less straightforward case, but generally fell within the purview of the Southern Secretary. Russia, however, posed particular difficulties. Baltic issues were obviously the remit of the Northern Secretary, and most dealings with St Petersburg took place within a broadly north German or north European context.

And yet, as we have seen, British statesmen also tried to use the Ottoman Empire – the responsibility of the Southern Secretary – against Russia. The same blurring of competencies was also to be seen in slightly less extreme form with regard to Austria, which was a central, western and southern European power. The resulting confusion was summed up in August 1736 by the veteran diplomat Horace Walpole the Elder: 'I do not wonder', he wrote, 'at [our] embarrass in . . . negotiations; consultations and orders are carried on in England with such confusion and in so undigested a manner; the affairs of Turkey are in the province of one Secretary [of State], the directions to be sent to the Hague belong to the department of another, these two I believe see one another but little, and I perceive that one [Harrington] writing nothing at all and the other [Newcastle] will not suffer nobody but himself to think or write anything that may concern his province.'[93]

The danger of hasty and unreflective engagement in Europe, of course, was that Britain might become the 'Don Quixote' of Europe, tilting at imaginary threats to the balance. In March 1734, at the height of the War of the Polish Succession, in which Britain remained neutral, one

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[92] Most recently by Rodger, *Command of the Ocean*, p. 258.
[93] Cited in Black, 'Recovering Lost Years', p. 482.

parliamentarian exclaimed, 'For God's sake Sir, are we thus to be eternally the dupes of Europe? If the emperor, or any other power, neglects to keep their fortified places in a proper posture of defence, must we answer for that neglect? Are we, for the sake of preserving the balance of power to undertake, at our own charges, to defend every power in Europe, and to prevent their being invaded or conquered by any of their neighbours?'[94] Ten years later, the MP Edmund Waller warned that 'we have of late got into a ridiculous custom, of making ourselves the Don Quixotes of Europe; and sometimes under the pretence of preserving a balance of power in Europe, at other times under the pretence of preserving a balance of power in the north, we have engaged . . . in the quarrel of almost every state in Europe, that has, by its impudence or ambition, brought itself into any distress. The consequence is, that whilst we take upon ourselves the burden of defending our allies, they give themselves very little trouble about defending themselves.'[95] Britain thus risked, as the parliamentarian John Philipps warned in December 1741, becoming a 'knight errant', wasting the nation's blood and treasure on selfless quests which European powers should be undertaking themselves.[96]

III

The instruments which British statesmen could bring to bear in support of their European policy were varied, but also problematic. One option was pre-emption or unilateral military intervention. Here the Royal Navy proved itself a useful instrument of British European policy. In 1718, for example, Admiral Byng famously worsted the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro before the declaration of war, and thus wrecked Madrid's attempt to dominate the western and central Mediterranean. Pre-emptive strikes were also widely canvassed as tension mounted with Spain in the late 1730s. In 1742 Commodore Martin appeared in the Bay of Naples and threatened to level the royal palace if its ruler did not come to heel. Pre-emptive strikes were actually carried out against French shipping in 1755, well before the formal outbreak of hostilities. The lessons of Frederick the Great's surprise attack on Silesia were also taken to heart. In October 1761, for example, the parliamentarian George Lyttleton demanded that Britain should act '*à la Prussienne*' and strike first, while the enemy was unguarded'.[97]

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[94] Anon. parliamentarian, 28 March 1734, Cobbett, IX, col. 599.
[95] Cobbett, XIII, 11 January 1744, col. 425.
[96] Cobbett, XII, 6 December 1742, col. 914.
[97] Quoted in Jeremy Black, *Pitt the Elder* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 224.

Unilateral military, principally naval, intervention, was however a very limited and imprecise instrument.[98] It sufficed neither to intimidate Peter the Great in the Baltic between 1716 and 1720, not least because the Royal Navy could not follow his galleys into shallow waters, nor to master Spain in 1739–41, nor to compensate for Britain's weakness on land in the final years of the War of the Austrian Succession, 1746–7. Moreover, Britain was simply not strong enough to right the European balance on its own. Its peacetime regular army was larger than that of a middling German state, to be sure, but substantially smaller than the Prussian and Austrian armed forces, not to mention those of France. Between 1714 and 1740, there were on average some 35,000 men available for service around the world.[99]

Central to the culture of intervention, therefore, was a realisation that the British power was limited and that British interests could only be achieved in cooperation with other states. The resulting reliance on diplomacy and European alliances, often backed up by Britain's formidable fiscal power in the shape of subsidies, made Britain a state like any other, and diluted her sense of exceptionalism. It was for this reason that the former arch-unilateralist William Pitt announced in late 1759 that he had 'unlearned his juvenile errors, and thought no longer that England could do it all by herself'.[100]

If much of the public sphere, the louder parliamentary voices and some of the more raffish politicians wrapped themselves in the naval flag, at the expense of the European connection, the anti-unilateral reflex among the elite was stronger. Here the traumatic experience of the Treaty of Utrecht, when Britain had abandoned its continental allies, resonated throughout the first half of the century.[101] It made British statesmen cautious of courting popularity at the expense of the true national interest. 'I remember the great approbation given to the treaty of Utrecht', Carteret remarked in February 1741, 'and in a little time the makers of it impeached. The capital fault of it was making France too strong, and Germany too weak.'[102] Pulling out of Europe, another parliamentarian argued not long after,

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[98] On the 'practical problems of employing naval power to achieve diplomatic ends' see Black, *America or Europe*, p. 60, and Black, 'British Naval Power and International Commitments: Political and Strategic Problems, 1688–1770', in Michael Duffy (ed.), *Parameters of British Naval Power, 1650–1850* (Exeter, 1992), esp. pp. 39 and 43. See also Richmond, *The Navy as an Instrument of Policy*, p. 380 and passim.

[99] See John Childs, 'The Army and the State in Britain and Germany during the Eighteenth Century', in Brewer and Hellmuth (eds.), *Re-thinking Leviathan*, p. 56.

[100] Quoted in Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, p. 158.

[101] On this see now most recently Jens Metzdorf, *Politik-Propaganda-Patronage. Francis Hare und die englische Publizistik im spanischen Erbfolgekrieg* (Mainz, 2000), pp. 353–416.

[102] Cobbett, XI, 13 February 1741, col. 1047.

'will be a more unjustifiable measure than the desertion of the Grand Alliance in 1712'.[103] It was this same reflex which caused William Pitt to announce at the height of the Seven Years' War – December 1758 – that 'he would not give up an iota of our allies for any British considera-tion'.[104] Indeed, after Pitt's resignation in 1761, ostensibly over Spain but really because of the abandonment of the Prussians, one friend conjured up the spectre of 'Gertrudenberg and Utrecht'.[105] Pitt himself referred to the 'treaty of Utrecht, the indelible reproach of the last generation'.[106]

All this contributed to a culture of strategic restraint: here minis-ters differed from the militant pamphleteers and hawkish parliamen-tarians determined on colonial despoliation. They knew that unilateral action could jeopardise Britain's defence of the European balance, and indeed provoke an anti-hegemonic reflex against it. It was for this rea-son that British statesmen hesitated to push home their maritime advan-tage against France towards the end of the Seven Years' War. Newcastle observed that 'to think of being able to extirpate the French from north America, or if we could, that our business was done by doing so, or that such a nation as France would sit down tamely under it, is to me the idlest of all imaginings'.[107] The Duke of Bedford, a former Secretary of State, claimed that 'the endeavouring to drive France entirely out of any naval power is fighting against nature and . . . must excite all the naval powers of Europe to enter into a confederacy against us as adopting a system'.[108] Even Pitt conceded the force of these arguments. 'He sees', as one observer noted, 'that in order to obtain peace, so much of our acquisitions must be given up.'[109]

This shows that the European balance of power was explicitly accorded a much higher priority than colonial or commercial concerns.[110] Thus British statesmen were slow to anger over colonial 'depredations' in the 1730s, for fear of driving Spain further into the French camp in Europe, where Britain was temporarily isolated. It was the failure of Walpole to

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[103] Cobbett, XIII, 11 January 1744, col. 392.
[104] Cited in Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, p. 133.
[105] Bishop of Gloucester to Pitt, 17 October 1761, Prior Park, in Taylor and Pringle (eds.), *The Correspondence of Pitt*, II, p. 161.
[106] Pitt to Keene, 23 August 1757, Whitehall, in Taylor and Pringle (eds.), *The Correspon-dence of Pitt*, I, p. 251.
[107] Quoted in Browning, *Newcastle*, p. 268.
[108] Bedford to Bute, 9 July 1761, in Lord John Russell (ed.), *Correspondence of John, Fourth Duke of Bedford*, vol. III (London, 1846), p. 26.
[109] Hardwicke to Newcastle, 10 April 1760, Moor Park, in Yorke (ed.), Hardwicke, III, p. 245.
[110] For a well-argued sceptical view see N. A. M. Rodger, 'The Continental Commitment in the Eighteenth Century', in Lawrence Freedman, Paul Hayes and Robert O'Neill (eds.), *War, Strategy and International Politics* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 39–55.

stop the threatened partition of the Habsburg lands in 1740–1 which holed his administration below the waterline, not the much-criticised handling of the war with Spain. Similarly, at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Canadian fortress of Louisburg, wrested with such fanfare from the French three years earlier, was exchanged for a French withdrawal from the Low Countries, a much more vital area of British interest.[111] Truly, as Jack Sosin remarked, drawing on Canning's subsequent famous phrase, 'the New World had redressed the balance of the old'.[112]

It is significant that in the early stages of the Seven Years' War, Pitt initially asked not for the Southern Secretaryship, with its colonial responsibilities, but for the northern department. Whatever his public rhetoric and later myth, therefore, Europe remained his principal preoccupation throughout. In June–July 1757, at the height of the war, there were many more ships and men deployed on the near side of the Atlantic.[113] The famous coastal expeditions against St Malo, Brest and Rochefort were not so much expressions of naval virtue as a desperate attempt to draw off French resources and thus ease the pressure on Britain's only continental ally, Frederick the Great. Even at the height of the conflict, the imperial apotheosis of 1759, the year of victories, most British regular forces were to be found in Europe rather than overseas, and the contingent in Germany was actually increased in 1760.[114] For most of the war, which is now remembered very much as an imperial venture, British officers – including General Wolfe, the hero of Quebec – longed for European rather than colonial postings. In December 1758, Wolfe as yet unaware of his impending rendezvous with imperial destiny, lamented that 'it is my misfortune to be cursed with American services', whereas his friend was lucky enough 'to serve in an army commanded by a great and able Prince', that is the Duke of Brunswick.[115]

In short, by mid-century a coherent British strategic culture had emerged. It was firmly Eurocentric: it gave absolute priority to preventing the growth of a hegemon on the continent, from the 1730s a role taken by France after a generation when Spain, Russia and Austria had all played

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[111] On this see the authoritative work of Manfred Mimler, *Der Einfluss kolonialer Interessen in Nordamerika auf die Strategie und Diplomatie Grossbritanniens während des Österreichischen Erbfolgekrieges 1744–1748. Ein Beitrag zur Identitätsbestimmung des britischen Empire um die Mitte des 18. Jahrundert* (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York, 1983), p. 135 and passim.

[112] Jack M. Sosin, 'Louisburg and the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle 1748', *William and Mary Quarterly* 14 (1957), p. 535.

[113] For the figures see Middleton, *Bells of Victory*, p. 25.

[114] See the figures in W. D. Bird, 'British Land Strategy', part 3, *Army Quarterly* 21 (1930–1), p. 50.

[115] Cited in Middleton, *Bells of Victory*, p. 101.

that part. This culture was mainly, though not exclusively, Whig. In this culture political and diplomatic instruments counted as much as military or naval ones; sometimes more so. It was restrained and conscious of the limits of British power. It generally subordinated narrowly naval and colonial to continental European concerns. Underpinning everything was a powerful sense of structure: Europe was conceived as an overall balance with a combination of regional balances. The British elite was generally well informed about Europe, and all times sensitive, perhaps overly so, to potential dynastic permutations and geopolitical revolutions. British statesmen thought and spoke of Europe in terms of 'systems', 'barriers' and 'natural' allies, such as the Habsburgs. Rather than being fixated on the 'moat' of the surrounding silver sea, they conceived of the European mainland itself as an integral part of Britain's defences – a 'rampart'. *Pace* Walpole, they were expected to be and often perforce were 'ministers of Europe'.

With the accession of George III in 1760, and the triumphant end to the Seven Years' War in 1763, this strategic culture did not change overnight. As Hamish Scott has shown,[116] British statesmen continued to see Europe as their primary focus, but they were now working within a context which was more stridently colonial and maritime than anything they had previously known. Unlike the first forty-odd years after 1714, they now found themselves working with a monarch – George III – who was firmly opposed to the 'German War'; he sought to safeguard Hanover primarily through the structures of the Holy Roman Empire rather than European alliances. Moreover, British statesmen were themselves not immune from the naval exuberance which had accompanied victory in the Seven Years' War; and they were less willing than an earlier generation to make concessions in support of a continental alliance. As Jeremy Black put it, the 'interventionist habit of mind . . . was lost as far as Europe was involved'.[117] In this new conception of the world, the colonial empire now loomed much larger.

Contrast, for example, Newcastle's heroic if futile efforts to implement an Imperial Election scheme in the early 1750s, with the steadfast refusal of British statesmen, twenty years later, to agree to the 'Turkish Clause' with Russia. The new men seemed unable to grasp that if they wanted European powers to act on Britain's behalf, they would need to offer them something in return. They were also less able to adapt to shifting balances.

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[116] Scott, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of the American Revolution*, passim.
[117] See Black, *America or Europe?*, p. 102 and Daniel A. Baugh, 'Withdrawing from Europe: Anglo-French Maritime Geopolitics, 1750–1800', *International History Review* 20/1 (1998), pp. 1–32.

Contrast the speed with which Stanhope adjusted to the Russo-Spanish threat after 1716, with the helplessness with which British statesmen watched the balance of power shift eastwards after 1763. Contrast, finally, the sophisticated debates on Europe of the first part of the century with the parliamentary ignorance and indifference of the 1760s and 1770s. It can come as no surprise that, before long, Britain was to be isolated in Europe and famously went down to defeat in America.

7   Confessional power and the power of confession: concealing and revealing the faith in Alpine Salzburg, 1730–1734

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In the eighteenth century, the archbishopric of Salzburg – like the Electorate of Mainz, the subject of Tim Blanning's first monograph – was a semi-independent territory of the Holy Roman Empire ruled by an ecclesiastical prince who wielded both secular and ecclesiastical authority. Like Mainz and other ecclesiastical principalities of the empire, Salzburg retained its semi-autonomous status up to the Napoleonic era, when it was finally absorbed by Habsburg Austria. Today it is of course Mozart, Salzburg's native prodigy, who dominates its carefully burnished baroque facade. But around the time of Mozart's birth in 1756, Salzburg's reputation – at least in Protestant Europe – was coloured by a very different image. It grew out of the notorious *Emigrationspatent* (1731) of Archbishop Leopold Anton Freiherr von Firmian, an edict that resulted in the expulsion of more than 20,000 Protestants (most of them Lutheran peasants and farmhands) in the years between 1731 and 1734. The majority sought refuge in Protestant Prussia; the remainder settled in other territories of the empire, with a few hundred migrating to James Edward Oglethorpe's newly founded colony of Georgia. The expulsions occasioned a torrent of protest throughout Protestant Europe, while in the empire itself, as Mack Walker has shown, the extraordinary quantity of pamphlets and published sermons sparked by the expulsions made it one of the most resounding *causes célèbres* of the century.[1] In this regard, the episode is a pointed reminder of a theme running throughout Professor

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[1] Mack Walker, *The Salzburg Transaction: Expulsion and Redemption in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Ithaca and London, 1992). The standard Austrian account, written from a Protestant point of view, is Gerhard Florey, *Geschichte der Salzburger Protestanten und ihrer Emigration 1731/32* (2nd edn, Salzburg, 1986), while Franz Ortner, *Reformation, katholische Reform und Gegenreformation im Erzstift Salzburg* (Salzburg, 1981), pp. 179–262, is written from a Catholic viewpoint. On the expulsions in the Gastein valley, the focus of the present essay, see Gertraud Oberhummer, 'Die Verfolgung und Auswanderung der Gasteiner Protestanten unter Erzbischof Leopold Anton von Firmian' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Innsbruck, 1950).

Blanning's work: the enduring power of religion in what is conventionally considered an age of Enlightenment.

The expulsions marked the culmination of recurrent efforts, conducted over two centuries with varying degrees of intensity, to re-Catholicize the territory's sizeable remnants of Protestantism. These had survived in the archbishopric's remote Alpine districts to the south, mainly in the region known as the Pongau. Efforts to reconvert them had been a notable failure, another reminder of the limits of what historians now call 'confessionalization'. A clandestine Protestant subculture, dating back to the Reformation, had managed variously to resist and accommodate efforts by the ecclesiastical government to establish confessional uniformity. Key to the success of this strategy had been an ability to conform outwardly with Catholic beliefs and practices, while at the same time preserving integral elements of a Protestant identity.

Focusing on the Gasteinertal, the Alpine valley situated in the southernmost part of the Pongau, this essay explores local confessional dynamics that brought an end to this stalemate. It begins with an account of the 1730 Corpus Christi celebration in Hofgastein (the parish seat of the valley), which epitomized the blend of accommodation and resistance that had become the hallmark of Salzburg Protestantism on the eve of expulsion. The second part examines devotional techniques deployed by local Catholic authorities, in alliance with Jesuit missionaries imported from outside the territory, which served to construct or sharpen confessional boundaries that two centuries of clandestine Protestantism had served to blur. As the final section of the essay concludes, the result was a process of confessional polarization that helped facilitate one of the largest and most draconian religious expulsions in early modern Europe.

Sounds of music in Alpine Salzburg: Corpus Christi, 1730

On a June morning in 1730, parishioners in the Alpine market-village of Hofgastein gathered for the mass preceding its annual Corpus Christi procession.[2] The celebrant was Thomas Wagner, the local parish priest, with musical accompaniment provided by the village's ten-member choir. The leaders of the choir were two soloists, the peasant Michael Pichler and the linen-weaver Bartholomeus Landraiter; the remaining eight vocalists were mainly peasants and artisans. Most were long-standing members: the weaver Landraiter and the sawyer Mattheus Huber had sung for more than twenty years, while Landraiter's son Georg, also a

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[2] Unless otherwise indicated, the account that follows is from local reports and interrogations (mostly by Hofgastein's parish priest, Thomas Wagner) found in the *Salzburger Landesarchiv* (henceforth *SLA*), Emigrationsakten, Karton 29, fos. 1–2, 141–58, 438–9, 540–62.

weaver, and the peasant brothers Matthias and Wolfgang Leyerer, had sung in the choir for about a decade. Choirs of this sort, which sources from the period refer to as *Kirchensänger*, appear to have become common in areas of the Tyrol and Salzburg in the seventeenth century. Unlike later parish choirs, which towards the end of the eighteenth century began to take their repertoires from officially sanctioned hymnals, *Kirchensänger* set simple liturgical texts to existing folk melodies. Like the Hofgastein singers, these 'folk choirs' were exclusively male and composed of simple laymen. In Catholic German-speaking regions of the eastern Alps, folk choirs began to die out in the nineteenth century. A few survive today in Alpine parishes of the Tyrol and South Tyrol, where Manfred Schneider, an Innsbruck ethnomusicologist, conducted fieldwork in the late 1980s and was able to collect hundreds of texts found in handwritten parish songbooks.[3]

The centrepiece of the choir's performance that day was what appeared to be a Catholic hymn known to parishioners as 'Father High on Heaven's Throne' (*Vater Hoch im Himmels Throne*). The choir performed it first as a part of the mass's penitential rite (*Kyrie*) and then in the Corpus Christi procession that followed. The sources yield no detailed description of the procession that day,[4] but scattered pieces of archival evidence, illuminated by studies of Corpus Christi processions elsewhere in German-speaking Catholic Europe,[5] give some idea of what it must have looked like. The focal point would have been the Eucharistic host, borne by Father

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[3] See Manfred Schneider, 'Musikethnologische Feldforschungen in Südtirol', *Der Schlern* 61 (1987), pp. 243–55. On folk choirs see also Hildegard Herrmann-Schneider, *Musik in Tirol. Grundzüge ihrer Geschichte von der Zeit Kaiser Maximilians bis zum Ende der k. und k. Monarchie* (http:/www.musikland-tirol, 2002), ch. II, pt. 2.

[4] Fortuitously, there exists a nineteenth-century depiction by Adolph von Menzel, 'Corpus Christi Procession in Bad Hofgastein, 1880', which the painter undertook during a visit to what was by then a fashionable Alpine spa. Narrating the procession's progress as it made its way into the Hofgastein churchyard, Menzel's painting depicts a canopy-bedecked clergy as the central link in a chain that joined banner-bearing members of local confraternities in the front with rows of burghers to the rear. (What appear to be well-dressed tourists in the foreground are otherwise engaged and seem not particularly interested – perhaps a subtle but revealing accretion of late nineteenth-century Kulturkampf?)

[5] Excellent studies of Corpus Christi processions in Austria and Germany include Ulrike Aggermann-Bellenberg (Kammerhofer-Aggermann), 'Die Grazer Fronleichnamsprozession von der Zeit ihrer Entstehung bis zu den Reformen des aufgeklärten Absolutismus' (Ph.D. dissertation, Institut für Volkskunde, University of Graz, 1982), pp. 44–5; Aggermann-Bellenberg 'Quellenvergleich zu den Fronleichnamsprozession in den Städten Graz und Salzburg vor und nach der Reformationszeit. Die Rolle der Corporis-Christi-Bruderschaften in der Fronleichnamsprozession', in Helmut Eberhart et al., eds., *Volksfrömmigkeit. Referate der Österreichischen Volkskundetagung 1989 in Graz* (Vienna, 1990), pp. 267–84; Charles Zika, 'Hosts, Processions, and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century Germany', *Past and Present* 118 (1988), pp. 25–64; and on the role of music, Alexander J. Fisher, *Music and Religious Identity in Counter-Reformation Augsburg, 1580–1630* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 226–56.

Wagner under the shelter of a baldachin (or *Himmel*, the canopy customarily used in solemn processions). Preceding Wagner and those carrying the baldachin (perhaps the mayor and members of the village council) were likely members of the local miners' brotherhood, bearing banners with the image of their patron St Barbara, and representatives of the Confraternity of the Rosary (*Rosenkranzbruderschaft*), a Marian lay confraternity promoted by Franciscan and Capuchin missionaries throughout the Pongau and first introduced into Hofgastein in 1676.[6] Filling out the column would have been other parishioners, with the choir holding up the rear (as later testimony attests) and repeating its rendition of 'Father High on Heaven's Throne'.

Not everyone was pleased with the music that day, or at least not with the choir. At some point following the procession, an anonymous informant related to Wagner that although the vocalists had sung the melody of 'Father High on Heaven's Throne' properly, they had taken liberties with the text. The original lyrics of the hymn, which I was able to identify with some degree of certainty in Schneider's collection of folk hymns,[7] were heavily Marian in flavour. Fifteen of sixteen verses contained references to the Virgin, attesting efforts by Catholic clergy and missions in the region to promote the veneration of Mary. The Hofgastein choir, however, had replaced the Marian text of the hymn with an entirely different set of stanzas. Pater Michael Zech, a Jesuit missionary in the Gastein valley, cited some of the stanzas (with due horror and disgust) in a 1732 report

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[6] Account records from the valley's mining brotherhood in 1709 refer to disbursements for the purchase of banners portraying St Barbara, to be carried in that year's Corpus Christi procession. *SLA*, Bergoberamt, Gastein, Fasz. 37/2. The original charter of Hofgastein's Confraternity of the Rosary is located in the *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, 10/2: Pastoralia Hofgastein (Bruderschaften), 21 September 1676, along with annual inventories of the banners, staffs and other objects carried by members in local processions.

[7] Tiroler Landesmuseum *Ferdinandeum*, Innsbruck, Volkslied-Archiv, Signatur 45h 8/10. What I believe to have been the lyrics survive in a 1721 manuscript version from the Tyrol and may have been of Jesuit origin, since a later handwritten copy indicates that it was also published in a 1735 handbook of devotional exercises used by clergy conducting popular missions in the Tyrol. I could not locate the handbook, which was entitled *Christliche Andachts-Übungen / zu Gebrauch der durch Ihro Kayserliche und Königliche Majestät mit Genehmigung Ihro Päpstlicher Heiligkeit im Land Tyrol eingeführten Heiligen Mission cum Permisso Superiorum* (Innsbruck, 1735). Other versions of the hymn can be found in Innsbruck's Volkslied-Archiv, but they appear to be of much later provenance (e.g. Schmieden, c. 1850, Sig. IIIST/PS2, pp. 366ff.; Brixen, 1910, Sig. 51 b 5, 2; Inntal, 1910, Sig. 45S 9/9; Geiselberg, 1927, Sig. III ST/GE 14, p. 49; Nasen, 1930, Sig. IIIST/N2, p. 49; Reinswald, 1947, Sig. IIIST/R3, pp. 24ff.). In any case, we know from the testimony of a Hofgastein choir member that *Vater Hoch im Himmels Throne* was one of the 'U. L. Frauen Gsänge', i.e. a Marian hymn. *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, Reformation Gastein, 11/71: Verhöre, 1731 (interrogation of the peasant Georg Leyerer, 24 April 1731).

to the archbishop.[8] Below are some of the offending stanzas, juxtaposed alongside selections from the original Marian lyrics:

Original	*Hofgastein version*
O Maria, chosen one	*He who knows the Truth*
God was born of your body	*and remains steadfast to the end*
O Virgin of virgins	*God too will stand by him*
Who brings hope to all the world	*with his spirit and his angel.*
Drive out all that is unholy	*Tyrant! How dare you make us flee*
Everlasting Lady and Mother.	*God will lead our cause.*
Help us in the final battle	*Do not flinch from the tonsured mob*
Mother of mercy, Mother of Christ	*Entrust your cause to our dear God*
Full of Grace and honour, the purest of all	*Let them drive us from our land*
Whose chastity is pleasing unto God	*We shall praise and give thanks to God*
Unstained, untouched, free of sin	*Christ shall guide us*
Mother of all loveliness, eternal wonder.	*and lead us to another home.*
Thou who heals sick children	*Should they cast us into prison*
Thou who gives refuge to all sinners	*God will look down from heaven*
Thou who consoles in sadness	*and say: you godless tyrant*
Drive out all that is unholy	*You do violence to the apple of my eye*
Help us in the final battle	*Because you rage and storm with sound and fury*
Everlasting Lady and Mother	*You shall repay me in the fires of Hell.*

What was the source of the anti-Catholic lyrics that the Hofgastein choir brazenly injected into the celebration of Corpus Christi, a day which the Church had in the late fourteenth century elevated to the status of the four major feasts of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and the Assumption? Members of the choir confessed under interrogation that they had taken their text from a Protestant hymnal known to inhabitants of the valley as 'Das Sechzigerl' (the *Book of the Sixty*, so named because it contained sixty hymns). The particular hymn in question, known colloquially as the 'Loinbacher', had also been reprinted in what was by far the most popular clandestine devotional text in the Pongau, the 'New Evangelical Missive' (*Neu-Evangelischer Sendbrief*) of Joseph Schaitberger.[9] Handwritten

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[8] Zech, 'Miserabilis Gasteinensium Status in tertia missione detectus, et syncero descriptque A. 1732, 3. December', *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 28a, fos. 159–60.

[9] Joseph Schaitberger (1658–1733), a salt miner from the Salzburg village of Dürrnberg, had been expelled as a Protestant and emigrated to Nuremberg in 1686. Numerous editions of his missive, which exhorted Salzburg Protestants to remain true to their faith, appeared after 1710 under the title *Neu-vermehrter Send-Brief, darinnen vier und zwanzig nützliche Buchlein enthalten. Geschrieben an die Landsleute in Salzburg und andere gute Freunde, dadurch dieselbigen zur christlichen Beständigkeit, in der evangelischen Glaubens-Lehr, Augspurgischen Confession, in ihrem Gewissen aufgemuntert werden*. In Schaitberger's *Neu-vermehrter Sendbrief* the text of the 'Loinbacher' appears under the title, 'Wir Christen hier im Jammertal'. Samuel Urlsperger, at that time Senior Pastor in Augsburg and a

copies of the hymn also seem to have circulated widely: in this particular case the weaver Landraiter, one of the choir's two soloists, confessed to having copied out stanzas of the hymn for the other singers. Some members of the choir also admitted they had sung the 'Loinbacher' in previous Corpus Christi masses and processions, and the investigation revealed that the hymn had been sung in the valley's two filial churches as well.[10]

According to August Hartmann, who discussed the origins of the 'Loinbacher' in his three-volume collection of historical German folk songs, some of the verses may have been Anabaptist in origin with others added later.[11] He also speculated that 'Loinbacher' could have been a corrupt version of Lambach, the Upper Austrian village where a 1626 uprising of Protestant peasants began. It is also possible that 'Loinbacher' referred originally to Martin Laimbauer, an Upper Austrian Protestant peasant who in the 1630s claimed to possess prophetic powers. After the Swedish army marched into Upper Austria and revived Protestant hopes there, Laimbauer had roamed throughout the area preaching, singing and exhorting Protestants in the territory to remain steadfast in their faith. In 1636, when he led a peasant uprising in Upper Austria's Mühlviertel district, he was captured by the Habsburg authorities and beheaded in Linz. According to Hartmann, the 'Loinbacher' may have been one of his songs.[12]

However much the antics of the Hofgastein choir may have dismayed local Catholic authorities, the Protestant appropriation of Catholic devotional melodies had been common since the very onset of the Reformation. The device is an example of what musicologists call *contrafactum*, the practice in vocal music of substituting one set of lyrics for another without any substantial change to the original melody.[13] Most popular songs in the medieval and early modern period were probably

leading champion of Salzburg Protestants, wrote that clandestine Protestants in Habsburg Carinthia were also familiar with the hymn. See his letter of 15 January 1732 in George Fenwick Jones, ed., *Henry Newman's Salzburger Letterbooks* (Athens, GA, 1966), p. 291.

[10] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29, fos. 92, 544–5.

[11] August Hartmann, *Historische Volkslieder und Zeitgedichte vom sechzehnten bis neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1907–13), 2:263–7. The hymn also receives brief mention in Gerhard Walterskirchen, 'Das protestantische Lied in Salzburg', in *Reformation. Emigration. Protestanten in Salzburg. (Ausstellung 21. Mai – 26. Oktober 1981. Schloss Goldegg. Pongau. Land Salzburg)* (Salzburg, 1981), p. 148.

[12] On Laimbauer (his actual name was Aichinger but he commonly went by the name of his farmstead) see Franz Wilflingseder, 'Martin Laimbauer und die Unruhen im Machlandviertel 1632 bis 1636', *Mitteilungen des oberösterreichischen Landesarchivs* 6 (1959), pp. 136–208.

[13] Robert Falck and Martin Picker, 'Contrafactum', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London, 2001), vol. VI, pp. 367–70; Robert

contrafacta, since the singers and balladeers who peddled copies of their lyrics after performing them on the street or in taverns did not usually create new melodies for their songs. In the early Reformation, Protestant songwriters (including Luther) appropriated hundreds of Catholic devotional melodies and replaced their texts with Protestant lyrics. As Rebecca Wagner Oettinger pointed out in her recent study of popular songs in the German Reformation, contrafacta enabled reformers to build an imposing corpus of Protestant vocal music and were ideally suited for the dissemination of confessional propaganda.[14] For one, the adaptation of Protestant texts to familiar popular melodies was a useful mnemonic device enabling the reader or hearer to remember the text more easily and hence absorb its confessional message. Protestant lyricists also used contrafacta to purge traditional Catholic songs of elements they found objectionable. Hans Sachs, for example, repeatedly appropriated traditional Catholic melodies whose themes had focused, say, on the Virgin, and added new lyrics that displaced the pre-existing Marian language and imagery in favour of a more Christ-centred text. Hence the traditional Catholic song 'Maria Zart', 'Sweet Mary', became 'Jesu Zart', to cite just one example.[15]

I would argue that for the Protestant singers in the Hofgastein choir, contrafactum had a different meaning. By marching in the Corpus Christi procession and participating in the mass, they accepted roles as liturgical actors in a Catholic performance. But within it they also staged a counter-performance: by displacing the triumphal Marian imagery of 'Father High on Heaven's Throne' with the defiantly Protestant 'Loinbacher', they expressed their dissenting stance within the parish confessional community. In this context, contrafactum mirrored the bifurcated confessional conscience of a religious minority that over the centuries had outwardly accommodated itself to an officially dominant Catholicism while at the same time carving out a sphere of opposition to it. Protestants in Alpine Salzburg married each other and baptized their children in the Catholic faith, attended mass (though like many of their reliably Catholic neighbours, with varying degrees of regularity), took communion, went on pilgrimages and marched in village processions. But to an exceptional degree they had also managed to preserve integral

Falck, 'Parody and Contrafactum: A Terminological Clarification', *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979), pp. 1–21; Walther Lipphart, 'Über die Begriffe Kontrafakt, Parodie, Travestie', *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* 12 (1967), pp. 104–11.

[14] Rebecca Wagner Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 1. See also Fisher, *Music and Religious Identity in Counter-Reformation Augsburg*, pp. 31–7.

[15] Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda*, ch. 1.

elements of a Lutheran confessional identity. Ownership of Lutheran devotional texts was widespread, ranging from sixteenth-century copies of Luther's *Small Catechism* to contemporary editions of Joseph Schaitberger. They were concealed in the walls and roofs of their cottages and outbuildings or buried under piles of firewood, to be taken out on occasion and read aloud at household devotions or at conventicles hosted by friends and kinfolk. And as their reactions to a stepped-up, officially supported programme of Marian piety shows (see below), they had absorbed fundamental Lutheran beliefs on issues like justification, purgatory and indulgences.

There was a logic to the choir's choice of the Corpus Christi celebration as the stage for its contrafactual performance. The central symbol of the celebration, the body of Christ, highlighted Catholic doctrines of the Eucharist and affirmed a central tenet of the Catholic faith, transubstantiation. The Corpus Christi procession was also a symbolic re-enactment of the bonds of unity woven into the secular and ecclesiastical fabric of a community. The canopy that sheltered the priest as the local representative of ecclesiastical authority was customarily born by town or village leaders and evoked the unity of secular and sacred power.[16] The participation of lay confraternities, guild organizations and the town citizenry also embodied, at least in principle, the community's organic unity as a secular and as a sacred body. Late medieval Salzburg sources expressed this imagined unity in referring to the procession as a *circuitus civitatis*, literally an encirclement of and by the town community. As such, the ritual defined and demarcated the social and spatial boundaries of the local community.[17]

But Corpus Christi processions could also be divisive occasions, usually taking the form of wrangling over precedence that sometimes marred the celebration.[18] In a confessionally divided region like Gastein, religious differences heightened the potential for conflict.[19] In the later sixteenth century, archbishops had corresponded regularly with the valley's mining officials regarding the annual procession. In May of 1564 a letter

[16] Zika, 'Hosts, Processions, and Pilgrimages', pp. 37–48.

[17] Aggermann-Bellenberg, 'Die Grazer Fronleichnamsprozession', pp. 44–5; Aggermann-Bellenberg, 'Quellenvergleich zu den Fronleichnamsprozession in den Städten Graz und Salzburg', pp. 267–84.

[18] See for example the detailed account of struggles over precedence in the Austrian town of Graz during Corpus Christi processions in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, in Aggermann-Bellenberg, 'Die Grazer Fronleichnamsprozession', pp. 234ff. See also Zika, 'Hosts, Processions, and Pilgrimages', pp. 40–1.

[19] Compare the example of bi-confessional Augsburg, where Corpus Christi processions could also be occasions for tension and conflict: Fisher, *Music and Religious Identity in Counter-Reformation Augsburg*, pp. 61–3.

from Archbishop Johann Jakob von Kuen-Belasy to the valley's mining magistrate (*Bergrichter*) expressed grave concern about the participation of the local miners' brotherhood in the procession that year. Gastein's miners had been the backbone of Protestantism in the valley ever since Salzburg's Peasants' War of 1525, in which they had played a vanguard role, and unrest erupted again in 1564 when Protestant miners and peasants in the valley demanded the right to receive both elements of the Eucharist.[20] The archbishop's 1564 letter alluded to 'seductive preachers [who] have been smuggled in and out of Gastein, mostly by miners who have since been dismissed'. The archbishop was doubtless alarmed about the potential for violence in a procession focused on the Eucharist, since Catholic interpretations of the sacrament were precisely what rebellious Protestants in the valley were contesting in demanding the chalice. Accordingly, he solicited information about any arms the miners might carry and enjoined officials to ensure that the procession take place with proper 'discipline and modesty'.[21] The 1730 performance of the Hofgastein choir showed that the Corpus Christi procession had remained a confessionally fraught occasion. The choir's contrafactual inversion of the ceremony placed in question the unity of creed and community that the procession otherwise sought to enact, and testified to the sharpening of confessional divisions that were building in the wake of intensified persecution.

A closer look at the spatial dimensions of the choir's performance suggests another kind of logic at play. How had the choir hoped to colonize the liturgical space of the Corpus Christi celebration without being detected? Father Wagner recalled that during the mass, choir members were seated towards the rear of the church and hence behind the other parishioners. In other words, the rows of parishioners to the front shielded the choir acoustically from the priest at the altar. Similarly, noted the priest, the heretical lyrics had escaped his notice during the procession as well, since the choir had marched at the rear of the procession behind

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[20] See Karl-Heinz Ludwig, 'Miners, Pastors and the Peasant War in Austria 1524–26', in Janós Bak and Gerhard Benecke, eds., *Religion and Rural Revolt* (Manchester, 1984), pp. 156ff.; Ludwig, 'Bergleute im Bauernkrieg', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 5 (1978), pp. 23–47.

[21] *SLA*, Bestand Museum Carolino Augusteum, Nr 442. Just how confessionally contested the procession had become after the Reformation is seen in the case of Graz, the provincial capital of Habsburg Styria, which remained formally under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Salzburg archbishop until the reforms of Joseph II. By the mid-sixteenth century the population of Graz had become overwhelmingly Protestant, and no Corpus Christi processions took place between 1552 and 1572. Only after the Habsburg archduke imported Jesuits into the city in 1572 did the annual procession resume. See Aggermann-Bellenberg, 'Die Grazer Fronleichnamsprozession', pp. 126ff.

other parishioners. Hence the distance between the choir and Wagner again prevented him from discerning the lyrics, which the university-educated priest noted were in any case sung in a rustic local dialect that was difficult to understand. As in the mass, the lyrics of the 'Loinbacher' would have been audible to parishioners but not to Wagner, a configuration that allowed the choir to make its presence known to the lay public but evade detection by their priest.

The way in which the choir appropriated the ceremonial space of Corpus Christi – acoustically as well as spatially – suggests a process simultaneously clandestine and open, one in which the choir concealed its heterodoxy from clerical authority while appealing directly to the lay public of the parish.[22] There is reason to believe that the appeal met with at least some sympathy, though obviously not from the informant who denounced the choir to the priest ('per privatam denunciacion', to use Wagner's phrase).[23] One member of the choir, the weaver Landraiter, admitted that their performance had sparked peals of laughter during the procession.[24] Even among the village's reliably Catholic parishioners, there is evidence that the choir's protest against escalating persecution might have elicited at least some sympathy. Catholics and Protestants had co-existed in the valley for two centuries, and the reams of interrogations conducted in Alpine Salzburg before and after the expulsion make clear that confessional membership cut across kinship networks. Mixed marriages were not uncommon, and children of such unions might well receive religious instruction in both faiths. In such households, attempts to impose confessional uniformity must have sparked considerable tension.

Economic interests also came into play. According to the report of December 1732 by the Jesuit Michael Zech, Hofgastein's Catholic shopkeepers and artisans considered the expulsion edict bad for business and a threat to their economic livelihoods. Two months later, in fact, the village mayor of Hofgastein, a Catholic innkeeper by the name of Hans Pichler, submitted a petition to the archbishop protesting the harsh treatment accorded suspected Protestants during interrogations by Wagner and his Jesuit associates. According to Pichler, who claimed to speak for the Hofgastein community, Jesuit interrogators boasted to those they interrogated that 'they haven't come to instruct but to condemn them to

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[22] On the struggle for confessional space in a bi-confessional environment, cf. Duane Corpis, 'Mapping the Boundaries of Confession: Space and Urban Religious Life in the Diocese of Augsburg, 1648–1750', in Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, eds., *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 302–25.

[23] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29a, fos. 1–2 (1 July 1733).

[24] *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, Reformation Gastein, 11/71: Verhöre, 1731 (6 April 1731).

the depths of Hell'.[25] The petition requested the replacement of Wagner with a kinder and gentler priest, and asked that the Jesuits be sent home and Capuchin or Franciscan missionaries be sent in their stead. When the petition remained unanswered, a second was sent. For his efforts the mayor was ultimately rewarded with eight days of bread and water in the local jail,[26] but the incident shows that at least some Catholics in the village might have been receptive to the choir's earlier protest.

Signifying confessional identity: Jesuit missions and Marian devotion

Despite the harsh reputation he later acquired, Father Wagner's initial response to the choir's performance had been relatively mild. He reported the incident to his clerical supervisor, the deacon of Werfen, who visited Hofgastein and interrogated choir members in the presence of Wagner and the valley's secular judicial officer (*Landrichter*). The choir was disbanded and its members were required to pray the rosary, aloud and in unison, after every Sunday mass. Wagner had worked in the parish for less than two years, which perhaps accounts for his relative leniency. Outright expulsion for evidence of Protestant beliefs had in any case been relatively rare in Salzburg's Alpine regions, at least since Archbishop Max Gandolf's expulsion of over 600 peasants from the Deferegger valley in 1684–5 and some seventy Dürrnberg miners and their families in 1686.[27] Economic motives partly explains this restraint: Salzburg's archbishops, loathe to jeopardize their income from Dürrnberg's salt mines and the gold and silver mines of Gastein and Rauris, chose throughout much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to refrain from harsh persecutions. Repression did in fact intensify in the opening decades of the eighteenth century, but up to 1731 persecution had chiefly taken the form of house visitations and public book-burnings aimed at stemming the flow of contraband devotional literature into the region. According to the Jesuit Zech, Hofgastein's parish priest had staged elaborate book-burnings in 1716 and 1720 'publicly in solemn rituals witnessed by the whole valley', and some 500 additional Protestant books had been burned since Wagner's installation as priest in 1728.[28] But those found in possession

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[25] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29a, fos. 611–12 (25 February 1733).

[26] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29a, fos. 617 (12 August 1733).

[27] See Ortner, *Reformation, katholische Reform und Gegenreformation im Erzstift Salzburg*, pp. 179ff.

[28] 'Compendium Relationis de Missione Gastunensi 1733', in *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29a, fo. 630; 'Miserabilis Gasteinsium Status', fo. 159. The parish records of Hofgastein also refer to book-burnings – *Pfarrarchiv Hofgastein*, Glaubenssachen, 25 July 1712, 7 November 1723.

of contraband books had rarely been expelled, and punishment usually took the form of fines or brief jail terms. Indeed, in Gastein I have found only one case of outright expulsion between 1615, when 233 suspected Protestants were driven from the valley, and the accession of Firmian in 1727.[29]

But a year after the Hofgastein choir received its slap on the hand from Wagner, such leniency was rapidly becoming a thing of the past. A major turning point was the arrival of Jesuit missionaries elsewhere in the Pongau in 1730, followed by missions conducted in the Gastein valley beginning in early 1732. Zech launched his first Gastein mission in March of 1732 and set about exposing clandestine Protestants with astounding energy and zeal. He and his younger associate Michael Bauer approached their work like skilled ethnographers, visiting households and soliciting in hundreds of interviews details about the backgrounds, beliefs and devotional practices of the natives.[30] For the historian today this fieldwork makes fascinating reading; for more stubbornly Protestant mountain folk who now found their confessional consciences subjected to painstaking scrutiny, the Jesuit intruders were nothing short of Antichrist. Hans Mossegger, a Protestant ringleader and lay preacher from the Wagrain district who was later imprisoned and expelled, described the intrusive presence of the Jesuits in a sermon he preached to a clandestine gathering in 1731: 'No household, no bedroom, no barn or stall, no straw hut or pasture shack, no basement, no cave, is safe from their spying. Like wolves and assassins, the Jesuit fathers creep into your houses and poke into every corner, questioning children and farmhands. If you say a word you are lost.'[31]

Frightened by their Jesuit nemeses but heartened by rumours that the archbishop, in response to pressure from the emperor and the Protestant

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[29] Ruepp Junger, a miner and Protestant agitator who for several years preached to clandestine conventicles in miners' hostels, farmhouses and taverns throughout the valley, was finally expelled in 1724 after several arrests for possessing and distributing Protestant books. *Pfarrarchiv Hofgastein*, Glaubenssachen, 1723–5; *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, Reformationsakten 11/71 (Gastein), which contains files on the investigation into Junger's activities.

[30] The ethnographic dimensions of early modern inquisitorial practices are discussed in Carlo Ginzburg, 'The Inquisitor as Anthropologist', in Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method* (Baltimore, 1989), pp. 156–64. On the limits of inquisition records as ethnographical evidence, see Renato Rosaldo's polemical essay, 'From the Door of His Tent: The Fieldworker and the Inquisitor', in James Clifford and George W. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 77–97.

[31] Mossegger's sermon is published in Gerhard Florey, 'Predigt eines Salzburger Prädikanten aus dem Jahre 1731', *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte des Protestantismus in Österreich* 97 (1981), pp. 133–46, here p. 142.

Estates, planned to change course and grant religious toleration, Protestant ringleaders had drafted a petition in June of 1731 that purported to represent the wishes of 19,000 Protestant men and women from the seven districts of the Pongau. The petition, which was delivered to Corpus Evangelicorum (the caucus of Protestant Estates represented in the imperial diet) in Regensburg, requested that the body intervene with the archbishop to allow each of the Pongau's districts to have its own Protestant pastor. This set in motion the chain of events that led the archbishop, believing he had a major uprising on his hands, to issue his decree (31 October 1731) requiring all Protestants to leave the territory within a stipulated period.[32]

For all the brutal simplicity of Firmian's *Emigrationspatent*, carrying out the expulsions proved anything but simple. Aside from the logistical problems involved in executing the decree, the task of identifying the thousands of Protestants to be expelled was daunting in a region where so many were practised in the art of dissimulation. Some resigned themselves to emigration early on and openly declared themselves Lutheran. But others, relying on habits of camouflage honed by generations of crypto-Protestants, still tried to pass as Catholics in the hope of avoiding expulsion. Recurring rumours of a Prussian invasion encouraged some to play for time, concealing their beliefs in the hope that military intervention would force the archbishop to abrogate the expulsion. Nor should one overestimate the extent to which confessional identities were fixed and stable in a mountainous and in places inaccessible region like the Pongau. Interrogators found that some of their subjects had no religious training and lacked even a basic understanding of the faith. Others, whether out of confusion or opportunism, migrated elastically between Protestant and Catholic identities. Thus Georg Höll, an eighty-year-old peasant in the Werfen district, confessed he had switched confessional loyalties several times, while the Goldegg peasant Magdalena Portenkirchner said her stepmother had advised her that 'if the Catholics win she should be Catholic, but if the Lutherans win, then she should be Lutheran'.[33]

The petition claiming to represent 19,000 self-declared Lutherans was of no help to investigators seeking to identify those to be expelled.

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[32] The edict originally required the families of domiciled peasants and tradesmen to leave within three months, while non-domiciled farmhands and day labourers were given only a week. The draconian provisions were subsequently revised for the members of the former category, who were given until St Georgi (23 April 1732) to emigrate. For a discussion of the patent and the events leading up to it see Walker, *Salzburg Transaction*, ch. 1.

[33] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 13 (15 October 1732), fo. 120; Kart. 17b (14 October 1733), fo. 667.

Although some Protestant accounts have assumed that a list of 19,000 signatories accompanied the petition, no such list has ever surfaced and the petition never in fact claimed to have one; the presenters of the petition simply claimed to be representatives of the allegedly 19,000 victims of persecution.[34] More useful as a guide for expulsion was the list of more than 20,000 alleged Protestants collected in July of 1731 by the territorial commission that Firmian had dispatched to the Pongau to investigate the growing unrest. Yet even this document was not an infallible criterion, since many of those whose names had appeared on the list subsequently came forward and requested to be certified as good Catholics.[35] Some were contrite and claimed to have recognized the error of their ways, while others, pleading ignorance, insisted they had unwittingly declared themselves Protestant out of ignorance and had not known that 'evangelical' meant Lutheran. Still others protested that Protestant neighbours or employers had pressured them into declaring themselves Protestant before the commission, or had registered them as such in their absence and without their permission.

No doubt some who had been registered as Protestant but later declared themselves Catholic were feigning innocence or contrition to evade punishment – this at least was the working assumption of interrogators like Zech, who wrote that 'a large number of those who had earlier identified themselves as non-Catholics later asked to be removed from the list, either because they now saw the likely consequences of their actions or because others had secretly persuaded them to do so'.[36] But even Zech, for all his hardened scepticism, felt compelled to review those cases before recommending final expulsion. Chicanery no doubt occurred, since some Protestant activists apparently believed a high turnout of non-Catholics would sway the archbishop to allow freedom of worship. These more passionately committed Protestants thus had every interest in swelling the number of those listed as Lutherans, even if it meant declaring others as Protestant in their absence or threatening retaliation against neighbours or farmhands who registered as Catholic.[37] Here it is important to balance conventional depictions of Salzburg Protestants as tragic-heroic

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[34] Here I follow Walker, *Salzburg Transaction*, pp. 46–52, who makes this point persuasively.

[35] In September and October of 1731, for example, 440 inhabitants of the Radstadt district requested that their names be struck from the list. *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kartons 37a and 37b.

[36] 'Miserabilis Gasteinsium Status', fo. 161.

[37] Allusions to such pressures can be found for example in *SLA*, Kart. 37a, fo. 15 (9 September 1731), fo. 12 (28 September 1731); Kart. 62, fo. 542 (21 April 1733), fo. 560 (5 June 1733).

victims of Catholic fanaticism with an acknowledgement that threats and coercion were employed on both sides.

Faced with the difficult task of penetrating confessional consciences that were often opaque or indeterminate, Catholic investigators in the Pongau employed strategies of exposure designed to identify if not construct boundaries of belief. They relied above all on Marian devotional symbols and practices, pre-eminently in the sensory realms of sight and sound, which had the effect of sharpening confessional boundaries hitherto blurred or porous. Aimed at eliciting visible or audible evidence of Catholic identity, these strategies sought to identify those loyal to the faith and expose others who hid their heresy under a cloak of simulated conformity. Two Marian-centred devotions promoted by Catholic missionaries in the region – the wearing of scapulary amulets and the audible recitation of the rosary – illustrate how these strategies could be deployed to demarcate confessional identity and thereby create criteria for conformity and heterodoxy.

The origins of the Confraternity of the Scapulary, a Counter-Reformation brotherhood named after the priestly garment worn over the neck and shoulders, date back to the thirteenth century. According to a pious tradition the Blessed Virgin appeared to St Simon Stock, General of the Carmelite Order, at Cambridge in 1215. She bore in her hand a scapulary, the symbol of the Carmelites, and promised that anyone who died wearing it would not suffer everlasting fire. The sodality's sixteenth-century charter promised that members wearing a scapulary amulet at their deaths would receive a full remission of sin and hence escape the trials of purgatory.[38] The cult of the scapulary consciously identified it with Catholic doctrines of purgatory, as for example in woodcuts and medallions depicting the Virgin using the garment to retrieve fallen sinners from the fires of purgatory.

The introduction of the confraternity into Salzburg in 1630 was part of a broader revival of lay brotherhoods that began in the early seventeenth century and reached its zenith around 1730. Confraternities had existed in the territory since the thirteenth century, but declined in the wake of the Reformation. In 1613–14, after a general visitation underscored the poor state of pastoral care, Archbishop Markus Sittikus began promoting confraternities as a vehicle of confessional revival. The Confraternity of

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[38] R. Copsey, 'Simon Stock and the Scapular Vision', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 50 (1999); Rupert Klieber, *Bruderschaften und Liebesbünde nach Trient. Ihr Totendienst, Zuspruch, und Stellenwert im kirchlichen und gesellschaftlichen Leben am Beispiel Salzburg 1600– 1950* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999), p. 315.

the Scapulary was just one of dozens chartered in Salzburg in the ensuing decades, but it was to become the largest in terms of membership. In the 1680s alone the Confraternity recruited more than 10,000 members in the archbishopric.[39] Men, women, even infants could join: one-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was initiated in 1757.

Ostensibly the brotherhood resembled medieval confraternities in tending to the burial of members and the recitation of prayers for departed brethren. But similar to what Rebekka Habermas observed of Upper Bavarian brotherhoods after 1700,[40] the activities of the Scapulary brotherhood and other late Counter-Reformation confraternities in Salzburg especially emphasized participation in the processions and pilgrimages that were such an integral part of south-German and Austrian Catholic piety. Like other post-Tridentine brotherhoods venerating the Virgin, the Confraternity of the Scapulary provided a visual, Marian adornment of the sacred landscape. In processions members carried banners bearing images of Mary[41] and were otherwise encouraged to wear their scapulary badges (normally two patches of wool connected with a loop of cord and worn over the shoulders) not just on formal religious occasions but also at home, in the tavern, or while working in their fields, pastures and shops.

The brotherhood arrived belatedly in the Protestant-ridden Pongau. There the first chapter was not founded until 1702, in the village of Bischofshofen, and Hofgastein did not have one until 1731.[42] On the eve of expulsion the Church aggressively promoted membership as a confessional tool, and wearing a scapulary badge became all but compulsory in confessionally suspect areas like the Pongau.[43] Clandestine Protestants appear to have loathed the patches they were pressured to wear around their necks. Not only did they consider them idolatrous, linked as they were to the veneration of Mary, the scapulary's association

[39] Klieber, *Bruderschaften und Liebesbünde*, pp. 572–4; Christian Greinz, *Das sociale Wirken der katholischen Kirche in der Erzdiözese Salzburg* (Vienna, 1898), pp. 74–6.

[40] Rebekka Habermas, *Wallfahrt und Aufruhr. Zur Geschichte der Wallfahrt in der frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), pp. 94–5. On processions in Catholic German-speaking Europe during this period see also Marc C. Forster, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque: Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550–1750* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 16–22.

[41] See the description of scapulary processions in the Salzburg village of Kuchl in Rupert Struber, 'Die Bruderschaften der Pfarre Kuchl im Lichte archivalischer Quellen vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert' (Master's thesis, University of Salzburg, 1997), pp. 79–80.

[42] Klieber, *Bruderschaften und Liebesbünde*, pp. 321, 560–1. The charter of the Hofgastein brotherhood is found in the *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, 10/2: Pastoralia Hofgastein (Bruderschaften), 20 July 1731.

[43] Cf. the consistorial provisions for the districts of Werfen (1730) and Wagrain (1732), in *SLA*, Pfleggericht Werfen 1, 1675–1775, 1730: fo. 126; Emigrationsakten, Kart. 35a, fos. 17–20 (20 February 1732).

with Catholic doctrines of purgatory and indulgences flew in the face of Lutheran notions of justification. They bridled at a campaign crafted to elicit visible compliance with precisely those facets of Catholic piety they found most repugnant. The more defiant sought to desacralize the scapulary with scatological language. Christina Egger, a distiller's wife in Hofgastein, was arrested after an informer heard her joke that 'I wouldn't wipe my arse with a scapulary,' while Christina Rossbacher, a peasant widow in the St Johann district, was interrogated for reputedly having said 'I shit on the scapulary.'[44]

But the promotion of the scapulary by Catholic missionaries was effective precisely because of its polarizing effect. Clandestine Protestants who up to then had been able to comply publicly with Catholic beliefs and practices found it harder to do so without jeopardizing the hidden side of their confessional identity. For that very reason, Catholic missionaries came to consider public display of the scapulary a useful litmus test for distinguishing true Catholics from false ones. In the salt-mining village of Dürrnberg, the Lutheran enclave where seventy Protestants had been expelled in 1686, the parish priest favoured requiring all miners to wear scapulary badges as a way of exposing secret Protestants. Such a measure, he wrote in 1733, was 'guaranteed to identify those who are good Catholics and expose those who are not', since Protestants 'abhor nothing more than the Holy Scapulary'.[45] Two secular clergy, after informing the consistory that they had recruited 149 members into the brotherhood during a catechistic mission to the Liechtenberg district in May of 1732, wrote that parishioners should be enjoined to wear the badge because it was 'an especially good symbol that distinguishes a Catholic from a non-Catholic'.[46] Two missionary priests sent to investigate heresy in the Mittersill district in the autumn of 1732 concluded that the area was solidly Catholic because almost everyone they encountered wore scapulary badges.[47]

The rosary, a series of meditations on the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary, was of course a key aspect of Marian piety in Counter-Reformation Europe.[48] Reciting the rosary included repeatedly praying the Ave Maria,

[44] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29a, fo. 289; Kart. 22a, fo. 260.
[45] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 1a, fo. 253 (15 April 1733).
[46] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 62, fo. 7 (26 May 1732).
[47] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 59a, fo. 76 (4 November 1732). Cf. Etienne François, *Die unsichtbare Grenze. Protestanten und Katholiken in Augsburg 1648–1806* (Sigmaringen, 1991), p. 183, on scapulary amulets as an index of Catholic identity in early modern Augsburg.
[48] Louis Châtellier, *The Europe of the Devout: The Catholic Reformation and the Formation of a New Society* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 8–11, 53–6; R. Po-chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1550–1770* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 202.

which along with the Our Father was at that time one of the devotion's two constituent prayers (the Creed was also recited in some regions). A 1741 psalter published in Salzburg and authorized by the consistory prescribed a cycle of three rosaries, each a meditation on the sufferings of Mary at various stages of the Passion and each involving the recitation of fifty Ave Marias and fifteen Our Fathers.[49] The accompanying prayers to the Virgin acknowledged her Immaculate Conception, her status as Mother of God, and her efficacy as friend, protector and intercessor.

Rosary devotion in Catholic Europe dated back to the fourteenth century, but in the Counter Reformation it acquired special significance as a catechetical instrument for use in confessionally contested areas. Catering to the unlearned and promoted by the Jesuits and other Tridentine orders, the rosary was what one English scholar has called 'the simple man's catechism, his prayer book and his own précis of the New Testament'.[50] It reaffirmed the Virgin's intercessional role in the face of Protestant ridicule, and the remission of sins variously earned in reciting it repudiated Protestant teachings on justification and purgatory. As Anne Dillon noted in a study of rosary sodalities in English Catholic communities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, rosary devotion also appealed to missionaries because it provided a form of catechesis for communities lacking priests. The rosary could be recited anywhere, during mass but also as part of one's private household devotions. Rosary devotion offered a doctrinal structure and a kind of substitute liturgy for those deprived of regular access to mass and the sacraments.[51]

This aspect of rosary devotion explains its appeal for missionaries in the Gastein valley and other Alpine areas of Salzburg. As a catechistic tool the rosary was ideally suited to a distant region whose mountainous terrain could discourage attendance at mass and limit access to clergy. Problems posed by topography were especially dire in a mining region like the Gastein valley. Because the valley's gold and silver mines were located high in the mountains and hence relatively inaccessible, miners lived for most of their work week in hostels, divorced from any effective pastoral supervision. Miners were never effectively integrated into the rhythms and practices of Catholic devotional life, which doubtless helps explain why most were solidly Protestant (90 per cent, according to

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[49] *Kurtze Andacht zu der Schmertzhaften unter dem Creutz stehend Jungfräulichen Mutter Maria* (Salzburg, 1741).

[50] Anne Dillon, 'Prayer by Number: The Confraternity of the Rosary and the English Catholic Community, c. 1580–1700', *History* 88 (2003), p. 470; see also pp. 457–60 on the origins of rosary devotion.

[51] Ibid., p. 469.

visitations conducted in 1617–18).[52] Father Wagner blamed the persistence of heresy in the region on the valley's miners and their inadequate integration into the parish community.[53]

Official sponsorship of rosary devotion in Alpine Salzburg included the creation of confraternities devoted to it,[54] but catechistic missions appear to have promoted rosary prayer as above all a household devotion. Heads of households were enjoined to pray it on Saturday evenings with their wives and children but also with servants or farmhands ('Hausleit') living under their roofs.[55] Saturday, the day of the week on which Mary was supposed to have wept at the tomb of Jesus, had a special meaning in Marian devotional practice.[56] Missionaries to the region may also have considered Saturday-evening rosary devotions a needed counterweight to the household conventicles long prevalent in the Pongau, where Protestants gathered secretly to pray, sing hymns and read aloud from their Bibles and chapbooks. In this respect rosary devotion would have offered missionaries a way of confessionally colonizing the private space of the household, which they considered to be under continuous siege if not *de facto* occupation by Protestant devotional practices.

Catholic missionaries in Alpine Salzburg also encouraged rosary prayer for the same reason they promoted the wearing of scapularies, namely as a signifier of religious conformity or, alternatively, Protestant heresy. For Catholics and Protestants alike, the rosary was a badge of confessional identity. In 1593 the English Jesuit Henry Garnet called it 'a manifest badge or token of the Romane Religion', a judgement shared by Tudor law courts for whom possession of rosary beads sufficed to incriminate suspected papists.[57] In 1733 a Lutheran pamphlet on the persecution of Salzburg Protestants alluded to the rosary's signifying function as 'a symbol one carries and prays so that it is possible to discern those who are of the Roman Church'.[58]

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[52] *SLA*, Pfleggericht Gastein, Reste 37.

[53] *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, 10:2: Pastoralia Hofgastein, 9 June 1730.

[54] Archbishop Paris Lodron chartered a Confraternity of the Rosary in the city of Salzburg in 1634. Capuchin and Franciscan missions subsequently promoted the sodality in the Pongau, including the Gastein valley. The charter of the Hofgastein brotherhood is found in the *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, 10/2: Pastoralia Hofgastein (Bruderschaften), 21 September 1676.

[55] See the report on a catechistic mission conducted in the Liechtenberg district in the spring of 1732, in *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 62 (26 May 1732).

[56] Cf. *Kurtze Andacht zu der Schmertzhaften . . . Mutter Maria*, p. 8.

[57] Dillon, 'Praying by Number', p. 453.

[58] Theophilander (pseud.), *Historische Nachrichten von dem Neuen Grusse: Gelobet sey Jesus Christus! Warum die Evangelischen Salzburger, als sie noch in ihrem Lande Waren, solchen nicht haben annehmen und gebrauchen wollen, sondern sich ein Gewissen darüber gemachet. Inglechen von dem Rosen-Kranze, oder sogennanten Pater Noster in der Römisch-Catholischen Kirche* (n.p., 1733), p. 5.

For missionaries in rural Salzburg, the signifying force of the rosary lay partly in the visual realm (members of Salzburg rosary confraternities were required to carry it publicly at mass and in processions)[59] but also in the acoustical sphere. Unlike English Catholics in Tudor England, for whom the rosary appears to have been a silent exercise[60] (perhaps to avoid detection), Catholic missionaries in Alpine Salzburg insisted that it be prayed aloud as a public declaration of faith. A catechistic mission in the Liechtenberg district admonished parishioners to recite their Saturday-evening rosary prayers 'in a loud voice' ('mit lauter Stim'), while one part of the questionnaire used by Jesuit interrogators in the Gastein valley sought to determine whether or not the subject prayed the rosary 'laut'.[61] Well after most Protestants had been driven from the territory, praying the rosary aloud and in the presence of others remained an index of conformity. The diary of Joseph de Berto, a Benedictine missionary sent by the Salzburg consistory to conduct confessional mop-up efforts in the Gastein valley between 1746 and 1753, recorded his interrogation of a maidservant who had been denounced by the wife of her peasant employer for failing to pray the rosary aloud with the rest of the household. When the maidservant protested that she prayed the rosary regularly but alone and in silence, the missionary responded: 'But why alone? Pray aloud nicely with the others to show you are a good Catholic.'[62]

So if the scapulary badge provided Catholic missionaries with a *visual* signifier of conformity, audible rosary prayer also gave them an *acoustical* one.[63] The promotion of rosary prayer as an audible exercise, like the

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[59] 'Kurtze Unterweisung für alle Brüder und Schwester des H. Rosenkrantzes Bruder-schaft', a broadsheet published in 1720 and distributed to members of the Hofgastein brotherhood. It stipulates that members would receive a full indulgence when they joined, when they attended confession on the first Sunday of October and when they died, as long as they had observed the rules of the brotherhood. These included praying the rosary aloud three times a week and carrying the rosary publicly at mass and in processions. *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, 10/2: Pastoralia Hofgastein (Bruderschaften).

[60] Dillon, 'Praying by Number', p. 470.

[61] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 62 (26 May 1732), fo. 6; the handwritten questionnaire from Gastein is found in Kart. 29a, fos. 155–6.

[62] From the excerpts of the diary edited by Georg Loesche, 'Ein handschriftliches Benediktiner Tagebuch aus der Zeit gegen den "Gasteiner Glauben"', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* NF 39 (1921), pp. 96–133, here p. 108.

[63] Another acoustical signifier were the efforts by Catholic missionaries in the Pongau to encourage the laity to greet each other in everyday situations with the salutation 'Praise be to Jesus Christ' ('Gelobt sei Jesus Christus'). Pope Sixtus V had originally authorized the greeting in 1587 and Pope Benedict XIII reintroduced it in 1728. Benedict promised an indulgence of 100 days to those who used it, which according to a contemporary observer from Protestant Germany, was the reason Salzburg Protestants resisted the greeting. See Theophilander, *Historische Nachrichten von dem Neuen Grusse: Gelobet sey Jesus Christus!*, p. 8. This 1733 account considered the greeting a device developed by the Church to help identify nonconformity. The author emphasized the signifying function of the greeting

promotion of scapulary badges, was effective because it entailed compliance with Catholic practices and beliefs – above all veneration of the Virgin and Catholic penitential doctrines – that struck at the heart of Protestant confessional identity. For convinced Protestants it was one thing to carry a string of rosary beads to mass; it was quite another to pray the rosary aloud, with the dozens of audible Marian mantras that entailed. And as had happened in response to the aggressive promotion of scapulary devotion, the more hotheaded reacted with behaviour and language designed to desecrate. One reads of Protestants using their rosaries as dog collars, or of a farmhand relating how Jesus had once seized two women by their noses when he found them praying the rosary.[64] The more prudent, as befit their bifurcated confessional lives, sought to integrate rosary devotion into their public personae as best they could without violating their Protestant consciences. Some for example recited the rosary aloud but in a contrafactual version that substituted the Our Father for the Ave Maria.[65]

Polarization and expulsion

Yet even efforts at compromise invited scrutiny, usually on the basis of open or anonymous denunciations. As persecution intensified and confessional tensions mounted, denunciations related to rosary prayer multiplied and suggest a process of polarization that had penetrated to the level of the household. A recurring theme in denunciations is the tension between landholding peasants and propertyless farmhands, or what language of the period categorized as the domiciled and undomiciled

in contending (p. 8) that 'under the pretext of promoting the use of these holy words, the subtle intent was to identify all those who would or would not render obedience to the Pope . . . Thus this greeting is a *Signum distinctivum*, a distinguishing mark used to recognize those who belong to the Roman Church and those who do not.' Judging from the frequent denunciation of those who resisted the greeting, the stratagem was effective. A few examples: *SLA*, Kart. 59a, fos. 52ff. (a Mittersill miller who grumbled 'Leck mich in Arsch' when a farmhand greeted him with the salutation); Kart. 22a, fo. 338 (a peasant who threatened to strike someone who had so greeted him); Kart. 38b, fo. 621 (a peasant who remained silent when greeted with the formula); Kart. 31a, fos. 16–17 (a Hofgastein villager interrogated for having complained about the greeting). Walker, *Salzburg Transaction*, p. 41, briefly discusses the greeting, which he mistakenly calls the 'angelic salutation'. The German term *englischer Gruss* refers not to the greeting in question but rather to the Ave Maria, based biblically on the angel Gabriel's salutation.

[64] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 31a, fos. 168–73 (18 March 1735); Kart. 17a, fo. 588 (17 October 1733).

[65] Cf. examples from interrogations conducted in Liechtenberg district, *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 62, fo. 202 (19 April 1732), fo. 246 (23 May 1732) and fo. 554 (13 May 1733).

(*Angesessene* and *Unangesessene*).[66] One encounters cases like Hans Priedlinger, a peasant from the Pongau district of St Johann, who was denounced by one of his farmhands for leaving the room when Priedlinger heard him praying the rosary, or that of Maria Winkler, a Pongau milkmaid, who informed on the wife of her peasant employer after she forbade her from praying the rosary aloud, or the peasant Maria Oberleitner, who told missionaries in the Mittersill district that she had never heard Caspar Orthofer, a former farmhand, pray the rosary aloud in her household.[67] Denunciations related to the scapulary hint at similar tensions.[68]

Such a charged atmosphere left increasingly less room for the kind of ambiguity and elasticity that had once characterized confessional personae in the region. Hastening the progressively stark demarcation of confessional identities were the visual and acoustical signifiers used by Catholic authorities to distinguish conformity from heterodoxy. They could not have done so without considerable complicity on the part of the inhabitants themselves. In the years following the expulsion edict, a polarizing dynamic of provocation and denunciation came to characterize relations between Catholics and Protestants. Beleaguered Protestants, forced to embrace devotional practices at odds with their Lutheran identities, grew ever more hostile to Catholic practices they had once accommodated. Catholics, reacting against Protestant provocation and anxious for their part to avoid any suspicion of heresy, appeared increasingly willing to come forward as informers. The sources give the impression that by mid-1732, when the machinery of persecution and expulsion was in full gear, an air of venom had come to pervade the valleys and mountains of the Pongau. It arrived somewhat belatedly in the Gastein valley, the most remote part of the Pongau where the first Jesuit mission did not arrive until early 1732. As noted earlier, Catholic villagers in Hofgastein were complaining about the harsh behaviour of Jesuit missionaries as late as February of 1733. But judging from subsequent interrogations in the valley (more than a thousand between winter of 1733 and late 1734), which depended heavily on information gleaned from informers, the same dynamic of persecution and polarization came to prevail there

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[66] On these categories see Walker, *Salzburg Transaction*, pp. 12–13.

[67] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 22a, fo. 379 (16 November 1733); Kart. 22a, fo. 291 (16 November 1733); Kart. 59a, fo. 60 (11 November 1732).

[68] Cf. denunciations in the Liechtenburg district from spring and summer of 1732, in *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 62, fo. 230 (denunciation of peasant who had forbidden his farmhands from wearing scapularies during work); fo. 245 (denunciation of peasant who prohibited the wearing of scapularies in his household); fos. 558–9 (peasant denounced by his maidservant for not permitting her to wear a scapulary).

as well. In a fashion that evokes more recent historical experience,[69] a spiralling dialectic of provocation and denunciation brought to the surface resentments and tensions that exist under the surface of any society. Peasants informed on each other or their farmhands, farmhands informed on each other or their peasants, unmarried servant women denounced the fathers of their unborn children, stepchildren incriminated stepparents, wives denounced their husbands or vice versa. 'Cursed and damned are we,' lamented the Protestant lay preacher Hans Mossegger in a 1731 sermon. 'No one can be trusted, not your child, your brother or sister, your father and mother, your farmhands and neighbours.'[70]

The fate of the former members of the Hofgastein choir was indicative of the growing repression. Wagner and Zech reopened their case in July of 1733, as a result of which five were expelled from the territory indefinitely. Four others were banished for three years and allowed to return on condition that they spend the term of exile in a Catholic territory where their confessional conformity had been attested. The verdict allowed only one, the frail eighty-five-year-old peasant Michael Gruber, to remain.[71]

A few months after their expulsion, two former members returned secretly to the valley with the aim of appealing for clemency from the archbishop. The peasant brothers Matthias and Wolfgang Leyerer petitioned separately, acknowledging their past transgressions but presenting evidence putatively attesting their rehabilitation. Matthias even managed to win the support of the new parish priest (Wagner had retired in late 1733), who testified that the petitioner, since returning to Hofgastein, had behaved as a model Catholic, helped out with daily tasks in the parish and showed genuine contrition. Surprisingly – the archbishop rarely granted clemency to those already expelled – Firmian approved the request, having been swayed not only by the priest's recommendation but also by the dire health of Matthias's wife and children, who had remained in the territory and contracted smallpox a few months after his expulsion.[72]

His brother Wolfgang, who appealed his three-year term of exile after roaming through various parts of Bavaria, was less fortunate. It was not from want of trying: the dossier he carefully assembled to accompany

[69] On the phenomenon of denunciation in modern European history, see the editors' introduction to *Accusatory Practices: Denunciation in Modern European History, 1789–1989*, eds. Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately (Chicago, 1997), pp. 1–21, and to *Der Staatsbürger als Spitzel. Denunziationen während des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts aus europäischer Perspektive*, eds. Michaela Hohkamp and Claudia Ulbrich (Leipzig, 2001).
[70] Florey, 'Predigt eines Salzburger Prädikanten aus dem Jahr 1731', p. 143.
[71] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 29b, fos. 551–3.
[72] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 30b, fos. 378–87 (16–27 February 1734).

his petition represented a fascinating if futile effort to reinvent his confessional identity. The packet included a note signed by Father Wagner in April of 1731 certifying that he had joined the Confraternity of the Rosary and recited the prayers audibly every week; a slip signed by a Capuchin priest in the Bavarian town of Burghausen, where Wolfgang had spent several weeks following his expulsion, attesting that the priest had heard his confession in December of 1733; another confession-ticket dated 16 January 1734 and signed by a Jesuit priest in Passau; and the deposition of an innkeeper in Iltzstatt (near Passau) testifying that Wolfgang had attended mass with him and his wife every day and prayed the rosary aloud. Also included in Wolfgang's dossier was a piece of handwritten verse entitled 'A Faithful Admonition to the Said Wolfgang Leyerer, A Repentant Salzburg Peasant from Unterberg in Gastein'. It is not clear who composed the doggerel: conceivably it was Wolfgang himself, who was apparently literate since a house visitation conducted by Catholic authorities in 1726 had discovered in his possession a Protestant Bible, a volume of Luther's hymns and a hymnbook containing the 'Loinbacher'.[73] Whoever composed the verse, Wolfgang enclosed it in his dossier as further evidence of contrition and reconversion:

> Wolf Leyerer, Hark my words!
> Live piously as a Catholic Christian, avoid false teachings
> Your gracious prince acts justly and well
> When he hunts down the evildoers and shelters the pious.
> Put your faith in one God and one Church, the old Roman one I mean
> Leave be the Bible, Spangenberg's hymnal,[74] contentious books.
> Remember that you are no Doctor but a peasant
> And peasants are not meant to read books.
> Sit quietly and still on your farm in Gastein
> In peace with your wife and children, eating your cabbage and
>   porridge.
> With God's help you will find mercy under Prince Firmian,
> Who loves the pious but cannot tolerate evildoers.
> A voice will tell you: Go home and sin no more.[75]

The author clearly thought he knew what the archbishop wanted to hear, even if the tone of abject contrition sounds contrived and a bit over the top. The archbishop must have had his doubts in any case, since he rejected the petition and expelled Wolfgang again. Undaunted, Wolfgang returned in the spring of 1734, as his wife (who was Catholic and had

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[73] *Konsistorialarchiv*, Salzburg, 11/54: Reformation Gastein (25 September 1726).
[74] Johannes Spangenberg (1484–1550), a disciple of Luther and pedagogical reformer whose devotional works enjoyed great popularity among Salzburg Protestants.
[75] *SLA*, Emigrationsakten, Kart. 30b, fos. 373–4.

remained in the territory) admitted in a letter to the archbishop seeking clemency for her husband. At the urging of Zech, who was unconvinced by Wolfgang's claims of contrition and still considered him a dangerous Protestant, the archbishop rejected the appeal and expelled him a third time. There is no evidence he ever returned.

For a strict confessional gatekeeper like Zech, Wolfgang's efforts to reinvent himself as a Catholic subject was simply another case of the crypto-Protestant hypocrisy the Jesuit found so entrenched in the valley. 'For more than two centuries', as Zech wrote of clandestine Protestants in the Gasteinertal, 'they have learned how to conceal, deny and renounce their faith.'[76] The self-conscious way in which Wolfgang sought to verify his Catholic identity does indeed suggest an individual adept at altering his confessional persona. Yet I would suggest that the ability to migrate between Protestant and Catholic identities – whether from choice or necessity – also equipped Salzburg Protestants for another kind of migration, the territorial one that took thousands of them to Prussia and a few hundred as far as the Georgia lowcountry. As emigrants they were famously successful in both places, adapting with remarkable skill and persistence to environments different in almost every way from the one they had left behind. This adaptation required new habits and skills, including the acquisition of new religious identities – whether in Prussia as members of a state Church, or in colonial Georgia as inhabitants of a tightly knit, virtually theocratic Pietist community. If they had learned anything in their Alpine homeland, it was the ability to alter confessional identities – often swiftly and at very short notice.

[76] 'Miserabilis Gasteinsium Status', fo. 160.

8   The transformation of the *Aufklärung:* from the idea of power to the power of ideas

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The German *Aufklärung* has been an enduring theme in Tim Blanning's *œuvre*. His first book on reform and revolution in Mainz published in 1974 made a significant contribution to the debate on Enlightened Absolutism. In the German states, he argued, Enlightened ideas were not only accommodated within traditional structures, they positively reinforced those structures. Indeed, if Enlightened Absolutism existed anywhere at all, he suggested, then it was in the Holy Roman Empire.[1]

In contrast to the French Enlightenment, the German *Aufklärung* was not characterised by any inherent antagonism to the demands of the state. Enlightened ideas gained their distinctive force in Germany from the fact that there was no distinction between intellectuals and administrators. Many were both at the same time and were able to employ their ideas in the service of beneficial reforms. The measure of the impact of these ideas was that the German masses declined the opportunity to overturn the old order after 1789. 'Traditional notions of religion, duty and obedience continued to dominate public life'; just as they had been accommodated to the ideals of the Enlightenment, so they now 'adjusted to changing circumstances, without their essence being diluted'.[2]

Blanning's latest work on the power of culture and the culture of power reverts to this theme. In a comparative sweep that embraces Britain and France as well as Germany, he again underlines the particularity of the German case. In France the 'intelligentsia became divorced from the regime during the course of the eighteenth century and then helped to destroy it'. In Britain, the state was peripheral to culture: intellectuals were concentrated in London where there was no university before 1828 and no bureaucracy until even later. The relationship between German

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[1] T. C. W. Blanning, *Reform and Revolution in Mainz 1743–1803* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 33.
[2] Ibid., p. 38.

intellectuals and the state, by contrast, was a symbiotic one.[3] The exemplary case for 'Germany' is now taken to be Prussia. For Prussia played a key role in what Blanning sees as the German response to the challenge of the 'new circumstances' of the late eighteenth century.[4]

Austria too met the challenge of modernisation under Joseph II. Yet Prussia under Frederick the Great mastered the new public sphere more effectively still. Frederick created a state that was widely admired. It was not only concerned with power (though Frederick pursued that with great skill as well) but was 'a state governed by the rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*) and a state committed to the promotion of culture (*Kulturstaat*)'.[5] Furthermore Frederick the Great's success in combining power with culture also played a key role in what Blanning sees as the dominant German cultural trend of the decades after 1740: the development of nationalism.[6] To varying degrees many German rulers, including Joseph II, embraced this trend in the 1770s and 1780s. The result was that 'princes and peoples in Germany found in their national culture a powerfully adhesive bond' in the face of the ideological and military threat of the French Revolution.[7]

Blanning's view of the particularity of the German tradition has much in common with the mainstream of writing about the *Aufklärung* as an intellectual and philosophical movement. His work on Mainz was in many ways a precursor of what became the new approach to Enlightenment studies, whose manifesto was the influential collection of essays edited by Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich devoted to the national contexts of the European Enlightenments.[8]

Since then Enlightenment studies have evolved further. While many of the main lines of interpretation have remained constant, new research has opened up novel perspectives. Above all this has raised important questions about the period after 1789: for example, the question of the persistence of Enlightened ideas into the nineteenth century and the extent of their influence, and the relationship between Enlightenment and nationalism. Moreover, these questions have particular significance for the German case because of the way that the *Aufklärung* has been interpreted in the context of the development of German society and culture.

[3] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 209–12.
[4] Ibid., p. 441.   [5] Ibid., p. 212.   [6] Ibid., pp. 239–65.   [7] Ibid., p. 265.
[8] Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). The Cambridge History Faculty seminar on which the essays were based was held in 1979. Blanning's own contribution on 'The Enlightenment in Catholic Germany' is pp. 118–26.

I

The past three decades have seen an extraordinary boom in *Aufklärung* studies. In the 1970s people could in a sense still think of themselves as pioneers, or as standard bearers for a neglected and rather misunderstood movement. Much German scholarship in particular was infused with the sense of the renewed significance for the present of a movement that seemed to be the precursor of modern social and intellectual aspirations.[9] As Werner Schneiders wrote in 1974: '*Aufklärung* has become a slogan again, just like criticism, emancipation and autonomy.'[10]

The idea that the *Aufklärung* was 'rediscovered' after 1945 is of course misleading.[11] Ever since the late eighteenth century both the thing itself and its legacy have been the subject of politicised and ideological debate. But there was a peculiar urgency about the approaches to it after 1945, both in scholarship and also in the periodic attempts by politicians and commentators of the most diverse persuasions to appropriate the *Aufklärung* legacy and to instrumentalise it for the present.[12]

Of course, that is in some senses true of Enlightenment studies generally. Peter Gay's monumental two-volume study of the Enlightenment published in 1966 and 1969 made an impact as an extraordinary work of scholarship and synthesis. But its central theme – the inherent and irrepressible liberalism of the Enlightenment – was also highly congenial to the progressive liberal consensus that emerged in universities in the US and elsewhere during the 1950s and 1960s.[13] However, such discussions had an even sharper edge in Germany than elsewhere. The influential views of Adorno and Horkheimer and of Habermas, for example, in a

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[9] Joachim Whaley, 'Rediscovering the *Aufklärung*', *German Life and Letters* NS 34 (1981), pp. 183–95.

[10] Werner Schneiders, *Die Wahre Aufklärung. Zum Selbstverständnis der deutschen Aufklärung* (Munich: Karl Alber, 1974), p. 7.

[11] For good surveys of the historiography with a wealth of bibliographical references, see Winfried Müller, *Die Aufklärung*, Enzyklopädie deutscher Geschichte 61 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2002); Angela Borgstedt, *Das Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, Kontroversen um die Geschichte (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004); Christoph Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt. Die Popularphilosophie der deutschen Spätaufklärung im Zeitalter Kants*, Forschungen und Materialien zur deutschen Aufklärung Abteilung II, Monographien 17 (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 2003), pp. 236–83; Peter Pütz, *Die deutsche Aufklärung*, 4th edn, Erträge der Forschung 81 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1991); Horst Stuke, 'Aufklärung', in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhard Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, 8 vols. in 9 (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1972–97), I, pp. 243–342.

[12] Jürgen Habermas, *Die nachholende Revolution*, Kleine Politische Schriften 6 (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 12, 24.

[13] Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966–9). For the reception, see: Harold Mah, *Enlightenment Phantasies: Cultural Identity in France and Germany 1750–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 4–6.

sense served two functions. They were formulated as visions of the development of western, or more precisely capitalist, society as a whole, yet they were also shaped by specifically German concerns. Discussions of these ideas today sometimes overlook the fact that they were formulated within a German philosophical tradition as diagnoses of the specific historical experience of the Germans. They were propagated as prescriptions for the future development of German society.[14] That was something the theorists of the Frankfurt School shared in common with Marx: the universalisation of a specifically German experience and way of thinking. Nor was this tendency confined to the German Left. A similar point might be made about Reinhard Koselleck's *Kritik und Krise* published in 1959. Koselleck's analysis of the genesis of criticism is remarkably similar to that of Habermas, which appeared in 1962; indeed Habermas acknowledged his debt to what he described as Koselleck's 'outstanding study'.[15] However, Koselleck's conclusions about the destructive and negative effects of criticism could not but meet with outright and scathing rejection by Habermas with his fundamentally, if cautiously, optimistic sense that criticism, if voiced effectively and given an appropriate forum, might yet transform society.[16]

The underlying issue throughout all of these early debates was the question of the relationship between the German *Aufklärung* and the European Enlightenment. Was this simply a national variant of the broader movement or was the *Aufklärung* substantively different? The *Aufklärung* never became an issue in the *Sonderweg* debate as such. But that was largely because of the common assumption that the movement expired around 1789, that it had few lasting consequences. Recent developments have done something to relativise that assumption, but they have not eradicated it entirely.

If scholars of the 1960s and early 1970s often thought of themselves as trail-blazing pioneers, they are now more likely to feel themselves lucky to find space on what often seems to be a hopelessly overcrowded

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[14] Rolf Wiggershaus, *Die Frankfurter Schule. Geschichte, theoretische Entwicklung, Bedeutung* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1986), pp. 364–83, 597–628; Rolf Wiggershaus, *Jürgen Habermas* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2004), pp. 52–5.

[15] Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, 8th edn (Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand, 1976), p. 319. Reinhard Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise. Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (Freiburg and Munich: Karl Alber, 1959). For the context, see Jan-Werner Müller, *A Dangerous Mind: Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 106–7 and William E. Scheuermann, 'Unsolved Paradoxes: Conservative Thought in Adenauer's Germany', in John P. McCormick (ed.), *Confronting Mass Democracy: Political and Social Theory from Nietzsche to Habermas* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 221–42, esp. pp. 234–40.

[16] See Habermas's 1960 review of Koselleck's book in Jürgen Habermas, *Philosophisch-politische Profile*, enlarged edn (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1987), pp. 435–44.

motorway. Almost nothing seems to be excluded from 'Enlightenment studies'. Indeed the very notion of what the Enlightenment was has been transformed. Once, the Enlightenment was understood as a purely rationalist tendency, whether as a negative and destructive force in Adorno and Horkheimer's reading or, following Habermas, as an ultimately more positive phenomenon, or at least as one which still had the potential to provide the starting-point for a future *Diskursgemeinschaft*.[17] Since then postmodern and feminist theories have prompted investigation of the irrationalism of the Enlightenment.[18] Echoing the neo-Marxist critique of Adorno and Horkheimer, such studies query the universality and emancipatory intent of the *Aufklärung*. The 'Schattenseiten der Aufklärung' ('the dark sides of the Enlightenment', to cite the title of Gudrun Hentges's study of attitudes to Jews and 'barbarians') or the 'esoterische Nachtseite' ('esoteric darker side') of the *Aufklärung* (as Monika Neugebauer-Wölk terms it) are now considered integral features of the project of modernity, rather than just as pre-modern survivals.[19]

More recently still a series of attempts to synthesise the mass of new research has sought to recognise the variety of the Enlightenment. Christa Knellwolf, for example, writes of the Enlightenment as a 'tapestry of harmonious as well as conflicting social, cultural and intellectual interests and developments'.[20] National Enlightenments have been overtaken by multiple enlightenments; indeed the latest survey volume in English (the Routledge *Enlightenment World*) explicitly avoids both the definite article and the capital 'E' throughout its nearly 700 pages. Fania Oz-Salzberger has complained that the essence of the Enlightenment, its 'lightness', has been lost, or even that the 'Enlightenment no longer "is"'. It is no longer a question of different interpretations, she suggests, but simply that more is being added in and that more and more (often overspecialised) questions

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[17] Wiggershaus, *Jürgen Habermas*, pp. 52–5,115–30; Stephen K. White, 'Reason, Modernity and Democracy', in Stephen K. White (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 3–16.

[18] Pütz, *Deutsche Aufklärung*, pp. 165–88; Karen O'Brien, 'The Feminist Critique of Enlightenment', in Martin Fitzpatrick, Peter Jones, Christa Knellwolf and Iain McCalman (eds.), *The Enlightenment World* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 621–34; Susan Wilson, 'Postmodernism and the Enlightenment', ibid., pp. 648–59.

[19] Gudrun Hentges, *Schattenseiten der Aufklärung. Die Darstellung von Juden und 'Wilden' in philosophischen Schriften des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, Studien zu Politik und Wissenschaft (Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau, 1990); Monika Neugebauer-Wölk, 'Die Geheimnisse der Maurer. Plädoyer für die Akzeptanz des Esoterischen in der historischen Aufklärungsforschung', *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert* 21 (1997), pp. 15–32, at p. 20.

[20] Christa Knellwolf, 'Introduction', in *The Enlightenment World*, pp. 571–5, at p. 571.

are being asked.[21] Others, however, continue to promote the 'expansion' of the Enlightenment. Harold Mah's recent study of cultural identity in France and Germany, for example, builds on the new approaches of the 1970s and 1980s to explore the 'multiple, contradictory and phantasmic nature of the terms and discourse of Enlightenment identities'.[22]

If our understanding of the European Enlightenment has changed, what has happened to the *Aufklärung* in particular? That is not only a question about current perceptions and understandings of the *Aufklärung* but also about perceptions of its role in the development of modern German society.

II

While recent scholarship on the *Aufklärung* has undoubtedly shared in the broadening and deepening processes that have characterised Enlightenment scholarship generally, the old underlying structures of interpretation remain surprisingly persistent.[23] This becomes apparent if we look at how German scholars have approached the periodisation of the *Aufklärung*. Perceptions of the early and middle phases have undergone a considerable change while views of the final phase of the *Aufklärung* remain extremely problematic.

Perhaps the most influential periodisation is that of Werner Schneiders.[24] For him the symbolic start date of the *Aufklärung* is the announcement of a lecture course in German by Thomasius in 1687. Its mature phase begins around 1720 (the date of the publication of Wolff's *Deutsche Metaphysik*). The Seven Years' War induced what he terms a 'midlife-crisis', though signs of a change in attitudes became apparent even before 1750 with growing influence from France and England and the serious assault on Wolff's system first by the rationalist theologian Crusius and then by the early *Popularphilosophie*. Increasingly, Schneiders suggests, a

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[21] Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'New Approaches towards a History of the Enlightenment – Can Disparate Perspectives Make a General Picture?', *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 29 (2000), pp. 171–82, at pp. 171, 182.

[22] Mah, *Enlightenment Phantasies*, p. 12.

[23] See: Borgstedt, *Zeitalter der Aufklärung*; Müller, *Aufklärung*; and Monika Neugebauer-Wölk, Markus Meumann and Holger Zaunstück (eds.), *25. Jahre Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Erforschung des 18. Jahrhunderts. Zur Geschichte einer Wissenschaftlichen Vereinigung (1975–2000)* (Wolfenbüttel: Wallstein, 2000).

[24] Werner Schneiders, 'Aufklärungsphilosophien', in Siegried Jüttner and Jochen Scholbach (eds.), *Europäische Aufklärung(en). Einheit und nationale Vielfalt*, Studien zum Achtzehnten Jahrhundert 14 (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), pp. 1–17; Werner Schneiders (ed.), *Lexikon der Aufklärung. Deutschland und Europa* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1995), pp. 12–22.

new eclecticism undermined the doctrine of 'Truth-Virtue-Usefulness' and the principle of rationality became a hollow slogan as a result of its endless reiteration.

In the 1770s the *Aufklärung* then experienced a severe crisis; after 1780 its protagonists were too weak to respond to new challenges. The young turned to the *Sturm und Drang* and the world of feelings and emotion. Kant's vision of self-critical reason entailed the abandonment of too many key principles of previous *Aufklärung* thinking, and in effect merely generated an internecine struggle between Kantians and anti-Kantians. The weak and sickly *Aufklärung* could not cope with what Friedrich Carl von Moser called the 'Freiheitsinfluenza'. In particular, the French Revolution posed political challenges to which the German *Aufklärer* were not equal. Lacking any constructive answers to the great questions of the day, their defence of the reformist *Aufklärung* as the true *Aufklärung* lost credibility and they abandoned the central cause that had inspired four generations: the commitment to practical reform. Germany paid a heavy price for their pusillanimous self-denial: for 'The fact that Germany too had been a country of Enlightenment, was then forgotten for a long time.'[25] Above all, Schneiders insists that neither Leibniz nor Kant belonged to the *Aufklärung*.[26] Leibniz, he argues, did not have the anthropological vision that he believes is typical of the *Aufklärung*; he remained essentially a metaphysician and a natural scientist. Kant, he argues, started off by defending the *Aufklärung* and thought of himself as a philosopher of the movement. Yet Kant's philosophy clearly undermined the basis for empirical criticism and in pursuing an understanding of transcendental 'Vorurtheile' or judgements he transcended the *Aufklärung*.

Schneiders is not a critic of the *Aufklärung*. On the contrary, he has devoted his entire career to promoting it. He has been particularly influential in dispelling the old myth that the German *Aufklärung* was a delayed, in some sense retarded, phenomenon that really only took root around 1750 and he has consistently argued for the continuing contemporary relevance of Enlightenment philosophy.[27] Yet in key respects his periodisation mirrors the views of those whom he alleges have repressed the memory of *Aufklärung* in Germany.

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[25] Schneiders, *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, p. 22.   [26] Ibid., pp. 17–18.

[27] See, for example, Werner Schneiders, *Hoffnung auf Vernunft. Aufklärungsphilosophie in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990) and his *Deutsche Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1998), pp. 207–8. On Schneiders generally, see: Frank Gunert and Friedrich Vollhardt (eds.), *Aufklärung als praktische Philosophie. Werner Schneiders zum 65. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1998). The preface praises him for his life-long commitment to promoting the understanding of both the epoch and the programme of the *Aufklärung*. Ibid., pp. ix–x.

The early and middle periods are relatively unproblematic. The idea of an early Enlightenment starting in the last decades of the seventeenth century is now widely accepted, as is the central role that Thomasius played in propagating the new ideas and promoting a new approach to the problems of government and society. While it is conventional to emphasise that the *Aufklärung* was initially an academic movement and that it developed in alliance with the state rather than in opposition to it, the recent focus on the radical Enlightenment has added a new dimension. Martin Mulsow, for example, has discovered a network of radical Antitrinitarian writers who challenged virtually every assumption of conventional theology and who savagely criticised the political exploitation of official teachings.[28] Jonathan Israel has explored the central significance of Spinoza's writings in this radical Enlightenment, suggesting that the Spinozist radical Enlightenment was much more important, especially for the German tradition, than most have previously recognised.[29] Mulsow is more cautious. He points out that the early German radicals were nothing if not eclectic and that they were just as happy taking issue with Spinozist doctrine as they were arguing against Christian Platonism or the notion of a *philosophia perennis*.[30]

At the same time, and at a less elevated level, recent research has revealed evidence of radical strands in German politics from the late seventeenth century. In urban unrest from Hamburg in the north to Basel and Zürich in the south the demand for openness and publicity, for the publication of constitutions and the public scrutiny of government decisions became increasingly vociferous.[31] These events were not just localised and, though it is difficult to measure their impact, it seems that, cumulatively, they contributed to a growing awareness of and assertion of fundamental rights.[32] In the case of the Zürich unrest of 1713, for

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[28] Martin Mulsow, *Moderne aus dem Untergrund. Radikale Frühaufklärung in Deutschland 1680–1720* (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 2002).

[29] Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 11–13.

[30] Mulsow, *Moderne*, pp. 439–43. See also: Winfried Schröder, *Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1987); Martin Pott, 'Radikale Aufklärung und Freidenker. Materialismus und Religionskritik in der deutschen Frühaufklärung', *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 38 (1990), pp. 639–50; Rainer Wild, 'Freidenker in Deutschland', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 6 (1979), pp. 253–85.

[31] Andreas Würgler, *Unruhen und Öffentlichkeit. Städtische und ländliche Protestbewegungen im 18. Jahrhundert*, Frühneuzeit-Forschungen 1 (Tübingen: Bibliotheca Academica, 1995).

[32] Georg Schmidt, *Geschichte des Alten Reiches. Staat und Nation in der Frühen Neuzeit 1495–1806* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1999), pp. 234–42; Wolfgang Schmale, *Archäologie der Grund- und Menschenrechte in der Frühen Neuzeit. Ein deutsch-französisches Paradigma*, Ancien Régime, Aufklärung und Revolution 30 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1997), pp. 332–50, 361–80, 399–439, 447–54.

example, there is a clear link to the activities of three societies (the 'Collegium der Insulanar' 1679–81, 'der Vertraulichen' 1686–96 and 'der Wohlgesinnten' 1693–1709) that attracted a wide variety of members from the educated urban elite, and even some artisans.[33] The range of topics discussed in the societies was quite extraordinary. Any view of seventeenth-century Zürich as a conservative oligarchy in the grip of orthodox Calvinism is undermined by the almost breathtaking radicalism of the debates. There were, it seems, no taboos, either in politics or in religion. For example, in August 1686 the 'Vertraulichen' concluded that it could be justifiable to offer resistance to an absolute ruler on grounds of religious persecution. On 22 February 1698 the 'Wohlgesinnten' discussed the question of whether the works of Pierre Bayle and Spinoza were harmful, concluding that they should be kept away from the uneducated but that they could do no harm to the educated. Other discussions concerned the justice of preventive wars, neutrality, natural law, the history of the Swiss Federation, alchemy, Copernicus and heliocentrism, Descartes's proposition that animals have no souls and Spinoza's attempts to apply the principles of natural science to the study of the Bible (which they rejected).

One of the leading figures in the Zürich societies and in the 1713 uprising was Johann Jakob Scheuchzer, whose correspondence linked him with like-minded figures throughout the Reich as well as the Netherlands and England.[34] Moreover, the Zürich disturbances, like subsequent disputes elsewhere, were widely reported in the press, which gave prominence to the demands of the discontents as well as to the measures taken to deal with the unrest.[35]

The discovery of the existence of more radical tendencies has four important implications. Firstly, it further undermines the once common view of the inherently conservative nature of German thought. Secondly, it suggests that the doctrines of Thomasius were at the very least arrived at not only in opposition to orthodox teachings but also in conscious dialogue with even more radical ideas. Thirdly, it underlines the continuity of Spinozist teachings in Germany, in contrast to the still widely held view that Spinoza was rediscovered by Jacobi in the 1780s. Fourthly, it seems clear that many of the issues that were openly debated in the 1770s and 1780s were not simply based on notions imported from France or the

[33] Michael Kempe and Thomas Maissen, *Die Collegia der Insulaner, Vertraulichen und Wohlgesinnten in Zürich, 1679–1709* (Zurich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2002), pp. 9–14, 249–93.

[34] Michael Kempe, *Wissenschaft, Theologie, Aufklärung. Johann Jakob Scheuchzer (1672–1733) und die Sintfluttheorie*, Frühneizeit-Forschungen 10 (Epfendorf: Bibliotheca Academica, 2003), pp. 22–5.

[35] Würgler, *Unruhen*, pp. 202–26.

American colonies. They were at least partly grounded in the political experience of many parts of the Reich since the late seventeenth century.

The new view of the early Enlightenment thus provides a further perspective on the middle phase, which Schneiders characterises as the phase of the establishment or acceptance of the *Aufklärung* from about 1750. Here again, the terms used reflect the generally rather specific definition of *Aufklärung* that Schneiders and indeed most German scholars employ. In fact, work over the past two decades has emphasised multiple strands of *Aufklärung*, if not multiple enlightenments. Tim Blanning has drawn attention once again to the conscious alliance between *Aufklärer* and the state in Prussia, and there is little doubt that the Berlin *Aufklärung* remains at the core of the movement as a whole, a fact recognised by the *philosophes* who coined and popularised the notion of the age of Frederick.[36] However, the term 'Berlin *Aufklärung*', later used by Hegel in a negative sense, implies a greater degree of homogeneity than in fact existed. Ian Hunter has, for example, recently discerned three competing Enlightenments at Halle in the 1740s: a civil or Thomasian Enlightenment, a Pietist Enlightenment and a Wolffian Enlightenment.[37] By the 1760s and early 1770s the Berlin scene itself was characterised by often competing groups of Wolffians, French-style materialists and *Popularphilosophen* who variously propagated Lockean or Thomasian ideas, or the Scottish 'common-sense' philosophers, or even notions of nature and virtue derived from Rousseau.[38]

Berlin of course was not the only centre; nor was strict rationalism, whether Wolffian or Thomasian, the only Enlightened way. Alongside Berlin, other groups and tendencies developed in Halle, Zürich, Braunschweig, Leipzig and Königsberg. The influence of Locke was more than matched by that of Shaftesbury.[39] Part and parcel of Shaftesbury's

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[36] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 194–232; Claudia Schröder, '*Siècle de Frédéric II*' *und* '*Zeitalter der Aufklärung*'. *Epochenbegriffe im geschichtlichen Selbstverständnis der Aufklärung*, Quellen und Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preußischen Geschichte 21 (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2002).

[37] Ian Hunter, 'Multiple Enlightenments: Rival *Aufklärer* at the University of Halle', in Fitzpatrick, Jones, Knellwolf and McCalman (eds.), *Enlightenment World*, pp. 576–95; Ian Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments: Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany*, Ideas in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[38] Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 89.

[39] Josef Chytry, *The Aesthetic State: A Quest in Modern German Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. iv, lxv–lxxiv, 94; Lothar Jordan, 'Shaftesbury und die deutsche Literatur und Ästhetik des. 18. Jahrhunderts', *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* NF 44 (1994), pp. 410–24; Oskar F. Walzel, 'Shaftesbury und das deutsche Geistesleben des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* 1 (1909), pp. 416–37; Rebekka Horlacher, *Bildungstheorie vor der Bildungstheorie. Die Shaftesbury-Rezeption in Deutschland und der Schweiz im 18. Jahrhundert* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004), pp. 22–6, 34–5, 101, 131–59.

aesthetic was his republican Commonwealthman politics that infused aesthetic and cultural theory with a subversive and oppositional tendency from the outset and which remained influential into the 1790s, shaping the ideas both of Schiller and of Schiller's radical young critics. Strict rationalism was paralleled by what has been described as the supranaturalist network that extended from Zürich up to Copenhagen and across to Königsberg, via Marburg, Düsseldorf, Münster and other centres.[40] That in turn overlapped with the tendency that Peter Reill has described as Enlightenment vitalism, which seemed increasingly to provide plausible answers to the objections that Hume and others had made to the reductive mechanical rationalism of the early decades of the century.[41] Then, developing slightly later, there is the Catholic Enlightenment; and, slightly earlier, a Berlin-centred Jewish Enlightenment.[42]

III

Many of these developments extend well into the period of what Schneiders and others term the crisis of the *Aufklärung*, dated from the end of the Seven Years' War, the early 1770s or the 1780s. Its underlying causes are also variously explained. Frederick Beiser suggests largely philosophical causes. On the one hand rational criticism led to scepticism, which undermined the common-sense belief in the reality of the external world. On the other hand scientific naturalism led to materialism which undermined any possibility of human freedom, immortality and the *sui generis* status of the mind.[43] Werner Schneiders focuses on a crisis in the relationship between the Berlin *Aufklärung* and the state. The 'est-il utile' debate of 1780, he suggests, crystallised a growing disillusionment of the

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[40] Johan van der Zande, *Bürger und Beamte. Johann Georg Schlosser, 1739–1799*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz 119 (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1986), pp. 24–5.

[41] Peter H. Reill, 'Analogy, Comparison, and Active Living Forces: Late Enlightenment Responses to the Skeptical Critique of Causal Analysis', in Johan van der Zande and Richard H. Popkin (eds.), *The Skeptical Tradition around 1800: Skepticism in Philosophy, Science and Society*, International Archives of the History of Ideas 155 (Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer, 1998), pp. 203–11.

[42] For literature on these aspects, see Borgstedt, *Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, pp. 42–53; Shmuel Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment*, trans. Chaya Naor, Jewish Culture and Contexts (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

[43] Frederick C. Beiser, 'The Enlightenment and Idealism', in Karl Ameriks (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 18–36, esp. pp. 19–22; and Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 75–7.

Aufklärer with the reforms of the 1760s and 1770s.[44] The very fact that Frederick II had set the question of whether it was permissible for a ruler to deceive his subjects in their own best interests for a prize essay competition in 1777 created unease. Some, like Kant, disapproved of the fact that the question had been asked at all. The sense that the greatest reform of all, the transformation of society, remained as remote as ever, led some to doubt whether it could ever be achieved. According to Schneiders, the debate about *Aufklärung* and *wahre Aufklärung* (true Enlightenment) that developed in the following years was ultimately little more than an endgame played out by a movement that had no future. Frederick the Great's death in 1786, the Wöllner edict which sought to dictate the dogma deemed valid in the Prussian state religion (to the exclusion of any competing versions) in 1788 and the French Revolution of 1789 created a new framework in which the *Aufklärer* had nothing more to say. By the early 1770s, they had vanquished their enemies, Schneiders argues, but they now paid the price for their success. Confidence and optimism gave way to 'exhaustion and disillusionment'.[45]

This chronology has a long tradition. It echoes the criticisms levelled at the *Popularphilosophen* by the younger generation of philosophers in the 1790s.[46] It reflects the view that Hegel set out in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* around 1820, which criticised the *Aufklärung* as plodding and unimaginative, a second-rate derivative of English and French thought. *Popularphilosophie* (popular or popularising philosophy) was nothing more than Wolffianism minus the formal system propagated by a brotherhood of 'ehrliche Trödler' (honest slow-coaches). Hegel had a clear purpose: to present the philosophy of Kant as the prelude to the Idealist systems of the 1790s and, ultimately, to his own mature system, the culmination, as he suggests in his closing remarks, of the 'Bemühungen des Geistes' (the exertions of the spirit) over 2,500 years.[47]

Hegel's chronology has never really been seriously challenged. Even his most radical critics simply substituted a new conclusion to his narrative: most notably, Marx's proclamation of the end of philosophy and the dawn of the new, and final, age of theory. Moreover, the notion of an early demise of the *Aufklärung* was further reinforced by the emergence in the 1870s of the idea that a 'Deutsche Bewegung' or 'deutsche geistige Bewegung' (German intellectual-spiritual movement) had developed between

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[44] Schneiders, *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, pp. 19–20. [45] Ibid., p. 19.
[46] Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt*, pp. 203–15; Beiser, *Fate of Reason*, pp. 167–8.
[47] G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1971–9), XX, pp. 308, 455. See also Ursula Goldenbaum (ed.), *Appell an das Publikum. Die öffentliche Debatte in der deutschen Aufklärung 1687–1796*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004), I, pp. 13–16.

about 1770 and 1830.[48] In Dilthey's view this was characterised on the one hand by a radical critique of the *Aufklärung* and its supersession by Kant, and on the other hand by a growing sense of Germanness among German intellectuals.[49] Dilthey and successors such as Herman Nohl were liberals hoping to bring about a revival of the Kantian heritage. However, the concept of a 'Deutsche Bewegung' also had obvious appeal to conservatives who wanted to emphasise the anti-rational and anti-western nature of German thought and culture.[50] Finally, after 1945 Hajo Holborn, another liberal (and an *émigré* as well), later identified the philosophical core of the 'Deutsche Bewegung' as the root of the German catastrophe. In his view, Idealism succeeded between 1770 and 1840, where Pietism and orthodoxy had failed, in halting the steady advance of the '*Aufklärung* in the spiritual and political life of Germany'.[51] According to Holborn this explained why Germany had no liberal tradition: for Idealism, he argues, was inherently statist and not founded on the western natural law tradition.

If the ideological baggage attached to the concept of a 'Deutsche Bewegung' has now been abandoned, the master narrative at its core remains powerful. Philosophers insist that Kant, though he might have intended to save it, destroyed the *Aufklärung* and that Idealism represents a radical new departure.[52] Literary scholars remain wedded to the concept of *Deutsche Klassik* and then *Romantik* as movements that superseded and were superior to *Aufklärung*.[53]

Attempts to introduce the concept of *Spätaufklärung* (late Enlightenment) have not been entirely satisfactory.[54] The combination of crisis and

[48] Armin Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918–1932. Ein Handbuch*, 3rd edn (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), pp. 12–15; Hellmuth Rössler and Günther Franz, *Sachwörterbuch zur Deutschen Geschichte* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1958), pp. 191–3.

[49] Wilhelm Dilthey, 'Die dichterische und philosophische Bewegung in Deutschland 1770–1800', in Wilhelm Dilthey, *Gesammelte Schriften V* (Leipzig and Berlin: B. G. Treubner, 1924), pp. 12–27.

[50] Herman Nohl, *Die Deutsche Bewegung. Vorlesungen und Aufsätze zur Geistesgeschichte von 1770–1830*, eds. O. F. Bollnow and F. Rodi (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970).

[51] Hajo Holborn, 'Der deutsche Idealismus in sozialgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung', in Hans-Ulrich Wehler (ed.), *Moderne deutsche Sozialgeschichte*, Neue Wissenschaftliche Bibliothek 10 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1976), pp. 85–109, at p. 97.

[52] Schneiders, *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, p. 18. But see Gerhard Gamm, *Der Deutsche Idealismus. Eine Einführung in die Philosphie von Fichte, Hegel und Schelling* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1997), p. 11; Karl Americks, 'Introduction: Interpreting German Idealism', in Americks, *Companion to German Idealism*, pp. 1–17; Beiser, 'Enlightenment and Idealism', ibid., pp. 18–36; Walter Jaeschke, 'Zum Begriff des Idealismus', in Christoph Halbig, Michael Quante and Ludwig Siep (eds.), *Hegels Erbe* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), pp. 164–83.

[53] Gerhard Schulz, *Romantik*, 2nd edn (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2003), pp. 26–9, 67–76; Müller, *Aufklärung*, p. 100; Borgstedt, *Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, p. 91.

[54] For example: Wolfgang Albrecht, 'Deutsche Spätaufklärung – eine interdisziplinäre Forschungsaufgabe', *Weimarer Beiträge* 33 (1987), pp. 655–63; Wolfgang Albrecht,

lateness all too readily equates with decay and decline. The fact that the main theme of *Spätaufklärung* is often held to be the debate about the meaning of *Auklärung* itself fits all too neatly into the Hegelian notion that movements and ideas only reflect on themselves when they have all but run their course. Furthermore some notions of *Spätaufklärung* have been criticised because they give undue prominence to the German Jacobins and to relatively minor *Popularphilosophen*, which simply emphasises the weakness of the phenomenon generally. Similarly an exclusive focus on the debate about what *Aufklärung* was, with all the growing ambiguity of claims to represent a *wahre Aufklärung* and the development of an outright opposition movement or *Gegenaufklärung* (anti-Enlightenment), in many ways merely reinforces the impression of an ever-weakening endgame after 1789.

Many of these arguments ignore the fundamental point. Instead of terms such as 'crisis' or 'late' it would be more fruitful to think of the later Enlightenment in the terms that Roy Porter suggested for England: as a second Enlightenment or the enlightened critique of Enlightenment.[55] The key lies in seeing the significance of a fundamental shift that took place during the 1770s. It was a complex phenomenon and it had aesthetic, religious, philosophical, as well as political dimensions. Of course many of the ingredients are identical to the causes of the supposed crisis of the *Aufklärung*. However, there is something more positive at the root of what are often seen as disparate manifestations of decline.

IV

Like the first Enlightenment the second is characterised by a wide spectrum of responses, attitudes and approaches. What unifies them is a fundamental shift in attitudes to the state. The first Enlightenment had been characterised by a positive view of the state and its functions based on a traditional understanding of natural law. According to Pufendorf, Thomasius and Wolff, the individual relinquished his natural rights, the *iura connata*, on entering society. With certain restrictions, largely self-policed by the ruler, the prerogatives of the state took precedence over the rights of the individual. From the 1760s that view was gradually superseded by the notion of inalienable human rights or *Menschenrechte*, which

'Deutsche Spätaufklärung: Versuch einer Wesensbestimmung aus germanistischer Sicht', in Werner Schneiders (ed.), A*ufklärung in Europa: Einheit und Vielfalt* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschaftsverlag, 2003), pp. 19–25; Wolfgang Albrecht, 'Aufklärung, Reformation, Revolution oder "Bewirkt Aufklärung Revolutionen?" Über ein Zentralproblem der Aufklärungsdebatte in Deutschland', *Lessing Yearbook* 22 (1990), pp. 1–75.

55 Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (Harmondsworth: Allen Lane, 2000), p. xvii.

the state was in no circumstances entitled to infringe.[56] The prerogatives of the state were increasingly limited and criticism of the abuse of power by absolutist princes, even enlightened ones, became commonplace. The old equivalence of state and society gave way to the assertion that society was independent of the state and that the state had a duty to respect its freedom.

The causes of this paradigm shift are complex. The influence of French physiocratic theory is undoubtedly significant. There was also growing unease at the rather unenlightened behaviour of some rulers, as well as doubts about the impact of enlightened reform. However, the new view was also in large part both a reaction against Wolff and Wolffianism and also a response to the sceptical and materialist challenges to which Wolffianism had no answer other than the insistence on its own exclusive validity.[57]

The debate about whether one calls this early liberalism or proto-liberalism diverts attention to nineteenth-century issues and detracts from the broader significance of this paradigm shift for the *Aufklärung*.[58] For it informed the entire spectrum of enlightened opinion. The Berlin *Popularphilosophen*, for example, embraced an eclectic approach that still retained Wolff's insistence that the individual be educated to be useful but now combined that with an insistence on the limitation of the state's role.[59] The state continued to loom large in their thinking but they were increasingly ambivalent towards it. Ernst Ferdinand Klein, the Prussian legal expert, for example, spent his life defending society against the state, but when asked by his doctor on his deathbed on 18 March 1811 what he was thinking about he replied: the state.[60]

The members of the Berlin circle of the 1780s no more exclusively represented the second *Aufklärung*, than their predecessors in the 1740s and 1750s had done the first. Kant's response was diametrically opposed

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[56] Diethelm Klippel, 'Von der Aufklärung der Herrscher zur Herrschaft der Aufklärung', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 17 (1990), pp. 93–210; Jörn Garber, 'Vom "ius connatum" zum "Menschenrecht". Deutsche Menschrechtstheorien der Spätaufklärung', in Reinhard Brandt (ed.), *Rechtsphilosophie der Aufklärung. Symposium Wolfenbüttel 1981* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1982), pp. 106–47.

[57] Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt*, pp. 49–51; Beiser, *Fate of Reason*, pp. 193–225.

[58] Klaus Gerteis, 'Die politische Spätaufklärung und die "Krise" des Absolutismus', in Helmut Reinalter (ed.), *Die demokratische Bewegung in Mitteleuropa von der Spätaufklärung bis zur Revolution 1848/49* (Innsbruck: Inn–Verlag, 1988), pp. 65–74.

[59] Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt*, pp. 68–70; Christina M. Sauter, *Wilhelm von Humboldt und die deutsche Aufklärung*, Historische Forschungen 39 (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1989), pp. 99–115.

[60] Klaus Berndl, 'Neues zur Biographie von Ernst Ferdinand Klein', in Eckhart Hellmuth, Immo Meenken and Michael Tauth (eds.), *Zeitenwende? Preußen um 1800* (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1999), pp. 139–81, at p. 181.

in philosophical terms, though not so different in its attitude to the state. And the spectrum could be extended to include such diametrical opposites as Justus Möser with his defence of traditional corporatist rights, Johann Georg Schlosser with his amalgam of Shaftesbury and traditional Frankfurt republicanism, and the whole range of opinions represented by the so-called Jacobins.[61]

Equally significant is another variety of philosophical reactions that developed in the 1790s as successive recipes for a true *Aufklärung*. These were more than just responses to the French Revolution; they were productive answers to the issues of the day formulated within the framework that emerged in the 1760s and phrased in a vocabulary that was well established before 1789.

Alexander von Humboldt, for example, criticised both the Philanthropinists (as limited rationalists) and Kant (as a subjectivist). Inspired by his reading of Rousseau and Shaftesbury, horrified by Wöllner's literalist *Aufklärung*, and sceptical about the ahistorical rationalist experiment in France, he developed a more radical, vitalist vision of the development of the individual.[62] The state did not become redundant, but it needed to change its mission from one of control to one of liberation and the promotion of sensual beings. For Humboldt, as for so many others, the new view of the state essentially limited its function to providing security, which he defined as 'the certainty of lawful freedom'.[63]

Developments in Jena and Tübingen also produced more radical visions of what the state might be and do. Fichte sought first to complete Kant's system, then moved beyond it. Like Humboldt, he rejected the machine-like and controlling state and insisted on man's essential freedom.[64] The Tübingen group – Hölderlin, Schelling and Hegel – were also first inspired by a radical version of Kant's teaching developed by Immanuel Carl Diez. They then interacted with Reinhold and above all

[61] Jonathan B. Knudsen, *Justus Möser and the German Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 1–30; van der Zande, *Bürger und Patriot*, pp. 63–5; Susanne Lachenicht, 'Deutscher Jakobinismus: zur "Janusköpfigkeit" eines politischen Phänomens', in Oliver v. Mengersen (ed.), *Personen – Soziale Bewegungen – Parteien. Beiträge zur Geschichte. Festschrift für Hartmut Soell* (Heidelberg: Manutius, 2004), pp. 301–22; Anne Cottebrune, *'Deutsche Freiheitsfreunde' versus 'deutsche Jakobiner'. Zur Entmythologisierung des Forschungsgebiets 'Deutsche Jakobiner'* (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung, Historisches Forschungszentrum, 2002).
[62] Sauter, *Wilhelm von Humboldt*, pp. 184–91, 316, 347; Frederick C. Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution and Romanticism: The Genesis of Modern German Political Thought 1790–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 111–37. See also: Anthony La Vopa, *Fichte: The Self and the Calling of Philosophy, 1762–1799* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 312–13.
[63] Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution and Romanticism*, pp. 133–5.
[64] Ibid., pp. 45–99.

Fichte in Jena, and finally developed their own notion of *Aufklärung* in the *Systemprogramm* of 1797.[65] They too rejected the traditional state. In so far as they believed they needed a state at all at this stage it was for the purposes of security only. Their response to the leading icons of Weimar thought is indicative. For the Swabians criticised Schiller and Goethe for their neglect of the collective side of community: Schiller, they claimed, had failed to appreciate the social essence of human existence.[66]

One thing that all these individuals have in common is that they are generally excluded from the *Aufklärung*. Neo-Humanism, Idealism, Romanticism – in Fichte's case nationalism as well – are all conventionally studied as rejections of *Aufklärung*. The same can be said of the *Deutsche Klassik* and, by implication, its leading exponents Schiller and Goethe. Their underlying concerns, however, were still surely those of the *Aufklärung*: the explanation of man as a rational being and the establishment of the optimal principles for man's social living. A new language of philosophy and new claims for the status of philosophy were employed in the pursuit of the old objectives.[67] The turn to a new mythology represented a development of key *Aufklärung* principles, notably those developed by Herder.[68] The high regard that young Romantics such as Friedrich Schlegel had for Lessing as the model of an Enlightenment thinker is indicative of a continuing sense of identification with the fundamental principles and aspirations of the movement.[69] And while each new tendency claimed exclusivity and invariably scorned its competitors, they would have been surprised to be told that they rejected the *Aufklärung*.

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[65] Dieter Henrich, *Grundlegung aus dem Ich. Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte des Idealismus, Tübingen-Jena (1790–1794)*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2004), I, pp. 13–21, 891–6, 902–5; Franz Gabriel Nauen, 'Revolution, Idealism and Human Freedom: Schelling, Hölderlin and Hegel and the Crisis of Early German Idealism', *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 45 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971), pp. viii, 1–17, 23–4, 46–9; Frederick C. Beiser (ed.), *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. xi–xxix; Chytry, *Aesthetic State*, pp. 123–7; Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 43–55.

[66] Chytry, *Aesthetic State*, p. 69.

[67] Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt*, pp. 171–215; Jürgen Habermas, 'Die Philosophie als Platzhalter und Interpret', in Jürgen Habermas, *Moralbewußtsein und kommunikatives Handeln* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp. 9–28; Dieter Henrich, 'Französische Revolution und klassische deutsche Philosophie', in Dieter Henrich, *Eine Republik Deutschland* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 71–101, esp. pp. 92–4.

[68] George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), pp. 19–71; Habermas, *Die nachholende Revolution*, pp. 14–15.

[69] Friedrich Schlegel, 'Über Lessing', in *Friedrich Schlegel, Kritische und theoretische Schriften*, ed. Andreas Huyssen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1978), pp. 46–75. See also Huyssen's illuminating editorial postscript, ibid., pp. 227–43.

What Hegel (much) later told his lecture audience in Berlin was a distortion of his early own development. In reality it was only in the late 1790s that he and his friends began to denounce the 'berlinische Aufklärerei'. *Aufklärung* as such remained the central cause.[70]

V

What caused the change in attitude? To some extent it resulted from the increasingly bitter struggle in the philosophy faculties during the 1790s.[71] By about 1800, the Kantians and Idealists had triumphed over their opponents, though pre-Kantian *Aufklärer* were still powerful enough to drive Fichte out of Jena for atheism in 1798.[72] On the other hand exponents of more traditional – in Hegel's view 'antiquated' – *Aufklärung* or 'practical reasoning' persisted in neighbouring faculties, particularly those that contributed to the emergence of the 'gesamte Staatswissenschaften' in the early decades of the nineteenth century.[73]

Just as important, the dramatic changes in the political scene around 1799 prompted figures such as Fichte or Hegel to perceive a renewed role for a state conceived as more than just the guardian of a realm of freedom. The optimism about freedom that had inspired many during the 1790s was undermined. The state that the later *Aufklärer* wanted variously to reduce, to limit or to turn into a harmonious space of freedom came under threat. Under attack from France its structures wilted and the wider framework which held the German states together, the Reich, was also more and more obviously redundant.

In casting about for a new state it seemed to some only natural to turn to that other Enlightenment (re)discovery: the nation. As Tim Blanning has recently reminded us, the decades after about 1740 saw a powerful development both of German culture and of confidence in the worth and

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[70] Stuke, 'Aufklärung', p. 306. For an account of Hegel as an *Aufklärer*, see Willi Oelmüler, *Die unbefriedigte Aufklärung. Beiträge zu einer Theorie der Moderne von Lessing, Kant und Hegel*, 2nd edn (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1979). More cautious, but with an emphasis on Hegel's loyalty to key *Aufklärung* principles, is Frederick Beiser, *Hegel* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 21–33.

[71] Beiser, *Fate of Reason*, pp. 226–326; Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt*, pp. 203–15.

[72] La Vopa, *Fichte*, pp. 380–7.

[73] David F. Lindenfeld, *The Practical Imagination: The German Sciences of State in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997), pp. 33–88; Michael Stolleis, *Geschichte des öffentlichen Rechts in Deutschland*, 3 vols. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988–99), II, pp. 156–86, 230–65. See also: Wolfgang Albrecht (ed.), *Um Menschenwohl und Staatsentwicklung. Textdokumentation zur deutschen Aufklärungsdebatte zwischen 1770 und 1850, mit drei zeitgenössischen Kupfern*, Stuttgarter Arbeiten zur Germanistik 302 (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1995).

world-historical potential of that culture.[74] That drew on a variety of older traditions of thinking about the German nation. The humanist critics of Rome around 1500 and the rhetoric of the Reformation established a new awareness of 'Germany' as both a linguistic and a geographical concept. The external conflicts of the Reich with the Turks and the French in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the internal struggle of the Protestant princes against the emperors in the name of German liberty all contributed to a rich vocabulary of images and an expressive pathos-laden national discourse. In the seventeenth-century language societies those notions were employed in the pursuit of a national ideal that transcended social and gender and that aspired to transcend the religious divide as well. In the eighteenth century the discourse of the nation was then further enriched by the development of dynastic nationalisms: that local and regional patriotism that was so characteristic of the early phases of the *Aufklärung*. Governments from Vienna to Berlin fostered such patriotism in their efforts to consolidate their disparate territories and their subjects into citizens of a streamlined unitary state. The distinctive blend of culture and power that Blanning has identified in Prussia is reflected in the appearance there of a new intensity of national rhetoric during the Seven Years' War. Works such as Thomas Abbt's *Vom Tode für das Vaterland* (1761) or the patriotic poetry of Ewald von Kleist, Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim and Karl Wilhelm Ramler are indicative of the new spirit, but also of its ambiguous elision of Prussian and German. The combination of the two levels – the 'German' and the territorial – is characteristic of most German national or patriotic writing well into the nineteenth century.

Many of the elements of what is taken to be classic nineteenth-century nationalism clearly developed long before 1789.[75] The view, espoused both by traditional nationalist historians and by scholars such as Hans-Ulrich Wehler, that a purely cultural nationalism expressed in a cosmopolitan idiom gave way to a quite new form of modern political nationalism expressed as a secular religion, draws too stark a contrast between two supposed forms.[76] It also exaggerates the Prussian disaster of 1806 as

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[74] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 232–65. For a review of recent literature: Borgstedt, *Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, pp. 71–80.

[75] Ute Planert, 'Wann beginnt der "moderne" deutsche Nationalismus?', in Jörg Echternkamp and Sven Oliver Müller, *Die Politik der Nation. Deutscher Nationalismus in Krieg und Krisen 1760–1960* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2002), pp. 25–59; Joachim Whaley, 'Thinking about Germany, 1750–1815: The Birth of a Nation?', *Publications of the English Goethe Society* NS 64 (1996), pp. 53–72; Joachim Whaley, 'Reich, Nation, Volk: Early Modern Perspectives', *Modern Languages Review* 101 (2006), pp. 442–55.

[76] Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Nationalismus. Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001), pp. 62–87.

a dramatic watershed in the development of German nationalism. In reality writers such as Fichte, but also Arndt and Jahn, continued to think in eighteenth-century *Aufklärung* terms of rationalism and universalism.[77] Yet at the same time the dissolution of the Reich and the collapse of the German state system generated new imperatives. On the one hand the need to drive the French out seemed to require the precise definition of German values and qualities (especially the martial qualities) and of German ethnicity. On the other hand the dissolution of the Reich required more urgent reflection on the geographical extent of 'Germany' than at any time since the fifteenth century.[78]

The new national ferment was essentially radical in its politics. Fichte's *Reden an die deutsche Nation*, for example, denounced the betrayal of the German nation by the princes, including the King of Prussia. He sketched out a vision of the liberation of the *Volk* from France and of a renewal of the nation in the service of mankind based on a new unifying religion. Like others, Fichte conceived of Germany as a land of freedom.

Nonetheless, the German governments sought to use the new rhetoric in their efforts to mobilise their people in the struggle against the French. The Austrians emulated France and the Confederation of the Rhine and introduced universal conscription. The Prussians embraced reform and their monarch appealed to his people. The majority of the people were, however, more moved by loyalty to their locality or region: 'the national discourse of the elites simply passed the less educated by'.[79]

Equally important, once the crisis was over, the governments had no more use for the propaganda of national patriotism. In Prussia, as in other German states, the authorities soon turned the patriots into outlaws, suspect because the Germany that they believed in would engulf the Prussian crown along with all the other German crowns. Heine's shrewd and embittered judgement of 1836 characterises the process nicely. The princes hoped to be liberated from Napoleon by God, he wrote, but they realised that the combined forces of their subjects might also be helpful. Hence they did all they could to awaken the communal spirit of the

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[77] Klaus von See, *Freiheit und Gemeinschaft. Völkisch-nationales Denken in Deutschland zwischen Französischer Revolution und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 2001), pp. 20–5.

[78] Karen Hagemann, *'Mannlicher Muth und Teutsche Ehre'. Nation, Militär und Geschlecht zur Zeit der Antinapoleonischen Kriege Preußens*, Krieg in der Geschichte 8 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002).

[79] Planert, 'Wann beginnt der "moderne" deutsche Nationalismus?', p. 56. See also Matthew Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture 1806–1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 41–68 and Otto W. Johnston, *Der deutsche Nationalmythos. Ursprung eines politischen Programms* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1990).

Germans: 'We were ordered to adopt patriotism and we become patriots; for we do everything that our princes tell us to do.'[80]

VI

That was not the end of nationalism. Nor, however, did the response to the national crisis before 1815 represent the extirpation of all *Aufklärung* values. Narratives that see 1806 either as the birth of Prussian-German nationalism or as the origin of a uniquely German form of nationalist evil need to be re-examined.[81] There were undoubtedly important new developments in the period 1789–1815. Some reacted to events in France by arguing that the Germans had no need of a revolution since they were well on the way to achieving freedom (and more effectively) by means of reform. Others turned against any kind of reform and developed powerful anti-*Aufklärung* ideas, part of a movement as complex and as diverse as the *Aufklärung* itself.[82] Alongside the dominant ideas of the nation that had evolved during the eighteenth century new ideas now also began to emerge. Adam Müller developed the ideas of Edmund Burke into an organological theory of the state, while others, such as the Grimm brothers, Niebuhr and Dahlmann, formulated an idealised view of the German peasant that later became the foundation of much 'völkisch' thinking.[83]

The ideas developed before 1789 inevitably assumed different meanings as those who espoused them went through the massive upheavals of the next twenty-five years. While any periodisation is to a degree arbitrary, the years around 1800 seem to be genuine 'Satteljahre' (watershed years).[84] Yet exclusive concentration on this transformation both fails to do justice to the previous transformations of the *Aufklärung* and tends to obscure the lines of continuity along which *Aufklärung* thinking survived into the nineteenth century. For all the confusion and ambiguity of their present situation, commentators around 1800 surely had good reason to

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[80] Heinrich Heine, *Sämtliche Werke*, 2nd edn, 4 vols. (Munich: Hanser, 1992), II, p. 279.

[81] Wehler, *Nationalismus*, pp. 62–87.

[82] Wolfgang Albrecht and Christoph Weiß, 'Einleitende Bemerkungen zur Beantwortung der Frage: Was heißt Gegenaufklärung?', in Christoph Weiß (ed.), *Von 'Obscuranten' und 'Eudämonisten'. Gegenaufklärerische, konservative und antirevolutionäre Publizisten im späten 18. Jahrhundert*, Literatur im historischen Kontext 1 (St Ingbert: Röhrig, 1997), pp. 7–34.

[83] von See, *Freiheit und Gemeinschaft*, pp. 25–40.

[84] See Reinhart Koselleck, 'Einleitung', in Brunner, Conze and Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, I, pp. xiii–xxvii, at pp. xv–xvi; Reinhart Koselleck, 'Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert als Beginn der Neuzeit', in Reinhart Herzog and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.), *Epochenschwelle und Epochenbewußtsein*, Poetik und Hermeneutik 12 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1987), pp. 269–82.

view the second half of the eighteenth century as the 'philosophisches Jahrhundert'.[85] A cacophony of voices engaged in multiple but interconnected debates accompanied a major shift in attitudes. The first German Enlightenment was preoccupied with ideas of power, or at least with what those in power could achieve for society. The second German Enlightenment was preoccupied with the power of ideas to create the optimal conditions for the fulfilment of human (social) existence. This latter vision was as radical as any conceived in the eighteenth century. It has fascinated German intellectuals of all political persuasions, both the heirs of the *Aufklärung* and their opponents, to this day.

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[85] Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt*, p. 275.

9 Culture and *Bürgerlichkeit* in eighteenth-century Germany

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Gone are the days when it was fashionable to view culture as a product of *longue durée* sociological processes far removed from the action-packed world of high politics.[1] Tim Blanning's work leaves us in little doubt about the importance of the state in shaping culture. This raises interesting questions about causality. In the Marxist tradition, the story was clear: each cultural superstructure was the logical and inevitable product of an equivalent economic substructure, in other words: the outflow of class consciousness. The introduction of Gramsci's 'cultural hegemony' slightly complicated matters, but still, from Marx to Adorno, culture was accorded no real agency.[2] Under different auspices, one can imagine a history of culture where the 'primacy of the state' replaces the primacy of the socio-economic realm. In such a history, the quest for political legitimacy would engender cultural production: from blatant propaganda to subtler forms of political affirmation.[3] By the same token, in the hands of the oppressed and disenfranchised, we can imagine culture as a means

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[1] For this approach, see Arnold Hauser, *Sozialgeschichte der Kunst und Literatur* (2 vols., Munich, 1953). Traces of it can still be found in more recent work, for example Jutta Held and Norbert Schneider, *Sozialgeschichte der Malerei vom Spätmittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 1993).

[2] Unlike orthodox Marxists, the Italian Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) argued that culture could become detached from its economic base under certain conditions. Specifically, Gramsci suggested that capitalism's longevity had to be explained in terms of a 'hegemonic culture', through which the bourgeoisie transformed their own outlook into a seemingly universal or common-sensical set of beliefs. Workers thus developed a 'false consciousness', which inhibited socialist revolutions. On Marxist attitudes to culture, see Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London, 1991); and Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukacs to Habermas* (Berkeley, 1986). On Gramsci and the notion of hegemonic culture, see Walter L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory* (Berkeley and London, 1980); Benedetto Fontana, *Hegemony and Power: On the Relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli* (Minneapolis, 1993).

[3] Representative examples of this approach include *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators, 1930–1945* (exhibition catalogue, London, 1995); Hermann Hipp and Ernst Seidl, eds., *Architektur als politische Kultur: philosophia practica* (Berlin, 1996), especially chapters by Bernd Roeck, 'Die Ohnmacht des Dogen und die Macht der Kunst: Marco und

of political resistance or subversion. Such a view of 'cultures of power' has become well established in recent decades. But what of the power of culture? The second half of Blanning's emblematic title suggests that politics have not simply taken the place of the socio-economic substructure; causation here is an altogether more complex affair. Culture, it seems, is a power in its own right.

Of course, the claim that culture and power are mutually constitutive is not entirely new. Yet, despite fashionable protestations to the contrary, the bulk of historical writing still treats culture as 'illustrative' of political processes.[4] If this has begun to change, this change is not so much the result of more sophisticated histories of cultures, but, rather, new histories of the state.[5] For increasingly historians have come to see the state itself as a cultural artefact. Very different methodological trajectories appear to be converging on this conclusion. First, there is theoretically informed work that takes its cue from Latour's notion of material culture as an 'actant'.[6] Such work has suggested that state power consists not only in the activities of the legislature, judiciary and executive, but is also constituted through a range of material interventions in the natural and built environment, which 'naturalise' particular governing rationalities. Many historical accounts written in this vein focus on the

Agostino Barbarigo, 1485–1501', ibid., pp. 79–92; and Andreas Koestler, '*Gloire* und *simplicité* französischer Platzanlagen. Zur politischen Ästhetik der Reimser *Place Royale*', ibid., pp. 131–47; Jacques Le Goff, *Reims, ville du sacre* (Paris, 1986); Georges Duby, *27 juillet 1214: le dimanche de Bouvines* (Paris, 1973), which proposes a reading of a battle as a carefully choreographed 'ceremony' of power; and, exploring the dialectic between 'autonomous' art and propaganda, Elmar Stolpe, *Klassizismus und Krieg. Über den Historienmaler Jacques-Louis David* (Frankfurt a.M., 1985).

[4] A side-effect of this is that, as source materials, artefacts are rarely allowed to speak for themselves. Their 'meaning' is, instead, derived from written sources documenting the 'intentions' of their creators. Critiques of such approaches have been articulated by Peter Wagner, *Reading Iconotexts: From Swift to the French Revolution* (London, 1995), p. 169; and Ernest B. Gilman 'Interart Studies and the Imperialism of Language', *Poetics Today* 10 (1989), pp. 5–30; W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago, 1986); Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York, 1973).

[5] Three iconic volumes can serve as *pars pro toto* here: Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton, 1980), the first influential study to argue that cultural ritual was central to a state's reality; Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge, 1985), which signalled the 'rediscovery' of the state among social scientists and cultural historians; and James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998), which charts the material processes involved in some of the most ambitious political projects of so-called 'high modernism'.

[6] Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Milton Keynes, 1987), introduced the neologism 'actant' as a neutral way to refer to actors irrespective of intentions, in both the human and the material world.

late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, under the heading of 'liberal governmentality',[7] but there is now also a growing body of early modern scholarship which takes a similar line. Chandra Mukerji's study of the gardens of Versailles as a physical realisation of the ideal absolutist state is a case in point.[8]

Such broadly Foucauldian approaches have no monopoly claim to the growing field of history which examines culture as a form of politics. Recent empirical work on modern German history, too, has also taken a material turn.[9] Relatedly, political historians of the early modern period have woken up to the fact that the different types of regimes they study were themselves culturally constructed myths; the most famous example that springs to mind is the *Myth of Absolutism*.[10]

If the state, then, is at least partly constituted by culture, it makes little sense to see culture only as its product; it is, also, the stuff that states are made of. This raises interesting questions about agency. It is, of course, imperative that we do not revert to German-style *Geistesgeschichte*, in which a reified notion of 'culture' as a Hegelian spirit of the age is seen as the driving force behind world events. Yet it does seem clear that the relationship between culture and the state is mutually constitutive. Tim Blanning offers us two related yet subtly different explanations for this relationship.[11] According to the first, cultural richness is the direct corollary of political power. The more hegemonic a political regime, the more impressive its cultural production, and vice versa. Historically, this did not apply only to the musical, visual and literary examples explored in Blanning's book, notably the courtly culture of absolutist France and Enlightened Prussia. Similar observations could equally be made about *quattrocento* and *cinquecento* Venice, Elizabethan England, or Spain's Golden Age. Such culture is not, or not only, a product of political power; it is one of the ways in which power is translated into political *praxis*.

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[7] Patrick Joyce, *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City* (London and New York, 2003); Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom* (Cambridge, 1999); Chris Otter, 'Making Liberalism Durable: Vision and Civility in the Late Victorian City', *Social History* 27/1 (January 2002), pp. 1–15.

[8] Chandra Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Garden of Versailles* (Cambridge, 1997). See also Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, 1992).

[9] For example, David Blackbourn, *The Conquest of Nature: Water and the Making of the Modern German Landscape* (London, 2006). See also, by the same author, 'A Sense of Place: New Directions in German History', *Annual Lecture at the German Historical Institute 1998* (London, 1999).

[10] Nick Henshall, *The Myth of Absolutism: Change and Continuity in Early Modern European Monarchy* (London and New York, 1992).

[11] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), especially summary of both models on p. 223.

Blanning's second hypothesis, however, complicates the equation. For it introduces a small yet decisive time gap. Here, cultural achievement is seen as something that follows rather than accompanies the heyday of any given political regime. In this view, culture is not so much a sensual as a reflective activity. And like the owl of Minerva, such 'philosophical' culture resumes her graceful flight only in the twilight of political glory. This model, according to Blanning, can better account for the cultural richness of fifteenth-century Burgundy, eighteenth-century Venice, or Vienna and Paris around 1900. Indeed, ever since the *fin de siècle*, the idea of cultural vitality as a product of political decadence has gained widespread currency. Yet Blanning gives this idea an interesting new twist. It is not so much the well-rehearsed tale of the rise and fall of empires which informs his view of culture as something that flourishes after political power has peaked. Rather, Blanning uses the example of eighteenth-century regimes on the cusp between 'representational' and 'critical' culture to show how cultural production can result from what we might call 'politics with a vision'. Frederick the Great was out of touch with many artistic innovations of his time. Yet he emerges from Blanning's analysis as a ruler who, although conservative and Francophile in his personal cultural tastes, was driven by a firm conviction that German culture was about to enter a golden age that was fuelled by the expansion of Prussian state power.[12] Thus, even if *Klassik* and Idealism in German literature and thought were not in any direct sense sponsored by the Prussian state – and in this were quite distinct from the courtly culture which historians such as Mukerji examined – they were, at least in the eyes of Frederick himself, indirect products of his regime.[13] Unlike the technical experts examined in the recent literature on the technologies of liberal power, the writers and artists of the new 'critical' culture, from Immanuel Kant to Wolfgang von Goethe, operated at arm's length from the state and their princely patrons, basing their status on the 'autonomy' of cultural production. Yet this does not make their art apolitical. Instead, critical culture can be read as a kind of commentary on politics, reflecting on political practices from a distinct and independent point of view, and, in doing so, influencing and shaping events to come. Culture, in short, was not just a mirror image of the state: it emerged from the political realm, but transcended the politics of the day, and connected with the politics of the future.

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[12] Ibid., pp. 194–232.

[13] Nicholas Boyle makes a similar point when he interprets German classicism essentially as an extension of Kantian Idealism in his *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, especially II, *Revolution and Renunciation, 1790–1803* (Oxford, 2000).

At this precise moment of transition, from a representational (or official) to a critical (or autonomous) culture, the category of *Bürgerlichkeit* entered contemporary debates. At first glance, this seems to take us back to materialist explanations. Marxist orthodoxy suggests that it was the rise of the middle classes, not the political superstructure, which explains this transformation. For representational culture read 'aristocratic', for critical culture read the 'bourgeois' – and we arrive at the subtitle of Habermas's famous study of the public sphere as 'a category of bourgeois society'.[14] The rise of the middle classes is of course one of the oldest clichés of historical writing, typically fairly meaningless, and entirely misplaced when trying to understand eighteenth-century Germany. As Blanning reminds us, small-town burghers, who made up the bulk of the German middle classes, were losers, not gainers, in the structural transformation of the public sphere, alongside the peasantry.[15] As German burgher towns declined after the Thirty Years' War, courtly culture came to dominate German life, and continued to do so well into the nineteenth century. This is why many historians have concluded that *Bürgerlichkeit* is not a useful concept when trying to explain cultural change in eighteenth-century Germany. Yet it remains a fact that from the 1770s onwards, contemporaries frequently referred to the culture of the salons, reading clubs and debating societies, in short, to what Habermas described as the new public sphere, as *bürgerlich*. We only need to recall the invention of a new literary genre dubbed the *bürgerliches Trauerspiel*.[16] And when Reinhardt Koselleck subtitled his distinctly non-Marxist dissertation on German Enlightenment culture 'an inquiry into the pathogenesis of *bürgerlich* society',[17] he could marshal an impressive range of contemporary sources to justify his choice of words. Unlike Habermas, however, Koselleck,

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[14] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, 1989). Critiques of this model are Andreas Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit. Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1994), esp. pp. 11–33, which emphasises the importance of international politics and legal debates in provoking the formation of a responsive 'public' well before the advent of the economic upheavals which Habermas saw as the primary cause for the public sphere's formation; and Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1992), especially the editor's introduction, pp. 1–48.

[15] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 12.

[16] Christian Erich Rochow, *Das bürgerliche Trauerspiel* (Stuttgart, 1999); Lothar Pikulik, *Bürgerliches Trauerspiel und Empfindsamkeit* (Cologne, 1966); Jochen Schult-Sasse, *Briefwechsel über das Trauerspiel. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Moses Mendelssohn, Friedrich Nicolai* (Munich, 1972); Claudia Albert, *Der melancholische Bürger. Ausbildung bürgerlicher Deutungsmuster im Trauerspiel Diderots und Lessings* (Frankfurt a.M., 1983).

[17] Reinhardt Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise. Studien zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Freiburg and Munich, 1961), translated into English as *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Oxford, 1988).

more sensitive than most to the finer nuances of historical *Grundbegriffe*,[18] did not use the term *bürgerlich* as synonymous with middle-class. It seems, then, that a different translation is needed, although neither Koselleck himself nor those who followed in his footsteps could agree on a single word.

The following pages attempt to sketch some ways in which we may be able to make sense of the self-proclaimed *bürgerlich* character of eighteenth-century culture while being mindful of the need to eliminate economic determinism and 'bring the state back in'. To this end, I shall focus upon a particular dimension of Germany's cultural life in this period, which is almost taken for granted among historians of literature, but which political historians all too often relegate to the margins of their inquiries. This is the pivotal role of the small, even tiny, territories of the Holy Roman Empire in shaping the cultural and political life of eighteenth-century Germany. The courts of these miniature states proved a particularly fertile breeding ground for Germany's cultural revolution. As with their much bigger neighbour, Frederick the Great's Prussia, here, too, the state drove cultural innovation, and the larger number of independent courts, compared with most other European states at the time, multiplied opportunities for such favourable cultural patronage (and more or less neutralised the influence of those courts which resisted such innovations). In another sense, though, the smaller territories did more than just mimic the situation in Berlin. Although Frederick II patronised intellectuals and uttered prophetic statements about the dawn of German culture, he also remained hostile to much that was new and innovative in Germany's cultural revolution in this period.[19] By comparison, princes like Carl August of Saxe-Weimar or Prince Leopold Friedrich Franz III of Anhalt-Dessau embraced not only the principle of public debate and that flagship policy of Enlightenment public relations, religious toleration. They also engaged with and contributed to those cultural innovations which Frederick II himself rejected: the storm and stress movement, sentimentality and the gothic revival. Because these movements, more than the courtly idioms of rococo and neo-classicism cultivated at courts like Sanssouci,[20] were generally dubbed *bürgerlich* by

[18] Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (8 vols., Stuttgart, 1972–97).

[19] Horst Steinmetz, ed., *Friedrich II., König von Preußen, und die deutsche Literatur des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1985).

[20] On Sanssouci, see Michael Hassels, ed., *Potsdamer, Schlösser und Gärten: Bauund Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert* (Potsdam, 1993); Hermann Heckmann, *Baumeister des Barock und Rokoko in Brandenburg-Preussen* (Berlin, 1998); and

contemporaries, the smaller states can shed more light on the complicated nexus between *bürgerlich* culture and political power.[21]

There is one, very obvious sense in which the new culture was indeed *bürgerlich*. Although certainly not the product of a predominantly bourgeois and burgher milieu, the culture sponsored by princes in this era (and most of those who came before them) was mainly produced by writers, artists and composers from non-aristocratic backgrounds: they might have smuggled a *bürgerlich* agenda into the courtly realm. Yet this was nothing new. Moreover, this kind of German *Bürgertum* was not connected to a commercial middle class, much less an industrial one: the courts of the empire, by offering employment opportunities to the educated classes, and by sponsoring the education which qualified them for these positions in the first place,[22] had themselves played a major role in the creation of this *Bildungsbürgertum*. The relationship between *bürgerlich* cultural producers and their princely patrons and employers is better understood as a symbiosis. Artists and architects depended on the courts, but they were more than simple executors of princely orders. The same applies to those who worked as what we might, anachronistically, call public relations advisors. Princely palaces were built, portraitists chosen, collections assembled and gardens designed with the input of a host of expert advisors, who could bring their own tastes and cultural sensibilities to bear on projects, especially where princes were eager to embrace the latest cultural trends and styles. Weimar classicism was not the product of

Hans-Joachim Kadatz, *Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff. Baumeister Friedrichs II.* (Leipzig, 1983). A useful collection of primary sources on rococo taste is Franz Blei and Heinz Puknus, *Geist und Sitten des Rokoko* (Munich, 1966). In distinguishing between courtly and *bürgerlich* cultures, what literary scholars have dubbed the Weimar *Klassik* occupies a curious intermediate position. While linked with the allegedly *bürgerlich* aesthetics of 'genius', as the name implies, the literary *Klassik* was also characterised by affinities with the aesthetics of neo-classicism, which was widely regarded as an aristocratic style. The following represent cornerstones in the debate about this concept: Hans Pyritz, 'Der Bund zwischen Goethe und Schiller. Zur Klärung des Problems der sogenannten Weimarer Klassik', *Publications of the English Goethe Society* NS 21 (1952), pp. 27–55; Walter H. Bruford, *Culture and Society in Classical Weimar, 1775–1806* (Cambridge, 1962); Terence James Reed, *The Classical Centre: Goethe and Weimar, 1775–1832* (London, 1980); Dieter Borchmeyer, *Weimarer Klassik. Portrait einer Epoche* (Weinheim, 1994).

[21] Lothar Pikulik, *Leistungsethik contra Gefühlsethik. Über das Verhältnis von Bürgerlichkeit und Empfindsamkeit in Deutschland* (Göttingen, 1984); Werner Busch, *Das sentimentalische Bild. Die Krise der Kunst im 18. Jahrhundert und die Geburt der Moderne* (Munich, 1993); H. B. Nisbet, ed., *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe* (Cambridge, 1985); Martin Swales, *The German Bildungsroman from Wieland to Hesse* (Princeton, 1978).

[22] An exemplary study of this process is James Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of Compulsory Schooling in Prussia and Austria* (Cambridge, 1988).

Carl August's mind, but an invention of Goethe and Schiller, generously patronised by the prince eager to be seen as a cultural innovator. Likewise, in Anhalt-Dessau, Prince Franz relied on a team of experts to give concrete expression to his reformist aspirations. His neo-Palladian villa and landscape garden were designed by Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff, who was also the brain behind the Chalcographie, a model company set up to mass-produce affordable prints of worthy works of art.[23] Dessau's new model schools were created by Johann Bernhard Basedow, another *Bürger*, who in turn derived much inspiration from the pedagogic ideas of the English scientist Joseph Priestley.[24] The list could be extended.

It would be wrong, however, to regard Carl August and Franz merely as facilitators of the rise of *bürgerlich* artists and experts. In Anhalt-Dessau, none of Franz's advisors had the same creative energy or the ability to sniff out and foster the most interesting and innovative cultural trends as the prince himself. Michael Stürmer recognised as much in his essay of 1993, which he ironically entitled 'Bürgerliche Fürsten'.[25] In it, Stürmer focuses on the origins of the Biedermeier style in German

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[23] On Erdmannsdorff, see Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Wörlitz, eds., *Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff, 1736–1800. Leben, Werk, Wirkung* (Wörlitz, 1987), as well as Ralph Torsten Speler, ed., *Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff, 1736–1800. Literarische Zeugnisse* (Dessau, 1986); and Hans-Joachim Kadatz, *Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff. Wegbereiter des Frühklassizismus in Anhalt-Dessau* (Berlin, 1986). On the Chalcographie, see Susanne Netzer, *Die Chalcographische Gesellschaft zu Dessau. Profil eines Kunstverlages um 1800* (Coburg, 1987); and more generally, Antony Griffiths and Frances Carey, eds., *German Printmaking in the Age of Goethe* (London, 1994). On Prince Franz's artistic advisors, see also Erhart Hirsch, *Dessau-Wörlitz. Zierde und Inbegriff des XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (2nd edn, Munich, 1988); Erhart Hirsch, 'Winckelmann und seine Dessauer Schüler', in J. Dummer and M. Kunze, eds., *Antikerezeption, Antikeverhältnis, Antikebegegnung in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Eine Aufsatzsammlung*, II: *Von Winckelmann zum Klassizismus* (Stendhal, 1988); Andreas Bechtoldt and Thomas Weiß, eds., *Weltbild Wörlitz. Entwurf einer Kulturlandschaft* (Wörlitz, 1996).
[24] Johann Bernhard Basedow, *Vorstellung an Menschenfreunde und vermögende Männer über Schulen und Studien und ihren Einfluß in die öffentliche Wohlfahrt* (1768, reprint ed. H. Lorenz, Leipzig, 1893); and Basedow, *Elementarwerk für die Jugend und ihre Freunde* (4 vols., Dessau, 1774). Basedow's work is discussed in Maiken Umbach, *Federalism and Enlightenment in Germany, 1740–1806* (London and Ohio, 2000). On the English model: Lutz Rössner, *Die Pädagogik des englischen Experimentalphilosophen Joseph Priestley* (Frankfurt a.M., 1986).
[25] Michael Stürmer, 'Bürgerliche Fürsten', in Wolfgang Hardtwig and Harm-Hinrich Brandt, eds., *Deutschlands Weg in die Moderne. Politik, Gesellschaft und Kultur im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1993), pp. 215–22, citation from pp. 218–19; and Stürmer, 'Höfische Kultur und frühmoderne Unternehmer. Zur Ökonomie des Luxus im 18. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 229 (1979), pp. 265–97. A similar case for the primacy of princely taste is made in Friedrich Sengle, *Das Genie und sein Fürst. Die Geschichte der Lebensgemeinschaft Goethes mit dem Herzog Carl August von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach. Ein Beitrag zum Spätfeudalismus und zu einem vernachlässigten Thema der Goetheforschung* (Stuttgart, 1993).

furniture design, allegedly the epitome of *bürgerlich* consciousness. David Roentgen's austere and simplified neo-classicism, he demonstrates, was in fact derivative of Erdmannsdorff's designs for Wörlitz. And because Erdmannsdorff had done little more than execute what Prince Franz himself had thought up, in Stürmer's view, this example exposes the whole myth of German *Bürgerlichkeit* as a princely invention – in much the same ways as the folksy fairy tales collected by the brothers Grimm were often derivative of medieval courtly poetry.[26]

To subscribe to Stürmer's conclusion is to chuck out the baby with the bathwater. Princes were incapable of realising their vision without their *bürgerlich* underlings. Instead of declaring one or the other group as dominant, we need to recognise that the peculiar cultural dynamism of the smaller German courts in this period was based on a mutually beneficial alliance of *bürgerlich* and princely agendas. Two factors account for this. First, a very specific political situation in the Holy Roman Empire made several reigning German princes predisposed to collaborate with, or even to hijack, the agenda of *Bürgerlichkeit*. Second, these princes also acted to protect the *bürgerlich* milieu against its tendency towards self-destruction. I shall discuss these two factors in turn.

For eighteenth-century writers, the notion of *Bürgerlichkeit* was not a class attribute. Instead, it designated a moral disposition. Perhaps its most iconic representation was a series of cartoons by Daniel Nikolaus Chodowiecki. Chodowiecki, director of the Berlin Kunstakademie, was a particularly prolific artist, who created over 2,000 aquafortes, 30 oil paintings and around 4,000 drawings, many of which illustrated literary texts that enjoyed particular popularity among eighteenth-century sentimentalists.[27] The year 1779 saw the publication of a particularly emblematic series of engravings entitled 'Natural and affected acts of life', which were published with a commentary by Georg Christoph Lichtenberg. The first two sets of these juxtapositions use German- and French-language titles to identify German *Bürgerlichkeit* with the 'natural', and French aristocratic styles with the 'affected'. The titles of the first series were *Der Unterricht / L'instruction, Die Unterredung / La conversation, Das Gebeth / La prière, Der Spatzier-Gang / La promenade, Der Grus / La révérence* (described by Lichtenberg as a 'veritable masterpiece in the

[26] Elmer H. Antonsen, James W. Marchand and Ladislav Zgusta, eds., *The Grimm Brothers and the Germanic Past* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1990); Lothar Bluhm, *Grimm-Philologie. Beiträge zur Märchenforschung und Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Hildesheim, 1995).

[27] *Daniel Nikolaus Chodowiecki (1726–1801) und seine Zeit* (exhibition catalogue, Düsseldorf and London, 2001); Werner Busch, 'The Reception of Hogarth in Chodowiecki and Kaulbach', *Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 46 (1992), pp. 9–19; Renate Krüger, *Das Zeitalter der Empfindsamkeit. Kunst und Kultur des späten 18. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland* (Vienna and Munich, 1972).

way it visualised unspeakable courtly sweetness').[28] In each case, the *bürgerlich* attitude is one of quiet introspection, a generally unassuming *habitus*, an almost Pietist sensibility and, in the case of exterior scenes, a natural setting resembling a landscape garden. The corresponding poses of aristocratic affectation are identified through pompous rococo costumes, exaggerated gestures and, in the exteriors, the artificially trimmed hedges of a baroque garden. Similar typologies were constructed in literary texts of the period, most famously Lessing's dramas, such as *Miss Sara Sampson* and *Emilia Galotti*, in which virtuous *bürgerlich* heroines modelled on Richardson's Pamela have to fight off the immoral advances of decadent princely tempters.[29] The *bürgerlich* alternative to the corruption that was being chastised here was by no means confined to a particular socio-economic milieu. Rather, it was a moral persuasion that could be adopted by any feeling individual. While both Sara Sampson and Emilia Galotti meet a sad end, there is at least a hint in both plays that their sacrifice works to convert the decadent prince to the *bürgerlich* cause.

If for Chodowiecki and Lessing *Bürgerlichkeit* denoted morality, honesty and self-restraint, from the later 1770s it also came to designate a new cult of the autonomous individual, and self-cultivation. The *Bürger* was a self-made man – not, or not primarily, in the economic sense, but as the master of his own spiritual fate, which was realised through a process of *Bildung*.[30] In this context, the *Bürger* moved even further away from a realistic social milieu, and became an ideal type, a Promethean figure who embodied a cultural aspiration rather than any real person or persons. *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* was the paradigmatic novel illustrating this process of *bürgerlich* self-building.[31] The construction of the heroic

[28] Ingrid Sommer, ed., *Der Fortgang der Tugend und des Lasters. Daniel Chodowieckis Monatskuppfer zum Göttinger Taschenkalender, mit Erklärungen Georg Christoph Lichtenbergs* (2nd edn, Frankfurt a.M., 1977).

[29] The subtitle *bürgerliches Trauerspiel* of Lessing's principal dramas has led to a proliferation of studies on Lessing as an exponent of eighteenth-century *Bürgerlichkeit*, for example in Claudia Albert, *Der melancholische Bürger. Ausbildung bürgerlicher Deutungsmuster im Trauerspiel Diderots und Lessings* (Frankfurt a.M., 1983); Manfred Durzak, *Zu Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. Poesie im Bürgerlichen Zeitalter* (Stuttgart, 1984); Dieter Hildebrandt, *Lessing. Biographie einer Emanzipation* (Munich and Vienna, 1979); Walter Jens, *In Sachen Lessing. Vorträge und Essays* (Stuttgart, 1983); Edward M. Batley, *Catalyst of Enlightenment: Gotthold Ephraim Lessing: Productive Criticism of Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Bern, Frankfurt a.M., New York, Paris, 1990).

[30] Walter Horace Bruford, *The German Tradition of Self-Cultivation* (Cambridge, 1975); Georg Bollenbeck, *Bildung und Kultur. Glanz und Elend eines deutschen Deutungsmusters* (Frankfurt a.M. and Leipzig, 1994).

[31] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, ed. Erich Trunz, in *Goethes Werke*, Hamburger Ausgabe, vol. VII (Munich, 1981). See also Hellmut Ammerlahn, 'The Marriage of Artist Novel and *Bildungsroman*: Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, a Paradigm in Disguise', *German Life and Letters* 59/1 (2006), pp. 25–46; Jürgen Jacobs, *Wilhelm*

self owed much to the aesthetics of genius, commonly associated with the storm and stress epoch.[32] Yet it is also important to bear in mind that in Goethe's successor novel to his classic *Bildungsroman*, entitled *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* and published in two versions in 1821 and 1829 respectively, the discovery of a 'vocation' reunited the contemplative and the practical lives of the emancipated *bürgerlich* individual.[33] While *Bildung* involved introspection, this did not preclude a political application: even in its purely literary manifestation, the cult of the *bürgerlich* ego was linked to an agenda for social transformation.

If *Bürgerlichkeit* in later eighteenth-century Germany denoted both a new moralism and a new individualism, both suited the political requirements of German small-state rulers. The minor princes of the empire – especially those who cultivated an image as 'Enlightened absolutists' – courted German public opinion as an important ally. This was particularly acute because such territories had little hope of defending their autonomy by military means against the expansionist aspirations of both Austria and Prussia. This dilemma was dramatised by the War of the Bavarian Succession in 1778–9, which led to both major powers

Meister und seine Brüder. Untersuchungen zum deutschen Bildungsroman (Munich, 1972); Jacobs, 'Reine und sichere Tätigkeit. Zum Bildungskonzept in Goethes Wilhelm Meister', *Pädagogische Rundschau* 53/4 (1999), pp. 411–23; Hannelore Schlaffer, *Wilhelm Meister. Das Ende der Kunst und die Wiederkehr des Mythos* (Stuttgart, 1980); Friedrich A. Kittler, 'Über die Sozialisation Wilhelm Meisters', in Gerhard Kaiser and Kittler, eds., *Dichtung als Sozialisationsspiel. Studien zu Goethe und Gottfried Keller* (Göttingen, 1978); Michael Beddow, *The Fiction of Humanity: Studies in the Bildungsroman from Wieland to Thomas Mann*, Anglica Germanica Series 2 (Cambridge, 1982), esp. pp. 63–158; Franco Moretti, *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (London, 1987), esp. pp. 15–73; Michael Minden, *The German Bildungsroman: Incest and Inheritance* (Cambridge, 1997).

[32] Jochen Schmidt, *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens in der deutschen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik, 1750–1945* (Darmstadt, 1985); Nicholas Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, I: *The Poetry of Desire, 1749–1790* (Oxford, 1991); Dieter Borchmeyer, *Höfische Gesellschaft und Französische Revolution bei Goethe. Adliges und bürgerliches Wertsystem im Urteil der Weimarer Klassik* (Kronberg, 1977).

[33] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder Die Entsagenden*, ed. Erich Trunz, in *Goethes Werke*, Hamburger Ausgabe, vol. VIII (Munich, 1973), pp. 7–516 (and commentary pp. 517–690). See also Anneliese Klingenberg, *Goethes Roman 'Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder die Entsagenden'. Quellen und Komposition*, Beiträge zur Deutschen Klassik (Berlin and Weimar, 1972); Ehrhard Bahr, '*Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder die Entsagenden*', *Goethe-Handbuch*, vol. III (Stuttgart and Weimar, 1997), pp. 186–231; Joachim Pfeiffer, 'Von Prometheus zum Wandererbund. Das Verhältnis von Künstlertum, Kreativität und Masochismus bei Goethe', *CollGerm* 30 (1997), pp. 121–9; Gonthier-Louis Fink, 'Die Pädagogik und die Forderungen des Tages in *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahren*', *Euphorion* 93/2 (1999), pp. 251–91; Klaus F. Gille, '*Wilhelm Meisters* kulturpolitische Sendung', *Weimarer Beiträge* 45 (1999), pp. 432–43; Manfred Engel, 'Modernisierungskrise und neue Ethik in Goethes Roman *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder Die Entsagenden*', in Henning Kössler, ed., *Wertwandel und neue Subjektivität. Fünf Vorträge* (Erlangen, 2000), pp. 87–111.

infringing upon the constitutionally guaranteed autonomy of such territories by recruiting outside their own borders.[34] In this political climate, for minor rulers to be seen to be setting new moral standards in government could only be advantageous.[35]

At the same time, a useful parallel could be drawn between the autonomy of the celebrated *bürgerlich* individual, and the individualism of small political units which, so these rulers wished to suggest, enriched the political culture of the Holy Roman Empire as a whole. This was helped by the fact that the process of abstraction, which turned the idea of the *Bürger* into an ideal type – a Promethean new man – meant that the concept could also be transferred from an imagined individual to an imagined polity. Johann Gottfried Herder had argued that, like the ideal-typical individual of the storm and stress epoch, every nation had its 'individual genius'.[36] The same notion could be applied to the German principalities: such polities, though hardly significant on a world-political stage, were deemed to have a 'character' in their own right. The genius of the German nation arose from the multiplicity of political individualities encapsulated in the imperial territories.

Such arguments were frequently made in the context of the imperial reform movement of the later eighteenth century. Here, we can distinguish between two factions: those reformers who looked to the medieval empire as a precedent, and those who, instead, turned their attentions to the Reich of the Renaissance.[37] Justus Möser is an exemplar of this

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[34] These political dynamics are explored in more detail in my work on 'The Politics of Sentimentality and the German *Fürstenbund*', *Historical Journal* 41 (1998), pp. 679–704.

[35] On the connection between courtly life and public opinion in the Holy Roman Empire during the late Enlightenment, see Andreas Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit. Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1994), esp. pp. 11–33; Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1992), especially the editor's introduction, pp. 1–48; James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001); Thomas Biskup, 'The Politics of Monarchism: Royalty, Loyalty and Patriotism in Later Eighteenth-Century Prussia' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2001); Hans-Wolf Jäger, ed., 'Öffentlichkeit im 18. Jahrhundert', *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert – Supplementa* 4 (1997).

[36] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Another Philosophy of History and Selected Political Writings*, trans. and introduced by Ioannis D. Evrigenis and Daniel Pellerin (Indianapolis and Cambridge, 2004). A useful introduction is Frederick M. Barnard, *Herder on Nationality, Humanity, and History* (Montreal and London, 2003).

[37] Useful overviews of the imperial reform debate are provided by Michael Hughes, '*Fiat justitia, pereat Germania*? The Imperial Supreme Jurisdiction and Imperial Reform in the Later Holy Roman Empire', in John Breuilly, ed., *The State of Germany: The National Idea in the Making, Unmaking, and Remaking of a Modern National State* (London, 1992); and Horst Dippel, 'Der Verfassungsdiskurs im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert und die Grundlegung einer liberaldemokratischen Verfassungstradition in Deutschland', in Dippel, ed., *Die Anfänge des Konstitutionalismus in Deutschland. Texte deutscher Verfassungsentwürfe am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt, 1991), pp. 7–44.

'medievalist' faction. In his *Patriotische Phantasien* of 1770, he advocated maximum autonomy for the imperial Estates.[38] This was the most radical formulation of an argument which equated freedom with the complete absence of any imperial 'interference'. As Möser's title indicates, however, his was not written as an 'accurate' historical account. Rather, these 'fantasies' presented an imaginative vision of small-state autonomy pushed to extremes, based on what he perceived as a medieval notion of individual honour, which had been superseded by the mechanisation and instrumentalisation of individuals in the modern age, especially in modern warfare. A less radical stance was promoted by eighteenth-century reformers who took not the medieval, but the sixteenth-century empire as a model (or more accurately: the empire as it emerged after the foundation of the Imperial Cameral Court in 1495). According to legal theorists such as Johann Stephan Pütter, Friedrich Karl Moser, Karl Friedrich Häberlin, A. L. von Schlözer, Otto Heinrich Freiherr von Gemmingen, Wilhelm Ludwig Wekhrlin and many others, small-state individualism had to be protected by an imperial umbrella structure, a legal framework that harmonised relationships between the 'individuals' – i.e. the different polities – that constituted the indivisible imperial 'body'.[39]

These arguments gained topicality in the negotiations about the formation of a *Fürstenbund* in 1779, originally conceived as an alliance of the smaller territories against both Borussian and Habsburg expansionism. The princes at the heart of the scheme, Franz of Anhalt-Dessau and Carl August of Saxe-Weimar, were inspired by the idea that the relationship between the imperial territories could be modelled on the relationship between ideal-typical *Bürger*: every territory had a distinctive character, yet the polities would be united by common sentiment and 'friendship'. 'I hope especially that a close tie of friendship . . . might unite within the imperial system our disjoined intentions, interests and forces,' wrote Carl August of Saxe-Weimar,[40] and Franz von Anhalt-Dessau agreed

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[38] Justus Möser, 'Der hohe Stil der Kunst unter den Deutschen', in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. W. Kohlschmidt et al., IV: *Patriotische Phantasien I* (Oldenburg, 1949, originally 1770), pp. 263–8. Cf. Jonathan B. Knudsen, *Justus Möser and the German Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1986); and Jan Schröder, 'Justus Möser', in Michael Stolleis, ed., *Staatsdenker in der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1995), pp. 294–309.

[39] Cf. Hanns Gross, *Empire and Sovereignty: A History of the Public Law Literature of the Holy Roman Empire, 1559–1804* (London and Chicago, 1973); and Michael Stolleis, *Geschichte des öffentlichen Rechts in Deutschland* (2 vols., Munich, 1988–92), I: *Reichspublizistik und Policeywissenschaft, 1600–1800*, pp. 298–333, and II: *Staatsrechtslehre und Verwaltungswissenschaft, 1800–1914*, pp. 39–57.

[40] Carl August to Otto Ferdinand Freiherr von Loeben, 30 March 1788, in Willy Andreas and Hans Tümmler, eds., *Politischer Briefwechsel des Herzogs und Großherzogs Carl August von Weimar* (2 vols., Stuttgart, 1954), I: *Von den Anfängen der Regierung bis zum Ende des Fürstenbundes 1778–1790*, pp. 465–6.

that 'friendship ties' should bind the small states together into a single 'organism'.[41] Traces of this argument can even be found in the works of Goethe, who remained critical of his patron's intentions to revive the imperial constitution in a *bürgerlich* light.[42]

It is clear, then, that the agenda of *Bürgerlichkeit* suited the particular requirements and ambitions of minor German princes in more than one way. That is not to say that *Bürgerlichkeit* was simply hijacked to promote power politics. In a curious twist, the same princes played an important role in saving *bürgerlich* culture from its tendency towards self-emasculation. It was a dilemma with which Goethe himself was only too familiar. After all, the attribute of *Bürgerlichkeit* could be applied, with equal justification, to at least two characters in *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. First, there is Werther himself: the prototypical *bürgerlich* hero of a new age. Second, however, there is his adversary, Albert, loosely modelled on the real-life figure of a Frankfurt merchant, Peter Brentano. In Albert, *bürgerlich* designates not the aesthetics of genius, but a tendency towards pedantry, petty-mindedness and intellectual conservatism of the academic sort: all qualities which later reached their apex in the culture of Biedermeier, which confirmed the symbiosis of *Bürgerlichkeit* and a profoundly risk-averse attitude in things cultural and political.[43] The history of music provides particularly instructive examples of this trend. In a detailed statistical survey on house music, Nicolai Petrat shows that in the Biedermeier era, the aesthetically challenging genre of the sonata declined, from 33% of new compositions in 1818, via 6% in 1833 to just 3% in 1848. It was replaced by simpler and more 'harmless' musical forms, such as the potpourri (1818: 2.5%, 1843: 27.5%).[44] The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* contrasted a golden age where 'Mozart's and Haydn's sonatas were appreciated and performed by an emotionally sophisticated musical public' and 'elevated in spirit by virtue of their inner substance, dignity, splendour, sentimental *gravitas* and loveliness', with a present time in which the piano in the home 'is considered by all

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[41] Franz to Carl August, Wörlitz, 29 October / 1 November 1784, printed in Andreas and Tümmler, *Politischer Briefwechsel*, I, p. 110. This is discussed in greater detail in Umbach, 'The Politics of Sentimentality'.

[42] Georg Schmidt, 'Goethe. Politisches Denken und regional orientierte Praxis im Alten Reich', *Goethe-Jahrbuch* 112 (1995), pp. 197–212. By focusing on Goethe's practical involvement in politics, Schmidt portrays Goethe's view of the empire in a more positive light than the poet's surviving written comments on the subject would suggest.

[43] See Renate Krüger, *Biedermeier. Eine Lebenshaltung zwischen 1815 und 1848* (Vienna, 1979); Rudolf Brandmeyer, *Biedermeierroman und Krise der ständischen Ordnung. Studien zum literarischen Konservatismus* (Tübingen, 1982); Dominic R. Stone, *The Art of Biedermeier* (London, 1990).

[44] Nicolai Petrat, *Hausmusik des Biedermeier im Blickpunkt der zeitgenössischen Fachpresse, 1815–1848* (Hamburg, 1986), p. 64.

classes as a piece of furniture even more essential than the washing bas-
ket, sewing table or a key cupboard'.[45] And when another critic wrote:
'the more devoid of content, the more superficial, the more lacking in
serious meaning, the more welcome and pleasant [music is held to be];
the more unnoticed musical notes drift past the ear, the more diverting
and delectable they are considered',[46] he summarised what many con-
temporaries thought of as the very nature of *bürgerlich* culture in the age
of Biedermeier.

To be fair, the image of an unpolitical German culture has rightly
been criticised in scholarship of the past few decades. There is the obvi-
ous point that German Romanticism fostered an alliance between cul-
ture and nationalism which was by no means politically neutral – most
obviously so in the way it transformed the so-called Wars of Liberation
into a foundational myth of German identity, with obvious repercussions
for Franco-German relations.[47] More broadly, Theodore Ziolkowski has
made a persuasive case for foregrounding Romanticism's formative role
in the evolution of German political and social institutions; the Roman-
tic writer, he wrote, was 'oriented not only toward the infinite and
the miraculous but also toward the social actuality of his times'.[48] It
is equally true that, in the run-up to 1848, so-called *Vormärz* authors
such as Georg Büchner produced what, in modern terminology, might
be called a subversive or counter-cultural movement.[49] Yet both these
movements, notwithstanding the social milieus from which their prin-
cipal artists and writers emerged, defined themselves as anti-*bürgerlich*.
Nor did the association between *Bürgerlichkeit* and an emasculated cul-
ture come to an end in 1848. While Wagner's operas created an ambi-
tious *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the type of musical performance that was princi-
pally associated with the values of *Bürgerlichkeit*, even in the years around
1900, remained Biedermeier-style *Hausmusik*. Every decent middle-class
home had to contain a special music chamber dedicated to such amateur
performances. 'In a country where music is as important as in Germany',

[45] August Kanne, *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 1818, quoted in Petrat, *Hausmusik des Biedermeier*, pp. 82–3.

[46] Anonymous review, *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 1819, quoted in Petrat, *Hausmusik des Biedermeier*, p. 92.

[47] On Romanticism's association with German nationalism, see Keith Hartley et al., eds., *The Romantic Spirit in German Art, 1790–1990* (London, 1994); and Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, eds., *Romanticism in National Context* (Cambridge, 1988). On the anti-Napoleonic 'Wars of Liberation' as a Romantic trope, see Hagen Schulze, *The Course of German Nationalism: From Frederick the Great to Bismarck* (Cambridge, 1990).

[48] Theodore Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism and its Institutions* (Princeton, 1990), p. 15.

[49] James Crighton, *Büchner and Madness: Schizophrenia in Georg Büchner's Lenz and Woyzeck* (Lewiston, NY, 1998); Maurice B. Benn, *The Drama of Revolt: A Critical Study of Georg Büchner* (Cambridge, 1976).

Hermann Muthesius wrote, 'the music chamber assumes a very special significance in the house . . . It is true that the piano or grand piano is part of the standard furniture of the house in many countries, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world. Yet abroad, music is nowhere near as highly developed as in the German house.'[50] In the visual arts, too, Biedermeier and *Bürgerlichkeit* had become almost synonymous by 1900. Although Paul Mebes used both terms approvingly in his influential book,[51] most cultural observers of the day, Muthesius included, argued that German *Bürgerlichkeit* was feeble, subservient and imitating aristocratic lifestyles rather than driving cultural innovation: 'we seem to be ashamed of the very thing which should make us proud, our *Bürgertum*'.[52]

It is no coincidence that concerns about the tendency of *bürgerlich* culture towards the trivial and the conventional had first arisen in the immediate aftermath of the Old Reich's destruction. This tendency was not just apparent in cultural production – it was also, and perhaps even more acutely, a problem of cultural consumption. Cultural historians of the Biedermeier era have rightly chipped away at the image of a purely reactionary epoch, emphasising instead the profoundly ambivalent role of its *bürgerlich* culture *vis-à-vis* the modernisation process. This is evident in the literature of the older Goethe as much as in the music of Schubert and Wagner. Yet if the culture of the post-Reich decades was marked by a precarious balancing act between harmony and dissonance, unity and multiplicity, wholeness and fragmentation, it is also true to say there existed a marked tendency in the *bürgerlich* milieu at large to neutralise and 'disarm' such creative tensions, politically and epistemologically.

In this attitude to culture, the contrast between the post-Revolutionary *bürgerlich* public and princely patronage of the pre-Revolutionary era is most apparent. Characteristically, Goethe himself experienced this change not as a liberation, but as a threat: the Weimar *Klassik* was tamed, its literary works cleansed of all ambiguities and critical undertones, even the rich and oscillating meanings of Goethe's innovative vocabulary of this period were elevated to the status of a new normativity, and hence solidified. Such a *bürgerlich* attitude was epitomised by the Boswellian

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[50] Hermann Muthesius, 'Das Musikzimmer', in *Almanach*, ed. Velhagen und Klasings Monatshefte (Berlin, Bielefeld, Leipzig, Vienna, vol. I, n.d. (1908)), pp. 222–37, quotation p. 222.

[51] Paul Mebes, *Um 1800. Architektur und Handwerk im letzten Jahrhundert ihrer traditionellen Entwicklung* (2 vols., Munich, 1908).

[52] Hermann Muthesius, *Der Kunstwart* 17 (1904), p. 469, quoted in Matthew Jefferies, *Politics and Culture in Wilhelmine Germany: The Case of Industrial Architecture* (Oxford and Washington, 1995), pp. 50–1.

figure of Johann Peter Eckermann (1792–1854).[53] An informal assistant and confidant during Goethe's final years, Eckermann chronicled many conversations with the by now world-famous poet. Published four years after Goethe's death, Eckermann's *Conversations*, heavily edited to suit Biedermeier tastes, shaped the poet's public image for decades to come. A similarly domesticated image of the Weimar *Klassik* also underlay the subsequent construction of countless commemorative sites and practices, which transformed Goethe and Schiller into the heroes of a German national Renaissance.[54] This was a trend which the older Goethe himself had come to dread. Much of his later *œuvre*, notably *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* and *Faust Part II*, actively deconstructed the sense of harmony which characterised the *bürgerlich* reception of the Weimar *Klassik*. In such works, the well-rounded self was abandoned, and the notion of a fixed and stable identity dissolved in multilayered fictionalisations. Scholars as diverse as Walter Benjamin and Hans Pyritz, both concerned, for different reasons, with the overthrow of the 'myth' of German high classicism, first drew attention to this process under the heading of 'the anti-classical turn'.[55] Carl August, it seems, had been better equipped than Eckermann's *bürgerlich* public to embrace the precarious side of the new *bürgerlich* individualism.[56] Thus, in a paradoxical twist, princely patronage, especially at the minor courts, appears to have had a stimulating rather than a smothering influence on the culture of heroic *Bürgerlichkeit*.[57]

[53] Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*, ed. Heinrich Hubert Houben (25th edn, Wiesbaden, 1959); Walter Gröll und Günther Hagen, eds., *Johann Peter Eckermann, Leben und Werk* (Winsen-Luhe, 1992); Reiner Schlichting, ed., *Johann Peter Eckermann. Leben im Spannungsfeld Goethes* (Weimar, 1992).

[54] On Goethe monuments and commemorations, see Thomas Nipperdey, 'Nationalidee und Nationaldenkmal in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 206 (1968), pp. 529–85; Rolf Selbmann, *Dichterdenkmäler in Deutschland. Literaturgeschichte in Erz und Stein* (Stuttgart, 1988); Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Nationsbildung und politische Mentalität. Denkmal und Fest im Kaiserreich', in Hartwig, ed., *Geschichtskultur und Wissenschaft* (Munich, 1990), pp. 264–301; Gert Mattenklott, 'Denk ich an Deutschland. Deutsche Denkmäler 1790 bis 1990', in Meinolf Jansing, ed., *Deutsche Nationaldenkmale* (Bielefeld, 1993), pp. 17–49; Ulrich Schlie, *Die Nation erinnert sich. Die Denkmäler der Deutschen* (Munich, 2002).

[55] Walter Benjamin, 'Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften', *Neue deutsche Beiträge* 2 (1925), H. 1, pp. 83–138, and H. 2, pp. 134–68; Hans Pyritz, 'Nachlaßfragment Humanität und Leidenschaft. Goethes gegenklassische Wandlung 1814/1815', in Hans Pyritz, *Goethe-Studien*, ed. Ilse Pyritz (Cologne and Graz, 1962), pp. 34–51.

[56] Hans Tümmler, *Carl August von Weimar, Goethes Freund. Eine vorwiegend politische Biographie* (Stuttgart, 1978); and Tümmler, *Goethe in Staat und Politik. Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Cologne and Graz, 1964).

[57] On the equation of post-Reich German culture with *Bürgerlichkeit*, see Erika Wischer, ed., *Propyläen Geschichte der Literatur. Literatur und Gesellschaft der westlichen Welt*, V: *Das*

Another example can shed more light on this paradox: Wörlitz, Franz of Dessau's famous residence, has been described as the 'epitome' of eighteenth-century culture in the German lands.[58] The estate comprised not only an 'ideal' picturesque landscape, but, set within it, a host of exhibition pavilions, a model school, public lecture halls as well as greenhouses, stables and so forth devoted to agricultural experimentation. All of these component parts – constructed, as detailed above, with the help of *bürgerlich* experts – could be classified as broadly innovative in the spirit of Enlightened reform. Yet none could lay claim to achieving something unique; in fact, many, such as the Chalcographie and the Philanthropin, were outright failures.[59] What made Wörlitz so famous throughout Germany was the fact that the whole was greater than the sum of its parts. And it is the overall conception that clearly bears the mark of Franz's personal intervention: only the vision of a prince united the *bürgerlich* reform projects into what became perhaps the most commented-on cultural microcosm of the German Enlightenment. This was not just due to the sheer size of the operation. Wörlitz's most remarkable quality was its 'dialogical' structure. Its composite character thrived on the creative tension between rationalism and sentimentality, pantheism and Enlightenment, historicism and progressivism.[60] The construction of this antithetical structure was unthinkable without Franz's personal influence. Indeed, it is the reason why Werner Hofmann, in his seminal study of art between 1750 and 1830, referred to Franz as the 'foremost representative of bifocality', which he sees as the driving force of cultural innovation in this period.[61] The prince's role becomes especially apparent when we consider that Wörlitz was largely inspired by Franz's extensive journeys throughout Europe. The prince himself rarely recorded the details of his journey – although his itineraries can be reconstructed using the correspondence

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bürgerliche Zeitalter, 1830–1914 (Frankfurt a.M. and Berlin, 1984); Jürgen Reulecke, ed., *Geschichte des Wohnens*, vol. III: *1800–1918. Das bürgerliche Zeitalter* (Stuttgart, 1997); Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Bürgerliche Kultur und politische Ordnung. Künstler, Schriftsteller und Intellektuelle in der deutschen Geschichte 1830–1933* (Frankfurt a.M., 2002); Manfred Hettling and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, eds., *Der bürgerliche Wertehimmel. Innenansichten des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 2000).

[58] Erhard Hirsch, *Dessau-Wörlitz, Zierde und Inbegriff des XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (2nd edn, Munich, 1988). A more detailed and scholarly account of contemporary responses to the phenomenon of Wörlitz is Hirsch, 'Progressive Leistungen und reaktionäre Tendenzen des Dessau-Wörlitzer Kulturkreises in der Rezeption der aufgeklärten Zeitgenossen (1770–1815). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Ideologie im Zeitalter der Französischen Revolution' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Halle-Wittenberg, 1969).

[59] Netzer, *Die Chalcographische Gesellschaft*; Umbach, *Federalism and Enlightenment in Germany*, pp. 43–57 and 117–27.

[60] Umbach, *Federalism and Enlightenment*, esp. pp. 59–90.

[61] Werner Hofmann, *Das entzweite Jahrhundert. Kunst zwischen 1750 und 1830* (Munich, 1995), p. 113.

and diaries of those whom he visited – but various of his own staff wrote detailed accounts of these undertakings.[62] The most extensive of these travel diaries are Erdmannsdorff's, who acted as Franz's foremost artistic advisor, accompanied the prince throughout Europe, and often stayed in Italy for longer than his patron in order to acquire art for the princely collection.[63] It is curious that Erdmannsdorff's diaries, describing trips that inspired the creation of one of Germany's foremost cultural monuments, make for surprisingly boring reading: there is hardly a single original thought in them. Like most dutiful 'grand tourists', Erdmannsdorff spent much of his time admiring canonical artworks and purchasing very inferior copies of many, which he then used to turn the villa at Wörlitz into an increasingly conventional 'academic' museum. In this quest, he was immune to the aesthetics of sentimentality or the storm and stress movement, both allegedly very *bürgerlich* cultural moments, which shaped the appearance of the gardens at Wörlitz in decisive ways. It was the prince, not his *bürgerlich* advisor, who created the more innovative counterpoints to these academic tendencies. As soon as the villa of Wörlitz, conceived as an understated *Landhaus* in a rustic Palladianism, became a showcase for Erdmannsdorff's art collection, Franz himself moved out. He built a new residence for himself in the gardens, the quirky and unassuming Gotisches Haus, a labyrinthine and entirely unrepresentative structure, in which he lived a simple life devoted to open-air sports and the study of agricultural improvement, entirely unencumbered by etiquette

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[62] My own research into this material included the following manuscript sources: British Library, Sir William Hamilton, envoy to Naples, correspondence and papers, 1761–1803, Additional Manuscripts 40714.240716 and 41197.241200; Stadtbibliothek Dessau / Anhaltinische Landesbibliothek / Herzogliche Bibliothek zu Dessau, HB8089: Georg Heinrich von Berenhorst, 'Journal de voyage des princes Léopold Frédéric Francois et Jean George d'Anhalt du 18 octobre 1765 jusqu'au 3 mars 1768, conduit par de Berenhorst le 19 avril 1775'; and ibid., HS10012: Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff: Reisetagebuch der zweiten Italienreise 1765–6; Landesarchiv Oranienbaum des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt (previously Staatsarchiv Magdeburg, Außenstelle Oranienbaum), Abt. Dessau, A 9e, No. 15 (1–17): Tagebuch der Fürstin Louise, original autograph; Abt. Dessau, A 10: correspondence of Leopold III. Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau; Abt. Dessau, A 10, Film 4783: correspondence of Leopold III. Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau; and for the prince's English tours: Bodleian Library, Oxford, Department of Western Manuscripts, MS Shelburne Film Dep. 972, 980, 992, 1001; Public Record Office, Chatham papers (papers of Hester Grenville, Lord Temple's sister) 30/8/7–9; Cottrell-Dormer Family Archive, Rousham, Journal kept by Sir Charles Cottrell-Dormer, M. C. to George III, Contains a notice of the King's Marriage to Queen Charlotte & of the Birth & Christening of George IV.

[63] See Erdmannsdorff, *Reisetagebuch der zweiten Italienreise*; and Erdmannsdorff, *Kunsthistorisches Journal einer fürstlichen Bildungsreise nach Italien 1765/66*, trans. and ed. Ralf-Torsten Speler (Munich and Berlin, 2001). See also Landesarchiv Oranienbaum, Abt. Dessau, A 14a, No. 7 (folder concerning the collection of paintings etc. of Leopold III. Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau).

and convention.[64] It is this vision, not Erdmannsdorff's, which we could call *bürgerlich* in the sense of the storm and stress epoch. In an unintended inversion of Stürmer's idiom of *bürgerliche Fürsten*, it seems that the minor German princes did indeed prove highly effective guardians of *Bürgerlichkeit*.

In conclusion, these short sketches may have given some sense of the importance of *Bürgerlichkeit* as a category, even as we move from sociological towards primarily political explanations of cultural change in eighteenth-century Germany. As a moral attribute celebrated by major writers and critics of this period, *Bürgerlichkeit* became a powerful trope. As such, it was appropriated by princes – especially, it seems, the minor rulers of the Holy Roman Empire – whom it helped in their quest to legitimate their political positions through a new, intensely moralising political language. In addition, the same rulers also used *Bürgerlichkeit* to defend the polycentric structure of the empire, by drawing or at least implying parallels between territorial diversity and the new culture of *bürgerlich* individualism. In doing so, they not only became princely champions of *Bürgerlichkeit*. They also, inadvertently, ensured that German culture around 1800 became more dynamic and more exciting than a purely 'bourgeois' culture might have been. The result, then, was a cultural idiom that was both princely and *bürgerlich*.

[64] Umbach, *Federalism and Enlightenment*, esp. pp. 143–60.

10 The politics of language and the languages of politics: Latin and the vernaculars in eighteenth-century Hungary

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The period and place of my title are more strategic in the social history of language than might at first appear. They embrace two very distinct, indeed counterposed phases. On the one hand, Europe's last linguistic ancien régime; on the other hand, the roots of the continent's most dynamic process of linguistic destabilization, which would lead directly to the revolution of 1848 and beyond. Yet the former state of affairs has been grievously neglected; and even the latter process tends only to be studied in terms of the foundation of literary languages (usually considered separately from one another), and to some extent as part of the prehistory of the later 'nationality question' in the region. The actual workings of language interaction in the Hungarian past are hardly ever examined, at least by historians and those in allied disciplines. Yet those workings also raise wider questions about the 'public sphere', in the sense of access to group communication. To whom was this available, and on what terms? And what kinds of justification – practical or rhetorical – underpinned the claims of one language rather than another?

It is symptomatic that the only eminent treatment of my subject for eighteenth-century Hungary (or perhaps any other period) – by Daniel Rapant – has been buried, as a victim of the same divergent evolution. A Slovak, writing in the 1920s about larger issues of Hungarian linguistic culture, made little impact at home and was routinely dismissed unread elsewhere, if noticed at all.[1] Thus a chief cause of disregard for the issues raised in what follows is the *subsequent* politics of language. But part of

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[1] Daniel Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie* (2 vols., Bratislava, 1927–31), one of the first major scholarly tomes ever produced in Slovak. On Rapant: R. Marsina (ed.), *Historik Daniel Rapant: život a dielo, 1897–1988–1997* (Martin, 1998), though even this belated tribute has little on the language side. Rapant is normally ignored by Hungarian historians, or else routinely demonized: e.g. recently Ambrus Miskolczy, 'Egy történészvita anatómiája. 1790–1830/48: folytonosság vagy megszakítottság?', *Aetas* (2005), pp. 160–212, at p. 182 (here in relation to a later work of his).

the reason lies in the difficulty of contemporary sources, especially for the spoken tongue. I can here only hint in a preliminary way at the kind of materials on offer, and at their limitations, before moving on to some reflections about how they might be exploited for wider historical ends.

Of course, a huge volume of documentation serves to demonstrate what language was used for given published and unpublished records. But it is harder to refine the topic. The best kinds of evidence are three-fold. Firstly, certain kinds of official survey, beginning with ecclesiastical ones, notably a countrywide record of parishes in 1773 which identified the majority language in each case.[2] Secondly, from the 1780s *Conduite-listen* (or personal dossiers), which frequently included information about knowledge of languages, were introduced within the central administration and the army. They constitute a potentially remarkable source, but need to be consulted with caution, since most rest on self-assessment, and raise the question what benefits or penalties might attach to claims or admissions made in them. Finally, we have the more casual observations of travellers, memoirists and the like, which mounted in volume for Hungary by the end of the century. These are miscellaneous, impressionistic, often derivative; but they can sometimes supply key testimony, as I hope to show, from a surprising source, later in this chapter.

The basic linguistic datum about Hungary was variety. There were seven main native vernaculars: Magyar[3] clearly the most prominent, especially as the spoken tongue of much of the social establishment, as we shall see below; but none with an absolute majority of speakers. In the Middle Ages Magyars, descendants of the tribesmen who invaded the middle Danube basin around the year 900 and those who had assimilated to their culture, must have enjoyed a clear predominance. Croats, with their semi-autonomous lands in the south-west, and the Slav populations to the north later known as Slovaks and Ruthenes had also been settled since that early period, along with some Germans near the Austrian border and probably some Romanians in the east. Over succeeding centuries many more Germans and Romanians arrived, the latter often driven by pressure from warfare in the Balkans. Ottoman conquests also displaced large numbers of Serbs and Croats on to Hungarian territory, and the

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[2] *Magyarország helységeinek 1773–ban készült hivatalos összeírása = Lexicon locorum regni Hungariae populosorum anno 1773 officiose confectum* (Budapest, 1920). The purpose is described thus: 'Lexicon universorum regni Hungariæ locorum populosorum una perhibens primô: qvænam ex his pagi, qvæve oppida sint? secundô: an & cujus religionis parochos et ludimagistros habeant? tertiô: qvæ principaliter in singulis lingva vigeat?'

[3] I shall mostly refer to the language thus in what follows: 'magyar [nyelv]' can equally be rendered as 'Hungarian [language]', but in the present context that might create ambiguity. Use of the two overlapping terms would itself deserve a semantic study.

Table 10.1 *Hungary: Population (in '000s)*

	1842	%	1900	%
	(estimated, by language of parishes)		(census of mother tongue)	
Magyars (Hungarians)	4,800	37	8,700	45
Romanians ('Wallacks')	2,200	17	2,800	15
Slovaks ('tótok')	1,700	13	2,000	10
Germans ('Saxons', 'Swabians')	1,300	10	2,100	11
Croats ('Illyrians') together	} 2,100	17	1,800	9
Serbs ('Rascians')			1,100	6
Ukrainians ('Russians', 'Rusins')	450	4	400	2
Jews	250	2	*included in above*	5
Total	12,800		18,900	

extended period from the 1520s to the end of the seventeenth century when the central part of the country fell under direct Turkish rule further shifted the ethnic balance.

The statistics in Table 10.1 give an impression of this state of affairs. However, we need to bear in mind for present purposes that they were not only collected much later, but suffer from other defects. They may not themselves be wholly accurate, certainly not before proper decennial censuses were introduced in 1880, and even thenceforth to some extent. Linguistic competence revealingly formed no part of the terms of reference for Joseph II's otherwise quite intrusive statistical investigations, even as he sought to implement the controversial decree we shall consider below.[4] Hence eighteenth-century contemporaries could only guess at the facts – and when they began to do so, in public, some speculated in markedly prejudiced ways. Besides, many people at the time had little or no sense of ethnic identity anyway, so such aggregations are largely at best meaningless and at worst mischievous.

Still more distinctive, however, was the survival in Hungary of Latin, as both a written and – in significant degree – a spoken lingua franca. Elsewhere in Europe its role, though very considerable in and beyond the age of humanism, fell away sharply by the period which concerns us

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[4] Gusztáv Thirring, *Magyarország népessége II. József korában* (Budapest, 1938), pp. 3–12, outlines the (largely military) purposes of Joseph's 1784 census.

here, and it retained a place largely in some intellectual and ecclesiastical circles, especially Roman Catholic ones.[5] Only there was it still called upon to perform certain limited official functions. That applied even to Hungary's neighbours, where Czech in Bohemia had been the first tongue to supplant Latin in most spheres of public life, followed by German in the empire, including the Habsburgs' Austrian lands, and Polish in the western half of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.[6] Farther east, in Lithuania proper, old Ruthenian long survived as Europe's only other such language of formal record. But Ruthenian too was finally replaced by Polish in 1697, and even before then it had been on its last legs; moreover, although antiquated, it did not stand all that far from the local White Russian and Ukrainian vernaculars, which weakens the parallel with Latin.[7]

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Latin long maintained a stable linguistic ascendancy in Hungary, and it continued to hold this ground until the late eighteenth century.[8] Virtually all official business was recorded in Latin – and much was actually conducted in it. That included, most conspicuously, proceedings at both houses of the diet, but especially the upper house, from the sessions that re-established the balance between Estates and Habsburg ruler under King Charles III (VI as emperor), through the famous 'vitam et sanguinem' pledge to Maria Theresa in 1741 and the contrasting impasses later in her reign, to the dramatic confrontations of 1790–1. István Szijártó's new account of eighteenth-century Hungarian parliamentary life, by dint of unprecedentedly thorough dissection of such things as session diaries, seems to confirm the probable hegemony of spoken Latin, above all in the upper house and much plenary business of the lower house, where interventions in Magyar are sometimes commented on, presumably for being unusual. Certain ceremonial addresses were regularly delivered in one or other of the two tongues, affirming perhaps a kind of ritual balance, but with Latin as the dominant partner.[9] The same applied in the counties, where the debates of their noble

[5] Peter Burke, in *Language, Self and Society*, ed. Burke and R. Porter (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 23–50; Burke, *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 43–60.

[6] Cf. R. J. W. Evans, 'Language and Politics: Bohemia in International Context, 1409–1627', in *Confession and Nation in the Era of Reformations: Central Europe in Comparative Perspective*, ed. J. Pánek, forthcoming.

[7] Antoine Martel, *La langue polonaise dans les pays ruthènes: Ukraine et Russie Blanche, 1569–1667* (Lille, 1938).

[8] Rapant, *K počiatkom maď'arizácie*, I.3–91.

[9] István Szijártó, *A diéta. A magyar rendek és az országgyűlés, 1708–92* (Budapest, 2005), pp. 132–5, 180f.

congregations were carried on in Latin, at least in areas of mixed ethnicity, and their minutes everywhere recorded in that language.

The same also held for almost the whole of the country's central administration, up to the Lieutenancy Council and Chancellery in Pressburg/Pozsony and Vienna respectively, and down to county level and below – at least in so far as it was Hungary's own system. Some Austrian inroads had been made in financial and especially military management, as we shall see. But they counted for little beside the squarely Latinate character of the entire legal system above the manorial courts (except of course for some direct witness testimony), and of all education above the age of eleven or so years. That was true for literary culture too, with a majority of all books still published in that language until the mid-eighteenth century, and of learned ones even beyond.[10]

Contemporary apologists for this situation may have gilded the lily at times.[11] But the strength of Latin was not seriously in question, and it even appears to have gained or regained ground over most of the century. Latin advanced through a variety of factors: the extra volume of administration; the end of an independent Magyar-dominated Transylvanian state, which meant that the grand-duchy now used less Hungarian in its proceedings; the successes of Roman Catholicism and the limitations placed on Protestants and Orthodox. Most of all Latin benefited from the ever-greater diversity of population, and to some extent of diet deputies, in the expanded and still expanding eighteenth-century kingdom.[12]

Given that no one came to Latin as a native tongue, how polyglot were Hungary's inhabitants? The educated often acquired three or four languages, with other vernaculars mainly learned outside school. We have plenty of evidence of nobles who spoke Magyar, Latin and some further tongue, as of clerics at least as well equipped. Particular examples may be

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[10] Domokos Kosáry, *Művelődés a XVIII. századi Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1980), pp. 129ff., 529ff.; Kálmán Benda, *Emberbarát vagy hazafi? Tanulmányok a felvilágosodás korának magyarországi történetéből* (Budapest, 1978), pp. 299ff. A case-study in Ilona Pavercsik, *A kassai könyvek útja a nyomdától az olvasóig* (Budapest, 1992). Éva Knapp and Gábor Tüskés, in *Companion to the History of the Neo-Latin Studies in Hungary*, ed. I. Bartók (Budapest, 2005), pp. 37–54, survey part of this output; I am grateful to Derek Beales for this last reference.

[11] Cf. below, n. 38. The *Ratio educationis* (see below) asserted that 'the diet and government departments, county congregations and courts, transact all business in Latin': I. Mészáros (ed. and trans.), *Ratio educationis: Az 1777–i és az 1806–i kiadás magyar nyelvű fordítása* (Budapest, 1981), p. 75. It depended on what was meant by 'transact all business'.

[12] It seems likely that the diet in its first, late medieval, phase had witnessed substantial debate in Magyar, but I know of no adequate treatment of this issue, or of language policy in Transylvania during and after the rule of its native princes.

cited: 50 per cent of priests in the new bishopric of Besztercebánya/Banská Bystrica and of municipal officials in Pressburg were quadrilingual in the years around 1780.[13] Individuals could be credited with several more: thus Sándor Pászthory, a top chancellery secretary, knew Latin, Magyar, German, French, Italian and English; Wolfgang Kempelen, another top counsellor and famous too as an inventor, apparently knew Latin, Magyar, German, Italian, French, English and Dutch.[14] *Conduitelisten* for high officials in Transylvania record that, of a total of 64 in 1789, all claimed Latin, 96% Magyar, 90% German, 83% Romanian, 27% (mainly senior ones) French and 8% Italian. Ten years later, out of a larger group of 109, competence in Latin remained at 100%, with 93% knowing Magyar, 91% German, 88% Romanian, 17% French and 12% Italian.[15] The surviving correspondence of a second-generation magnate, Count János Fekete, has been analysed for the period 1767–1803: 35% of it is in German, 23% Magyar, 20% French, 13% Italian, 10% Latin.[16]

Things are harder to measure lower down the social scale. The late István Tóth brilliantly exposed many lesser nobles' clumsy mistakes in basic written Latin. But he also uncovered a considerable mastery of spoken Latin by those who needed it for everyday situations in places where several vernaculars were in use.[17] British travellers to Hungary were perhaps especially inclined to be impressed by facility in Latin as they encountered it in various parts of the country: men like Robert Townson, who was acutely sensitized to the issue when he found himself arrested in 1792 as a Jacobin spy because he spoke French.[18] It is a common observation that innkeepers speak Magyar and German and often some

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[13] Rapant, *K počiatkom maď'arizácie*, I.57f.; cf. *Gróf Hofmannsegg utazása Magyarországon 1793–4-ben*, ed. I. Berkeszi (Budapest, 1887), pp. 25, 28–9, 55.

[14] Lajos Hajdu, *A közjó szolgálatában. A józefinizmus igazgatási és jogi reformjairól* (Budapest, 1983), pp. 94–6.

[15] Elek Csetri, 'Az erdélyi központi hatóságok tisztviselőinek nyelvtudásáról a 18. század végén', in *Nemzeti és társadalmi átalakulás a 19. században Magyarországon*, ed. I. Orosz et al. (Budapest, 1994), pp. 19–29.

[16] Claude Michaud, 'Felvilágosodás, szabadkőművesség és politika a 18. század végén', *Századok* 115 (1983), pp. 558–98; the same art. in French in *Dix-huitième siècle* 12 (1980), pp. 327–79. For Fekete's French connections, cf. Zoltán Baranyai, *A francia nyelv és műveltsége Magyarországon, 18. század* (Budapest, 1928), pp. 40–58.

[17] István Gy. Tóth, *Literacy and Written Culture in Early Modern Central Europe* (Eng. trans., Budapest, 2000), pp. 130–45.

[18] Robert Townson, *Travels in Hungary, with a Short Account of Vienna in the Year 1793* (London, 1797), p. 332; William Hunter, *Travels in the Year 1792 through France, Turkey, and Hungary, to Vienna, Concluding with an Account of that City* (2 vols., London, 1798), II.238; Edward Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa* (11 vols., London, 1816–24), II.651; Richard Bright, *Travels through Lower Hungary* (London, 1818), pp. 100, 138.

Latin.[19] The abilities of postillions and the like probably reflected rather the parrot-learning of set phrases.

At all events a good deal of interplay of different language groups certainly took place, even if dialectal variations could compound the problems for strangers. As the diplomat Sir Robert Murray Keith bemoaned: 'With my ten languages I could never make a one [sic] of the six nations which inhabit Hungary comprehend a word I said.'[20] When the English physician Richard Bright noted a little later, of the linguistic skills of merchants at Hainburg, on the Austrian side of the border, that 'they spoke fluently no less than seven, of which they wrote five with tolerable correctness', one wonders how he could be so sure. 'Such accomplishments', he added, 'are, however, by no means unusual in the country we were just entering.'[21] In c. 1780 all forty-one officials of the Transylvanian county of Kolozs, at every level down to the janitor, allegedly spoke Latin, Magyar and Romanian.[22]

How much mixing of vernaculars took place on the ground? We have far too little ready information. Hungary's towns were comparatively small: most contained several nationalities, often with a German or Germanized establishment, but little sign of friction. The twin centres of Buda and Pest, reviving fast from their destruction in the Turkish wars, afford good examples; they soon attracted at least five substantial ethnic groups: Germans, Magyars, Serbs, Slovaks, Jews.[23] Villages might be mixed too, especially in the south (Serbian/Croatian/Magyar/German) and Transylvania (German/Romanian/Magyar), as well as parts of the west (Magyar/German) and north (Slovak/Magyar/Ruthene). A typical instance would be Mezőberény on the Great Plain with its three separate but interconnected settlements of Germans, Magyars and Slovaks.[24] Guilds formed the chief form of social organization in many towns, and they operated through much of the countryside too. They might well be divided on ethnic lines, mainly because of language, though also maybe through the type of work undertaken, as with different styles of tailoring. Yet here too Latin retained an official role, not least for designation of the trades involved. Some of the delectable results deserve citing here, such as *spacicaminarius* (chimney-sweep), *catapultarius*

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[19] *Hofmannsegg utazása*, p. 9; Krisztina Kulcsár, '18. századi német utazók Magyarországon', in *Sic Itur ad Astra* (1996), pp. 83–113, at p. 101.

[20] *Memoirs and Correspondence . . . of Sir Robert Murray Keith*, ed. G. Smyth (2 vols., London, 1849), I.469.

[21] Bright, *Travels*, p. 96.   [22] Hajdu, *A közjó szolgálatában*, pp. 94–6.

[23] Lajos Nagy in *Budapest története*, vol. III: *A török kiűzésétől a márciusi forradalomig*, ed. D. Kosáry (Budapest, 1975), pp. 150ff.

[24] For Mezőberény and its like, see István Rácz, *A török világ hagyatéka Magyarországon* (Debrecen, 1995), esp. pp. 148ff.

(rifle-maker), *cordubisiarius sive pellium cordovan dictarum praeparator* ((Cordoba) leather-worker), *cremati ustor* (distiller), *dulciarius* (confectioner), *farcimererius* (sausage-stuffer), or – best of all – *placentarum mellitarum pistor* for the humble pancake-maker.[25]

Besides Latin, alternative cross-communicative languages had an established, but still strictly subordinate place. On German, more will be said shortly. While reported by many travellers as commonly understood, for practical transactions, it was by no means an Open Sesame, and few nobles knew it well, if at all. Near Léva/Levice Bright met a postmaster who 'could not speak German, and gave me the choice of all the languages he knew; they were Latin, Hungarian, Sclavonian and Walachian'. Bright of course chose Latin.[26] In higher society the use of French became quite widespread, especially after mid-century, with a vogue emanating from Vienna. It entered into its own above all in correspondence and in the reading matter of private libraries, reflecting local contacts with a *philosophe* cultural ambience.[27] In Hungary, announced a representative from that quarter in the 1780s, 'all that is called the fine world speaks our patois [i.e. French]'.[28] By then there is some evidence of secondary school teaching and primers in French. Italian too had certain ecclesiastical and social functions, and gained more just at this time, in the maritime domain, with the country's acquisition of the port of Fiume/Rijeka, on the Adriatic.

<div align="center">*</div>

The rule of Latin in Hungary was ultimately sustained and perpetuated by a constitutional relationship. It long suited both the country and its largely absentee monarchs, both the Estates of the realm at home and the distant central government of the Monarchy as a whole, to be able to operate through Latin as a traditional and neutral vehicle. But from the mid-eighteenth century that balance of interest came under pressure, *pari passu* with the big changes afoot in other parts of the Habsburg lands. To some extent the retreat of Latin in Austria must have played its part. More decisive were measures initiated by the monarchs and their government, in the context of their overall reform programme, which impinged directly on the linguistic situation across the Hungarian border. We shall consider first two small steps, mildly in favour of the

[25] List in Géza Eperjessy, *Mezővárosi és falusi céhek az Alföldön és a Dunántúlon, 1686–1848* (Budapest, 1967), pp. 205–9. Cf. *A magyarországi céhes kézművesipar forrásanyagának katasztere*, comp. I. Éri (2 vols., Budapest, 1975), I.180ff.
[26] Bright, *Travels*, p. 138.   [27] Baranyai, *A francia nyelv*.
[28] Johann Caspar von Ri[e]sbeck, *Travels through Germany, a Series of Letters* (3 vols., Eng. trans., London, 1787), II.47.

vernaculars in general; and then one huge one, heavily to the advantage of one vernacular in particular.

The Urbarium of 1767 was the largest enactment for Hungary during the reign of Maria Theresa. A highly contentious piece of 'legislation' (strictly a mere ordinance, since a refractory diet had refused its consent), it sought to establish official norms to regulate the manorial nexus which bound peasants to their lords. Important for our purposes is that the framers of the Urbarium unprecedentedly sought responses directly from the common people. Although the outline of the nine points (*puncta*) they raised and of the anticipated replies (*fassiones*) was still in Latin, the peasants supplied their material in the language of the village. Did they possess any existing urbaria or other contracts? How burdensome was the *robot* (corvée) and how arranged? What local *beneficia* and *maleficia* could be identified, e.g. good or bad soils, presence or absence of woods, quality of water? How extensive were arable and pasture, or wasteland (*puszta*)? What tithes were due? Was their serfdom hereditary? All this information, for thousands of settlements all across the country, emanated, directly or indirectly, from the villagers themselves.[29] It both afforded rich testimony to the state of the vernaculars and enhanced their respectability. The priorities of the Urbarium went with a rising tide of manuals and primers of instruction on all sorts of agrarian and artisan matters, which were similarly circulated in every language of the country.[30]

A decade later a further governmental initiative was launched which likewise still clothed itself in Latin garb, but opened up new vistas for the vernaculars. The *Ratio educationis* issued in 1777 was the blueprint for an elaborate new scheme of state-directed education, addressed to the majority Catholic population in the first instance, but with implications for the rest of Hungary's church-based school system. It stressed that all of the country's modern languages were necessary to underpin Latin, and that it would be useful for pupils to learn several. It also laid out precise timetables: thus on Monday afternoons 'German and other *linguae domesticae*' should be studied in secondary schools.[31] The *Ratio* formed

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[29] Slovak ones in István Udvari (ed.), *A Mária Terézia-féle úrbérrendezés szlováknyelvü dokumentumai/Slovenské dokumenty urbárskej regulácie Márie Terézie* (Nyíregyháza, 1991), and Udvari, *Szlovák mezővárosok népélete Mária Terézia korában. Adatok Pozsonyvármegye 18. századi történetéhez* (Nyíregyháza, 1994). Ruthene ones in Udvari, *Ruszinok a 18. században. Történelmi és művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok* (2nd edn, Nyíregyháza, 1994), pp. 251–83. In general: I. Felhő et al. (eds.), *Az úrbéres birtokviszonyok Magyarországon Mária Terézia korában*, vol. I: *Dunántúl* (Budapest, 1970).

[30] Examples in János Barta, *Mezőgazdaági irodalmunk a 18. században* (Budapest, 1973); cf. Barta, *A felvilágosult abszolutizmus agrárpolitikája a Habsburg- és a Hohenzollern-monarchiában* (Budapest, 1982).

[31] Mészáros, *Ratio educationis*, esp. pp. 63f., 69, 71, 75, 123, 130f., 135; Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie*, I.112ff.

part of a broader *Aufklärung* current of support for culture in the mother tongue, which encouraged the beginnings of 'national' literatures in the region.[32] This, as we shall see, gave a massive boost to publications generally by the 1780s, helped, in Hungary as in Austria, by the – temporary – abolition of censorship then.

The Urbarium and the *Ratio* raised expectations and concerns. They were not uncontentious. But all that was as nothing compared with the storm aroused by Joseph II's decree of spring 1784 which essentially commanded the replacement of Latin by German in the whole of Hungarian public life, all within a matter of months or at most a very few years.[33] This ukase, introduced over the heads of even the emperor's most loyalist royal advisers, came as a bolt from the blue. It had some limited antecedents in financial management, including the valuable mining industry, much of which spoke the language of the Viennese agencies who controlled it, as did the army command, including the commissariat for procurement which dealt brusquely at times with local county and municipal authorities. The Military Frontier and the Banat of Temesvár also operated in German for the most part; and the language enjoyed reasonably wide currency for commercial transactions, as the majority language among the citizens (if not normally among the whole population) of many Hungarian towns.[34] But those were, for patriots, long-established and circumscribed abuses, perhaps on their way to being overcome. Had not the Habsburgs just returned the Banat to civilian control in 1780?

Joseph says it is a 'scandal' still to use Latin, because the language is a dead one, already replaced by living tongues almost everywhere else in Europe. At the same time the emperor stresses that he is not just making the change for his own convenience, 'since I can express myself in Latin

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[32] The subject is too large to engage with here. For a first orientation, see R. J. W. Evans, *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe, c. 1683–1867* (Oxford, 2006), chs. 3, 4, 8.

[33] To be implemented immediately in central administration; within a year in the counties; within three years at lower levels. Original text of the decree (drafted 26 April, revised 6 May, issued 18 May 1784) in István Katona, *Historia critica regum Hungariae*, vol. XL (Buda, 1810), pp. 378–80. Cf. Henrik Marczali, *Magyarország története II. József korában* (3 vols., Budapest, 1885–8), II.384ff.; Pavel (Paul) Mitrofanov, *Politicheskaia dieiatel'nost' Iosifa II, eia storonniki i eia vragi, 1780–90* (St Petersburg, 1907), pp. 223ff., trans. as *Joseph II. Seine politische und kulturelle Tätigkeit* (2 vols., Vienna, 1910), I.260–7; and Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie*, I.209ff. have paraphrases. See also discussion by Franz von Krones, *Ungarn unter Maria Theresia und Joseph II.* (Graz, 1871), pp. 23–45, and Éva H. Balázs in *Magyarország története, 1686–1790*, ed. Gy. Ember and G. Heckenast (2 vols., Budapest, 1989), II.1064–7, 1480; also as Balázs, *Bécs és Pest-Buda a régi századvégen, 1765–1800* (Budapest, 1987), pp. 205–10, 368–70; and Balázs, *Hungary and the Habsburgs, 1765–1800: An Experiment in Enlightened Absolutism* (Budapest, 1997), pp. 225–30.

[34] Not least of Pest and especially Buda, starting point for the excellent study of János Kósa, *Pest és Buda elmagyarosodása 1848-ig* (Budapest, 1937).

quite well' – though in practice his grammar seems to have been rather faulty.[35] Moreover, Joseph asserts, Magyar could not be considered as a replacement, since only a minority of Hungarians are able to speak it. German, on the other hand, is already known to many, indeed to the bulk of those involved in administration (here he exaggerated wildly), besides being the language of the rest, and hence the larger part, of his whole Monarchy. Joseph shrugs off objections put to him on behalf of senior Hungarian officials in a highly characteristic retort (with a further, macaronic dig at Latin *en passant*): 'they are not to be asked *an possint* [whether they can], but the *fac, ut possis* [do, so that you may be able] is to be impressed upon them'.[36]

In fact the decree proved impossible to enforce: even bodies closest to the ruler failed to apply it properly. Its deadlines soon had to be extended, and it was abandoned within a few years. But meanwhile the episode set in motion crucial reactions. Responses from the Hungarian noble establishment were articulated through the county congregations and culminated at a diet, the first for twenty-five years, held in the immediate aftermath of Joseph's death in 1790, just when the threat from German seemed (for the present, at least) eliminated by an effective political backlash against the emperor's assault on constitutional and social privileges, and by a broader crisis of Habsburg government. The arguments on language deployed by Joseph's opponents now call for our attention.

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Defences of Latin had their background in the humanist manuals which were still in use in Hungarian schools, though with increasing textual adaptation to local circumstances, works such as the *Syntaxis ornata et flos Latinitatis* originally compiled by a French Jesuit, François Pomey.[37] The *Ratio educationis* itself appeared in Latin and stressed Latin teaching: it urged the needs of the Church and the merits of classical authors; it pointed to Latin as the language of Hungary's laws, decrees, diet, administration and courts, and as the lingua franca in a multinational country.[38] The counties, reacting (in Latin, of course) against Joseph's plans, used more colourful imagery and more plaintive rhetoric – indeed their texts furnish eloquent testimony to the continuing creative engagement with

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[35] Marczali, *II. József*, II.532. Ferenc Kazinczy, *Művei*, ed. J. Szauder (2 vols., Budapest, 1979), I.221, notes Joseph as making 'wine' masculine in Latin instead of neuter: 'vinus' instead of 'vinum'.

[36] 'ist ihnen nicht die Frage zu stellen, *an possint*, sondern das *fac, ut possis*, ist ihnen einzubinden': Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie*, I.516.

[37] See János Balázs, *Magyar deákság. Anyanyelvünk és az európai nyelvi modell* (Budapest, 1980), esp. pp. 602ff.

[38] Mészáros, *Ratio educationis*, pp. 63, 67, 74f. (esp.), 82–90, 113–19.

the language by their spokesmen. Alongside the same claims for Latin as the language of culture, philosophy and politics, they by the end of the 1780s more and more insisted on it as a bastion of their grants and freedoms. Therefore it is a sovereign tongue; deprived of it, others have lost their liberties and their beliefs. It defends the *patria* against despotism, and is needful for transactions with other lands, especially the associated realm of Croatia.[39]

Other lines of argumentation were still being sustained as late as 1844 by the very last apologist for Latin's official status in Hungary. The Catholic priest András Rácz then presented it not just as the vehicle of religious tradition and universal civilization, but as the language of purity. In terms reminiscent, for a British context, of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century defences of Welsh, he asserted that vernaculars introduce worldliness, immorality and cultural decay. By then Rácz was contemplating, and detesting, a full-scale Magyarization campaign.[40] Sixty years earlier, the noble Estates frequently presented Latin and Magyar as complementary: Latin was the 'official', 'legal', 'habitual', 'chief', '*father*' tongue; Magyar was the 'popular', 'patriotic', 'vernacular', '*mother*' tongue.[41] The counties thus still mainly viewed Magyar as a kind of back-up to Latin, part of the national defence if the latter proved vulnerable. Not for nothing did they appeal against Joseph to the language tolerance of their own first king, St Stephen, and also – *inter alia* – of the ancient Persians, even (a piquant allusion, given their destructive role in Hungarian history!) of the medieval Tatars.[42]

By the beginning of the 1790s, however, the language balance was already shifting. At the diet a surge of patriotic enthusiasm brought Magyar into favour in the lower house, at least among those who spoke it well – and some of the rest became anxious, even finding themselves hissed on occasion when they eschewed it or performed badly in it.[43] This defection from Latin fed into an existing more critical discourse among intellectuals which, albeit desultorily, dated back several decades. The Calvinist minister Péter Bod seems to have been the first, in 1760,

[39] Rapant, *K počiatkom maď'arizácie*, I.216ff. Cf. Katona, *Historia critica*, 380–90; and Marczali, *II. József.*, II.390ff. on county responses (though he is inclined to play down their Latinophilia). Cf. also R. J. W. Evans, 'Language and State-building: The Case of the Habsburg Monarchy', *Austrian History Yearbook* 35 (2004), pp. 1–24, at p. 9.

[40] (András Rácz), *Reflexiones privatae de linguae latinae in Sacris Ecclesiae Catholicae usu, ejusque apud Hungaros in occasum vergentis inclinatione* (Leipzig, 1845), a forgotten and eccentric, but most interesting little work. For the Welsh comparison, cf. G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains, 1801–1911* (Cardiff, 2000).

[41] Rapant, *K počiatkom maď'arizácie*, I.251ff., II.53ff.

[42] Balázs, in *Magyarország története, 1686–1790*, II.1066.

[43] Rapant, *K počiatkom maď'arizácie*, II.31ff., 129ff.

to launch an attack on perhaps the most vulnerable point of the existing division of linguistic functions: he censured excessive Latinity within the Magyar tongue. The latter had indeed, especially in its more administrative uses, as in verbal diet proceedings and related unofficial political diaries and correspondence, become so bizarrely macaronic that foreigners who heard it may well actually have thought it *was* Latin.[44] Purity in this (rather than in Rácz's) sense increasingly went with indigeneity. By some commentators Magyar was already coming to be described as the 'ancestral speech of Hungary' (*sermo patrius Hungariae*), the 'idioma nativum'. Stung by Joseph II's aspersions in 1784, the Chancellor, Ferenc Esterházy, claimed it as a language known to practically all nobles in public affairs; and at the same time János Beöthy, vice-sheriff of Bihar, argued that Magyar was used by all county politicians in Hungary proper, even at the diet.[45]

The Vienna-trained patriot György Bessenyei, in his tract *Magyarság* (1778), introduced to Hungarians the topos that 'every nation has become learned in its own language' ('minden nemzet a maga nyelvén lett tudós'), and must have a mother tongue, presumably a distinct one. An entire nation, in other words, cannot rely on a foreign means of communication, and – here Bessenyei broached another important theme for the future – it is the monoglots, primarily the peasants, who keep nobles from losing touch with the vernacular. The first work on Magyar by the pioneering grammarian Miklós Révai appeared in 1778. There then followed especially Sándor Báróczi's defence of Magyar, which refutes the arguments for Latin point by point, emphasizing that languages need to change and that truths, especially religious truths, need to be expressed in the tongue of the people.[46] Báróczi's work appeared, together with several other pamphlets of similar cast, simultaneously with the diet of 1790–1.

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[44] Two choice examples. 1/ A 1712 resolution by the Protestant Estates that 'a religiora tartozó dolgokat tractálhassák, concludálhassanak is, ha miben pedig difficultasok interveniálna referálhassák a mostani Diaetara congregalt Evangelica Confession levő Communitasnak' (Szijártó, *A diéta*, p. 270). 2/ A 1741 report on meetings of the circular sessions (cf. below): 'itt combinalták instructioikat s gravamináikat universalisra redigálták, hogy amidőn F. Asszonyunk [Maria Terézia] lejövetelével . . . a diaeta referáltatik s béáll, akkoron készen lehessen az Ország a gravamináival s az általlis acceleráltassanak a dolgok' (ibid., p. 340). For Bod: Zoltán Éder, *Benkő József nyelvészeti munkássága és az Erdélyi Magyar Nyelvművelő Társaság* (Budapest, 1978), pp. 36ff.; Balázs, *Magyar deákság*, pp. 20–2.

[45] Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie*, I.80. The revised and reissued *Ratio educationis* of 1806 (Mészáros, *Ratio educationis*, pp. 217–382, passim) refers to Magyar as 'lingua patriae'. Marczali, *II. József*, II.387, 395f., 527–32, at p. 529 (Esterházy, Beöthy).

[46] György Bessenyei, *Válogatott művei*, ed. J. Szauder (Budapest, 1953), pp. 197–201 (Magyarság). Révai, *A magyar nyelv tanításnak két részei* (1779). (Sándor Báróczi), *A védelmezett Magyar nyelv, vagyis a 'Deákság mennyire szükséges voltáról való kettős-beszélgetés* (Vienna, 1790).

That diet was itself a linguistic turning-point, partly (I think) for technical reasons. It shared no personnel with its immediate predecessor back in 1764–5, and it took place in a new location, Buda. Those circumstances enhanced the scope for the development of a new institution in the lower house, the circular sessions (*kerületi ülések*), which met together on an informal basis to prepare the business and even the decisions of the collectivity of deputies. My hunch is that these bodies, in which the strongly patriotic counties of the Tisza region took a leading part, mainly debated in Magyar from the beginning.[47] Moreover, the diet did briefly assert that language as the norm for its own *official* business – and this meant to some extent for both houses, since the majority of its plenary sessions, unusually, were mixed ones.[48] Magyar became, and would remain, the authentic language of the printed diet proceedings (as opposed to its decrees), likewise initiated in 1790–1. The assembly also enacted the first in a series of laws in favour of employing Magyar in public life, especially education. But in practice the extended use of Magyar in dietal and county dealings speedily subsided, for the moment. The immediate results of the campaign were slow, patchy and sometimes contradictory. Thus, for example, increasing reliance on *written* forms of communication (*nuncia*) between the two houses ironically meant the elimination for that purpose of the vernacular which had frequently served as an oral vehicle.[49]

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In the struggle between the counties and Joseph II, Hungary's other languages remained definitely subordinate. But if Latin fell under suspicion, whereas German failed to win out, a different front opened up and the contest was soon transformed. That too had some ancestry before the 1780s, notably in the unlikely looking location of a *footnote* in a learned Latin source edition, published anonymously by Maria Theresa's court librarian, Adam Kollár. Commenting in 1763 on a passage in the description of multi-ethnic Hungary by a sixteenth-century humanist, Kollár observed that the country's inhabitants were not as diverse as his source had believed. In fact they were and are mostly Slavs, he (wrongly) claimed; and 'the Slavic peoples all use one and the same language, without any great difference in pronunciation'. That view, however remote from

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[47] Szijártó, *A diéta*, pp. 331–48 and passim, has much on the emergence of the *kerületi ülések*, and stresses their importance for his thesis of the rise of the county gentry; but strangely he does not tie them in with changing linguistic usage. Cf., however, Henrik Marczali, *Az 1790/1-diki országgyűlés* (2 vols., Budapest, 1907), I.354.

[48] Marczali, *1790/1-diki országgyűlés*, I.341ff., esp. p. 364 for Magyar as the language of the diet; cf. ibid., II.1ff. Szijártó, *A diéta*, p. 81 for the point about *mixtae sessiones*.

[49] Szijártó, *A diéta*, p. 75, notes this consequence *en passant*.

reality, was a commonplace in the still modest tradition of Slavonic grammarians.[50] But Kollár goes on with something far more drastic, a prophecy about the vulnerability of the Magyar language: 'The Hungarians, that is the people who just use the Hungarian idiom, have the smallest part of Hungary; indeed, it is to be feared that their tongue will pass away.' Kollár, a controversial and touchy figure (he admitted to being provoked 'propter cavillationes quorundam qui itidem Hungariam incolunt'), at odds with the noble establishment, already had his own agenda – and his prediction ended up, far more conspicuously, in a famous passage of Herder's *Ideen*.[51]

Meanwhile divergence was opening up on the ground, with the development in Hungary of standard or literary languages alongside Latin. Magyar led the way, with a koine or common speech (*köznyelv*) rapidly becoming regularized, accompanied by a sharp increase in publications and a reduced proportion of dialect writing. The key decade was the eighties, by the end of which the first Hungarian novels were in print and the language lay poised to flourish as a vehicle for more technical and scientific literature.[52] A shift took place between the 1770s and 1790s in the nascent patriotic programme from a stress on 'national *culture*' to one on '*national* culture', with the linguistic medium assuming a value in itself.[53] Magyar already had a built-in advantage in respect of varieties

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[50] 'Slavicae gentes omnes una eademque utuntur lingua, non magna admodum pronunciationis differentia': (A. F. Kollár (ed.)), *Nicolai Olahi . . . Hungaria et Atila* (Vienna, 1763), pp. 91f. n. For earlier tropes (e.g. the 'donation' of Alexander the Great, apparently first invented at the court of Emperor Charles IV, revived at Leopold I's): A. S. Myl'nikov, *Kartina slavjanskogo mira. Vzgliad iz vostochnoi Evropy: etnogeneticheskie legendy, dogadki, protogipotezy, XVI. – nachala XVIII. veka* (St Petersburg, 1996), esp. pp. 45ff.

[51] 'Minima Hungariae portio est, quae Hungaros, sive populum, Hungarico solum idiomate utentem, habet; verendumque profecto est, ne sermo ipse exolescet': Kollár, *Olahi . . . Hungaria*, pp. 91f. n. The reference has been picked up by modern commentators: Rapant, *K počiatkom maďarizácie*, I.184, 468, 492f.; Andor Csizmadia, *Historický Časopis* 12 (1964), pp. 215–36 at p. 219; Dezső Dümmerth, *Filológiai Közlöny* 9 (1963), pp. 181–3, and 12 (1966), pp. 391–413. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, ed. M. Bollacher (Frankfurt a.M., 1989), p. 688: 'Da sind sie [die Ungarn] jetzt unter Slawen, Deutschen, Wlachen und andern Völkern der geringere Teil der Landeseinwohner, und nach Jahrhunderten wird man vielleicht ihre Sprache kaum finden.' For the impact of this Herder passage: Holm Sundhaussen, *Der Einfluß der Herderschen Ideen auf die Nationsbildung bei den Völkern der Habsburger Monarchie* (Munich, 1973), pp. 76ff.

[52] Loránd Benkő, *A magyar irodalmi írásbeliség a felvilágosodás korának első szakaszában* (Budapest, 1960). A useful listing and illustration of late eighteenth-century Magyar works on aesthetics, literary history, philosophy, psychology, architecture, arithmetic, algebra, physics, astronomy, mechanics, mineralogy, chemistry, geography, botany, human and animal medicine is in *Pannóniai féniksz*, ed. I. Gazda and Á. Stemler (Budapest, 2005).

[53] From 'nemzeti *művelődés*' to '*nemzeti* művelődés': Ferenc Bíró, 'Nemzet, nyelv, irodalom: az 1780-as évek értelmiségének ideológiájához', *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 88 (1984), pp. 558–76.

of speech, since its widespread use by nobles almost throughout the country and in some major urban centres like Debrecen had already helped standardize its forms, while the geo-linguistic benefit of its concentrated plainland location contributed through a relative absence of dialect. New kinds of elite sociability may have favoured it too (evidence from Freemasonic lodges would be specially instructive); and influential polemics, by Báróczi, Sámuel Decsy, György Aranka and others, argued for Magyar to be fostered as the only egress from cultural and material backwardness.[54]

Other vernaculars stood not far behind, but had extra handicaps to overcome. The first important Slovak philologist, the priest Anton Bernolák, was already at work in the 1780s: his *Grammar*, with its praise of the 'lingua slavica' (in Kollár's sense), came out in 1790. Here too novels began to appear. But the Catholic–Protestant divide, with a Czech version of the language in favour among the Lutheran minority, at least in formal contexts, was aggravated by stark dialectal variance.[55] German possessed, of course, an imported standard, effective for education (and literacy rates were anyway much higher among German-speakers); but its progress was impeded by local diversity, not least the presence of settlers from all over the Reich and beyond and confessional splits even among the long-standing Swabian and Saxon populations. Serbian- and Romanian-speakers both had to contend with obsolete or actually foreign sacral languages. Their secular literary equivalents were correspondingly slow to develop, and those who sought to promote them, especially Dositej Obradović and the romanizing Transylvanian School, initially provoked considerable dissension. The other Orthodox tongue, Ruthene, had not yet come under starter's orders at all. Finally Croatian, a particular and curious case. It displayed huge dialectal and geographical diversity; and it does not appear to have yet availed itself of its own limited communal domain, centred on Habsburg Croatia's provincial assembly (the *sabor*), although presumably all those members of the local noble elite who attended its close-knit sessions knew more or less the same

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[54] Marczali, *1790/1-diki országgyűlés*, I.299ff. The lack of dialect was noted by contemporaries too: e.g. *Hofmannsegg utazása*, pp. 55, 139; Benkő, *Írásbeliség*, esp. p. 264. The Freemasons of the distinctive Hungarian (Draskovics) rite appear to have operated in Latin into the 1780s: Lajos Abafi, *A szabadkőművesség története Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1900), pp. 163, 203. One wonders whether that changed later. Báróczi, *Védelmezett Magyar nyelv*; Decsy, *Pannóniai Féniksz, avagy hamvából fel-támadott magyar nyelv* (Vienna, 1790); *Aranka György erdélyi társaságai*, ed. S. Enyedi (Budapest, 1988).

[55] Anton Bernolák, *Gramatické dielo*, ed. J. Pavelek (Bratislava, 1964), includes the *Dissertatio philologico-critica* and *Orthographia* of 1787, and the *Grammatica slavica* of 1790. Background in *K počiatkom slovenského národného obrodenia*, ed. J. Tibenský (Bratislava, 1964).

vernacular. Rather, Croats would hold out longer than anyone else for Latin in Hungarian public life.[56]

By the early 1790s most of these languages boasted some kind of printing network and periodical press. It now proved decisive for the future that, just as a plurality of claimants presented themselves for a share in the sphere of public communication, proponents of Magyar attempted a drastic reduction in the multilingual options. On the one hand they began to stake a claim for the rights of monoglot speakers, not only among nobles and burghers, where they were perhaps becoming increasingly numerous, but especially among the masses of the Hungarian population. For instance at tripartite Mezőberény, which we encountered earlier, the Germans apparently learned Slovak and Magyar, and the Slovaks learned Magyar, whereas the Magyars remained monolingual.[57] On the other hand they laid rhetorical stress on Hungary as – for them – literally 'Magyarland' ('*Magyar*ország'), and thus on the 'foreignness' of the rest of her peoples and their languages, an argument which after the turn of the new century more and more came to be applied to German and French too, and even Latin. In one typical formulation, the native (Magyar) tongue is distinguished as 'sunshine', the remainder as 'moonshine'.[58] Contemporary pamphlets maintained that cultivation of Magyar was the best way to keep away outsiders (and most effective for swearing at them too). By the early nineteenth century competitions were instituted, with prizes, to demonstrate the utility and merits of Hungarian.[59]

Yet all that, of course, also reflected continued unease about the language's comparative credentials. And it earned ever more strident rejoinders about the Magyars as being 'Asiatic' in their origins and culture, from Serbs and others who made heightened political demands in 1790 and the years following[60] – just at the time when Herder was recycling Kollár, as chance would have it. What made things worse was the incipient impact of Finno-Ugric studies – the work of Sajnovics, Benkő, Gyarmathi – which demonstrated that Magyars shared a common linguistic ancestry with the peasant Finns rather than with the warrior Turks, an awkward pill for noble proponents of the Hungarian cause to swallow, though some

[56] But cf. Vlatko Pavletić et al., *Hrvatski jezik u hrvatskom saboru = The Croatian Language in the Croatian Parliament* (Zagreb, 1997).

[57] Rácz, *A török világ*, pp. 141, 158, for Mezőberény.

[58] József Teleki, *A magyar nyelvnek tökéletesítése új szavak és új szólásmódok által*, ed. Z. Éder (Budapest, 1988), esp. pp. 66ff. (re Latin), 134ff. (re German). *Aranka György*, ed. Enyedi, p. 109 (sunshine/moonshine).

[59] Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie*, II.177–80, 575. See esp. Teleki, *Magyar nyelvnek tökéletesítése*, pp. 9ff. (competitions).

[60] Rapant, *K počiatkom mad'arizácie*, II; S. Gavrilović and N. Petrović (ed.), *Temišvarski sabor 1790* (Novi Sad, 1972), passim.

took it in their stride.[61] Altogether Magyarization as a political campaign to spread the language owed its genesis precisely to Magyar's lack of any decisive cultural advantage. Hence the legislation which, still nominal from 1792 onwards, would acquire teeth after 1805 and introduce the language wars proper that raged through the region during the nineteenth century.

<div style="text-align:center">*</div>

This whole Hungarian literary movement was associated particularly with Ferenc Kazinczy (1759–1831), its leading codifier and theorist. Kazinczy, from a well-to-do Protestant noble family, grew up in a multicultural climate, much influenced especially by German models – but he later explicitly forswore the term 'cosmopolitan'.[62] An enlightened progressive in his younger days, Kazinczy made a major administrative career under Joseph II, as county official and then district inspector in the new schooling system; but from 1790 he turned to patriotic activity, even beginning to call himself a 'nationalist'. The linguistic concomitant of this was that Kazinczy, though a fluent speaker of Latin, German and Slovak, became an ever stronger Magyarizer. In his programmatic statements he asserted, *inter alia*, that the native language was the cultural equivalent of 'Hungarian bread' (*magyar kenyér*), which non-Magyars must either learn or they will starve.[63]

Meantime, however, Kazinczy fell foul of the 'Jacobin' purge, by which the government sought to eliminate the members of an alleged revolutionary conspiracy; and that left its linguistic residue in his memoir of captivity (*Fogságom naplója*). Though this text has, since its belated first publication in 1931, become an essential component of Kazinczy's autobiographical writings as a whole and thus part of the standard canon of Hungarian literature, it ironically happens to yield the best evidence known to me about the continuing multilingual character of later eighteenth-century Hungary, especially about the scarcely diminished significance of Latin at the very end of the century. Most of this – neglected and at times obliterated by later commentators[64] – appears in the extraordinary, at times

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[61] Cf. Günter J. Stipa, *Finnisch-ugrische Sprachforschung von der Renaissance bis zum Neupositivismus* (Helsinki, 1990), esp. pp. 208ff. Teleki, *Magyar nyelvnek tökéletesítése*, pp. 10, 33, 39, 262ff., is happy with Magyar as an eastern, but also a Finno-Ugrian language.

[62] Rapant, *K počiatkom maďarizácie*, I.331ff., 369ff. and passim; Kazinczy, *Művei*, I.261. The most detailed account of the relevant period of Kazinczy's life is still János Váczy, *Kazinczy Ferenc és kora*, vol. I (no more published), (Budapest, 1915).

[63] 'vagy éhhel hal el': Kazinczy *Művei*, II, nos. 11, 73. Cf. also Gy. Szekfű (ed.), *Iratok a magyar államnyelv kérdésének történetéhez, 1790–1848* (Budapest, 1926), pp. 24ff.; Rapant, *K počiatkom maďarizácie*, II.55, 64, 514–15.

[64] E.g. Váczy, *Kazinczy*, pp. 495–514, who clearly used the then still MS text, but airbrushed out non-Hungarian passages.

verbatim record of Kazinczy's imprisonment and treason trial in 1795, extracts of which are printed as an Appendix to this chapter. Whereas the official documentation of the trial, since published *in extenso* because of the political weight of the occasion, provides much information of a general kind about both oral and written practice, the gripping narrative in the diary adds many revealing personal details.[65]

We might wonder about Kazinczy's accuracy, given that he seems to have written down his recollections decades later. Yet he was a quasi-professional philologist, devoted to exactness of words, and there seems no reason why he should have played fast and loose, in a memoir designed only for private circulation, with texts that were not even in his beloved Magyar. Besides, Kazinczy's memory would have been mightily sharpened by the traumatic circumstances in which he had experienced them: he received a death sentence which was commuted only at the last moment to a long gaol term. An interesting corroborative feature are the hints at how Latin was actually spoken; elsewhere Kazinczy commented on his own Latin accent, as formed in the Calvinist college at Sárospatak.[66] Altogether these passages give us some insight into the functional nature of Hungary's multilingualism, deriving from a mixture of need and facility, institutional rules (which in the courtroom, for example, evidently enjoined Latin upon all those who knew it), social conventions, issues of confidentiality and familiarity, and so forth.

Kazinczy's arrest, on 14 December 1794, was negotiated in German throughout, since an Austrian army officer had been sent to detain him. His subsequent dealings with various other prisoners, guards, etc., at first in Hungary and then in Moravia, involved a mixture of tongues, with much German and some Slovak. He also regularly used Latin, especially it seems to avoid being understood by all and sundry, as in his exchange with a warder (**extract I**), when Kazinczy, suffering from gaol fever, found himself required to take a carriage journey which ended up, to his surprise, in a notorious penitentiary at Obrovitz/Obrovice. This passage has an authentic flavour, both in Kazinczy's efforts to gain special treatment, and in the way both men resort to German in the argument at the end.

Latin was the language of Kazinczy's interrogation too, even though all those round the table must have known Magyar. It began (**extract II**), after preliminaries of identification, with the defendant's denial that he had known about a Jacobin catechism found on his friend Szentmarjay, though they had been together on one potentially compromising

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[65] K. Benda (ed.), *A magyar jakobinusok iratai* (3 vols., Budapest, 1952–7), II, prints much of this material: the testimony, submissions and confessions (among them Kazinczy's, ibid., pp. 343–50) in Latin; the reports to Vienna mainly in German.

[66] Kazinczy, *Művei*, I.255f.

occasion. The letter from him to Szentmarjay which his prosecutors have
found, says Kazinczy, is the only one he wrote – and concerns nothing
more than the dispatch of some literary works by Klopstock. Whether or
not prompted by that learned cue, one of the interrogators now switches
to Magyar, in a distinctly intimate register, trying to induce the prisoner
into a confession, a gambit seconded by another of them, who makes the
same sort of plea ('by the five wounds of Jesus Christ . . . '), in Latin,
though of a regionally accented kind, as Kazinczy notes.

The prisoner refused to inculpate himself during these exchanges; but
when, after another month's confinement, he was brought back for more
questioning, the outcome (**extract III**) was different. Now the odious
prosecutor, Németh, shows him testimony from another of the suspects,
Szulyovszky, which claims that Kazinczy indeed kept company with other
alleged conspirators. At this point, fazed by the revelation but not by Latin
dialogue, Kazinczy admits as much: he would have said so earlier, but for
his promise to protect Szulyovszky (a relation of his, and evidently rather
witless). His tormentor seeks to lead him further: 'But it's not sufficient
to say what you did, what you know: you must add your way of thinking
about public affairs, about the *revolutio Gallica* . . . ' We are reminded
how much of Hungarian politics continued to be conducted in Latin.
The confiscated papers of the 'Jacobins' included a Latin translation of
the 'Marseillaise':

> Exurge natio lacertosa
> Sume ensem detructorem in manus . . .[67]

After his conviction, Kazinczy was taken to serve his term in Moravia.
On the way he ran across a fellow prisoner, Abafy, with whom he con-
versed in Latin (**extract IV**) – again perhaps for privacy. Once more
we hear about Kazinczy's now comparatively indulgent treatment in his
confinement, but the talk soon shifts to Szulyovszky, who, according to
Abafy, gave proof of his lunacy by continually singing Lutheran songs in
his cell. Moreover, on this account, he sang them in Slovak, since they are
identified by that tongue (with Latin endings!) in the text. This is con-
firmed elsewhere in the diaries, where Szulyovszky complicates the issue
further by telling Kazinczy that he took the Lutheran lines from a German
original.[68] Kazinczy also reports, glossing our extract, that Abafy spoke

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[67] Benda, *Magyar jakobinusok iratai*, I.1049f.
[68] 'Amice, multum flevi, multum orebam, cantabam; praesertim certam cantionem slavi-
cam, ex germanico Wer nur den lieben Gott la[=ä]sst walten; et assecuro te, cantio
haec me erexit. Animum tamen meum non poteram inducere ut credam Jesum Chris-
tus fuisse.' At which Kazinczy laughed and said 'lutheranszka pisznicskakat [he gives
them Magyar endings] nem dúdoltam is': Ferenc Kazinczy, *Az én életem*, ed. F. Szilágyi
(Budapest, 1987), pp. 178f.

'flowery' Latin, evidence of which was that he pronounced the letter 's', for example in the word 'stultus', as a simple sound, which implies that most Hungarians rendered it with 'sh', as they would the same letter in Magyar.[69]

A final short excerpt (**extract V**) illustrates the expressive power which Latin still retained in Hungary among those who naturally turned to it. It brings back two characters we have already met: Ferenc Szentmarjay, a young idealist deeply involved with the radical conspiracy, and János Németh, the *director causarum regiarum* or royal prosecutor, widely regarded as the most sinister, venomous and unscrupulous of the team of Habsburg myrmidons who worked to suppress it. Németh seems to have lured Szentmarjay with a promise that he would be spared if he made a clean breast of his part in the plot. When the death sentence is nevertheless confirmed to him, Szentmarjay turns on Németh with an emotional Latin outburst, ending 'I die, but I await Your Worship before that tribunal where perjury shall be avenged.' We may wonder whether these were the condemned man's exact words, since Kazinczy was presumably not present; but he occupied a nearby cell, and gives no hint of having to compromise here what appears to be an overall philological exactness.

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Kazinczy would doubtless have looked askance at my quarrying his richly Magyarophile writings for evidence of Latin usage. Much more would need to be assembled than I have done here for us to build up any adequate picture of linguistic interplay in eighteenth-century Hungary and its relation to political and social development. But at least some concluding questions can be put.

Had the continuing role of Latin been cause or effect of all this delayed development of the vernaculars? What were the reasons for the extraordinary acceleration of national language campaigns thereafter, led by that for Magyar, which in some ways had a long head start by the end of the century? What was the role of domestic factors in that process, alongside the shock delivered by Habsburg policy, especially under Joseph II? And how did linguistic interplay affect the issue of access to the public sphere?

Ultimately we need to ask whether language, in this distinctive Hungarian case, was a vehicle for social and political *ex*clusion or *in*clusion, and how far that changed as the long-time hegemony of one language that was no one's mother tongue faced a challenge from several rival languages which were. The country had become a last preserve of the perceived

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[69] 'Abafy cifrácskán beszéle deákul, és a stultus az ő szájában sztulltusz volt': Kazinczy, *Művei*, I.460–1.

merits of multilingualism, in theory and practice. Various adages – such as that 'unity of language is a blemish on the dignity of the realm' – were regularly invoked to justify this, not least of course when the status quo came under pressure from Joseph II.[70] It is hardly surprising that these were habitually cited in Latin.

[70] Cf. Evans, 'Language and State-building', p. 3.

Appendix

Extracts from Ferenc Kazinczy's *Fogságom naplója* (Journal of my Captivity).[1]

I/ KAZINCZY AND HIS WARDER, ON A JOURNEY

W[arder]: Induat se, ibimus in aliam domum.
K[azinczy]: Scit me male valere. Ut sum, transibo. Sed rogo, det mihi amoenum cubiculum, si licet.
W: Induere se debet; rheda vehemur.

[*K. asks to be taken through the town of Brünn/Brno:*]

W: Faciam, sed videbo, qualem mihi discretionem dabunt, dum eliberabuntur.

[*On arrival at destination:*]

K: Quid hoc est? Recordor mihi dictum fuisse, dum octobri hic pransus sum, in hoc parte esse domum correctoream . . .
W: Ja, das ist das Zuchthaus . . .

[*When K. begins to shout and swear:*]

W: Per amorem Dei, non faciant ne hic sciatur me dixisse, quod ista domus correctorea sit, quia includat ad arestum.
K: Hohle Sie der Teufel und Ihr Arrest.[2]

II/ KAZINCZY'S FIRST INTERROGATION (MOSTLY BY ONE MIKOS, A MAGYAR LIKE THE REST)

M[ikos]: Domine perillustris, quod est nomen?
K: Franciscus Kazinczy.
M: Unde? / Quot annorum? / Quae conditio? / Cujus religionis?
K: Protestans Helv. confessionis.

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[1] I have used the edition of this text in Kazinczy, *Művei*, I.419–541. The relevant sections are also conveniently reprinted in Benda, *Magyar jakobinusok iratai*, III.296–325.
[2] Kazinczy, *Művei*, I.469–70.

[*Interruption by one of the judges:*]

Domine Magnifice, scribat, reformatus.

M: Quare est interceptus?

K: Ex actione Mfici Dni directoris causarum regg.,[3] quam in Kerepes mecum Ord. Jud. Nobil. Cottus Borsodiensis[4] Adam Pogány communicaverat. Scio catechismum aliquem hic queri. Ego de catechismo tali nihil quidquam scio.

[*The chief prosecutor, N[émeth] asks:*]

Dne spectabilis, fuitne cum Francisko Szentmarjay [*another suspect*] in Károlyiensi installatione?

K: Fui, et meo curru vectus est Patakinum.

N: Et qualis haec est epistola?

K: Mea, ad Szentmarjay. Sed cum ad eum nullas unquam alias literas scripserim, constare mihi debet, in his nullam aliam contineri petitionem, quam ut mihi opera Klopstockii a Bibliopola mitteret.

[*Another interrogator tries to soften him up in Magyar:*]

Édes öcsémuram, mi osztályos atyafiak vagyunk, s öcsémuram tudja, hogy én öcsémuramat gyermeksége olta nagyon szerettem [*etc*.].

[*Now the chairman, the vice-palatine, intervenes, 'in his Slovak pronunciation, with all the long vowels short':*]

Domine spectabilis frater, scimus omnia. Per quinque vulnera Jesu Christi oro spectabilem dominum fratrem, non se destruat, non se reddat indignum clementia Optimim Principis, fateatur, quod facit . . .[5]

III/ MORE QUESTIONING (BY NÉMETH)

N: Domine Spectabilis, veniat huc. Noscit hanc scripturam?

[*Another of accused has testified*:]

Ego in congregatione Ujhelyiensi Franciscum Kazinczy evocavi ad habitationem meam; venit ad Rákoc; descendimus ad hortum. Tum ego: Domine Frater . . .

K [breaks in]: Non est necesse, ut lectionem magnifica dn. vestra continuet; dicam totum, nihil enim interest aliquid tacere. Ni me Szulyovszky per liberos suos rogasset ne revelem, dixissem omnia sub primo examine.

N [exulting, and calling for pen, ink and paper]:

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[3] The director of royal prosecutions, János Németh, another of those present in the room.

[4] The chief justice (*főszolgabíró*) of the county of Borsod, in north-east Hungary.

[5] Kazinczy, *Művei*, I.428–9.

Sed non est satis dicere quid fecerit, quid sciat: addat cogitandi rationem de rebus publicis, de revolutione Gallica . . .[6]

IV/ ANOTHER INCIDENT FROM KAZINCZY'S TRANSFER AS A CONVICT

[*K[azinczy] encounters en route his former fellow captive A[bafy]*:]

A: Amice, quid hic facis?
K: Brunam deducimur.
A: Sed quomodo? Sine catena te video, sine stipatore?
K: Habemus excellentem officialem; omnia nobis indulget.
A: Quid ergo Szulyovszky?
K: Graecium deductus est.
A: Habui ego comoedias cum illo stulto [*but K. notes he said 'sztull-to'*]. Budae meus vicinus fuit. Diu non poteram scire, quis illus meus vicinus sit, qui Lutheranszkász pisznicskász semper cantabat. Sero agnovi vocem, atque nocte intempesta acclamavi ei: Szul-lov-szky! Ille mihi: Quis es? – Ego sum, Abafy. – Ah, amice, quid ergo tu? . . .[7]

V/ SZENTMARJAY IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

[*He breaks out with 'wild outrage' against the chief prosecutor:*]

Domine magnifice, haec ergo est publica fides? D[omi]natio vestra me decepit, dum mihi spem fecerat, fore ut si omnia ingenue fassus fuero, gratia vitae mihi danda sit. Ego morior, sed expecto D[omi]nationem vestram coram illius tribunali, qui perjurii vindex est.[8]

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[6] Ibid., I.429–30.   [7] Ibid., I.460–1.   [8] Ibid., I.440.

11 'Silence, respect obedience': political culture in Louis XV's France

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In the early hours of the night of 19–20 January 1771, president Louis-François de Paule Lefèvre d'Ormesson de Noiseau of the Parlement of Paris, who along with his colleagues was on judicial strike, was woken by the sound of two musketeers hammering at his door.[1] They presented him with a royal *lettre de cachet*, which when opened contained the following orders:[2]

Sir, I send you this letter to inform you that it is my intention that you should resume the functions of your office and carry out the duties that you owe to my subjects for the dispatch of their affairs . . . and that you should make clear in writing to the bearer of the present [letter] without humming and hawing or beating about the bush, by a simple declaration of yes or no, your willingness to submit to my orders, informing you that I will consider a refusal to explain yourself and to sign as disobedience.

More than 150 of d'Ormesson's colleagues received a similar visit on this remarkable night. The majority replied negatively and they were exiled the next evening, and their remaining colleagues who had initially written 'yes' quickly recanted and soon suffered the same fate.

These dramatic events were the culmination of an intense and complex political crisis that had already provoked the disgrace of Louis XV's powerful secretary of state for foreign affairs, the duc de Choiseul, and had pitted the Parlement of Paris against chancellor de Maupeou in a battle for survival.[3] It was not the first time that the magistrates had been exiled, similar crises had occurred in 1756–7, 1753–4, 1732 and 1720, but on each occasion a compromise had eventually been reached. Indeed the

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[1] A[rchives]N[ationales] 156 mi[crofilm] 74, fo. 1.
[2] J. Flammermont, *Le chancelier Maupeou et les parlements* (Paris, 1883), p. 207.
[3] The crisis has been discussed by, among others, W. Doyle, 'The Parlements of France and the Breakdown of the Old Regime, 1771–1788', *French Historical Studies* 6 (1970), pp. 415–58; J. Egret, *Louis XV et l'opposition parlementaire* (Paris, 1970); Flammermont, *Chancelier Maupeou*; and J. Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754–1774* (Cambridge, 1995).

punishment of the Parlement had traditionally been part of what historians increasingly describe as judicial politics, namely the series of flexible, unwritten rules and procedures governing relations between the crown and the parlements in which both informal and formal channels of communication, rituals, threats, bribery and entreaty all played a part.[4] The seemingly bizarre idea of waking magistrates in the middle of the night to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the king's orders is perhaps best explained as a botched example of judicial politics, with the chancellor trying unsuccessfully to coerce the Parlement into backing down. In 1771, Maupeou was engaged in a game of brinkmanship, but when his gambit failed he ceased to play by the old rules and began to dismantle the institutions and conventions of government, recruiting a new Parlement, remodelling its jurisdiction, abolishing venality and the fees paid by litigants to the judges hearing their cases.

Contemporaries were quickly conscious that a Rubicon had been crossed and 'Maupeou's revolution' aroused controversy on a hitherto unimagined scale, with the court, the royal administration, the judiciary and even the wider public bitterly divided. Both sides rushed into print and the ensuing pamphlet war illustrates perfectly how competition for public support was transforming the nature of politics in the eighteenth century. Subsequent historians have reflected that split with continuing debate between those who see Maupeou as an accidental revolutionary, taking desperate measures to advance or shore up his own position, and those who, in the tradition of Voltaire, believe he led an attempt backed by Louis XV to impose a French form of Enlightened absolutism.[5] There is still scope for debate about both the effectiveness and viability of Maupeou's reforms and the outcome of the war of words that they unleashed. However, in this chapter I intend to leave these familiar arguments to one side and concentrate instead upon the nature of old regime political culture and the impact of the revolution of 1771 on the attitudes of the

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[4] In addition to the works cited above, see: P. R. Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Regime France, 1720–1745* (London, 1996); D. Dee, 'Judicial Politics, War Finance and Absolutism: The Parlement of Besançon and Venality of Office, 1699–1705', *French History* 19 (2005), pp. 440–62; W. Doyle, 'The Parlements', in K. M. Baker, ed., *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture, I: The Political Culture of the Old Regime* (Oxford, 1987); D. Hudson, 'The Parlementary Crisis of 1763 in France and its Consequences', *Canadian Journal of History* 7 (1972), pp. 97–117; J. M. J. Rogister, *Louis XV and the Parlement of Paris, 1737–1755* (Cambridge, 1995); J. H. Shennan, *The Parlement of Paris* (2nd edn, London, 1998); B. Stone, *The French Parlements and the Crisis of the Old Regime* (Chapel Hill, 1986); and J. Swann 'Parlements and Political Crisis in France under Louis XV: The Besançon Affair, 1757–1761', *Historical Journal* 37 (1994), pp. 803–28.
[5] For a discussion of the historiography of the *parlementaire* opposition, see Swann, *Politics and the Parlement*, pp. 27–44.

governing elite as it confronted the crucial issue of the legitimacy of royal power.

The works of Keith Michael Baker have been particularly influential in the study of political culture. He famously offered a linguistic definition of politics as 'the activity through which individuals and groups in any society articulate, negotiate, implement and enforce the competing claims they make upon one another and upon the whole. Political culture is, in this sense, the set of discourses or symbolic practices by which these claims are made.'[6] As Baker was well aware, it was the second half of his definition that was problematic, especially when he attempted to define specific discourses such as 'administrative', 'judicial' or 'political' and fit the ideas and actions of individuals into such categories or explain political events through discursive conflict alone.[7] Even if one accepts the philosophical premise that 'human identity and action are linguistically constituted',[8] to make sense of individual responses when the musketeers rapped at the door, it is necessary to consider a complex combination of social, cultural and psychological factors with ambition, conscience, education, family tradition, personality and much else besides all playing a part. Only by considering these factors, relating them to the specific context of a political crisis and to the values, expectations and rules governing individual and collective behaviour are we likely to get close to an accurate definition of political culture in eighteenth-century France.[9] The revolution of 1771 provides a particularly pertinent example for such a study because it not only forced individuals to make difficult choices, but also to think hard about the nature of power. As Tim Blanning has so justly remarked, power is about more than just the ability of rulers to command obedience; it is also about perception.[10] Louis XV failed dismally to project an image of himself as an Enlightened or patriot king and perhaps more damagingly his very weakness made him more vulnerable to the accusation that he was little better than a despot.

Maupeou's challenge

The idea of waking magistrates in the middle of the night of 19–20 January 1771 was clearly intended to intimidate, but it could be justified on the

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[6] K. M. Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 4.

[7] Ibid., pp. 4–7, 126–7.   [8] Ibid., p. 6.

[9] Definitions of this sort are invariably problematic and I have borrowed here, in part, from Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, CA, 1984), p. 10 and from T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 1–10.

[10] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 5.

basis that it might secretly be welcomed. Since at least 1750, ministers and many magistrates had complained that the parlements no longer thought or acted as they had once done.[11] Magistrates who dared to voice moderate or unpopular opinions were regularly shouted down by their opponents, and serious divisions had riven the parlements of Besançon, Paris, Pau and Rennes. By presenting individuals with a stark choice of answering 'yes' or 'no' to the orders of their sovereign, it might have been expected that free from the glares and heckles of their colleagues many would reply 'yes'. Remarkably, no fewer than thirty-five magistrates refused to give a direct answer. Abbé Philippe, for example, sent the musketeers packing and told them to take their paper with them, while president d'Ormesson de Noiseau chose to write 'neither yes nor no, believing this form of disobedience to be more honest than deceiving the king by writing one or the other'.[12]

Of the others, only forty-six wrote 'yes' and the list included some of the most notorious opponents of the chancellor, while seventy answered 'no'.[13] However, at least forty magistrates ignored the terms of the *lettre de cachet* and the protests of the musketeers by writing a more detailed explanation of their stance. Robert de Saint-Vincent spent an hour in bed, with his wife praying for inspiration by his side and the musketeers looking on in silent bemusement, while he sought the right words to reply.[14] He and most of his colleagues eventually produced firm expressions of loyalty. President Brisson wrote simply:[15]

I await with the most respectful and submissive resignation the events with which I am threatened, and I beg the king to be so good as to believe that, in whatever situation I find myself reduced, I will always conserve the same unshakeable attachment to his sacred person, to his service, to the good of his subjects and to the preservation of the essential laws of the kingdom.

Maupeou's failure to coerce the magistrates reflected his own unpopularity and his lack of political finesse. For the night of 19 January to have had any impact, those who replied 'no' ought to have been exiled immediately. Instead, they were allowed to meet up with their colleagues, most of

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[11] As the distinguished former *procureur général* of the Parlement of Paris, Joly de Fleury, complained in a letter to the prince de Conti, 2 January 1756, B[ibliothèque]N[ationale] Collection Joly de Fleury 2103, fo. 348.

[12] AN 156 mi 74, fos. 1–3.   [13] Flammermont, *Chancelier Maupeou*, pp. 207–11.

[14] Robert de Saint-Vincent, *Mémoires*, pp. 509–10. All references to these memoirs are from a photocopy of a typed version of the original kindly put at the disposal of the author by Dale Van Kley. The original is conserved by M. Michel Vinot. I would like to thank both Dale Van Kley and M. Vinot.

[15] Quoted in Flammermont, *Chancelier Maupeou*, p. 210.

whom quickly fell into line with the majority decision. The chancellor's response was to punish the magistrates with exile to often remote and inhospitable towns and villages from the Atlantic coast to the foot of the Alps.

Although Maupeou was not a visionary statesman, he had energy and ruthlessness in abundance and against all expectations he was able to remodel the judicial system during the course of 1771. His intentions were made clear at a *lit de justice* held on 13 April, where he presented edicts which, in the eyes of his opponents, transformed France into despotism. When the terms of the first law had been read out, the acting first president of the new Parlement, Antoine Martin Chaumont de La Galazière, had an opportunity to reply. He did so very briefly, declaring:[16]

Sire, in a place, on a day, when everything proclaims the absolute exercise of your power, we cannot fulfil any other duty than that of silence, respect obedience.

As Maupeou rattled through his list of measures, Chaumont de La Galazière continued to reply after each new law: 'silence, respect obedience'. Once the ceremony was complete, Louis XV spoke with an unaccustomed vehemence that shook his audience, declaring his support for the changes and barking imperiously 'je ne changerai jamais', before departing with a sense of majesty reminiscent of Louis XIV.[17]

These dramatic scenes captured the very essence of the Maupeou revolution. An absolute, and for once almost charismatic monarch had spoken and his loyal subjects had submitted to a clear expression of his royal will. The lesson was clear; any future opposition was nothing less than wilful disobedience. With such a strategy, Maupeou hoped to gain the political and moral high ground, and compel all but the most recalcitrant magistrates to cede. His plan was not dissimilar to that employed in March 1766, when Louis XV had temporarily silenced the magistrates with his resounding restatement of monarchical authority at the *séance de la flagellation*. However, the genius of that ceremony lay in its simplicity; in reality it was no more than a robust response to the Parlement's remonstrances. What Maupeou proposed was not only a radical institutional reform, but also a far more authoritarian, inflexible definition of royal power and of the duties and rights of the subject. Questions that had long been cloaked in shades of grey were suddenly represented as if they were black or white, permitting a response of yes or no as on the night of 19 January 1771. By

[16] J. Flammermont, *Remontrances du parlement de Paris au xviiie siècle* (3 vols., Paris, 1888–98), III.185–207, esp. pp. 192–8.

[17] The phrase 'Je ne changerai jamais' could be translated as 'my decision is final' or 'my decision is irreversible' and it was this sense of finality and determination which so surprised his audience.

treating complex political matters in such a blunt fashion, Maupeou in turn radicalised his opponents and split the governing elite in a potentially fatal fashion.

The 'king's true servants'

The magistrates who served in Maupeou's reformed courts were excoriated by the majority of their contemporaries and they have fared little better at the hands of subsequent historians.[18] The new magistrates were accused of, among other failings, low birth, professional ignorance, corruption, immorality and above all opportunism for putting private gain above the public good, and many no doubt deserved such criticism. Choosing to serve Maupeou or to side with the king against the majority in a Parlement was not, however, an easy option, and social ostracism, public insults and the threat of a career ending in ruins were an integral part of the bargain. Louis Jean Bertier de Sauvigny, first president of the remodelled Parlement of Paris, was recognised by many of his opponents as a man of probity.[19] His appointment was nevertheless greeted by popular verses such as:[20]

> Caligula once made his horse
> Roman Consul: is it such a wonder,
> If our prince, in like madness
> Makes Sauvigny chief of his tribunal?

Bertier himself had a very different explanation for his appointment. He believed that he had preserved his honour and personal integrity, acting in accordance with his conscience. In a letter sent to Louis XVI in November 1774, after the recall of the old Parlement, he claimed: 'I only accepted the charge of first president after a formal order, and by pure obedience.'[21] As in April 1771, he rejected offers of reward for his services for fear of being accused of having ceded to ambition rather than the:

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[18] For an overview of the debate and a more nuanced treatment of these magistrates, see J. Félix, *Les magistrats du parlement de Paris, 1771–1790* (Paris, 1990).

[19] As the comments of d'Ormesson de Noiseau, AN 156 mi 74, fo. 72, and Hue de Miromesnil, BN MS Fr 10986, fo. 17, make clear.

[20] B[ibliothèque]M[unicipale de]D[ijon] 1233, abbé Courtépée, 'Recueil de la plus étonnante révolution arrivée en France depuis 1769 à 1775', fo. 282.

> Caligula fit jadis son cheval
> Consul de Rome: est-ce grande merveille,
> Si notre prince, en démence pareille
> Fait Sauvigny chef de son tribunal?

[21] BMD 1233, fo. 280, 'Lettre de M. Bertier de Sauvigny, ancien premier président du parlement détruit le 7 novembre 1774'.

simple desire to show the king, my obedience, my zeal, my respect and my entire devotion to his will; at a time when the sentiments of a loyal and submissive subject were attributed to dishonour in the opinion of a large part of the nation.

Bertier's colleague, president Aymar-Charles-François de Nicolay, a former captain in the dragoons, was another to emphasise the duty of an obedient subject, declaring that his only crime was to have had the courage for four years to obey.[22] Others were even more explicit and as Louis XVI prepared to recall the Parlement of Rennes in 1774, those who had served Maupeou warned him that he would see 'loyal magistrates, who have sacrificed themselves for their prince and their *patrie*, insulted, persecuted, proscribed and abandoned by the royal authority of which they would be the martyrs'.[23] For these Breton judges there was an irreconcilable division between their own belief as subjects in 'an absolutely essential duty to obey' and those who saw their duty to resist. Perhaps surprisingly, such sentiments were rarely expressed in terms of the divine right of kings, although it is significant that most presented themselves as subjects rather than citizens.

This emphasis on duty and obedience was reflected in the public pronouncements of a young *maître des requêtes*, who justified his cooperation with the new tribunals with the phrase 'I have no respect for them, I despise them, but I serve Louis XV.'[24] The willingness to put duty above any personal sentiments was typical of the members of the king's council who filled in for the exiled Parlement of Paris between January and April 1771.[25] Such devotion to the monarch offers an interesting counterpoise to abbé de Véri's observation early in the reign of Louis XVI that 'the commonplaces of my youth like "serve the king" are no longer on the lips of Frenchmen'.[26] Far from assuming royal service was 'for valets', many nobles of both robe and sword continued to venerate an idealised bond between themselves and their monarch as much, if not more, than any sense of serving an abstract state or even the nation. It was surely not a coincidence that Louis XVI's abortive flight to Varennes in June 1791 triggered 'the military emigration' with the most substantial noble exodus from the officer corps of the army.

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[22] B[ibliothèque de]P[ort-]R[oyal] Collection Le Paige 573, 'Lettre de M. de Nicolai à M. de Miromesnil, 13 novembre 1774'.

[23] BMD 22981 (III), 'Lettre du parlement de Bretagne au roi, du 31 août 1774'.

[24] Recorded by d'Ormesson in his journal, AN 156 mi 75, fo. 391.

[25] According to d'Ormesson, AN 156 mi 74, fo. 33, Trudaine de Montigny, for example, claimed to be ashamed to wear his judicial robes in public and angrily informed Bertier de Sauvigny that they were 'doing everything that they should not do and nothing that they should'.

[26] Quoted in Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 187.

The king's will is law

There was a strong strand of authoritarian, or what we might legitimately describe as 'absolutist', thinking in the writings of the chancellor's servants and real continuity in terms of both ideas and personnel spanning the various *parlementaire* crises of the preceding quarter-century. In the many pamphlets produced on behalf of the government, the phrase 'si veut le roi, si veut le loi' was repeated so often that it appears to have been part of a deliberate strategy.[27] More often than not, it was presented as both a challenge and a reproach, as one author asked rhetorically:[28]

and what has become of this axiom so often repeated in the *grand'chambre*; this maxim from antiquity that our most famous jurists have put at the forefront of our public law: *si veut le roi, si veut le loi*? Since when did citizens become free to say: such and such an edict will not become law in the kingdom, because it frightens us, humiliates us, or simply displeases us?

On one level, 'si veut le roi, si veut le loi' was a simple statement of royal sovereignty and as Maupeou's supporters intended it was difficult to refute on its own terms. Yet it was also the expression of an inflexible, authoritarian interpretation of French monarchy, which, for all the theoretically absolute power of the king, had always been tempered by the rights and privileges of his subjects.

The need for unconditional obedience was another permanent refrain of pro-government pamphlets, and it was presented as the necessary basis of both divine and human law.[29] Magistrates in particular were expected to set an example by showing that it was not dishonourable to obey. Military analogies abounded and for many the resistance of the *parlementaires* was seen as the equivalent of soldiers deserting the colours. As one anonymous author explained matters:[30]

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[27] 'Si veut le roi, si veut le loi' could be translated as 'the king's will is law' or as 'the king wishes, so does the law'.

[28] BMD 4833, *Examen analytique et raisonné d'un écrit qui a pour titre: protestations des princes du sang* (n.p., n.d.), p. 21.

[29] For examples, see: BMD 4833, *Dialogue entre un officier françois qui revient de Corse, et son neveu, ci-devant conseiller au parlement de Paris, exilé dans une petite ville* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 32–3; *Lettres américaines sur les parlements 1770 et 1771* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 8–9, 18–19; *Idées d'un patriote* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 26–7; and *Examen analytique et raisonné*, p. 21.

[30] AN K 695, 'Mémoire sur l'autorité que s'arrogent les parlements sur l'autorité royale'. Much the same argument was presented in a pro-government pamphlet entitled *Ils reviendront: ils ne reviendront pas, ou le pour et le contre* (n.p., n.d.), p. 19, in which the author declared that a regiment that disobeyed 'would be broken', not subjected to the judgement of another regiment.

a corps of magistrates that quits its functions . . . commits the gravest crime against the sovereign authority and against public order. Its desertion endangers the peace of the state and delivers its jurisdiction up to anarchy. The regiment that refuses to march is broken; suppression [of his office] would be the least rigorous punishment that could be inflicted on the judge who refuses to carry out his duties.

Many of these themes were developed by the author of the *Dialogue entre un officier françois qui revient de Corse, et son neveu, ci-devant conseiller au parlement de Paris, exilé dans une petite ville,* which was based upon an imaginary conversation between a bluff military man and a committed young *parlementaire*. For the officer, France, unlike England, Poland or Sweden, was a monarchy and royal authority was held absolutely by the king, and to resist his orders, or to encourage others to do so, was to incite revolt. The cause of France's present unhappiness was a new 'spirit of mutiny', which he contrasted with that in 'Spain, Portugal and chez the King of Prussia, where [peoples] live happily, not because they are better treated or governed more gently, but because they are more submissive'.[31]

Not surprisingly, the officer had little sympathy for the plight of his exiled nephew, which was depicted as the bitter fruit of his own disobedience. However, the author did not leave matters there, and he continued by comparing the fate of the exiled *parlementaires* with that of military officers obliged to spend years in lonely garrisons without complaint, facing the threat of being 'discharged' after offering the sacrifice of their lives in battle. He also offered his reflections on the rigours of military discipline that meant a soldier could be hanged for stealing a cabbage, while the disobedience of the magistrates was met with leniency. He concluded by urging his nephew to accept an office in Maupeou's reformed courts and when this plea was rejected, declared:[32]

is it not always glorious to be employed by your king to render service to the state? I can see your stubbornness only too well, your inflexible pride. Continue then in your revolt, because that appears to you so fine, heroic; but I tell you straight that I do not wish to recognise a rebel among my kin; expect nothing from me, I am no longer your uncle.

Such a close comparison between military and judicial officers was typical of Maupeou's apologists, as was an insistence upon the fact that the parlements needed to be punished for their insubordination. The

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[31] *Dialogue entre un officier françois et son neveu*, pp. 22–3, 42–3. Other pamphlets took up the theme of military obedience such as *Le mot d'un militaire: prenez et lisez* (n.p., n.d.) and *Lettre d'un officier du régiment de *** à monsieur de ***, son frère, conseiller au parlement de **** (n.p., n.d.).
[32] *Dialogue entre un officier françois et son neveu*, p. 57.

problem was accentuated by the fact that many of those who came into conflict with the parlements were in fact serving military officers. At the royal *séance* held in the Parlement of Paris on 7 April 1770, the duc de Fitz-James, who had placed most of the Parlement of Toulouse under house arrest in 1763, opined that 'the king's wish alone must serve as a rule and that it suffice that His Majesty order something that everyone should hasten to submit'.[33] For those who shared Fitz-James's outlook, their opponents were 'leaguers', 'frondeurs' or even 'republicans' who could legitimately be suspected of treason.[34] Confronted by divisions within the Parlement of Besançon in February 1757, the duc de Randan wrote:[35]

personally, I limit myself to noting . . . as a soldier attached to his master, that the League makes all sorts of efforts to remove this province from his authority and that it seeks to revive the ancient project of becoming a Swiss canton.

In Brittany a decade later, the allegation that the Parlement and the provincial Estates formed a 'league against obedience' was regularly voiced, as was the idea that the only way Louis XV could restore his authority was by entering the province at the head of an army.[36]

Men like Fitz-James, Randan and other military officers who clashed with the parlements, such as the duc d'Aiguillon or Chastellier Dumesnil, clearly struggled to understand that a corps of judges could not be expected to behave like a regiment of soldiers. Yet, this was not just a case of a robe–sword cultural split (although one certainly existed) because many judges were equally convinced that tougher discipline was required to curb the opposition of their colleagues. The personal papers of the leading protagonists in the struggles against the parlements before 1771 are littered with projects for edicts of discipline, and the weeding out of alleged opposition ringleaders, and many such attempts were made, notably in Besançon, Paris, Pau and Rennes.[37] During the crisis in Toulouse of 1763, first president François de Bastard even drafted a comprehensive plan for the abolition of the Parlement, the reimbursement of its officers and their subsequent exile while a new court was created composed of loyal subjects who would be subject to a law of discipline

[33] BN MS Fr 6680, fo. 136.
[34] An argument repeated uncritically by M. Antoine, *Louis XV* (Paris, 1989), pp. 567–610.
[35] B[ibliothèque]M[unicipale de]B[esançon] Collection Chiflet 59, fos. 263–4, duc de Randan à la Cour, 19 February 1757.
[36] AN H1 630, fo. 96, D'Aiguillon to comte de Saint-Florentin, 18 August 1764.
[37] Egret, *L'opposition parlementaire*, pp. 133–81 and Swann, *Politics and the Parlement*, pp. 193–313.

governing their conduct.[38] It would be difficult to get much closer to the actual programme implemented by Maupeou, and his revolution was clearly an accident that had long been waiting to happen.

This authoritarian theme can also be detected when we examine the attitude of Maupeou's supporters towards French history. By the second half of the eighteenth century it was common to see cardinal de Richelieu denounced as a tyrant, and his ministry was described as a 'despotic' interlude in the remonstrances of the Parlement of Rennes.[39] Even Louis XIV was liable to public criticism for his infamous declaration of February 1673, restricting the right of remonstrance, which the Parlement of Toulouse labelled as an attack on 'national liberty'.[40] Yet for a staunch supporter of Maupeou, like Puget de Saint-Pierre, a minor literary figure and author of a history of the Druse of Lebanon, it was the ministry of Richelieu that 'had given the people liberty, prepared for the brilliance of Louis le Grand and the complete consolidation of authority under Louis le Bien-aimé'.[41] Others took up the theme, including the pro-government author of *Ils reviendront: ils ne reviendront pas*, who praised the 'grand Richelieu' for overcoming faction and compared him to the chancellor with the verse:[42]

> If the great Richelieu, to save the *patrie*,
> Knew how to lower *les grands* and tame heresy;
> Maupeou, even greater still, without sword or combat,
> Saved by an edict, the monarch and the state.

This attempt to tie the reforms of Maupeou into a broader tradition of French history, in which Richelieu and Louis XIV were seen as triumphing over the forces of internal dissension that had spawned the civil wars of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, was combined with an attack on the unpatriotic conduct of the *parlementaires*. They were regularly reminded that they had obeyed the far more draconian measures of Louis XIV, and their current conduct was attributed to a desire to imitate the English parliament. Much of the criticism was ironic, or

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[38] Quoted in Bastard d'Estang, *Les parlements de France: essai historique sur leurs usages, leur organisation et leur autorité* (2 vols., Paris, 1857), II.314–15.

[39] BMD 22981 (I), *Remontrances du parlement de Bretagne, 29 janvier 1771*, p. 12.

[40] BMD 22981 (II), *Remontrances du parlement de Toulouse, 6 avril 1771*, p. 37.

[41] A[rchives du Ministère des]A[ffaires]E[trangères] C[orrespondance]P[olitique]F[rance] 1375, 'Premier mémoire sur l'administration, octobre 1774', fo. 109.

[42] *Ils reviendront: ils ne reviendront pas*, pp. 41–2. The actual verse read:

> Si le grand Richelieu, pour sauver la patrie,
> Sçut abaisser les grands et dompter l'hérésie;
> Maupeou, plus grand encore, sans glaive ni combat,
> Sauva, par un édit, le monarque et l'état.

mocking in tone, as in *Le songe d'un jeune parisien*, where the author recounts a tale of a young man whose head is turned by the prospect of imitating the exploits of the orators of the House of Commons.[43] In his dream, he finds himself seated on one of a hundred golden thrones, while the monarch with a wobbly crown is held captive. Then, in what was clearly intended to be an analogy with recent events, the king struck back. Moving forward with majesty a voice rang out that the king is king and the magistrates were there to render justice not rule, and their thrones turned to dust. Yet there was also an element of fear within this and other pamphlets, with references to the lessons of the English civil war and to the fate of Charles I. Moreover, the pro-Maupeou authors tapped into a long-standing concern about contamination by the troublesome 'English spirit' which was seen as a growing threat, an 'infection' or a 'gangrene' that would invade the body politic of France.[44] From the 1750s, if not before, the opposition of the parlements and especially the Jansenists was classed as 'republican disloyalty', and writers such as Puget de Saint-Pierre were convinced that it had succeeded in infecting the bourgeoisie of Paris.[45]

Puget's proposed remedy not surprisingly involved doses of 'purging' and 'quarantine', by expelling the guilty magistrates and sending the remainder to healthier provincial climes, to cities such as Poitiers, Tours or Troyes, where they would no longer find 'nourishment for their delirium'.[46] Admittedly he overlooked the fact that they might in turn infect the provincials, but he was not alone in proposing remedies for the ideological contagion carried by the parlements. As Keith Michael Baker has noted, the government propagandist Jacob-Nicolas Moreau had long sought to assemble an 'ideological arsenal' designed to rebut their constitutional arguments, and through the *séance de la flagellation* and other royal statements a robust and uncompromising definition of sovereignty had been presented to the public.[47]

It is difficult to measure the impact of the government's propaganda, although the general consensus among modern historians suggests that the majority of the French population remained hostile to Maupeou. The

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[43] *Le songe d'un jeune parisien* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 338–9.
[44] Ibid., pp. 355–9. For a particularly interesting example, see AN 01 352, fo. 430, 'Mémoire sur les parlements et les pays d'états', written at the end of the Seven Years' War.
[45] Puget de Saint-Pierre, AAE CPF 1375, 'Second mémoire sur l'administration, octobre 1774', fos. 113–14. Similar ideas were expressed during earlier crises, notably that of 1757, AN 164 AP 1, 'Mémoire sur les troubles actuels et sur les moyens de les faire cesser, juin 1757'.
[46] AAE CPF 1375, 'Second mémoire sur l'administration, octobre 1774', fo. 114.
[47] Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution*, pp. 59–85.

chancellor himself remains one of the great enigmas of the eighteenth century, his true thoughts and intentions supposedly lost in the fires that destroyed first the archives in the Tuileries and then his family chateau. Yet even if the Paris Commune and the allied bombers had not done their worst, it is unlikely that we would have learnt much more about a man whose inability to put quill to paper was a running joke among his contemporaries. It is this shortage of genuine *Maupeouana* that makes his *compte rendu*, delivered to Louis XVI in 1789, so fascinating.

Rather than simply offer a belated vindication of his policies, Maupeou offered a critique of the ills supposedly plaguing society, deploring the lack of 'civic education' and the nefarious consequences of modern teaching methods.[48] As he interpreted matters, the authority of teachers weighed too heavily upon their pupils, and as a result the words 'order and obey are for them only the expressions of tyranny and servitude, that this once accepted shapes for the rest of their lives their opinions on the nature of government and the submission that it requires'.[49] The solution was to follow the practice of the ancients and use the older children as intermediaries between pupils and teacher 'thus accustomed from the cradle to command and to obey their equals, citizens know how to command without pride, and obey without a murmur and they will neither exaggerate the rights of authority, nor the hardships of submission'.

The chancellor was not the last statesman to look to the civic education of the next generation as a means of fostering 'public virtues', and his vision of classical education was clearly one designed to produce Spartans rather than Athenians. Although not presented to Louis XVI until 1789, these ideas almost certainly dated from the reign of his predecessor and may well have been based upon an earlier work drafted by Maupeou's gifted secretary, Charles-François Lebrun.[50] Whatever the truth of the matter, the content of the *compte rendu* dovetailed neatly with the thoughts of others writing in the early 1770s. The author of the *Dialogue entre un officier françois qui revient de Corse*, for example, argued that it was time to teach children a 'Catechism of the French citizen'.[51] Among the maxims to be absorbed were such gems as the 'king rules by the grace of God', that he dispenses 'justice and is not a despot' and that it was impossible to separate the concept of the nation from his person. Puget de Saint-Pierre, on the other hand, urged the government to codify the fundamental laws of the kingdom beginning with the principle that the king was 'sole legislator and sole master' and continuing to include

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[48] Quoted in Flammermont, *Chancelier Maupeou*, p. 602.   [49] Ibid., p. 603.
[50] Ibid., pp. v–vi.   [51] *Dialogue entre un officier françois et son neveu*, p. 36.

the rights of property and of personal liberty as well as more predictable ingredients such as the Salic Law of succession.[52]

These projects were a clear sign that many who backed the revolution of 1771 were conscious that something more than a simple call for 'silence, respect obedience' was required to win the battle against the parlements. Yet what the chancellor's apologists offered was an authoritarian philosophy that clearly owed as much, if not more, to the Counter Reformation as it did to Enlightened absolutism. Subjects were to be instructed in a state catechism, learning a creed that would set the principle of the absolute and unfettered power of the monarchy in stone. The aim was to make future political and constitutional wrangling of the type that had supposedly made the revolution of 1771 necessary impossible. Henceforth the king's servants could carry out their orders with military precision and any individual or institution bold enough to challenge them could be suitably punished. The ideal was a regimented state, with obedient officers exercising authority over silent and respectful subjects. It was as if the contemporary enthusiasm for imposing Prussian army discipline on wayward French troops was to be applied to society as a whole.

The *parlementaire* response

The attempts of Maupeou and his propagandists to present the *parlementaires* as disobedient rebels provided the justification for their harsh, even cruel treatment by the chancellor.[53] The magistrates were understandably anxious to counter the charge that their own disloyalty was the cause of their misfortunes and drew upon their own legal and political culture to defend their position. Many of the arguments they employed were deeply traditional, but the bitter experience of being dispossessed of their offices and exiled for a long period certainly caused some to think more critically about the legitimate exercise of royal power as the revolution of 1771 crystallised long-standing fears about the threat of despotism.

From the perspective of the judges, perhaps the most crucial problem was the attitude of Louis XV himself. The *lettres de cachet* and other orders emanating from Versailles were all signed 'Louis', and, in theory, they represented the express commands of an adult king who had been on the throne for over fifty years. Most biographers of Louis XV continue to peddle the same threadbare line that in 1771, exhausted by

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[52] AAE CPF 1375, 'Second mémoire sur l'administration, octobre 1774', fo. 113. He was not alone in considering projects for codifying the fundamental laws with the aim of breaking the power of the parlements, see AN BB 30 9, dos. O.

[53] For more details, see my 'Disgrace without Dishonour: The Internal Exile of French Magistrates in the Eighteenth Century', forthcoming *Past and Present* (2007).

constant opposition, the king struck back imposing his authority with majesty encapsulated in the curt phrase 'je ne changerai jamais'.[54] Contemporaries were certainly conscious that the monarch was jealous of his authority, but they would have been amazed by the suggestion that he had been suddenly transformed into a determined ruler. The attitude of president d'Ormesson de Noiseau, who had long observed the king at close quarters, provides a helpful insight into the impact of his intervention on 13 April 1771. In his diary, he noted that the king's tone had 'frightened the whole assembly', but a few days later doubts about the veracity of his contribution had surfaced.[55] He recounted that it was Maupeou who had passed the note to the king with an underlined instruction 'it is necessary to pronounce these words angrily'. It was not long before the humorists were at work, and d'Ormesson records an alleged conversation between the duc de Nivernais and Mme du Barry.[56] The king's mistress asked impatiently why there was still so much opposition to Maupeou, even after the monarch had stated 'je ne changerai jamais' so decisively. The duke replied, 'Madame, when the king said that, it was of you that he was thinking.' Perhaps it would be going too far to say that Louis XV had become a bad joke for his subjects, but his failure to convince them that he was personally directing government policy certainly made it easier for Maupeou's opponents to defend their actions.

Doubts about the king's real intentions could only reinforce the *parlementaires* in their determination to resist Maupeou, but there were also deep-rooted cultural factors behind their stance. As in other quarrels with the crown, the *parlementaires* were inspired by the ideal of the *parfait magistrat*, justifying opposition on the grounds of conscience as well as by a venerable tradition of political theory that permitted resistance on the basis that it was in the best interests of a king deceived by evil ministers. There were many references to chancellor d'Harlay's legendary retort to Henri IV:[57]

if it is disobedience to serve well, the Parlement ordinarily commits that fault and when it discovers a conflict between the absolute power of the king and the good of his service, it judges one preferable to the other not through disobedience, but through duty to its office and conscience.

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[54] Antoine, *Louis XV*, pp. 909–92, and F. Bluche, *Louis XV* (Paris, 2000), pp. 169–80.
[55] AN 156 mi 74, fos. 64, 69. D'Ormesson's comments were clearly second hand, but the changing tone illustrates the existence of widespread doubts about the king's commitment to Maupeou's policies.
[56] AN 156 mi 74, fo. 74.
[57] The phrase was picked up by, among others, the *procureur* Regnaud, BN MS Fr 13733, 'Histoire des événements arrivés en France par m. Regnaud ancien procureur au parlement de Paris', fo. 37; 13734, fos. 97, 99.

However, the events of 19–20 January 1771 and Chaumont de La Galazière's mantra of 'silence, respect obedience' of 13 April were interpreted as a direct challenge, requiring a considered and detailed response. For many, Chaumont's stance was little short of treasonable, betraying the king and the nation by failing in his primary duty of giving counsel. The magistrates were, however, anxious to provide a more thorough explanation of their own position, and president Saron spoke for many when he declared that:[58]

we have never ceased to give the king, by our silence and prompt obedience, marks of our respect for his sovereign orders and an example to all of his subjects of the most profound submission to everything which carries the imprint of his authority.

In developing his argument, Saron could point to the fact that the exiles had suffered disgrace without public protest or complaint.

Yet the magistrates who served Maupeou had also made much of the fact that they had followed the dictates of conscience, bowing to the king's explicit orders in the form of a *lettre de cachet*. The obvious problem for the disgraced *parlementaires* was to explain why it was permitted to obey one *lettre de cachet* and not another. While in exile, councillor Angran actually wrote a brief essay on the subject.[59] His solution was the conventional one based upon the argument that in France, unlike the Ottoman Empire, the king's authority was limited and as a result:

the king cannot demand of me, under the specious pretext that I owe everything to his authority and to his wishes, that I sacrifice to his arbitrary will . . . my property, my liberty, my profession and my honour.

Angran thus rejected the argument of his political opponents who believed that the first duty of the royal officer was to serve and that of the subject to obey. The celebrated first president of the Cour des Aides, Lamoignon de Malesherbes, had reached similar conclusions, treating the protests of those who served the crown in obedience to a *lettre de cachet* as nothing more than a sham designed to cover their dishonour.[60]

Such an interpretation had deep roots, and Omer Talon's maxim that the king's subjects were 'free men and not slaves' was called upon to explain that there were legitimate limits to obedience.[61] As the Parlement of Rennes reminded Louis XV in 1764, his government should never

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[58] AN 156 mi 75, fos. 210–11, 'Projet de lettre de m. le president de Saron à m. le duc de La Vrillière ou à m. le chancelier ou à tous les deux'. The letter is undated, but was written in the autumn of 1771.
[59] BPR Collection Le Paige 571 (III), 'Lettre d'un conseiller au parlement', fo. 257.
[60] *Remontrances de la cour des aides, du 18 février sur l'édit de décembre 1770, et l'état actuel du parlement de Paris*.
[61] Flammermont, *Remontrances*, II, pp. 421–2.

impose that 'blind and servile obedience which only exists in the heart of the most vile slave, who betrays the most precious interests of he who commands rather than dare to displease him'.[62] Only in despotic regimes was 'resistance a crime and obedience the only virtue', and the real service was to be prepared to tell the king unpleasant truths.[63] As the Cour des Monnaies explained to Louis XVI in August 1787: 'the obedience of magistrates is not a passive obedience which recognises no other laws than those of absolute authority, but a considered obedience, an assent . . . which cannot survive without a full and complete liberty of suffrage'.[64] Another to pick up this theme of legitimate opposition was the *avocat*, Blondel, who at a ceremony marking the recall of the old Parlement in 1774 eulogised the 'Enlightened obedience' of its members which made them willing to endure hardship and even the sacrifice of their tribunal in order to 'open the eyes' of the king and protect the state.[65]

Thus both sides of the political divide could claim in good faith to have responded with silence, respect and obedience to the king's orders. Those who had answered the chancellor's call stressed their submission to the monarch's will, whereas their opponents offered a more complicated formula. They claimed to have a duty to counsel the king, to speak out and oppose what they believed to be unjust. Yet once their conscience was discharged, they too would submit in respectful silence when presented with a *lettre de cachet* of exile. Both professed almost identical sentiments and yet a real chasm lay between their respective conceptions of what constituted loyal service or even of political culture. What for one side was necessary counsel appeared as insolence, even sedition, to the other, while respectful submission for one camp was nothing better than dreadful servility to their opponents. These sentiments were reinforced by conflicting interpretations of history, the rights of the crown, the legitimate duties of the subject and of the implicit rules and values that lay at the heart of old regime political life.

Such divisions were not new, they had existed with varying degrees of intensity throughout the reign of Louis XV. For much of the time, damaging conflict was avoided because both crown and parlements could derive benefit from abiding by the rules of judicial politics. Yet there was always a current of thought that believed the parlements represented a real danger to royal authority and that the solution lay in draconian measures

[62] BMD MS 1329, 'Remontrances du parlement de Bretagne, du 12 janvier 1764', fo. 83.
[63] BMD 22981 (II), *Arrêté de la cour des comptes, aides et finances de Normandie, du 18 avril 1771*, pp. 12–13.
[64] AN KK 1326, *Arrêté de la cour des monnaies, du 22 août 1787*, fos. 42–3.
[65] BPR LP Collection Le Paige 573, fo. 96, *Discours prononcé par M. Blondel, avocat, à l'ouverture des audiences de la Tournelle, le samedi 3 décembre 1774*, pp. 1–2.

modelled on those employed by Louis XIV. These sentiments were com-
mon among both military officers and the senior echelons of the Catholic
clergy, but they also found favour with some in the royal administration
and even the parlements without whom Maupeou's revolution would
have been impossible. Yet the France of 1771 was very different from
that of 1673. Louis XIV's humbling of the parlements was the work of a
young, dynamic monarch fighting a major and initially glorious war at the
head of a kingdom with fresh and painful memories of civil strife. Perhaps
more importantly, the severity of his legislation restricting remonstrances
was tempered by concessions in other fields.[66] The revolution of 1771,
on the other hand, was the work of a hated minister, acting for the aged
and unpopular king of a country, which, while at peace with itself, had
recently been humiliated in war. It was an inauspicious launch pad for a
political upheaval of such magnitude and we should not be surprised that
it was unpopular nor that it ultimately failed.

Military despotism

Maupeou's revolution is rightly viewed as a watershed in the history of
the French monarchy. The chancellor's assault on the parlements went
beyond the normal exchange of judicial politics and appeared to be an
attempt to change the rules by which France was governed. Such fears
could only be heightened by the emphasis upon the virtues of absolute
obedience and the efforts of the propagandists to equate the duties of civil-
ian and military officers. In the face of this onslaught the *parlementaire*
opposition remained steadfastly loyal, although some excitable commen-
tators were convinced that all France needed was a prince of the blood
to raise his standard for the kingdom to face revolt and civil war.[67]

Public discussion of such topics was clearly taboo. However,
Malesherbes did dare to broach the subject in his personal papers.[68]
He envisaged a situation whereby government abuse of power and the
threat of tyranny would 'force the nobility to arm, the clergy to mount
the pulpit and people to mutiny'. In such circumstances, he believed that
it would be better for the parlements to take the lead by issuing *arrêts*

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[66] J. J. Hurt, *Louis XIV and the Parlements: The Assertion of Royal Authority* (Manchester,
2002), has recently argued that Louis XIV adopted a draconian approach towards the
parlements. However, the argument of A. N. Hamscher, *The Parlement of Paris after the
Fronde, 1653–1673* (Pittsburgh, 1976), that the king's treatment of the courts involved
careful management and cooperation as well as coercion remains, in my opinion, more
convincing.
[67] Regnaud, BN MS Fr 13733, 'Histoire des événements', fos. 55–6.
[68] AN 162 mi 9, 'Eclaircissements sur les observations recueillies des conversations de m.
le chancelier de Lamoignon', fos. 36–55.

de défense because 'it would be much easier [for the crown] to treat with them than with the people or the army'.[69] When he considered possible scenarios for *arrêts de défense*, Malesherbes identified a situation whereby the king ordered the 'financiers to levy taxation arbitrarily at bayonet point'.[70] His fear was very much part of his broader preoccupation with fiscal maladministration and it inspired his personal campaign for the re-establishment of the Estates General. However, his concern about the danger posed by growing army involvement in the civilian administration was in tune with a wider concern in *parlementaire* circles that government was becoming more militarised – an issue of even greater resonance after Gustav III's successful coup of August 1772 against the Riksdag in Sweden.

As dedicated students of Montesquieu, the *parlementaires* were well aware of his warning that the possession of professional troops was one of the reasons why monarchies degenerated into despotism.[71] The frequent employment of the military to implement the various policies against the parlements in the second half of the eighteenth century could only add to their unease. The issue came to a head in the autumn of 1763, when the crown sought to maintain high rates of taxation in the aftermath of the disastrous Seven Years' War.[72] Military commandants were sent to register these laws in the provincial parlements and they were equipped with sweeping orders to take whatever measures they deemed necessary to overcome opposition. Trouble flared in Rouen and Grenoble, but it was in Toulouse that the situation developed into a serious political crisis. Rather than submit to the authority of the commandant, the duc de Fitz-James, the Parlement of Toulouse passed an *arrêt de défense*. Incensed by the opposition, Fitz-James struck back placing the magistrates under house arrest for more than a month, firm in his conviction that as the bearer of the king's orders he was above reproach. Yet a change of ministry at Versailles transformed the situation. Fitz-James was ordered to release his prisoners and they then struck back by attempting to arrest him. To his immense shock, the duke received lukewarm support from the government and he was eventually recalled in semi-disgrace. Not surprisingly, Fitz-James was outraged, arguing that he had done no more than carry out his orders, while his supporters headed by his formidable wife demanded that he be compensated with a

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[69] Ibid., fo. 54. *Arrêts de défense* were orders issued by the parlements which could, in theory, forbid tax collectors to carry out their duties under pain of prosecution. Not surprisingly, the legality of such *arrêts* was hotly disputed.

[70] Ibid.   [71] Echeverria, *The Maupeou Revolution*, p. 52.

[72] Hudson, 'The Parlementary Crisis of 1763', and Swann, *Politics and the Parlement*, pp. 218–49.

marshal's baton and that the 'cowardly', 'low born' *parlementaires* be suitably punished.[73]

Fitz-James and his wife failed to reverse government policy, but the duke's conduct in Toulouse provoked intense discussion about the role of the military in the civil administration. Most of the parlements drafted remonstrances relating to the affair, and the Parlement of Paris in particular made efforts to draw a distinction between the nature of civil and military obedience.[74] The court argued that in external military affairs, the king had an obligation to defend his people against aggression and in such circumstances 'blind obedience is a duty, is a virtue'. However, in matters of internal civil administration the situation was very different as the aim was to sustain subjects in their rights. The military could play no part in this process because they owed their liberty and property not to the power of their swords, but to the law 'which commands or, to be more precise, the sovereign commands by the law'. Nor was the Parlement impressed by the argument that Fitz-James was just obeying orders. It argued that his mistake was to interpret them in such a rigorous fashion, tyrannising the people over whom he had been given authority rather than using his influence to persuade the monarch in their favour.[75] Such conduct threatened the liberty of the people and the stability of the throne and risked transforming France into a military despotism where sovereign power was in the hands of those 'who should be nothing more than its instruments'.[76]

The political crisis in Toulouse was quickly followed by the even more dramatic and inflammatory Brittany affair, which featured a clash between another imperious military commandant, the duc d'Aiguillon, and the Parlement of Rennes. The causes of the quarrel were complex and institutional and personal rivalries were key components. However, the catalyst was provided by an attack upon d'Aiguillon's administration of the *corvée*, which he had been employing to improve the road network as part of the province's defences against the British. The Parlement of Rennes alleged that he had abused his position, linking his actions to the broader critique of the threat of despotism posed by the military commandants, 'who believe everything is permitted, they no longer respect anything, the property holder is no longer sure that tomorrow he will still possess his house and his fields'.[77]

[73] BN MS Fr 6834, fo. 102, duchesse de Fitz-James to marquise de Baulpry, December 1763.
[74] Flammermont, *Remontrances*, II, pp. 423–40, esp. pp. 428–30.
[75] Ibid., pp. 424–8.   [76] Ibid., II, p. 428.
[77] Quoted in B. Pocquet, *Le pouvoir absolu et l'esprit provincial: le duc d'Aiguillon et La Chalotais* (3 vols., Paris, 1900–1), I.318.

Once the crisis broke, the principal target of both the duke and the government in Versailles was René Caradeuc de La Chalotais, a distinguished judge and literary figure, who was subjected to trial and imprisonment on the flimsiest of evidence. In his defence, La Chalotais penned several remarkable memoirs and he left his readers in no doubt about the source of his tribulations, attacking, among other things, the ministry, d'Aiguillon and the Jesuits. However, much of his fire was concentrated upon the nefarious consequences of allowing the military to become involved in civil administration:[78]

accustomed to command absolutely, they have been persuaded that in civilian life the same obedience was necessary against citizens as in a battle against the enemy. And, to maintain an odious inquisition and to put the nation in irons, they have been made into enemies of their compatriots and obliged to hold their bayonets permanently raised against them. It is for these generous defenders of the *patrie* to see if their profession is degraded or not by a base and mercenary service.

La Chalotais had the duc d'Aiguillon firmly in his sights when he wrote these lines, but he was also critical of those military men who had served the crown as gaolers or carried out draconian orders against the parlements.

Such arguments were given even greater force by the heavy involvement of the army in Maupeou's revolution of 1771. Military commandants like the ducs de Fitz-James, Randan and Richelieu were to the fore in implementing the edicts abolishing the parlements, while soldiers distributed *lettres de cachet* exiling the magistrates and guarded the chancellor and his servants as they staged their revolution. As he reflected upon these developments, the exiled Malesherbes noted that his father, chancellor de Lamoignon, had compared the king's failure to back Fitz-James in 1763 to that of Charles I in abandoning the Earl of Strafford.[79] He added:

there are today good citizens who have more modern principles and a more republican soul, who will see this affair in another light, what barrier against tyranny, they ask, if there is no limit to the excesses that a [military] commandant can commit with impunity under the protection of the title that he holds and in brandishing the king's orders as a pretext.

As he contemplated the problem in his study, Malesherbes was again prepared to think radically:[80]

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[78] *Troisième mémoire de monsieur de La Chalotais, procureur général au Parlement de Bretagne* (n.p., n.d.).
[79] AN 162 mi 9, 'Eclaircissements', fos. 67–8.   [80] Ibid., fos. 66–7.

speaking frankly, it would perhaps be useful to change the constitution of the kingdom, it would perhaps be better to live in a country where the military power was not at the disposition of the king alone; but in France are we resolved for this revolution?

Ultimately he was reluctant to answer his own rhetorical question, but he admitted that until it was decided a soldier should not be 'arrested by the Parlement for carrying out his orders'. To be fair to Malesherbes, he was no closet revolutionary and his musings were those of a man who had spent three years in exile thinking about the implications of what he genuinely believed was an ill-judged policy pursued by a despotic government.

Yet he was not alone and another diligent commentator on the political crisis, the *procureur* Regnaud, drew similar conclusions. He lamented the fact that it was the military that had served as Maupeou's instrument in his fateful project, 'as if they ceased to be citizens in devoting themselves to the service of arms, as if the troops were not men of the nation, to protect and not oppress it'.[81] A series of anonymous pamphlets reinforced the theme that the military could not simply hide behind the excuse that they were just obeying orders.[82] In one of the more radical of these, it was argued that the citizen should not risk his honour and his virtue by carrying out orders blindly. Instead, the examples of military commandants such as the ducs de Beauvau and Duras, who had refused to serve Maupeou, were equated with seventeenth-century figures like Lesdiguières or the vicomte d'Ortez, and even classical heroes including Marcus Terentius, who had all refused to obey unjust orders.[83] The author finished with a resounding appeal:[84]

Obey authority without question, despotism cries to us; obey rather nature, justice, the *patrie* cries the general interest whose voice was made at all times to command citizens.

During the reign of Louis XV, these bold appeals would not trouble the good order of the French army, although their subsequent impact on the officer corps in the later crisis of 1788–9 should not be underestimated. What they do reveal, however, is the real fear that the threat of military despotism had created in the minds of Maupeou's opponents. This was not a rhetorical, abstract danger conjured up to blacken the reputation of

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[81] BN MS Fr 13733, 'Histoire des événements', fo. 241.
[82] Echeverria, *The Maupeou Revolution*, pp. 52–3.
[83] BPR Collection Le Paige 915, *Lettre à M. Le comte de ***, ancien capitaine au regiment de *** sur l'obéissance que les militaries doivent aux commandements du prince* (n.p., 1774), pp. 7, 16. The pamphlet was first published in April 1774 and was reprinted in 1787 or 1788.
[84] Ibid., p. 25.

the chancellor, but a genuine concern born of practical experience that was exacerbated by the tendency of his apologists to present complex political choices in the stark terms of will you obey: yes or no?

Conclusion

Political stability depends, in part, upon shared values and expectations and a common appreciation of the rules, conventions and rituals – the political culture – by which government is conducted. There can never be complete agreement about these factors, but throughout much of the reign of Louis XV there was sufficient consensus between crown and parlements to make judicial politics work. A mutual respect for traditional rights and practices ensured that despite frequent crises the business of government was transacted in a manner that was advantageous to both sides. The involvement of the parlements in the law-making process prevented the king from appearing despotic, while the magistrates derived immense prestige and honour from their privileged status. The religious and fiscal disputes after 1748 certainly weakened that consensus; the revolution of 1771 shattered it.

Maupeou was confronted with a political crisis of a complexity and magnitude that would have taxed the most gifted statesman. His solution was to strike out at his opponents, deliberately tearing up the rulebook of judicial politics and the rituals and conventions that had underpinned government since at least 1715. In its place, he sought to redefine political authority in an authoritarian fashion, presenting his work as a return to the traditional virtues of strong royal government associated with Richelieu and Louis XIV. It is true that the medicine was sweetened with a dash of reform that was enough to convince Voltaire, and many subsequent historians, that here was a French version of Enlightened absolutism. The occasional wistful comparison with affairs in the realm of the King of Prussia raises the question of whether or not there was an attempt to emulate the political approach of the widely respected Frederick II. 'Silence, respect obedience' might be interpreted as a Gallic version of the Prussian 'pay up, join up, shut up', an authoritarian, disciplined route to state modernisation similar to that imposed on the French army with mixed results.

The examples of later authoritarian French governments such as the Jacobin or Bonapartist regimes, or even more modern republican ones, do suggest that a regimented, bureaucratic mentality of state service would find fertile soil in which to develop. Yet whereas Frederick II, Joseph II or Napoleon I could draw strength from their armies, projecting an image of themselves as servants of the state or patriot kings, Louis XV could make no such claims. Not for nothing was he cast as a despot, with Maupeou

as his grand vizier, his power still feared, when in reality it was draining away. Here lay the great error of those who thought that to govern with the majesty of Louis XIV or Frederick II it was sufficient to apply harsh measures to recalcitrant institutions and discipline to the population as a whole. What they failed to realise was that these and other successful rulers had reinforced their authority through other means, and that for power to be wielded effectively it needs first of all to be seen as legitimate.

Any attempt to connect the revolution of 1771 to a tradition of state modernisation must, therefore, be treated with caution. While a small number of Maupeou's allies may have harboured dreams of reforming the French state, the majority were motivated by fear of a seemingly rising tide of insubordination. The revolution of 1771 was reactionary in the sense that it sought to turn the clock back to a more orderly and submissive era, a supposedly golden age that had flourished under Louis XIV. As a result, a broad swathe of opinion saw despotism rather than reform in the chancellor's policies and they failed to put down roots as a consequence. By putting so much emphasis on the concept of obedience, the chancellor's supporters had run straight into a wall in the form of another conception of French political culture, supported by a venerable tradition of political theory, stressing the duty of the magistrate to give counsel, to speak the truth even at the risk of incurring the sovereign's displeasure. To remain silent in the face of injustice was a crime because as counsellors they should act according to conscience, not obey orders blindly in the manner of soldiers on a battlefield.

Under the pressure of Maupeou's extreme restatement of the royal authority and the bitter personal experience of exile, the loss of their offices and the interference of the military in the civil administration, the *parlementaires* began to develop a more radical critique of arbitrary power. Fearful of the threat of despotism, they argued publicly for the rule of law, institutional checks on royal power and in favour of greater individual liberty. By the accession of Louis XVI in 1774, Maupeou had, therefore, succeeded in shattering the governing consensus, leaving the ruling elites badly divided about what constituted legitimate government and many fearful of despotism. Without a common political culture, or at least a shared understanding of the rules and rituals underpinning the exercise of power, the monarchy was severely weakened and was in serious need of an alternative source of legitimacy. One obvious solution was a revival of representative government and not for nothing did Turgot, Necker and Calonne consider reforms involving revived municipal, provincial or even national bodies. Here was the political legacy of the crisis of 1771, and although it may not have led directly to the revolution of 1789, no interpretation of the causes of that great upheaval is complete without reference to Maupeou's revolution.

12 Joseph II, petitions and the public sphere

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Tim Blanning, both in his book on Joseph II and in his *Culture of Power*, has held up the emperor as an example of a ruler who, like Frederick the Great and George III – though each in quite different ways – knew how to exploit the developing public sphere. Not only did Joseph change the Austrian Monarchy's censorship system so that anti-Catholic, progressive and critical writings could be published, but he had a 'surprisingly deft touch for gesture politics' – for example, when taking and driving a peasant's plough in Moravia in 1769, or when founding the Nationaltheater in Vienna in 1776. When the Danube burst its banks and flooded parts of Vienna in 1785, the emperor at once took charge of the rescue operation.[2] He was determined that his very numerous decrees should be widely published, whereas his officials liked to keep them, as hitherto, semi-secret, partly no doubt so that they could interpret and apply them as they pleased.[3] Ernst Wangermann has recently produced new evidence that Joseph and his ministers commissioned or rewarded some of the pamphlets that supported government policy, as had already been well known in the case of the vitriolic anti-Establishment pamphleteer Simon Linguet, who supported the emperor's claims on the Bavarian succession and over the opening of the Scheldt. Joseph actually offered asylum in Belgium to both Linguet and the radical Raynal, author of the anti-colonialist *Histoire des deux Indes*.[4] Blanning has also identified Joseph as in many respects a proponent of modernisation, defining as

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[2] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002), p. 264; my *Joseph II* (Cambridge, 1987) (henceforth *J.II*, I), p. 338; *Österreich zur Zeit Kaiser Josephs II.* (exhibition catalogue, Melk, 1980), p. 469.
[3] This difference of opinion between Joseph and his officials, esp. Hatzfeld, but sometimes even Kaunitz, was often apparent, e.g. over the toleration and serfdom patents. (C. von Hock and H. I. Bidermann, *Der österreichische Staatsrath* (Vienna, 1879), pp. 76–8, 335–50.)
[4] E. Wangermann, *Die Waffen der Publizität* (Vienna, 2004); D. G. Levy, *The Ideas and Careers of Simon-Nicolas-Henry Linguet* (London, 1980), esp. ch. 6.

modern, for example: 'centralised and anonymous' as opposed to 'local and personal government'; 'indirect, bureaucratic' as opposed to 'direct, personal social control'; and 'media-based' as opposed to 'personal communications'.[5]

The concept of the 'growth of the public sphere', whether in Habermas's own formulation or in the adaptations of others, is far from easy to define or summarise.[6] It must in any case be questionable whether it is possible to convey Habermas's meaning adequately in English now that the translations of his *Öffentlichkeit* as 'the public sphere', his *bürgerlich* as 'bourgeois' and his *Vorstellung* as 'representation' have taken hold. But what Habermas evidently means – and this is my formulation – is something like 'growing political interest and activity – using the word "political" in the broadest sense – on the part of citizens who had no formal standing in such matters, and the consequent need of rulers to abandon or temper their grandeur if they were to exploit such public interest and activity'.

I have never been able to regard emphasis on such developments as very novel. Like Blanning I was taught by David Thomson, who encouraged me to read ancient works like C. S. Emden's *The People and the Constitution* (1933) and H. Jephson's wonderfully named *The Platform: Its Rise and Progress* (1892).[7] More recently, major contributions to the theme like Herbert Butterfield's *George III, Lord North and the People* (1949), G. Rudé's *Wilkes and Liberty* (1962), E. C. Black's *The Association* (1963) and John Brewer's *Party Politics and Popular Opinion in the Early Years of George III* (1975) were all written without benefit of Habermas. These works all bring out the significance for the public sphere in Britain of a regularly meeting sovereign parliament, whose proceedings were becoming ever better reported, and one house of which was elected by an electorate of significant size. Because of the presence of this institution, a very large number of inhabitants of the British Isles had some political standing, as voters, non-voting participants in elections, attenders of county meetings and petitioners.[8] No German state had anything like such an assembly in the eighteenth century. The meetings of Estates were not public, they seldom discussed general issues and, in so far as their members were elected, it was very rare for the elections either to be public or to involve

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[5] Blanning, *Joseph II* (Harlow, 1994), pp. 20–1.
[6] What follows depends heavily on Blanning's work and on J. V. H. Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001).
[7] See my article on Thomson in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).
[8] Cf. F. O'Gorman, *Voters, Parties and People* (Oxford, 1989).

more than a handful of people.[9] And since the Hungarian diet was never called between 1764 and 1790, the only operational assemblies with a serious degree of public rapport in the Monarchy of Joseph II were those in the Netherlands – which I shall refer to as Belgium – pre-eminently the Estates of Brabant. There, as virtually nowhere else in the Monarchy – or indeed on the continent, before the French Estates General met in 1789 – the public could to some degree influence the Estates who could then make a stand against the ruler.[10]

So the public sphere in nearly all countries was confined to 'political interest and activity on the part of citizens who had no recognised standing in such matters' – that is, no vote, no chance to participate in an election even as a non-voter, and no hope of a place in a public assembly. Comparison between the position in Britain and that in central Europe – and, still more, the suggestion that their public spheres were similar – is therefore inherently problematic. To take another indicator, all over the continent Freemasonry, with its semi-secret gatherings of citizens claiming to reject intolerance and social distinctions, and meeting to discuss philosophical questions, was viewed with a mixture of suspicion and alarm by the authorities and came to be regarded as having promoted the French Revolution. In Britain it was just one group of clubs among many others that operated without causing anxiety before 1792, different only in that it was patronised by royalty and was considered so loyal and 'in great measure directed to charitable purposes' that it was expressly exempted from the Combination Act of 1799 which banned other secret societies.[11]

Joseph exemplified many of the ways in which eighteenth-century rulers 'abandoned or tempered their grandeur' – or their *Vorstellung* in Habermas's baroque paradigm. Joseph drastically reduced the size and cost of the Habsburg court, the number of court functions, its social significance, its participation in religious ceremonies and its role in government. Once he had become sole ruler, he rarely visited Maria Theresa's beloved and ostentatious Schönbrunn, and the house he built for himself in the Augarten was a mean, plain villa. He regarded it as a recommendation

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[9] Cf. F. L. Carsten, *Princes and Parliaments in Germany* (Oxford, 1959). I am grateful for Dr W. Godsey's help on these points.

[10] On the Hungarian diet, in English, B. K. Király, *Hungary in the Late Eighteenth Century* (London, 1969), esp. pp. 82–7. The Transylvanian diet met once under Joseph, but only for formal business. On Belgium, e.g. J. L. Polasky, *Revolution in Brussels, 1787–1793* (London, 1987); L. Delplace, *Joseph II et la révolution brabançonne* (Bruges, 1891).

[11] The quotation is from the Act, most of which is printed in E. N. Williams (ed.), *The Eighteenth-Century Constitution* (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 429–31. See J. M. Roberts, *The Mythology of the Secret Societies* (London, 1972).

for the prince and princess of Württemberg that they 'vivent on ne peut pas plus bourgeoisement' (live as domestically as possible).[12]

He belonged to the tradition of soldier-monarchs established by the kings of Sweden, especially Charles XII, and by Peter the Great of Russia, and continued by Frederick William I and Frederick the Great of Prussia. Joseph greatly admired both Peter and Frederick, he had himself undergone serious military training, he attended at least two military camps in most years and he regarded it as his duty to command his armies in war. He always slept on a hard bed to keep himself inured to army conditions and he wore undress uniform on all occasions when ceremony did not require him to wear other garb. This tradition, rivalling and utterly different from that of the supposedly dominant example of Louis XIV and Versailles, had as much as either Enlightenment or *embourgeoisement* to do with the elevation of simplicity, economy, efficiency, standardisation, utility and religious toleration into the catalogue of royal virtues and concerns.[13]

Joseph did not emulate Frederick's contributions to *belles-lettres* or his correspondences with *philosophes.* On the other hand, some of his measures and circulars, often bearing the imprint of his personal style, were widely publicised and admired: especially the censorship reform, the toleration patent and other church reforms, the abolition of *Leibeigenschaft* (personal servitude) and his 'pastoral letter'.[14] For those who wrote and read newspapers and pamphlets, however, the most conspicuous of Joseph's attempts to reach out beyond the traditional constraints of royal behaviour were his personal austerity and economy, his affability and readiness to speak civilly to anyone of whatever rank, especially during his extensive travels incognito, and his extraordinary accessibility to individual petitioners. These hallmarks of his style as monarch had become widely known and celebrated from the time of his visit to Italy in 1769, eleven years before he had the power to legislate, and still more after his

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[12] Dictated memorandum for Leopold of Tuscany, 19 February 1781 (A. Ritter von Arneth, *Joseph II. und Leopold von Toscana. Ihr Briefwechsel von 1781 bis 1790* (2 vols., Vienna, 1872), I.327). For the court more generally my *J.II*, I, pp. 154–61.

[13] The most persuasive account of this tendency is in V. Bauer, *Die höfische Gesellschaft in Deutschland* (Tübingen, 1993). It was almost ignored by Norbert Elias, whose overrated work, translated as *The Court Society*, dominated court studies for too long; and it has not been given its full due even by J. Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe's Dynastic Rivals, 1550–1780* (Cambridge, 2003), although he does point to many of Elias's weaknesses. Cf. M. Kaiser and S. Kroll, *Militär und Religiosität in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Münster, 2004), esp. M. Hochedlinger's essay in the volume (pp. 97–120) on the enlistment of Jews in the Austrian army in 1788–9.

[14] F. Venturi, *Settecento riformatore* (5 vols., Turin, 1969–2002), esp. vol. IV, part 2, pp. 615–779, is particularly valuable in showing how widely some of these documents were read in Italy, and also contains useful material on Joseph's Italian visits of 1769 and 1775.

journey to France in 1777.[15] So far as I know, none of these traits has been much discussed in relation to the public sphere. I wish in this chapter to suggest that this neglect is unjustified, especially with reference to his eliciting and treatment of petitions. The petitions themselves have been neglected: even Blanning and the great Mitrofanov, while they mention them, do not dilate on them. I have come to think they deserve greater attention.

The word 'petition' presents an immediate difficulty. That is what the requests and complaints that Joseph received are usually called in English. When writing in French, Joseph's usual word is 'plaintes', sometimes 'requêtes'. In the Belgian archives also they are called 'requêtes'. In German they are commonly called 'Bittschriften' or 'Beschwerden'. There are quite a lot of other possible German or adopted German words: 'Anliegen', 'Bitte', 'Eingabe', 'Gesuch' and 'Majestätsgesuch', 'Klage' and 'Klageschrift', 'Supplik' from Italian, and 'Vorstellung'. In sources of the 1780s 'memorials' is often used in French, German and Italian forms. It is instructive to look at the title index of the British Library catalogue. Titles containing the word 'petition' run into thousands, but nearly all are in English, and almost confined to the sorts of petitions famous in British constitutional history, mostly submitted to the crown from parliament or from large bodies of people to parliament, often on great political issues. The word 'petition' hardly appears in German before the nineteenth century, when it has a similar meaning. 'Représentation' is often used in French for institutional petitions. 'Bittschrift' is rather more frequent. 'Supplica' figures only in titles relating to the papacy. There are also in the catalogue many printed *Gravamina* put before the emperor and other German rulers by established bodies, especially at the time of the Reformation. 'Requête' is very frequent, but nearly always with reference to France or Belgium.[16]

In the case of Joseph II, a very large majority of the so-called petitions presented to him were individual complaints or requests rather than institutional protests. Joseph did receive petitions on behalf of constituted bodies. But it seems clear that he was chiefly interested in the petitions of individuals rather than in those of such bodies, most of which, like guilds,

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[15] See my *J.II*, I, esp. pp. 380–2.

[16] On terminology as well as the substance see A. Würgler, 'Suppliche e "gravamina" nella prima età moderna: la storiografia di lingua tedesca', *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento* 25 (1999), pp. 515–46. I owe this reference to Prof. C. Capra. On nineteenth-century so-called *Petitionen* in Germany see J. H. Kumpf, *Petitionsrecht und öffentliche Meinung* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1983). The only book-title containing 'Beschwerde' in the Cambridge University Library is *Die Beschwerden Irlands gegen England* of 1849.

brotherhoods and Estates, he wished to abolish or curb as 'sinister inter-
ests', defenders of privilege and opponents of his reforms. He suppressed
the Hungarian county assemblies in 1785 (though he had to revive them
in 1787) and he removed from the recalcitrant Estates of Tyrol their right
to petition him.[17]

The scale of petitioning to Joseph was vast, as is especially well attested
for his travels. On his trip to the Banat in 1768 he received at least many
hundreds of petitions. In Italy in 1769 the tally was 5,000. In Transyl-
vania in 1773 the total was estimated at 19,000.[18] Taking all his travels
into account, he must have received something approaching 100,000. But
he did not confine the practice to his travels. When he was in Vienna –
which, despite all his travels and military camps and visits to Laxenburg,
was most of the time – after dictating, writing and seeing ministers for
a few hours he would receive petitioners who had been queuing in the
corridor outside his suite of offices in the Hofburg, known as the *Con-
troleurgang*. Johann Pezzl said in his *Sketches on Vienna* that it was always
thronged with 'projectors, officials fallen on hard times, widows, orphans,
ex-monks and nuns, officers, builders, peasants etc.', mostly armed with
petitions. In September 1782 Count Karl Zinzendorf, one of Joseph's
ministers, saw him 'on the Controleur-Gang with a man who was pre-
senting him with a calculation about the Apocalypse and a number of
people in rags kneeling to present him with petitions'.[19] According to
Pezzl, Joseph would emerge to receive them several times a day.[20] Joseph's
brother Leopold, recording what he saw on his visit to Vienna in 1784,
said the emperor began receiving petitioners at 11 o'clock each day. He
added that people came to the *Controleurgang* not only to petition but

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[17] A. Szántay, *Regionalpolitik im alten Europa* (Budapest, 2005), pp. 61–95; H. Reinalter,
'Tyrol in josephinischer Zeit', in *Österreich zur Zeit Josephs II.* (see n. 2 above), p. 125.
Joseph's relationship with the numerous Estates of his provinces remains to be elucidated.
But he could sometimes give them serious attention: Zinzendorf recorded in his diary for
23 October 1783 (Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna (HHSA)) that on the previous
Saturday Joseph had spoken to the Estates of Lower Austria 'avec beaucoup de noblesse
les exhortant à songer serieusement à rectifier le cadastre'.

[18] *J. II*, I, pp. 267–8, 361. For Transylvania, Heydendorff's autobiography in S. Pascu (ed.),
Izvoarele rascoalei lui Horea (many vols., Bucharest, 1983), Series B, vol. I, p. 12. Prof.
Owen Chadwick generously gave me a copy of the early volumes of this series. On
petitions to Joseph during his travels, K. Kulcsár's chapter, 'Die Quellen zu den Hofreisen
im Habsburg-Lothringischen Familienarchiv aus der Jahren 1766 bis 1788', in J. Pauser,
M. Scheutz and T. Winkelbauer (eds.), *Quellenkunde der Habsburgermonarchie (16. – 18.
Jhdt.). Ein exemplarisches Handbuch* (Munich, 2004), pp. 108–19. Dr Kulcsár has worked
on the very large number of petitions preserved in Budapest for the 1770s, but not, so
far as I know, on the 1780s. Although Joseph ceased to write *Reisejournals* when he was
sole ruler and hence supplied much less information to historians, his power to deal with
petitions was clearly greater when he was sole ruler.

[19] HHSA: Zinzendorf diary, 12 September 1782.

[20] J. Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien* (Vienna, 1789–90), pp. 186–8. He spelled it *Kontrollorgang*.

also to admire the remarkable spectacle of men and women of every class gathering to approach the emperor in person.

Six years earlier Leopold had fiercely denounced Joseph's practice:

[He] gives no audiences and receives no one except on the Controleur-Gang, where his servants bring . . . the lowest, the most disreputable and the most infamous individuals. All passers-by can see there the scruffiest girls and procurers, since he is much attracted by such low and dirty women, whom he pays well. He readily believes what these humble persons tell him and on the strength of it acts outrageously against everyone . . . and on the basis of the smallest suspicion . . . makes sure that they are investigated.[21]

Leopold, who during his visits to Vienna lived in the Hofburg, was in the best position to observe such scenes. But his animus against his brother is only too evident in his apparent refusal to see any merit or advantage whatever in the emperor's contacts with ordinary people.

It is quite impossible to estimate how many petitions he must have received in Vienna – presumably, millions all told.[22] Although no doubt most of the petitioners in the Hofburg came from the Vienna area, visitors from further afield would take the opportunity to go there, as did a deputation from Transylvania including Horia, who was to lead the peasant revolt there in 1784.[23] As when abroad, Joseph had them all looked into as a matter of priority by the officials, and some reply given.[24] One of the brochures of the Broschürenflut is called *Joseph II on the Controleur-Gang, or Various Scenes from the Present Reign*. It is a series of playlets in which Joseph receives seven petitioners: a semi-literate official, someone with a complaint against an official, a widow hoping for support for her daughter, the father of a dead soldier, a parish priest, an idle nobleman and an ex-nun. All except the nobleman and the begging widow receive a kind welcome. Whether this pamphlet rests on specific personal knowledge or vaguer general awareness of Joseph's behaviour it is impossible to say.[25] But these contemporary accounts, together with several pamphlets about the emperor's travels, show that writers admired and popularised

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[21] Leopold's MS 'Relazione' of his visit to Vienna, 1784 (HHSA FA Sbde 16) (henceforth 'Relazione'); A. Wandruszka, *Leopold II.* (2 vols., Vienna, 1964–5), I.344.

[22] F. Reinöhl in L. Bittner (ed.), *Gesamtinventar des Wiener Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchivs* (5 vols., Vienna, 1936–40), II.173–8, says that no lists or indexes of petitions survive for Joseph II's reign, although some do for Leopold's, and more for subsequent reigns. See now M. P. Schennach, 'Supplikationen', in Pauser et al., *Quellenkunde*, pp. 572–84, valuable but not concerned with the later eighteenth century.

[23] When, how often and where Horia met Joseph are disputed questions, but that he took petitions to him is undoubted (see the mass of material in the volumes referred to in n. 18 above).

[24] Leopold, 'Relazione'.

[25] Ibrahim Goether, *Joseph II. im Controleur-Gang* (Vienna, 1782). This pamphlet is in the Austrian History Centre library at Stanford University. I owe thanks to Professor Peter Stansky and Dr Peter Frank for enabling me to work there.

the emperor's practice.[26] Even the British *Annual Register* joined in the praise, with reference to the Belgian journey:

The free audience, without state, difficulty in the approach, guards, or witnesses, which he afforded to all manner of persons who desired it, gained equally the hearts of those who applied, and of all who heard of their reception; while the patience with which he heard, examined, and sifted into, complaints and involved relations, was no less astonishing than his affability was captivating to the people.[27]

By this route his encouragement of petitioning unquestionably enters the public sphere.

How does this behaviour compare with that of other eighteenth-century rulers? Individual petitions to modern British kings seem to be rare. So far as I know, they have not been studied. I feel pretty sure that no Hanoverian king set aside time each day to receive petitions, though I understand that the monarchs were sometimes waylaid by individual petitioners as they walked in the royal parks. The court of the Bourbons of France was in principle accessible, but there seems to have been no systematic reception of petitioners. The *cahiers* of the French Revolution, produced by every designated community in France, are something wholly different again, petitions from constituted bodies or districts, collective rather than individual, addressing fundamental political issues. But they were not elicited until the Estates General were called in 1788.[28]

Much work has been done in recent years, mainly under the inspiration of Peter Blickle, on early modern petitions from German peasants to Estates or to rulers against mistreatment by their lords. But this work does not seem to extend very far into the eighteenth century. The practice, if not the right, of petitioning rulers was enshrined in Roman law and hence seems to have been in principle accepted in all states whose legal systems derived from that source.[29] In Denmark, where after the 1660s the ruler's absolutism was on paper complete, petitioning by individuals was recognised as a necessary corrective or safety-valve, while representations from groups or institutions were considered subversive. But the Danish kings were not noted for their travels, and the ruler contemporary with Joseph, Christian VII, was disabled by schizophrenia.[30]

The other Enlightened despots of the eighteenth century offer a closer comparison with Joseph II. Frederick William I and Frederick II are well

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[26] See n. 49 below for the pamphlets relating to his Belgian journey of 1781.
[27] *Annual Register*, 1783 (2nd edn, 1800), p. 11.
[28] A useful study in English is R. Chartier, 'From Words to Texts: The *Cahiers de doléances* of 1789', in his *The Cultural Uses of Print in Modern France* (Princeton, 1987), pp. 110–44.
[29] For this paragraph see Würgler, 'Supplique', see n. 16 above.
[30] I owe my knowledge of the Danish situation to Dr T. Munck's generous help and his book *The Peasantry and the Early Absolute Monarchy in Denmark, 1660–1708* (Copenhagen, 1979).

known for having made inspection tours and received many petitions as they travelled. Frederick William I came to resent the practice and at one point threatened all future petitioners with hanging – perhaps jocularly. Frederick II, of course, was much more civilised in his behaviour, and in 1770 direct access to him was officially described by civil servants as 'beyond price' – though still as a boon rather than a right. He spent much time – every day, it is said – reading and acting on petitions. But he did not seek them out or make a point of being available and talking to the petitioners.[31] Catherine the Great had a quite different approach. She thought Joseph had 'ruined his health with his eternal audiences'.[32] She decreed in 1765 that a peasant who tried to present her with a petition should be condemned to a month's hard labour for the first offence, for a second offence to a public punishment and a year's hard labour, and for a third offence to public whipping and perpetual exile.[33] In Joseph's Monarchy the people threatened with punishment were the lords who tried to prevent or penalise peasants approaching the emperor.

Joseph's practice, then, seems to have been unique in its scale and outreach. If it did not ruin his health, it was certainly extremely time-consuming. Why did he adopt it? The answer is to be found in his writings, especially the famous memorandum on the state of the Monarchy which he submitted to his mother, Maria Theresa, just after he became Holy Roman Emperor and co-regent of the Austrian Monarchy in 1765. In it he rashly told her how he would run things if he were in charge:

[Having chosen my ministers, I shall say to them:] I entrust this department to you, you will govern it in my name, but with the same authority as if I were doing it myself . . . I shall never listen to anyone with an axe to grind, or to underlings, so long as you are serving me well. But . . . *since I give the whole universe freedom to bring me their complaints*, and [since I] have the truth of the complaints rigorously examined, you must expect that, if I observe in you partiality or weakness, you will receive blame . . . May I never find in you the faults of malice or injustice, personal interest or deceit! You may be sure that the purest blood, fifty years' service, your entire family and connections, and everything that I hold dear, would not stop me for a moment from punishing you in the most ignominious, painful and conspicuous manner before all Europe.[34]

[31] See H. Lehmann, 'Zum Bittschriftwesen in fridericianischer Zeit', *Jahrbuch für branden-burgischen Landesgeschichte* 55 (2004), pp. 77–92. Dr T. Biskup kindly supplied me with a photocopy of this article. For the 1770 reference, *Acta Borussica* XV (Berlin, 1936), p. 379: access to the king is 'unschätzbar'.

[32] P. von Mitrofanov, *Joseph II* (2 vols., Vienna, 1910), I.275.

[33] I. de Madariaga, *Politics and Culture in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (London, 1998), pp. 137–8. Professor de Madariaga generously gave me a copy of this collection. I owe thanks to Prof. S. M. Dixon for his help here.

[34] Alfred von Arneth, *Maria Theresia und Joseph II. Ihre Correspondenz* (3 vols., Vienna, 1867–9), III.342–3 (italics mine).

When he became sole ruler in 1780, he did not initially spell out this attitude quite so strongly to his ministers, most of whom he took over from his mother. But there seems to be no doubt that he adhered steadfastly to this conception of 'complaints' or 'petitions' as a check on his ministers and officials. Every so often they would receive from him what his brother Leopold called *gridate* (scoldings or bawlings-out),[35] often in thoroughly disagreeable terms, sometimes citing evidence from petitions Joseph had received. The ministers understood only too well how dire the consequences might be. Even Charles Liechtenstein and his wife, prince and princess of the empire, he military governor of the city of Vienna, she the leading light in the circle of *Dames* that the emperor frequented, were reduced by one of Joseph's rebukes to a state of panic about the entire future of their family.[36] In 1782 a delation terminated the career of Count Heinrich Blümegen, the Austro-Bohemian chancellor.[37]

Bound up with this intention to discipline his ministers and officials with the aid of petitions was his insistence on the sovereign's duty to travel. Unlike other sovereigns, he says, he does not intend to see only through others' eyes and to depend on hearsay. Of course, he went on, one will not see everything and will only be able to do limited good.

But if you return several times, you see the changes, *you listen to the complaints*, you get to know [whom] to employ in the future, you judge the actions of the others . . . and finally you judge – more or less – the capacity and zeal of the ministers.[38]

He offered other genuine reasons to his mother when proposing later that he be allowed to travel extensively: he felt, for example, the need to supplement the information available in Vienna, and he wished to see the lie of the land in all his provinces for military purposes. He certainly loved getting away and seeing new things and rushing about, unconstrained by etiquette: Lacy remembered him once saying 'If only I could be simply Count of Tyrol, and travel far and wide in a barouche!'[39] But the fundamental purpose of his journeys within the Monarchy remained to check up on his officials. Count Philipp von Sinzendorf, who was personally

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[35] Leopold, 'Relazione'.
[36] See the letters between Princess Charles and her sister, Countess Ernest Kaunitz, in late 1780 (portions of which are printed in A. Wolf, *Fürstin Eleonore Liechtenstein* (Vienna, 1875), pp. 151–3) after Joseph had decided that the prince had exceeded his authority in putting in hand the building of a barracks with Maria Theresa's but not the War Department's approval. Fortunately, a concerted attempt by their friends to mollify Joseph succeeded.
[37] K. Gutkas, *Kaiser Joseph II.* (Vienna, 1989), pp. 226–7.
[38] See n. 34: the quotation from p. 359 (italics mine).
[39] HHSA: Zinzendorf diary, 31 May 1790.

close to the emperor, was obviously echoing what he knew were Joseph's sentiments when, presenting a report to him in 1786, he wrote:

From my standpoint the only good system is one that enables the prince to see in every single village whether his orders are carried out, and whose fault it is if they are not. Your Imperial Majesty, who every year undertakes arduous travels through his far-flung states, is the only reliable and non-partisan judge of whether this dual aim is achieved under the present arrangements.[40]

These were impossible aspirations, but they were an integral part of Joseph's unique view of monarchy – not uniquely sensible or uniquely successful, but unlike any other ruler's. In his mind, placed by God or 'Providence' in the position of an absolute ruler, it was his duty and function, first, to take all decisions personally on his own responsibility – no doubt after having previously sounded out his ministers, but not necessarily paying attention to their advice. It was not their business 'to treat his orders as though they were prosecuting counsel dealing with submissions by a plaintiff'. Once he had made his decision, it was their duty, as he repeatedly put it, in his 'pastoral letter' and elsewhere, to enter into his manner of thinking and to act in that spirit.[41] Secondly, it was also he alone whose duty it was to judge how well his local officials were carrying out his orders, and he who would decide when and how they should be replaced. He considered many of them to be lazy, negligent and incapable, and oppressive towards ordinary citizens.[42] To carry out these duties he needed the maximum possible information both about his lands and about his officials. From within the bureaucracy he would have as a guide the *Conduitelisten* which at the beginning of his reign he had required to be kept for all officials, the equivalent of modern 'appraisals'. As he had proposed in 1765, in 1781 he had given full authority over each ministry to its head and had placed on the ministers the responsibility to comb the *Conduitelisten* for signs of inefficiency, disobedience or corruption among officials, and report them to him. Outside the bureaucracy, he would listen to the complaints and petitions of ordinary people. The combined evidence of *Conduitelisten* and petitions would enable him to

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[40] Sinzendorf's report is printed by G. Otruba, 'Über das erbländische Commerce 1786. Eine Denkschrift Philipp Graf Sinzendorfs', *Mitteilungen des oberösterreichischen Landesarchivs* 8 (1964), pp. 502–12.

[41] E.g. Hock and Bidermann, *Staatsrath*, p. 143; H. Klueting (ed.), *Der Josephinismus* (Vienna, 1995), pp. 334–40, prints most of the pastoral letter in German: the first point (p. 334) was that the officials were to grasp 'den wahren Sinn' of all his decisions and decrees 'und deren absehen sich ganz eigen mache[n]'.

[42] These criticisms appear, for example, in his *Rêveries* of 1763 and the Bohemian *Relation* of 1771. See my *Enlightenment and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (London, 2005), pp. 170–1.

'judge whether his orders were being carried out, and whose fault it was if they were not'. His obsession with petitions, like his obsession with travel, was not just an eccentricity, amiable or otherwise. Both, in his mind, were necessary instruments of government.

In the pastoral letter that he sent to all departments at the end of 1783 he laid down a rather more practical version of this programme. He envisaged inspections of provincial offices by the centrally based heads of their departments either 'every year or in any year when suspicion of dilatory or inefficient administration arises'. The inspectors must travel to the localities concerned, 'listen to everyone' and 'find out especially what opinion the public has of each [official]'. Among his motives was certainly the desire to protect ordinary people from the 'despotism' of officials. But the only point in the pastoral letter where he acknowledged that he should be held to account was with regard to the expenditure of his subjects' money.[43]

Study of the petitions comes up against archive problems. No one, so far as I know, has attempted to find out, for the whole Monarchy, how many of the petitions presented to Joseph survive. For this period they scarcely figure in the catalogue of the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna; and those presented to the emperor in the Hofburg have evidently been lost. Professor Carlo Capra found many abstracts of petitions in the Milan archives and noticed that some original petitions had been used by archivists as convenient folders for other documents. Large numbers of petitions exist in the Hungarian national archives and work has been done on those Joseph collected on his visit to the country in 1770.[44] They are most readily accessible in Belgium, where they were well studied by Eugène Hubert.[45]

There are a number of obvious difficulties in dealing with such petitions as are available. In some cases at least, the petitions were abstracted, as for Milan, and so the originals may not exist, or they may exist in a different place from the abstracts. Great lists were made of the petitions in at least some instances, as we shall see, but one wonders whether even they are complete. I have myself worked only on the Belgian collection in Brussels – there may well be others in other Belgian towns – and to a small extent on a Hungarian batch of 1786.[46] In many cases a decision

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[43] Klueting, *Josephinismus*: quotations from p. 339.

[44] I am grateful here for information and guidance from Professor Capra and from Dr K. Kulcsár. See n. 18 above.

[45] E. Hubert, 'Le voyage de l'empereur Joseph II dans les Pays-Bas', in *Mémoires couronnés . . . par l'Académie royale . . de Belgique* 58 (1899), ch. II.

[46] On Belgium see the next note. The Hungarian files I saw in this context were Magyar Országos Levéltár, Budapest (MOL), Departamentum publico-politicum 230.d (1785/6) and C 53 464.

is recorded, but I have never been able to follow the complete path of a single petition from presentation to Joseph through consideration by the bureaucracy to a decision and its transmission to the petitioner. I have rarely seen a letter conveying a decision to a petitioner. But it is quite conceivable that huge numbers of petitions and related documents remain to be studied for large parts of the Monarchy. If they do, this is surely a wonderful subject for future research.

Hubert's work on Joseph's visit to Belgium in 1781 provides much detail which is probably of general application.[47] He arrived without warning at Luxembourg on 31 May 1781, taking rooms at the Seven Swabians and introducing himself as 'count of Luxembourg, and emperor'. He at once sent for the astonished president of the provincial council of Luxembourg and instructed him to announce to the public that he would immediately give audience to anyone who wished to speak to him or to present a petition. Everywhere he went, as well as doing other more obvious things like meeting the members of the council, the deputies of the Estates and the magistrates, taking a military parade, attending mass, seeing the higher clergy and viewing the fortifications, he set aside time to receive petitions, commonly from eleven till three. He generally, but not invariably, insisted on petitions being written. He would speak to the petitioners, receive their documents, perhaps discuss the case, have them listed by a secretary and then pass them, sometimes with a comment, to the appropriate authority. He required the departments to give them priority and to report to him in due course what had been decided.

It is hardly surprising that the majority of the petitions can be categorised as 'selfish', that is, concerned with the particular problems of individual petitioners and not, at least explicitly, raising broader issues. For example, there are requests to waive the fee payable to become a 'bourgeois' or to practise a profession. Applicants seek jobs, pensions or poor relief, or to be freed from the *corvée*, still surviving on some estates. Some petitions involve disputes over land and over hunting rights. Others concern privileges, or requests to be ennobled. Convicted criminals, or their relatives, ask for pardon or remission. Disputes within the Church

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[47] For what follows on Belgium see Hubert, 'Voyage'; W. Ravez, *Tournai et le Tournaisis pendant la révolution brabançonne* (Tournai, 1937), pp. 10–12; J. Roegiers, 'Die Reise Josephs II. in den österreichischen Niederlanden, *Österreich zur Zeit Josephs II.* (see n. 2 above), pp. 85–8. I have worked through files 1343 and 1346 of Royal Archives, Brussels, Conseil privé, Période autrichienne, A124, Requêtes à Joseph II (9 files, 1343–51) and used a précis of Starhemberg's responses to petitions in HHSA Rep. DD Abt. A: Belgien: Vorträge 12 (1782–5), undated but evidently from early 1782. In the same part of the archive Starhemberg's letters to Kaunitz: Berichte 253.

are not uncommon: priests claim that they are being denied their tithe or a new appointment; a nunnery wishes to be allowed to take dowries from new nuns, although it has recently been forbidden. A significant group is concerned with trying to obtain the revival of the *loi de Beaumont*, i.e. village self-government, which had been abolished in 1775.[48] The two largest batches which, taken together, amount to complaints on general issues of policy concern the complexity, cost and delays of legal proceedings and the interruption to trade and the associated costs caused by the great number of tolls levied by the numerous authorities in the different provinces. The least typical petitions are, of course, the most interesting: a complaint from the civilian musicians of Brussels that the army musicians are muscling in on their patch in the local Vauxhall; a diatribe against the negligence of nobles in bringing miscreants to their courts, on account of the costs incurred; an appeal by a visionary *curé* who after ten years' reading has found a way to make all HM's subjects happy, with special reference to the abolition of corporal punishment; requests for funding for a cancer cure; and an anonymous denunciation, in capital letters, of the excessive number of clergy in the university town of Leuven.

Prince Starhemberg, the resident minister in Brussels, reported on 12 June that he had many people 'working flat out to list all the petitions that have been presented', and on the 19th that two-thirds had already been passed to the relevant departments. He said: 'I am applying the greatest acceleration to referring these petitions.' In August, after Joseph had left, he sent to Vienna altogether thirty-seven annotated lists.

It has to be said that in the great majority of cases, as in the Hungarian sample I looked at, the eventual decision of the authorities – sometimes after a delay of more than a year – was that nothing could be done, or that the petitioner should go through the ordinary legal channels. It quite often turned out that the petition related to a lawsuit already in progress. Perhaps the successful petitions were preserved somewhere else, and perhaps the petitions that revealed misconduct on the part of officials were also separated out.

Joseph's visit to Belgium stimulated the appearance of several brochures, and it is there that one is told of successful petitions by individuals. Taking them with a pinch of salt, we learn that he gave a centenarian a pension, helped to fund the training of a sculptor, aided the victims of a serious fire and exempted the affected village from taxes for three years.

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[48] On the *loi de Beaumont* and the petitions relating to it, Hubert, 'Voyage', pp. 118–28; G. Trausch, *Le Luxembourg sous l'ancien régime* (3rd edn, Luxembourg, 1993), pp. 30, 33, 87, 101.

These were obviously rare matters which Joseph could settle without getting in the way of established procedures.[49]

Especially since the sources appear to be inadequate, it is very difficult to assess the impact of the petitions on the government. They certainly made the officials work harder for a time, though no doubt, as Starhemberg complained, this led to delays in routine matters. Some petitioners probably received better treatment from the courts than they might otherwise have done. Most interesting is the question how far they influenced Joseph himself and his policies. His mother always maintained that he learned nothing on his trips because he had made up his mind what his policy was before he went. This must be true on some subjects. No amount of petitions would have caused him to retain contemplative monasteries or to abandon his still secret plans to reform the government of Belgium in order to make it uniform with that of his other dominions. He was against the principle of sale of offices, which was the method of recruitment of judges in Belgium. But, when it came to his quizzing Starhemberg and the council about the province's affairs, Joseph began with ten items out of thirty-three about the judges and the courts, and he specifically mentioned the petitions as evidence of unnecessary cost, complication and delay. That he gave these issues such high priority suggests that he was directly influenced by the petitions. Equally, the many complaints he received about interruptions of trade strengthened his own objections to them. When in Milan in February 1784, he complained to Leopold that, though he spent three hours a day receiving petitions, none of them seemed to him to be of any importance.[50] He clearly considered this unusual and expected better.

Henri Pirenne, the famous medievalist, professor of history at Ghent, wrote a prize-winning history of Belgium, still justly cited. In it he devotes a few pages to the visit of Joseph II, whom he loathes. The historian claims that the emperor learned nothing about the country during his visit. 'The greater part of his time was spent in government offices, where, naturally, no one dared contradict him.'[51] This, as I have shown, is utterly false. The officials certainly argued against some of his comments. More important, Pirenne does not mention the petitions at all, or any of Joseph's contacts with ordinary people. What riled Pirenne particularly was that Joseph declared 'the stuff [*pate*] of the nation is Dutch with a bad French veneer

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[49] The main pamphlets are *Le voyageur bienfaisant, ou Anecdotes du voyage de Joseph II., dans les Pays-Bas, la Hollande etc., en 1781* (3rd edn, Paris, 1781); *Précis du voyage de S. M. l'Empereur Joseph II. en Hollande* (Amsterdam, 1781), containing a good deal on Belgium and petitions.

[50] Arneth, *Joseph II. und Leopold II.*, I.203.

[51] H. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique* (Brussels, 1921), V.392–3.

on top'. Pirenne was a prominent representative of the francophone elite of Belgium in the interwar years, concerned, to put it mildly, to downplay the Flemish element in Belgian society and history. His book's prize came from France. On the very point that Pirenne objected to, Joseph was obviously right, at least so far as the northern and western provinces were concerned.

Among the more significant of his numerous other journeys were the three he made to Transylvania, from the second of which, that of 1783, comes the best picture we have of Joseph's practice with petitions. It comes from the autobiography of M. C. von Heydendorff, a lesser official.[52]

I was in Hermannstadt the whole time His Majesty was there, and took part in both the national and religious business; and, since its character and the way it was handled were especially significant, and the presence of a ruler in a country, especially one like Transylvania, led to several notable events, I want my descendants to know what sort of times and business I've lived through.

The whole world of Transylvania was now in part fearful, in part hopeful, in part curious as to what [Joseph] would do. All was quiet enough for the first few days, although the governor, the general commanding and the president were received in audience, and petitioners of all types, high, low, young, old, from all the Transylvanian nations, especially Vlachs [Romanians], gathered in front of HM's lodging and handed in memorials in great numbers, which in the absence of formalities they could easily do, since HM had no other guard except one musketeer . . . from the local garrison, and he was forbidden to stop anyone entering the lodging.

So everyone, even down to the lowest of the low, could get into the house and on to the top step that led into the antechamber through which one entered the imperial chamber. Distinguished persons went freely into the antechamber. HM frequently came out into the antechamber, and so it was easy to get an audience. HM spoke there to anyone who had brought no special request [*Anliegen*], but anyone with a particular request Joseph took into his chamber and inquired into the circumstances. The *Pöbel* [common people] took up the entire staircase. HM came out often, roughly every quarter of an hour, to the top step of the staircase. There the *Pöbel* laid their memorials at HM's feet, and he took them very rapidly without entering into a conversation with the petitioners, gave most of them to the guards standing by, who then took them by the armful into the emperor's office, where extracts were made of them and they were sent to Vienna for further action, whence later would come the relevant orders . . .

The question arose for the representatives of the Saxon nation and Evangelical religion, what should be done while HM was there? [They had much on their minds, the recent removal by Joseph of their privileges as one of the three privileged 'nations', and of their special property rights, together with the introduction

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[52] It is printed in Pascu, *Izvoarele*, Series B, vol. I, pp. 16–18.

of equality, *Concivilität*, between all the nations and religions, including the hitherto unrecognised Romanians and Greek Orthodox.[53]]

   When the Saxon representatives raised the issue of their privileges, the emperor said, mildly but with warmth, 'I desire to bring love and unity and I want everyone to work together. Have you other matters?' [They replied that they were in difficulty because their schoolteachers depended for their income on collections from the faithful, but Joseph had forbidden all religious begging, which he believed was a means whereby Catholic clergy and especially monks robbed the deluded poor to promote superstition and their own well-being.] The emperor asked how much was collected for each teacher yearly. They could not answer. Joseph said this wasn't very good for the teachers. He went on:

Your clergy and teachers need to be paid better and more regularly than Catholics because they have wives and children. If my subjects were Turks, their dervishes would have to be well enough paid to live . . . I would like to bring all church funds together and divide them fairly, but the Catholic clergy keep on putting hindrances in the way. I have the devil of a time with them.

We were astonished by these remarks, which HM made more in jest than in anger. [Joseph said he couldn't change his decree and allow superstition and clerical greed to prosper again. The Evangelicals must simply arrange to pay their teachers proper salaries.]

   This encounter seems absolutely characteristic. First, as Blanning has pointed out, Joseph showed not the slightest concern for his personal safety in such circumstances. Secondly, he stood firm on his principles and edicts. Thirdly, he discussed the issues reasonably. Fourthly, he made quite a good joke, which was only too likely to be taken at face value and to persuade his hearers that he was more sympathetic to them than he really was. The clearest examples of his indiscretion reflect his sympathy with the peasants in the face of landlord tyranny: Maria Theresa blamed his incautious remarks for having encouraged the Bohemian peasants' revolt of 1775, and the sympathy he showed to Horia about the repression of peasants by both government and nobles' officials in Transylvania certainly played a large part in provoking the rebellion of 1784–5.[54] And fifthly, it was not entirely uncharacteristic that he later made an exception to his prohibition on collections. On 2 May 1785 he issued a decree reciting in very strong terms his objections to them, but then went on to allow the Calvinists – not the Lutherans who had petitioned him in

[53] On these issues M. Bernath, *Habsburg und die Anfänge der rumänischen Nationsbildung* (Leiden, 1972), esp. part III; A. Schaser, *Josephinische Reformen und sozialer Wandel in Siebenbürgen* (Stuttgart, 1989), esp. pp. 40–71; in English D. Prodan, *Supplex libellus valachorum* (Bucharest, 1971), esp. ch. XI.

[54] My *J.II*, I, p. 350; Prodan, *Supplex libellus valachorum*, p. 252; S. Schuller, *Samuel von Brukenthal* (2 vols., 1967–9), II.124–8; vast material in Pascu, *Izvoarele*.

1783 – to take collections for the support of their pastors, but only as a temporary measure while the matter was inquired into.[55]

The concept of the public sphere, as it has been popularised, focuses on literate, educated discussion of general political issues in newspapers, pamphlets, coffee-houses, reading societies and Masonic lodges. It certainly has not been taken to include 'selfish' petitioning by illiterate peasants. But, as I have shown, the public sphere clearly embraced the petitioning that Joseph elicited, at least to the extent that many contemporary observers wrote about it with surprise and admiration, as they did about the emperor's affability, approachability and lack of condescension.

If, however, the public sphere is taken to embrace all interaction between government and people which involves exchanges of views, then, at least in the Monarchy under Joseph II, petitioning was a major element in it. The reach of his call for petitions was far greater than that of the public sphere as normally understood. Though most of the petitions he received were written, in many cases they were based on statements by illiterates. The emperor issued numerous edicts to try to make available professional or semi-professional 'advocates' to all those with grievances against their lords or the government so that they could compose petitions in the proper form.[56] And it is plain that, at least in certain cases, the petitions, and Joseph's encounters with ordinary people, contributed to legislation. His discussions with 'the whole universe' in the Banat in 1768 certainly had much to do with the dismantling of the bureaucratic management of the province. After visiting Lombardy in 1769 Joseph was able to say that 4,000 of the 5,000 petitions he had received objected to the tax-farm. They must have strengthened his opposition to it and they certainly weighed with Maria Theresa and Kaunitz, who, to the chagrin of the resident minister, Count Firmian, abolished the tax-farm in 1771.[57] It was obviously important that on his visits to Transylvania in 1773 and 1783 he received petitions from many Wallachians, Vlachs or Romanians, who constituted over half the population, but did not count as one of the three privileged so-called nations, Hungarians, Saxons and Szekler, and practised a religion, Greek Orthodoxy, with less status in the

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[55] MOL C 23, no. 477 (2 May 1785).

[56] At the same time as the patent of 1 September 1781 establishing a system whereby serfs could complain against their lords was published, an *Instruktion für Untertansadvokaten* was published. (See R. Rosdolsky, *Untertan und Staat in Galizien* (Mainz, 1992), esp. ch. 5.) In *Josephs des Zweyten Römischen Kaisers Gesetze und Verfassungen im Justizfache* (Prague and Vienna, 1786) a circular of 23 January 1782, occupying pp. 118–37 (and they are large pages), ordains how petitions are to be drafted, with model versions. This mainly (but not entirely) relates to requests by departments and officials.

[57] My *J.II*, I, pp. 248–51, 266–71; Bernath, *Habsburg und die Anfänge der rumänischen Nationsbildung*, part III.

province even than Unitarianism. The Hungarians, Szekler and Saxons treated the Romanians as irredeemably servile and stupid. Joseph, however, recognised that they had potential and anyway were men and citizens. This was also partly because of his experience with the army in the adjacent military frontier region, which had taught him that Romanians made perfectly good soldiers. Without the visits of the emperor and his talks to petitioners, it seems very unlikely that he would have introduced concivility, parity between the Romanians and the other nations, in 1781. This was something the local government would never have accepted, let alone proposed, if Joseph had not been there himself and appraised the situation. From the officials' point of view, as also in Galicia, the problem was not that his travels taught him too little: they told him too much.

His receptivity to petitions contributed to arouse opposition to his regime in the bureaucracy. Both Starhemberg and Leopold acknowledged that Joseph's receiving petitions made him 'populaire' or 'popolare', a word which in their mouths was disdainful.[58] But they, and many other ministers like Firmian in Milan or Brukenthal in Transylvania, complained that this attention to the opinions of the *Pöbel* was inappropriate, disrupted the steady and languid procedures of the administration – and compelled it to limit the powers, and what Maria Theresa and Joseph called the tyranny, of the nobles, with whom the officials sympathised.[59] Brukenthal's biographer declares that the petitions

neither furthered justice nor supplied needs. Speedy decisions about them could lead to gross mistakes and cause subjects to lose all confidence in the orderly process of administration and justice; or it increased the work of the departments, which were required to investigate the origins of all these cases. For at this time the ruler had total power and everyone sought help from him. The Grace of God conferred on him also set the ruler's 'grace' above all law.[60]

These remarks evidently reflect Brukenthal's opinions and correspond to those of other officials. Sir Humphrey would have concurred. But it does not appear to be true that Joseph often overrode ordinary procedures, though he certainly tried to accelerate them. Leopold tells us that by 1784 the officials were so discontented that they were deliberately discrediting all Joseph's reforms with the public even before they were officially announced. And why? Because, he says, Joseph had maintained his policy, laid down in 1765, of trusting the senior ministers and never listening to the lesser officials, while allowing 'the universe to bring him their complaints'. Any Flemish, Galician or Romanian peasant or

[58] Leopold, 'Relazione'; Starhemberg to Kaunitz, 30 June 1781 (Berichte 253).
[59] This is emphatically Rosdolsky's thesis in *Untertan und Staat*, and it is hard to gainsay.
[60] S. Schuller, *Samuel Brukenthal* (2 vols., Munich, 1969), p. 88.

ordinary inhabitant of Vienna could get an interview on the Controleur-Gang, but no junior official.[61]

Petitioning a monarch has the air of a medieval survival. Individual petitions about personal circumstances do not have the aura of the British petitions from and to parliament or of the French *cahiers*. Nor do they fit into the world of gazettes, coffee-houses, reading societies and Masonic lodges. Looking for a twenty-first-century British comparison, one might suggest that MPs' surgeries fill something of the same function. But petitions to the absolute ruler could be rather more effective, especially when they impinged on general issues, since there was no parliament standing between the petitioner and the ruler, or when they revealed misconduct on the part of officials whom the ruler had the power to discipline or dismiss. In Joseph's Monarchy his call for petitions and his attention to them, both in his eyes and in the petitioners', were a notable aspect of relations between government and people. Either it ought to be included within 'the public sphere', or at least those who write about the public sphere should acknowledge the existence of these hundreds of thousands of direct contacts between monarch and subject, contacts that included the chattering classes but reached far deeper into society than clubs, the press and pamphlets, and undoubtedly influenced policy.

If petitioning, as exploited by Joseph II, has some claim to be included within 'the public sphere', it can hardly be regarded as an aspect of 'modernisation'. Perhaps a consideration of the role that petitioning played in Joseph's conception of government might lead to a reconsideration of his status as a 'moderniser'. This is surely not 'anonymous government' even if it is centralised. Nor is it 'indirect, bureaucratic government' as opposed to 'direct, personal social control'. Still less is it 'media-based' rather than relying on 'personal communications'. Joseph was as much inclined to develop certain older methods as certain newer ones. He glorified the impersonal state, elevated the status of the bureaucracy and provided it with the sort of 'modern' pension scheme which is about to become obsolete. But his government was as personal as any ruler's has ever been.

[61] Leopold, 'Relazione'.

13   The court nobility and the origins of the French Revolution

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I

On 21 May 1787, the marquis de la Fayette rose and delivered a speech to the bureau presided over by Louis XVI's younger brother, the comte d'Artois, in the assembly of notables at Versailles. In the main this was a technical examination of the new taxes the crown was proposing to tackle the financial crisis facing France. La Fayette's conclusion, however, was startling. Assuming that it would take five years for the reforms under discussion to bear fruit, he proposed that the happy moment of their completion should be crowned by the convocation of a national assembly. This phrase struck his audience like a bolt from the blue. As La Fayette put it in his memoirs:

From the effect produced by these two words pronounced for the first time, one would not have thought that only two years later, they would reappear with an explosive force that would dominate France and the world. 'What, Monsieur!' exclaimed the comte d'Artois, 'you are demanding the convocation of the Estates General?' 'Yes, Monseigneur' [I replied], 'and even more than that.'[1]

To historians today, familiar with La Fayette's subsequent role in the French Revolution, his voicing of these sentiments in 1787 may not seem so surprising. Yet as Artois's reply makes clear, to his listeners at the time they were both unexpected and shocking. Although he did have something of a radical reputation from his participation in the American War of Independence, La Fayette was also a distinguished noble, of a line that had been admitted three times to the honours of the court in the course of the century, and allied through his wife to one of the greatest aristocratic families of all, the Noailles.[2] For such a figure to call for the

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[1] *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits du général Lafayette* (6 vols., Paris, 1837–8), II.177.
[2] The standard biography of La Fayette is the multivolume work by Louis Gottschalk, *Lafayette Comes to America* (Chicago, 1935); *Lafayette Joins the American Army* (Chicago, 1937); *Lafayette and the Close of the American Revolution* (Chicago, 1942); *Lafayette between*

Estates General, an act which would shake the world of Versailles to its foundations, was to men like Artois almost inconceivable.

This chapter reconsiders why so many prominent nobles, of whom La Fayette is only the most famous, between 1787 and 1789 turned on the court that had bred them and, often in defiance of their material self-interest, threw themselves into the struggle for a new political order. In particular, it draws on the two major arguments put forward in the past thirty-five years to explain this conundrum. The first is that of Daniel Wick, set out in an article of 1980 and then in more detail seven years later in his published thesis.[3] This links the espousal by prominent nobles of the revolution in its early stages to loss of favour at court, above all at the hands of Marie Antoinette, over the previous decade. The second inter-pretation has been advanced most effectively by Tim Blanning himself in *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture*.[4] This stresses frustrated nationalism rather than disaffection with court politics as these nobles' essential grievance. In this analysis, disgust at France's disastrous defeat in the Seven Years' War, particularly among those nobles who were serving officers, turned them increasingly over the next quarter-century towards radical politics and away from an obsolete court perceived to have failed the nation.

A final section will apply both these analyses in a case-study of the most powerful disaffected court noble of all, Philippe, duc d'Orléans. Despite his importance in the first years of the revolution, Orléans has been somewhat neglected by historians for some decades now. Largely this is an understandable reaction to the partisan conspiracy theories that first blossomed while the duke was still alive, and which cast him as the demon king of the revolution. Yet although he falls outside Daniel Wick's field of inquiry, Orléans both illustrates and amplifies many of his themes. He can also be seen as an example of the frustrated and militaristic young nobles of the 1770s and 1780s analysed by Tim Blanning, though – unsurprisingly given the duke's quicksilver temperament – with some highly personal variations.

the American and the French Revolution (Chicago, 1950); (with M. Maddox), *Lafayette in the French Revolution, through the October Days* (Chicago and London, 1969); (with M. Maddox), *Lafayette in the French Revolution: From the October Days through the Federation* (Chicago and London, 1973). There is also a good recent French biography: E. Taillemite, *La Fayette* (Paris, 1989).

[3] D. Wick, 'The Court Nobility and the French Revolution: The Example of the Society of Thirty', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 13 (1980), pp. 263–84 and *A Conspiracy of Well-Intentioned Men: The Society of Thirty and the French Revolution* (New York and London, 1987).

[4] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002).

II

Daniel Wick first outlined his conclusions in his 1980 article 'The Court Nobility and the French Revolution: The Example of the Society of Thirty', and they have had considerable influence among historians since. Wick's starting-point is the well-attested fact that since Louis XVI never took a mistress and increasingly concentrated his affection on his queen, in the course of the reign Marie Antoinette was able to unite both these roles, which had previously been divided, and wield unprecedented power at court. Unfortunately, Wick argues, Marie Antoinette never understood the cardinal rule of court politics as laid down by Louis XIV: a balance had to be maintained in the distribution of patronage so that families and factions remained in a state of equilibrium, with the crown as the ultimate arbiter.[5] Instead, she foolishly concentrated almost all her favour on her small group of personal friends, the so-called queen's *société*, dominated by the parvenu Polignacs. In addition, her frequent withdrawals from Versailles to lead the simple life with these friends, at the Petit Trianon and elsewhere, robbed the rest of the court of that other vital component of patronage, access to its source.

Wick's most striking finding is how many members of the Society of Thirty, the extremely influential Parisian pressure-group set up in late 1788 to influence the forthcoming elections to the Estates General in a liberal direction, came from court families previously shut out of favour by Marie Antoinette. In fact, the name 'Society of Thirty' is something of a misnomer, since within a month of its first meeting in November 1788 the group's membership had swelled to fifty-five. Of these fifty-five, nineteen, or over a third, were court nobles. Some, like the duc de Lauzun, had fallen out with the queen personally. More, like the duc de Fronsac and the duc d'Aiguillon, came from families that had been at daggers drawn with her since her arrival in France. The final, and most numerous, group belonged to court clans like the Noailles that had lost pensions and positions to the Polignacs. The Noailles and their relations supplied two prominent members of the Society of Thirty – the vicomte de Noailles and, inevitably, his brother-in-law La Fayette. In this perspective, it was less ideology than that old staple of court culture, family politics, that motivated the liberal nobles on the eve of the revolution.[6]

The evidence for Wick's argument is certainly striking, but it does not tell the whole story. Wick's model of Louis XVI's court, with Marie

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[5] The best recent works on patronage and faction under Louis XIV are R. Mettam, *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France* (Oxford, 1988) and S. Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (New York, 1986).

[6] Wick, *A Conspiracy of Well-Intentioned Men*, pp. 121–9, 141–5.

Antoinette and her *société* on one side and a growing opposition of discontented courtiers on the other, certainly holds good for the late 1770s and early 1780s. Yet court politics, as all its practitioners knew, was never static, but constantly changing, and those of France were no exception. In fact, between 1784 and 1788 three major developments substantially altered the map of political faction and political culture at Versailles.

The most dramatic of these was unquestionably the diamond necklace affair, which mesmerized the court and the political nation from the arrest of the cardinal de Rohan on Assumption Day 1785 for 'conspiring against the queen's honour' to his acquittal by the parlement of Paris on 31 May 1786. While many details of the affair remain mysterious, the prevailing view is that Rohan, who was hated by the queen, was persuaded by the confidence trickster Mme de la Motte, who claimed to be an intimate of Marie Antoinette, that if he bought her a fabulous diamond necklace that she was known to covet, he would immediately be restored to favour. Naturally, Mme de la Motte stipulated that she should pass the necklace to the queen, and when she absconded with it the scandal broke. Beginning as a sordid fraud, the affair became political because the queen's enemies saw its potential as a means of attacking her through taking Rohan's side. In the ministry, these included the foreign minister Vergennes and the finance minister Calonne, while a strong oppositional faction in the parlement of Paris eventually convinced its colleagues to acquit Rohan at his trial.

In many ways, the affair simply confirmed the tendencies Wick describes, adding to the ranks of Marie Antoinette's enemies at court and extending them to include a majority of the parlement. On the other hand, it was so divisive that it inevitably changed the landscape of court politics. The ministry, in particular, was so deeply split by the affair that it did not long survive, and this in turn helped polarize allegiances at Versailles.[7]

Overlapping the diamond necklace affair, and encouraged by it, was a crucial shift in court politics that had begun at least a year before. This was the growing estrangement between the queen and her *société*, and the latter's migration across the political spectrum towards her opponents. This was probably motivated by material gain; to sustain its lifestyle, the queen's *société* needed to have the finance minister on its side, and from

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[7] On the diamond necklace affair, see F. Mossiker, *The Queen's Necklace* (New York, 1961). On its cultural implications, see S. Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Célèbres of Eighteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, CA, 1993), pp. 167–212. On its political context, see M. Price, *Preserving the Monarchy: The Comte de Vergennes, 1774–1787* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 170–86.

November 1783 this was Marie Antoinette's enemy Calonne.[8] When Calonne was forced from office in April 1787, the Polignacs and their circle also faced a reckoning. This reversal of fortune creates a problem for Wick's argument. At the very moment that the liberal court nobles were emerging as a political force, the queen's *société* they hated was itself in semi-disgrace. If resentment at loss of favour had really motivated the Richelieus and the Noailles, then the clique they held responsible had already been brought low.

The final upheaval, an immediate consequence of the fall of Calonne, was the most important of all. This was the definitive storming of the ministry by the queen in the person of her chosen candidate, the arch-bishop of Toulouse, Loménie de Brienne, who became leading minister in April 1787 and principal minister four months later. To tackle the dangerous fiscal and political crisis that had just toppled Calonne, Brienne embarked on a major programme of reforms. Although the components of the package varied over the next eighteen months according to circumstance, they included a land tax payable by the nobility and clergy as well as the Third Estate, a stamp tax, substantial new loans, severe economies at court and wide-ranging reform of the army.[9]

Brienne's policy was certainly radical, and as the short-term political crisis worsened he was forced to implement it by increasingly authoritarian means. Both these factors played into his opponents' hands. The sheer number of targets he attacked united his disparate enemies in a wide-ranging coalition, while his ever-harsher methods – culminating in the breaking of the parlements in May 1788 – gave them an unmissable target of their own: despotism. Just how far Brienne's adversaries were motivated by constitutional principle or by simple self-interest remains controversial. What is clear is that opposition to despotism provided an extremely spacious tent under which the most diverse and even discordant groups – the nobility, the higher clergy, the urban bourgeois and the urban crowd – could cluster together.

Such an alliance was bound to create unlikely bedfellows, and nowhere is this clearer than in the case of the court nobility. Some were unquestionably radicalized, and set out on a path that would lead them to the Society of Thirty and ultimately, as deputies for the nobility in the Estates General, to join the Third Estate in June 1789. Yet the scale of Brienne's reforming drive, and particularly his economies at court, allowed some unlikely candidates to pose as victims of despotism. In a particularly ironic

[8] See Price, *Preserving the Monarchy*, pp. 150–4.
[9] The standard account of Brienne's reforms is J. Egret, *La pré-révolution française, 1787–1788* (Paris, 1962).

twist, these even included the queen's *société*. In August 1787, the duc de Polignac lost his position as postmaster-general and its salary of 50,000 *livres* a year, and the duc de Coigny his office of master of the horse. Polignac took the blow with good grace, but Coigny did not; he almost struck the king in a rage, and his friend the baron de Besenval memorably rebuked the queen for supporting unconstitutional measures: 'One goes to bed not knowing whether or not one will wake up destitute,' he snapped. 'One might as well be in Turkey.'[10]

The Polignacs are an important, but not the only, example of the truth that courtiers who lost favour at court under Louis XVI did not all end up as liberal nobles in 1789. Brienne's reforms alienated many important aristocrats who could hardly have been called liberal in 1787 and whose political trajectory thereafter would tend even further to the right. The Seven Years' War veteran the maréchal de Broglie led a virtual mutiny against Brienne's military reforms as governor of Metz, and refused to sit in the plenary court set up in May 1788 to register general laws in place of the parlements.[11] Yet in June 1789 he commanded the army gathered by Louis XVI to confront the Estates General and the people of Paris, and in 1792 led the army of the *émigré* princes to join the Austro-Prussian invasion of revolutionary France. For Broglie and those who shared his views there was no contradiction here: they opposed radicalism in 1788 when it came from the crown; they did so again in 1789 when it came from the people.

For a final example of this 'opposition from the right', one returns to that most spectacularly disgraced courtier of all, the cardinal de Rohan. The cardinal was unable to participate in the pre-revolution because after the diamond necklace affair he had been exiled to the Auvergne. In 1789, however, he was released and a few months later elected to the constituent assembly, where he was predictably hailed as a victim of despotism. Yet the sufferings that the king and queen had inflicted on him in no way radicalized him; or if they did, they sent him in the opposite direction from the Society of Thirty. Like Broglie, Rohan rallied to those ultra-royalists who rejected even the limited concessions Louis XVI was prepared to grant during the revolution. After denouncing the constituent assembly's religious policy, he retired to his bishopric of Strasbourg where he attempted to foment counter-revolution, before emigrating definitively in 1791.[12]

[10] Ibid., pp. 75–8; Baron de Besenval, *Mémoires*, eds. S. A. Berville and J. F. Barrière (3 vols., Brussels, 1823), III.182–4.
[11] Wick, *A Conspiracy of Well-Intentioned Men*, p. 143; Egret, *La pré-révolution*, p. 92.
[12] See E. H. Lemay, *Dictionnaire des constituants* (2 vols., Oxford, 1991), II.825–6.

These cases show that there were more ways for great nobles to react to loss of favour than by espousing the popular cause. Far from it; Rohan, Broglie and the Polignacs responded by taking the path of reaction as far as it could go, to the court of the *émigré* French princes at Koblenz. Disaffection from Versailles, important though it may have been, did not lead inevitably to support for the revolution. Daniel Wick's work reveals an important truth about the court nobility and the origins of 1789, but not the only one.

III

If alienation from the court was not the sole factor that motivated some eminent nobles to become revolutionaries, what were the others? They were complex and varied, but frustrated nationalism must rank very high among them. One point on which almost all contemporaries and subsequent historians agree is that the defeats of the Seven Years' War deeply discredited the French monarchy. The one common factor in all the memoirs of the liberal nobles of 1789 is fury at the humiliations France had suffered between 1756 and 1763, and hatred of the national enemy that had inflicted them – England. These feelings were only heightened by the fact that so many of these men were soldiers. Fully sixteen of the twenty-three sword nobles in the Society of Thirty, for example, were military men.[13]

For these young noble officers, the American War offered a golden opportunity to take revenge on their neighbour across the Channel. The most famous of them, La Fayette, provides the best example. To judge by his memoirs, his unauthorized voyage to join Washington's army was motivated as much by Anglophobia as by love of liberty. His résumé in his memoirs of the causes of the conflict makes this very clear:

Having crowned herself with laurels and enriched herself with conquests, having gained mastery of every sea and insulted every nation, England had turned her pride against her own colonies . . . so that the obstinacy of her king, the passion of her ministers, and the arrogance of the English people, had forced thirteen of her colonies to declare their independence. No better cause had ever presented itself to mankind; it was the last combat of liberty, and defeat would have left her neither hope nor shelter . . . At the same time the destinies of France and England would be decided; England saw that over half of her territory, and the best half, could be lost. But if she recaptured these thirteen colonies, it would be the end of the French Antilles and of our possessions in Africa and Asia, of our seaborne trade and thus of our navy, in short, of our political existence.[14]

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[13] Wick, *A Conspiracy of Well-Intentioned Men*, pp. 107–8, 342.
[14] *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits*, I.8–9.

This vision of an Anglo-French struggle to the death may seem apocalyptic, but there is no doubt that La Fayette, and many of his contemporaries, believed it sincerely at the time. Interestingly, while La Fayette's Anglophobia may have cooled after England's defeat in the American War, it by no means disappeared. Writing to an unknown correspondent in 1786, he did admit that he now found the English agreeable as individuals:

The humiliation of the [Seven Years' War] and their insolence during the peace, gave me an aversion to them . . . but now I meet them with pleasure, and whether as a Frenchman, an American soldier or as an ordinary person, I am quite at my ease amid this proud nation.

However, La Fayette continued,

my conversion is not yet complete. While avoiding the stupidity of treating them as personal enemies, I cannot forget that they are the enemies of French glory and French prosperity.[15]

It is well known that the American Revolution cast a long shadow over the French Revolution, but is perhaps worth re-emphasizing just how long. To return to the Society of Thirty, there was a hard core of six of its sword noble membership of twenty-three who had actually served in America – La Fayette himself, the vicomte de Noailles, Alexandre, Charles and Théodore de Lameth, and the duc de Lauzun. Of the further ten who were army officers, several took part in the war to a lesser degree, and its rhetoric rubbed off on them too. The influence is just as clear on the robe nobles in the society. Its moving force, the councillor Adrien Duport, headed a group of younger magistrates in the parlement of Paris who advocated a liberal constitution so passionately that they were dubbed 'the Americans'. Given the importance of the Society of Thirty, and the fact that fully twenty-five of its fifty-five members were elected to the Estates General in 1789, the significance of the American example becomes very striking.[16]

A second example of frustrated nationalism could be found even closer to home. If England was hated as the direct cause of France's humiliation in 1763, a more insidious loathing was reserved for Austria. A strong current of court and public opinion felt that by jettisoning traditional French foreign policy and precipitating the Seven Years' War, the 1756 alliance with the Habsburgs had been disastrous for France. According to this analysis, France had been dragged into a damaging European war simply to help Austria win her feud against Frederick the Great of Prussia. To

[15] Ibid., II.160–1.   [16] Wick, *A Conspiracy of Well-Intentioned Men*, pp. 161, 166.

these rational geopolitical arguments was added a more pathological distrust of the Habsburgs as old enemies still pursuing anti-French policies under the guise of friendship.

All of these strands came together in the campaign waged at court against Marie Antoinette from the moment she set foot at Versailles. The new dauphine, and from 1774 queen, was not only a symbol of the Austrian alliance's permanence, to her detractors she was one more example of the underhand Habsburg tactic of using women as agents of domination by marrying them off to their allies. Hence the appearance of political and pornographic libels against Marie Antoinette from the early 1770s on, and which probably originated with the anti-Austrian faction at court. Marie Antoinette retaliated with the only weapon at her disposal, by withholding patronage from those she deemed responsible. It is no coincidence that many of those families shut out of favour by the rise of the *société*, such as the Richelieus and the Noailles, were members of the anti-Austrian faction. Thus their dislike of Marie Antoinette, and her defensive withdrawal into her own circle, became a self-reinforcing process.

It was only after 1789, with the government's loss of control over the press and Marie Antoinette's identification with counter-revolution and foreign intervention in France, that Austrophobia attained its fullest development, and the flow of libels against the queen significantly increased. Between 1774 and 1787, Austrian demands on France, and French perceptions that she was being exploited by Austria, were kept in check by the skill of Louis XVI and his foreign minister Vergennes. Although crises over the Bavarian succession and the Scheldt brought Franco-Austrian relations to the brink of rupture, the main aim of French foreign policy was preserved: a general peace was maintained on the continent and France was left free to settle scores with England overseas.[17]

With victory in the American War, the French monarchy was successfully riding the nationalist tiger. It was not, however, sufficiently aware

[17] On French Austrophobia see the important articles by T. E. Kaiser, 'Who's Afraid of Marie Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia and the Queen', *French History* 14:3 (September 2000), pp. 241–71; G. Savage, 'Favier's Heirs: The French Revolution and the *secret du roi*', *Historical Journal* 41 (1998), pp. 225–58. On Louis XVI's and Vergennes's policy towards Austria see J. Hardman and M. Price (eds.), *Louis XVI and the Comte de Vergennes: Correspondence, 1774–1787* (Oxford, 1998), passim. On the pamphlet literature against Marie Antoinette see V. R. Gruder, 'The Question of Marie Antoinette: The Queen and Public Opinion before the Revolution', *French History* 16:3 (September 2002), pp. 267–98; S. Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal and Revolution: London's French Libellistes, 1758–1792* (Manchester, 2006); C. Thomas, *La reine scélérate: Marie Antoinette dans les pamphlets* (Paris, 1989); and L. Hunt, 'The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution', in L. Hunt (ed.), *Eroticism and the Body Politic* (Baltimore, MD, 1991), pp. 108–30.

of the consequences if it fell off. These became painfully obvious four years later, with the Prussian invasion of Holland. As Tim Blanning has forcefully argued in both *The Culture of Power* and *The French Revolutionary Wars*, this marked a crucial stage in the collapse of the old regime.[18] The Dutch alliance was perhaps France's greatest gain from the American War. Above all, it opened up the prospect of her using the Dutch colonial empire in the Far East as a base from which to expel England from India. In September 1787, however, preoccupied with the ongoing financial and political crisis, Brienne failed to support France's clients, the Dutch Patriot party, against a Prussian invasion to restore the authority of the pro-British and pro-Prussian Stadtholder. France lost a vital strategic alliance, and even her status as a great power seemed to be at risk.[19]

The most important consequences of all were domestic. A wave of injured national pride engulfed the French political nation, and especially those young noble officers who had fought in or supported the American War. As one of them, the comte de Ségur, put it in his memoirs:

Prompt help [for the Dutch] would undoubtedly have resolved everything; our fatal irresolution guaranteed the triumph of our rivals, betrayed the secret of our weakness, and marked the first signs of a political decadence which we only shook off later through the efforts and the volcanic eruptions of a revolution.[20]

Many other retrospective accounts confirm the sense of national humiliation felt after the unopposed Prussian invasion of Holland, and underline the extent to which it alienated opinion from the regime, particularly in the army. Yet Ségur also raised a further point that makes an important link between the American victory and the Dutch debacle. For young liberal noblemen like himself, he wrote, what was particularly galling about the failure to support Holland was that it was another republic that was calling for French aid.[21] Having championed the cause of liberty in the United States, France was now betraying it in the United Provinces. When the same government that had abandoned the Dutch then turned on its own people in May 1788, the bonds of allegiance became dangerously strained. Here too, Ségur's comments are telling. Repeating his conviction that the only way Brienne could have 'diverted the passions that were agitating and leading the country astray' was by a just war in defence of Holland, he added damningly:

[18] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 421–3.
[19] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (London, 1986), pp. 47–51; O. T. Murphy, *The Diplomatic Retreat of France and Public Opinion on the Eve of the French Revolution, 1783–1789* (Washington, DC, 1997); M. Price, 'The Dutch Affair and the Fall of the *ancien régime*, 1784–1787', *Historical Journal* 38 (1995), pp. 875–905.
[20] Comte de Ségur, *Mémoires, ou souvenirs et anecdotes* (3 vols., Paris, 1825–7), III.199–200.
[21] Ibid., pp. 249, 262.

This tactic, however, was the only one that the archbishop-minister did not dare to try. It was offered, even dictated to him: but it frightened his feeble spirit. Timid against our natural enemies, but bold against his own nation, he could not bring himself to use force against rival powers, but risked a coup d'état against his own people and the parlements, which in turn provoked, by a sort of appeal to the nation, the convocation of the Estates General and sounded the hour of the revolution.[22]

The increasing reluctance of army officers to carry out orders to repress the civilian population in 1788 and 1789 is well known. Whether this amounted to a defection of the army from the royal government, or even to a military coup, is more controversial.[23] From the ranks of the Society of Thirty, the comte Destutt de Tracy refused to order his regiment to repress demonstrations in favour of the parlement of Brittany in 1788, and his was not an isolated case.[24] On the other hand, neither in 1788 nor during the far more serious confrontation of July 1789 did young noble officers actually lead their men over to the side of the crowds defying the government. Yet perhaps this was not necessary. As Samuel Scott has shown, the decision not to use force against the insurgent Parisians on 14 July was prompted not by the fact that the troops were actually unreliable, but that so many officers insisted to their commander the maréchal de Broglie that they were.[25] One wonders for how many of these officers giving warning that their men would not march was simply a less risky way of refusing to obey orders of which they disapproved. Either way, it had the same result: the offensive was not taken, the Bastille fell, and the National Assembly was saved. If there is such a thing as a tacit coup d'état, then July 1789 provides a good example.

IV

Between them, the analyses of Daniel Wick and Tim Blanning add substantially to our knowledge of the motivation of the liberal nobility on the eve of the revolution. Yet they can also be extended to include the greatest liberal noble of all, and the one who probably had the most significant effect on the events of 1789, Louis-Philippe-Joseph, duc d'Orléans. An enigmatic and deeply controversial figure, Orléans has tended to deter

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[22] Ibid., p. 262.   [23] See Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 426–7.
[24] E. Kennedy, *A Philosophe in the Age of Revolution*: *Destutt de Tracy and the Origins of 'Ideology'* (Philadelphia, 1978), p. 15.
[25] S. F. Scott, *The Response of the Royal Army to the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 60–2.

scholarly historians.[26] However, the insights of Wick and Blanning, when applied to the duke, shed considerable light on his motivation and actions.

If any court noble had the resources to make his opposition effective, it was the duc d'Orléans. For a start, as the king's cousin and first prince of the blood he had a reversionary interest in the throne, although after 1775 and the birth of male heirs first to the comte d'Artois and then to Louis XVI this prospect receded. On a more practical level, he was the richest man in France after the king himself. His appanage, which included the duchies of Orléans, Valois and Chartres, the county of Soissons and the Palais-royal in Paris, brought him an annual revenue of between three and four million *livres* on the eve of the revolution. His own patrimonial inheritance, which encompassed the duchy of Montpensier as well as the chateau of Saint-Cloud, added a similar yearly sum. Finally, Orléans's marriage in 1769 to the only daughter of another prince of the blood, the immensely wealthy duc de Penthièvre, secured him not only a dowry of six million *livres*, but also an inheritance that would make the next Orléans generation the richest princely family in Europe.[27]

In exactly the same way as the court nobles studied by Wick, Orléans's path to opposition began with estrangement from Marie Antoinette. This development was particularly spectacular since for several years the two had been close friends and allies. When Marie Antoinette first arrived at Versailles in 1770 to marry the future Louis XVI, the duc de Chartres, as Orléans was then styled since his father was still alive, was one of the few of her new relations with whom she had anything in common. Their political stance was the same: both loathed the ageing Louis XV's mistress, Mme du Barry, and his ministers d'Aiguillon, Maupeou and Terray, and supported the recall of the parlements exiled and remodelled in 1771. Marie Antoinette and Chartres also shared the same taste; the pleasure garden he laid out in 1773 at Monceau in western Paris provided the inspiration for her efforts at the Petit Trianon. Above all, until the late 1770s Chartres was a pivotal figure in Marie Antoinette's *société*, on excellent terms with both Mme de Polignac and his fellow-rake the baron de Besenval.[28]

Significantly, the root of the quarrel that transformed Chartres from one of Marie Antoinette's closest friends into her greatest enemy was a

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[26] The principal scholarly works on the duc d'Orléans are A. Britsch, *La jeunesse de Philippe-Egalité* (Paris, 1926); B. F. Hyslop, *L'apanage de Philippe-Egalité, duc d'Orléans, 1785–1791* (Paris, 1965); G. A. Kelly, 'The Machine of the duc d'Orléans and the New Politics', *Journal of Modern History* 51 (1979), pp. 667–84; and E. Lever, *Philippe-Egalité* (Paris, 1996).

[27] G. Antonetti, *Louis-Philippe* (Paris, 1994), pp. 28–33.

[28] Lever, *Philippe-Egalité*, pp. 137–52.

military matter. Like so many of the liberal nobles analysed by Daniel Wick, Chartres was frustrated by the gilded constraints of Versailles, and longed to break out of them and achieve something of his own, preferably in the traditional outlet of the armed forces. Again like them, he saw his great chance in the American War. In an original twist of his own, however, he chose to serve not in the army, but the navy, which no royal prince had done before. Partly this was simple pragmatism; his cousins Artois and Condé both had better claims to advancement in the army than he, and he also had hopes of inducing his father-in-law Penthièvre to resign his prestigious and lucrative sinecure of grand admiral of France in his favour. Yet, as his two tours of duty in 1775 and 1776 showed, Chartres did show some commitment to his naval career, and took his duties seriously.[29] By the eve of the American War, it seemed that the navy had provided him with a secure niche and a promising future.

The war itself, however, ruined these prospects. On its outbreak, Chartres was appointed inspector-general of admiral d'Orvilliers's Brest fleet, and in addition given command of its third division. Yet at the battle of Ushant on 27 July 1778, in circumstances which still remain unclear, he failed to respond promptly to a signal from d'Orvilliers to envelop the English rearguard, thus missing the chance of a decisive victory. When the news reached Versailles, Chartres only made his position worse by vicious attacks against the navy minister, whom he accused of blackening his conduct, and against the war minister, whom he suspected of blocking a possible sideways move into the army.[30] Louis XVI was furious, and Marie Antoinette had no option but to follow her husband's lead. When Chartres, in a last desperate attempt to retrieve his reputation, tried in July 1779 to join the expeditionary force being sent to America under an assumed name, it was she, writing on her husband's behalf, who ordered him back. The letter is one of the very few cases of the queen transmitting her husband's wishes in a direct command:

The king is acquainted and displeased, Monsieur, with your desire to attach yourself to his army. The constant refusals he has had to oppose to the most pressing demands in the area which most deeply concerns him [i.e. requests by young court nobles to serve in the expeditionary force], and the effects that your example would have, make me see only too clearly that he will accept no excuses and make no exceptions. The pain this causes me has made me agree to accept the task of communicating to you his intentions, which are quite positive. He feels that by sparing you the severe form of an order, he will lessen your distress at his decision while ensuring your swift submission.[31]

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[29] Ibid., pp. 153–60.   [30] Ibid., pp. 167–81.
[31] This letter is reproduced in ibid., p. 183.

This document is especially significant since it constitutes written proof of a formal breach between Marie Antoinette and a future liberal noble of 1789. For most of the latter, the queen's disfavour was shown in more subtle ways, by exclusion from her inner circle or the material benefits of her patronage. From the moment he received Marie Antoinette's letter, however, Chartres was in semi-disgrace. True, he was not actually exiled, but everybody at court knew that the king and queen were deeply displeased with him, and had signified this to him in explicit terms. For his part, from this moment on Chartres regarded Louis XVI, and especially Marie Antoinette, as his enemies. The 'Ushant affair' was thus decisive in transforming Chartres into an oppositional figure, with all the consequences that would flow from that stance. As his mistress and closest adviser Mme de Genlis put it later in her memoirs: 'This fatal resentment had the most unhappy influence on his character and his destiny.'[32]

Like so many other young French aristocrats, Chartres had sought in war the fulfilment – and the glory – that the world of Versailles could not offer them. In this, he was typical of the young officers whose political evolution from the American War to the Dutch disaster Tim Blanning has charted. Unlike them, however, his foray had ended not in a triumphant return, but disfavour and discredit. The chief causes of this failure were purely personal, and ascribable to Chartres's inexperience and volatility. One should not therefore take the parallel between Chartres's American war and that of the other liberal nobles of 1789 too far. What can be argued, however, is that Chartres had already experienced by 1779 the frustration and humiliation that the Dutch debacle would inflict on them in 1787, though in his case there was also a whiff of personal dishonour.

Chartres's alienation from Versailles also had a spatial dimension, important both in itself and in its consequences. As William R. Newton has shown in his excellent recent study of the living arrangements at court, the expansion of the royal family under Louis XV and Louis XVI had serious practical implications for the princes of the blood.[33] Whenever a new royal offspring was born or reached the stage of constituting a household, the extra space needed was usually gained at their cousins' expense. For the latter, the menace of being turned out of a comfortable apartment for something often inferior became a fact of life. The Orléans, however, were particularly hard hit, and it is difficult not to conclude that this may have been connected to their increasing alignment with the opposition to royal policy. Although he never embraced the extremes his son

[32] Cited in ibid., p. 184.
[33] W. R. Newton, *L'espace du roi: la cour de France au château de Versailles, 1682–1789* (Paris, 2000), p. 32.

later did, Chartres's father the duc d'Orléans generally took the side of the parlements in their disputes with the crown. Whether or not it was intended as a punishment, the fact that he was forced to move four times at Versailles in the ten years from 1747 to 1757 can hardly have improved his relations with Louis XV.[34]

From 1757 to 1780 Orléans and Chartres were allowed to enjoy undisturbed the apartment allotted to them on the first floor of the Aile des Princes looking out on to the Parterre du Midi. In 1780, however, this happy state came to an end when Louis XVI expropriated the lodging to give more room to his younger sister Madame Elisabeth. This latest compulsory move had two particularly galling aspects. Firstly, it meant that the Orléans lost their last foothold on the prestigious garden façade of the Aile des Princes. Secondly, they were making way not only for Madame Elisabeth but also for her lady-in-waiting Diane de Polignac, cousin of Marie Antoinette's favourite and a key member of the *société*. There was, however, one feature of the apartment they must have been glad to leave. When Diane de Polignac's maids took up residence, they were mortified to find that their rooms were directly under a large and leaky latrine. Here at least, the Orléans had the last laugh.[35]

Although the duke and his son were rehoused in the north-eastern corner of the Aile des Princes, they rarely lived there. The eviction of 1780 thus marked their definitive alienation from the court. More important still, it decisively shifted Chartres's focus towards Paris. It hardly seems a coincidence that just five months after the loss of the Versailles apartment, the duc d'Orléans formally made over to his son his Paris residence, the Palais-royal. Over the next three years, Chartres made his new property the focus of a remarkable, and in many ways visionary, urban development project. His plan was to enclose the Palais-royal's famous gardens by arcaded rows of houses and shops, and to recoup his investment from the rents they would yield. Begun in the summer of 1781, the transformation was complete by August 1784.[36]

Unfortunately for Chartres, the Palais-royal venture failed to yield the hoped-for profits. What it did become was an extraordinary and multifunctional public space in the heart of Paris. It was the capital's most fashionable pleasure garden and social centre, containing elegant establishments like the Café de Foy and the Café du Caveau and, from January 1785, a large theatre. It was also a noted place of assignation, famous for the prostitutes who gathered in the 'Camp des Tartares', the area of wooden booths at the open end of the gardens. Yet the Palais-royal was also a cultural space. In April 1784 a literary club, the Lycée, opened

[34] Ibid., p. 34.   [35] Ibid., pp. 37, 253.   [36] Lever, *Philippe-Egalité*, p. 223.

its doors, followed in December by the scientific museum founded by the famous balloonist Pilatre de Rozier, which remained an important meeting-place for the Parisian intellectual elite until the revolution. Pilatre de Rozier's museum was soon joined by a literary and artistic society, the Club des Arts, and an exclusive Masonic lodge, the Club Olympique.[37]

The full importance of the Palais-royal, however, only becomes apparent in comparative perspective. In *The Culture of Power*, Tim Blanning has drawn a striking contrast between late eighteenth-century Versailles and Vienna as symbols of state power. Versailles remained immured in the conception of kingship perfected by Louis XIV, ruled by etiquette and dangerously disconnected from the artistic, intellectual, cultural and social concerns of an increasingly prosperous and cultivated population. Yet in Austria, Joseph II was determined to reach out to precisely the sort of people the French Bourbons were rejecting. He closed down Schönbrunn, the Habsburg Versailles, and moved instead into an unpretentious villa in the Augarten. Significantly, he also opened up much of the dynasty's private space to the public. He turned the Glacis around the old city of Vienna into a public recreation ground, followed by the Prater in 1766 and the Augarten in 1775. Two years later, he transformed the Belvedere palace into a public art gallery.[38]

The case of the Palais-royal adds a further dimension to the contrast between Versailles and Vienna. In Austria, the emperor himself saw the need to use architecture and planning to forge bonds with the new type of public and 'public opinion' created in the course of the century. In France, on the other hand, this process was initiated not by the king, but by a disaffected prince of the blood. Admittedly, the profit motive, which loomed large in the duc de Chartres's mind, was absent from that of Joseph II. Yet the result of both men's efforts was remarkably similar: 'democratic' public spaces in which all classes could mix freely together, and enjoy a variety of experiences from simple leisure to cultivation of the arts and sciences. Beside these, hierarchical Versailles, increasingly deserted by the nobility as well as the public, had a palpable air of decline.

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[37] Ibid., pp. 223–6. On Louis-Philippe-Joseph's rebuilding of the Palais-royal, see R. Héron de Villefosse, *L'anti-Versailles ou le Palais-royal de Philippe-Egalité* (Paris, 1974) and V. Champier and G. R. Sandoz, *Le Palais-royal d'après des documents inédits* (2 vols., Paris, 1900). On the importance of the Palais-royal in the early stages of the revolution see D. M. McMahon, 'The Birthplace of the Revolution: Public Space and Political Community in the Palais-royal of Louis-Philippe-Joseph d'Orléans, 1781–1789', *French History* 10 (1996), pp. 1–29. For its wider role as a centre of Parisian leisure, see R. M. Isherwood, *Farce and Fantasy: Popular Entertainment in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New York and Oxford, 1986).

[38] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 415–18, 430–1.

On 18 November 1785, Chartres's father died, and he became in his turn duc d'Orléans. He was now first prince of the blood, and this fact only served to enhance his standing in the opposition to Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Two years later, he used this status to create a political sensation. When the parlement of Paris refused to accept Brienne's reform programme in the summer of 1787, he ostentatiously sided with the recalcitrant magistrates. Then, at the royal session called on 19 November to secure the passage of a compromise package, when Louis XVI ordered the edicts to be registered without a vote, Orléans electrified the gathering by rising and declaring the proceedings illegal. This dramatic intervention cost the duke four months of exile at his chateau of Villers-Cotterets north-east of the capital, but made him a hero to the Parisians.[39]

When the Estates General were called in late 1788, Orléans threw immense resources into the election campaign. He was never a member of the Society of Thirty, but his aim was the same as its own: to ensure that the political programme the deputies brought to the estates, in the form of their *cahiers* of grievances, were as liberal as possible. He even issued instructions to the deputies elected from his domains, and a model *cahier* for them to use, in the form of two widely diffused pamphlets, the *Instructions données par SAS Monseigneur le duc d'Orléans à ses représentants aux bailliages*, and *Délibérations à prendre dans les assemblées de bailliages*. The first was written by the soldier, writer and adventurer Choderlos de Laclos, more famous today as the author of *Les liaisons dangereuses*; the second by the abbé Sieyès. Significantly, Orléans was introduced to both men by friends of his in the Society of Thirty; Laclos was presented to him by the vicomte de Noailles, and it was at Lauzun's country cottage at Montrouge that he met Sieyès and commissioned him to write the *Délibérations*.[40]

Sieyès and Laclos, however, formed only a small part of Orléans's electoral and publicity machine. Contemporary accounts are sometimes difficult to verify, but at various points in this period the duke seems to have employed an extraordinarily brilliant and diverse group of talents, including several future leaders of the revolution: Brissot, Mirabeau, Duport, Dumouriez, Danton, Desmoulins, Barère and Marat. For this reason alone, Orléans's political importance in 1789 and beyond can never be underestimated.[41]

Unsurprisingly, these developments had a major effect on the Palais-royal. Already a recreational and cultural space, it now became a political one. From 1787 on, the Lycée, founded as a literary club, and numbering

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[39] Lever, *Philippe-Egalité*, pp. 261–6.
[40] Kelly, 'The Machine of the duc d'Orléans', pp. 672, n. 21, 679–80.   [41] Ibid., p. 674.

Condorcet, Chamfort and La Harpe among its members, turned its attention firmly to politics. According to Barère, it 'became a real centre of moral and political opposition to the court and the ministry'. In the winter of 1788 the club des Enragés, co-founded by Sieyès, was opened. It was followed in February by the Club de Valois, dominated by liberal nobles many of whom also belonged to the Society of Thirty. Orléans protected it, and made frequent appearances there.[42] As France's financial and political crisis worsened, the Palais-royal became the capital's principal focus of discussion, agitation and radicalism. All these developments culminated on 13 July 1789, when Camille Desmoulins climbed on to a chair at the Café de Foy and called on Paris to rise against the government.

Following Daniel Wick's analysis, it would be tempting to see Orléans's espousal of the revolution as a direct consequence of his spectacular loss of court favour in 1779. Yet while his breach with Marie Antoinette was undoubtedly a major factor in his move into opposition, it was not the only one. Of all the major revolutionary figures, Orléans has been perhaps the most consistently vilified, and his radicalization ascribed to the worst of motives – a savage resentment of the queen, and ultimately a desire to usurp the throne. Orléans certainly had major character flaws; he was weak and inconsistent, and had a vicious streak, especially where women were concerned. His political energies were also seriously undermined by debauchery and, by the end, alcoholism.[43] This does not mean, however, that he was incapable of responding to ideals. The demands for liberty first heard in America and then from 1787 in France awoke in him a powerful echo, even though they chiefly appealed to his desire to free himself from all constraint. As he put it to the baron d'Escars in early 1789:

I don't give a damn what the Estates General accomplish, but I wanted to be there at the moment when they took up the matter of individual liberty, so as to give my vote to a law that would assure me . . . that whenever I wanted to leave for London, Rome, or Peking, nothing could get in my way. I couldn't care less about the rest.[44]

Yet from this highly personal starting-point, Orléans did broaden his focus to support almost all the reforms championed by liberals on the eve of the revolution. The best guide to his views in 1789 is the *Instructions* he issued to guide the deputies elected to the Estates General from his lands, written by Laclos, which are virtually a political programme in their own

[42] Lever, *Philippe-Egalité*, pp. 250, 281–4.   [43] Antonetti, *Louis-Philippe*, pp. 162–3.
[44] Cited in Kelly, 'The Machine of the duc d'Orléans', p. 668.

right. Unsurprisingly, the first freedom they demand is 'the liberty to live where one wishes, to go, to come, to stay where one wants, with no impediment'. The list continues with freedom from arbitrary arrest and the right to a fair trial, complete liberty of the press and confidentiality of correspondence. This is followed by essentially constitutional articles: the regular and frequent summoning of the Estates General, no new taxation to be granted by the Estates General without sight of full public accounts, a general and fair tax system, and root-and-branch civil and criminal law reform to be undertaken by the Estates General.[45] The *Instructions* may have had their origins in the duke's personal grievances, but they were also a sincere endorsement of a new form of politics.

V

What new light do the arguments of Tim Blanning and Daniel Wick, both in general and as analysed in the case of the duc d'Orléans, shed on how the court nobility reacted to the crisis of the old regime? There is much evidence that loss of favour at Versailles caused individuals and families to take up an oppositional stance, whether to the left or to the right of the king, the queen and the ministry. There is even more evidence that the left-wing noble opponents of the government in 1788 were already motivated by that volatile mixture of liberalism and nationalism that was to dominate so much of the revolution. What all these nobles had in common was disgust at a representational court culture that had signally failed to satisfy them either materially or spiritually. The most spectacular example of this was Orléans, but he had many imitators.

Of these two aspects, the material was perhaps the least important. The Namierite approach adopted by Daniel Wick that sees the liberal nobles as driven essentially by their own self-interest tells us much about their motivation, but by no means all. Was La Fayette's outburst in front of the comte d'Artois in the Notables solely prompted by the fact that his Noailles relatives had fallen out with Marie Antoinette, or Orléans's protest at the royal session of 19 November 1787 by his loss of court favour eight years before? It does not seem a sufficient reason for so many of these great nobles to have adopted a position so radically at odds with their own material interests, even if they could not have foreseen just how radically at odds this would be after 1789. As Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret has argued, what remains striking is just how much many French nobles, both of court and country, were prepared to give up in the name

[45] Ibid., pp. 680–1.

of principle, whether liberal, nationalist, or simply patriotic.[46] This was certainly how they saw it at the time. As the duc de Montmorency-Luxembourg, one of the more conservative members of the Society of Thirty, put it in a retrospective letter to the vicomte de Chataigner at the end of 1789:

No, M. le vicomte, I have never compromised either with my honour or my duty, I have opposed and attacked those in authority when they were all-powerful and showering me with favour. I have demanded liberty and the rights of citizens at the expense of my fortune, and I have preached the same religion throughout my public life.[47]

One might argue that these words were hypocritical, or told only part of the story. Yet it might be wisest to take them at face value.

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[46] G. Chaussinand-Nogaret, *La noblesse au 18ème siècle: de la féodalité aux lumières* (Paris, 1976), pp. 193–4.

[47] P. Filleul, *Le duc de Montmorency-Luxembourg, premier baron chrétien de France, fondateur du Grand Orient, sa vie et ses archives* (Paris, 1939), p. 258.

14 The French Revolution and the abolition of nobility

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The French Revolution is perhaps the first movement in history to be remembered largely through its dates. The most famous is, of course, 14 July 1789, the day the Bastille fell; but there are a number of others, scarcely less famous: 10 August 1792, the overthrow of the monarchy; 9 Thermidor 1794 in the revolutionary calendar, the fall of Robespierre; or 18 Brumaire 1799, the accession to power of Napoleon. Those who know the field more closely could easily suggest more, but few, perhaps, would instantly think of 19 June 1790 among them. Yet on that day, two events happened in the National Assembly, both memorable in their way. One was essentially trivial, the other quite momentous. And yet the trivial incident often claims more space in histories of the revolution, while the momentous one scarcely rates more than a passing mention or a footnote in most general accounts.

The trivial one arose out of the order of the day in the National Assembly. The first anniversary of the fall of the Bastille was approaching, and the Assembly was discussing how to commemorate it. It decided first of all to set up a special uniformed company to be called the 'Conquerors of the Bastille' and made up of those who could prove that they had been present on the great day. It then decided to admit a number of deputations keen to express their patriotic sentiments. The last of these was led by Jean-Baptiste Cloots (he had not yet renamed himself Anacharsis), a renegade imperial baron, though a Prussian subject, notorious on the streets of Paris for his eccentric commitment to revolutionary causes.[1] The deputation he led in was made up of what he called 'representatives of the human race', or, as the official record puts it, 'of English, Prussians, Sicilians, Hollanders, Russians, Poles, Germans, Swedes, Italians, Spaniards, Brabanters, Liègeois, Avignonese, Swiss, Genevans, Indians,

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[1] On Cloots, see Roland Mortier, *Anacharsis Cloots, ou l'utopie foudroyée* (Paris, 1995). On this session, see pp. 125–33.

Arabs, Chaldeans, etc.'[2] There was also a Turk who harangued the Assembly in an accent so thick that nobody could understand it. But the star was Cloots, who called himself the 'Orator of the Committee of Foreigners', and asked that these alien admirers of the revolution should be given special seats at the ceremonies planned for 14 July, to witness the celebration of a freedom still denied in most of their native lands. The president of the Assembly granted the request, with the provision that afterwards they return home to recount what they had seen. Then they filed out. Home for many of them, it was rumoured, was not so far from the Assembly; and perhaps they returned there via the theatre from which it was suspected they had borrowed their colourful costumes. The whole episode seemed at worst a joke, at best an embarrassment. It has been remembered and recorded ever since as an example of how cheap and meretricious the French Revolution could be, the sort of demagogic episode that Tim Blanning loves to hold up to implicit ridicule.[3]

   And it is seldom recalled that it happened on the same day as something far more significant. No sooner had the Assembly returned to the order paper than an almost unknown deputy from the deepest rural south-west, called Lambel,[4] wrenched the whole discussion off course by declaring: 'Today is the graveyard of vanity. I ask that all persons should be forbidden from taking the title of count, baron, marquis, etc.' That was all he said. But immediately his lead was seized on by several of the prominent orators of the Assembly, all nobles – the brothers Lameth, Lafayette, Noailles, Montmorency – to call for the entire abolition of nobility. 'Hereditary nobility', declared Charles de Lameth, a noble deputy of impressive pedigree, 'is shocking to reason and wounding to true liberty; there can be no political liberty, there can be no emulation for virtue where citizens have any other dignity than that attached to the functions entrusted to them, or other glory than that which they owe to their actions.' 'This motion', added Lafayette, 'is so necessary that I do not believe it needs any support; but if it does, I declare that I am for it with all my heart.' And then, when another nobleman, this time visibly shaken, blurted out a protest, a Third Estate deputy from Normandy (who had himself previously feigned nobility by taking a particle in his name)[5] rose to declare

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[2] J. Madival and E. Laurent, *Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860: série I* (Paris, 1879–), XVI.373.

[3] E.g. *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (London, 1986), pp. 73–4; *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787–1802* (London, 1996), pp. 60–1.

[4] Joseph-Marie Lambel (1747–1807), Third Estate deputy for Villefranche de Rouergue. See Edna Hindie Lemay (ed.), *Dictionnaire des constituants 1789–1791* (2 vols., Oxford and Paris, 1991), II.508–9.

[5] Guillaume François Charles Goupil de Préfelne (1727–1801), Third Estate deputy for Alençon. See Lemay, *Dictionnaire*, I.418–19.

that he had long before drafted out a decree to outlaw nobility, and that he just happened to have it with him. He read it out, and his text formed the basis of what finally emerged as a decree of the Assembly later in the evening, after a good deal of impassioned but sometimes rambling debate. The National Assembly, it declared, abolished hereditary nobility forever. The use of titles was forbidden, and henceforth no French citizen could use any other name but that of his or her family. Liveries and the display of coats of arms were forbidden likewise.

Now, unlike the pantomime charade led on to and off the floor by Cloots, this really was momentous. The whole of Europe had been ruled and dominated since time immemorial by hereditary elites claiming, and generally recognised as possessing, the quality of nobility. They had often been the subject of hostility, hatred even, and criticism; but nobody had ever tried, until now, to abolish nobility itself, in the conviction that, by implication, society could continue to function entirely without nobles, or would indeed function less well if their status or quality continued to be recognised. Here was a quite fundamental attempt to change the cultural basis of society, to expunge from history a type of identity which had been regarded for centuries as both desirable in itself, and a necessary qualification for the legitimate exercise of both social and public authority. If the episode with Cloots exemplifies the cheap and tacky side of the revolution, this one surely stands as an example of the limitless sweep of its ambitions, and the seeming confidence of its leaders that such ambitions could be achieved. Or was it, at the same time, evidence of their fears: fears that, until the very idea of nobility was eliminated, the gains achieved in 1789 might yet prove neither safe nor permanent?

After all, defeating the pretensions of the nobility had been what the revolution of 1789 was mostly about. Once the king conceded that the only way to resolve the state's financial problems was by convoking the Estates General, the traditionally organised national representative assembly that had not met for almost two centuries, the status and power of the nobility posed immediate and unavoidable problems. The built-in veto which the tripartite structure of the Estates handed to the nobility and the clergy combined had the potential to block any sort of reform. And so the whole of the period between September 1788 and June 1789 was dominated by a struggle to destroy that structure – and indeed to defend it on the part of the majority of the nobility. All those months of conflict unleashed what had never really taken place earlier in the eighteenth century: a debate about whether the nobility performed any sort of useful function at all. The potential for an attack on nobility, of course, had always existed in the most basic premises of the Enlightenment. If all men are born equal, how can any of them enjoy any sort of hereditary superiority?

But the fact was that Europe was dominated and governed by men who *did* think themselves hereditarily superior. So there was nothing practical to be done about it. This goes a long way towards explaining the oft-repeated paradox that large numbers of the leading standard-bearers of the Enlightenment were in fact noblemen. And if there was debate about nobility in the century preceding the revolution, it revolved not around whether or how to get rid of it, but on how its value to society could be maximised.[6] Thus, the 1750s in France saw the famous quarrel over commercial nobility, with the abbé Coyer arguing on one side that if nobles abandoned their traditional disdain for trade they could both benefit society materially and solve the age-old problem of nobles too poor to afford their claims to superiority; and the chevalier d'Arc replying that the true noble vocation was military, and that the best way to make the most of that was to guarantee the nobility a monopoly of officer ranks in the army. It is true that these exchanges *implicitly* raised the question of whether a nobility was needed at all; but once again it was a question that nobody with any power to act took very seriously. Instead, the French government began to look with increasing favour on policies that gave nobles something useful to do, even if that actually entailed keeping those who were not noble out of more and more areas of public and professional life. There were some isolated voices (such as d'Argenson, or Holbach, both nobles themselves) condemning the whole principle of nobility root and branch, but it was usually in the context of wider preoccupations,[7] and if they were heard at all it was as voices crying in the wilderness.

The first time such a voice reached a mass audience was as late as 1784. We know it reached thousands because we know how many people came to see, or bought copies of, the play it was in: Beaumarchais's *Marriage of Figaro*.[8] It depicts a feckless, immoral nobleman trying to invoke abandoned feudal rights to sleep with his valet's fiancée. At one point the play's hero denounces him: 'Nobility, fortune, rank, position – it all makes you so proud! What have you done to have so much? You

[6] See Jay M. Smith, *The Culture of Merit: Nobility, Royal Service, and the Making of Absolute Monarchy in France, 1600–1789* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1996), and *Nobility Re-imagined: The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth Century France* (Ithaca, NY, 2005).

[7] D'Argenson, whose *Considérations sur le gouvernement ancien et présent de la France* (1765) appeared posthumously, was mainly concerned about elaborating new political structures; and Holbach's anti-noble polemics were embedded in one chapter of the anonymous *Ethocratie, ou le gouvernement fondé sur la morale* (1776) which sought to advise the new king Louis XVI about an overall ethical approach to government. The only overt attack by a non-noble, devoted entirely to the subject, appears to have been by the clerical essayist Pierre Jaubert, published anonymously: *Eloge de la Roture: dédié aux roturiers* (London, 1766).

[8] See the lively discussion by Tim Blanning in *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 432–5.

gave yourself the trouble of being born, that's all. Otherwise you're pretty ordinary.' More than 97,000 people in Paris heard these words during the play's first run.[9] It was only a few lines in a five-act play, but the character of Count Almaviva was drawn with such hostility from the very start that the criticism was unmistakeable. Louis XVI could see that. That was no doubt part of his reason for preventing the play's performance for several years.[10] But he was eventually persuaded to relent – by great nobles at court. And the traffic jams around the theatre while the play was being performed were caused by aristocratic carriages delivering their owners to see a representative nobleman denounced and lampooned.

So, a world without nobility still, just five years before the revolution, did not seem a realistic or threatening proposition. Or at least not on the European side of the Atlantic. But in the newborn United States a noble-free world already existed, ironically too helped to independence by the noble-officered French army and navy. Yet for a time this freedom from old world ways seemed under threat when certain officers of the now disbanding Continental Army of the United States decided to commemorate their role down the generations by establishing a hereditary veterans' association, known as the Society of the Cincinnati – after the Roman dictator Cincinnatus, who left his farm to save his country and returned to the plough as soon as the job was done.[11] They even commissioned a French officer to design a special badge and ribbon for members and their eldest male descendants to wear. But many of the citizens of the new republic saw this as an order of chivalry, the germ of an American nobility, and incompatible with republican principles. A fierce controversy raged throughout the last months of 1783 and much of 1784, culminating in George Washington, president of the Society, threatening to resign unless heredity was dropped. It was, and the controversy died away; but not before it had been transmitted to Europe by the efforts of the American minister in Paris, Benjamin Franklin.[12] Even as French officers who had served in America, like Lafayette or the Lameths, queued up for their insignia to flaunt around the streets and

[9] John Lough, *Paris Theatre Audiences in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1957), p. 182.

[10] The main source for the king's reaction to the play, however, Mme Campan's *Mémoires sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette* (1823), ch. 11, emphasises that his outrage was directed at Figaro's strictures in the same speech on government. Campan recalled at the same time that although the king found much of the play in poor taste, he also praised some of it.

[11] Minor Myers, Jr, *Liberty without Anarchy: A History of the Society of the Cincinnati* (Charlottesville, VA, 1983), and more recently Markus Hünemörder, *The Society of the Cincinnati: Conspiracy and Distrust in Early America* (New York, 2006).

[12] See Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin* (New York, 1938), pp. 707–10.

salons of Paris, Franklin received a copy of the most incendiary pamphlet produced by the controversy, the *Considerations on the Society or Order of Cincinnatus* by Judge Aedanus Burke of South Carolina.[13] Franklin gave it to Mirabeau, still at this point a desperate and renegade noble journalist, suggesting that he produce a French version, embellished with a few notes supplied by Franklin from a tract he had himself written but decided it was unwise to publish.[14] Mirabeau accepted; and the result, appearing late in 1784 as France was still echoing to the sensation of *Figaro*, was what Franklin called 'a cover'd satire against *noblesse* in general'. In the first work he signed with his own name and title, Mirabeau denounced the nobility as a band of parasites descended from barbarian marauders, and poured scorn on heredity anyway. From Franklin he took the idea that after nine generations only 1/512 of an original ancestor's blood would still be flowing in a descendant's veins. The true source of this ancestor worship, he proclaimed, was vanity, and mere opinion; and in a republic, dedicated by nature to liberty and civil equality, any form of nobility was a threat. Published at first in England[15] and signed by a notorious rake and adventurer, it was perhaps easy to dismiss this polemic. Besides, within a few months of its appearance Franklin, its original inspirer, had gone back to America. But within three years it had been translated into English, Dutch and German, and in the perspective of what was to happen in France within five years, it can be seen as an opening shot in a campaign that was to culminate on 19 June 1790. And it is interesting that, in the controversies immediately following the abolition of nobility, the crib used by Mirabeau which Franklin had written (including that famous calculation) was printed for the first time as Franklin's work in the *Journal* of the mainstream revolutionary club, the Society of 1789.[16]

The result of these polemics, along with a series of scandals and controversies arising out of noble pretensions or acts of apparent exclusivism in the early and mid-1780s, was to provide a repertoire of examples, precedents and arguments within recent memory for those who wished to attack the claims and pretensions of the nobility to separate representation and powers over the winter of 1788–9. Everything was raked up in these exchanges, everything was thrown in, and polarised positions

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[13] John C. Meleney, *The Public Life of Aedanus Burke: Revolutionary Republican in Post-revolutionary South Carolina* (Columbia, SC, 1989).

[14] Franklin to Sarah Bache, 26 January 1784, in J. A. Leo Lemay (ed.), *Franklin: Writings* (New York, 1987), pp. 1084–9.

[15] *Considérations sur l'ordre de Cincinnatus, ou imitation d'un pamphlet anglo-américain, par le comte de Mirabeau* (London, 1784) (dated 20 September).

[16] *Journal de la Société de 1789* 8 (24 juillet 1790), pp. 9–16, with an introductory letter from Philippe Antoine Grouvelle (1757–1806), formerly Chamfort's secretary. The news of Franklin's death had recently been announced by Mirabeau to the Assembly on 11 June.

were rapidly taken up from which, once articulated, it was difficult to withdraw. And suddenly it seemed as if the only alternative to a world in which nobles ruled the roost in almost every sphere, was one in which they ruled nothing at all – except in whatever capacity they might have as men of property. No sort of argument about the very existence of a nobility failed to surface in the press and pamphlet war that raged over that winter. The most famous was, of course, Sieyès's pivotal tract *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers Etat?*, which argued that no sort of privileged or separate order could form part of a nation, and that an order which claimed descent and legitimation from a horde of Frankish conquerors should pack up and go back to the forests of Germany. The idea of Frankish conquest, usually ascribed to the early eighteenth-century writer Boulainvilliers, but in fact much older,[17] was by no means subscribed to by everybody, not even all nobles, but it was a marvellous Aunt Sally to shy at; and so much other noble ideology proved an easy target, too. By the summer of 1789, accordingly, every politically conscious person was fully familiar with all the arguments against nobility; and everybody knew, too, how to demolish all the counter-arguments that nobles and their defenders might put up. In short, as in so many other spheres, the onset of the French Revolution unlocked the potential of the Enlightenment.

And so it is no surprise that once the separate powers and status of the orders in the Estates General had been overthrown in June 1789, the structure of noble power in general rapidly collapsed. On the night of 4 August, within six weeks of the final merger of the orders into a National Assembly, the whole structure of privilege was swept away. That night, nobles lost their feudal dues and prerogatives, their tax-exemptions and all sorts of juridical advantages. The main means by which the nobility recruited newcomers, through venal offices, also disappeared.[18] A few weeks later, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen proclaimed careers open to the talents, and service to the nation as the only legitimate claim to public distinction.

What is striking is the extent to which nobles accepted all this.[19] Most may not have liked it, but they felt they had to, and could, live with it. Both inside and outside the Assembly, many threw themselves into the

[17] See Harold A. Ellis, *Boulainvilliers and the French Monarchy: Aristocratic Politics in Early Eighteenth Century France* (Ithaca, NY, 1988).
[18] See William Doyle, *Venality: The Sale of Offices in Eighteenth Century France* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 1–2, 273–82.
[19] See Patrice Higonnet, *Class, Ideology and the Rights of Nobles during the French Revoluton* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 57–66; and Timothy Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary: The Deputies of the French National Assembly and the Emergence of a Revolutionary Culture (1789–1790)* (Princeton, NJ, 1996), pp. 181–2.

revolution's work of reform, accepting that the old regime was gone, and that it was now time to build something new and better. Besides, the revolution at this stage was not all loss. They were still nobles, after all. Their lands were still intact. They still wore their swords, ribbons and decorations. American veterans, proud to have participated in an earlier revolution, still sported their Cincinnati insignia. They still used their titles, displayed their coats of arms, dressed their servants in livery. And for many, there was a positive gain in what had been done. One of the most basic preoccupations revealed in the noble *cahiers* of 1789 was the desire to purify noble recruitment. That meant, above all, eliminating the acquisition of nobility by purchase in the form of ennobling offices. This aspect of the venality of public offices had completely transformed the character of the French nobility since the sixteenth century. Purchase had become the main everyday gateway to the noble order, and had made the nobility of France the most open elite in Europe.[20] But it was a process that nobles had always found troubling. The essence of belief in the ideology of nobility was that it was a thing of the blood, a matter of race (as some did not hesitate to claim) and strictly incapable of acquisition by outsiders. Even those – and it was by far the majority of the French nobility in 1789 – whose own lineage was traceable to purchase over the preceding two centuries soon embraced the myth, and welcomed the closing of the door by which their own families had entered. But when the sale of all offices was abolished on 4 August 1789 this door was suddenly slammed shut. No new nobles could now be recruited, unless by criteria of merit which in any case had yet to be formulated. At last, then, the nobility could become the true hereditary caste which it liked to think itself, but which it had never actually been. From another perspective, the revolution itself had *created* the mythical, exclusive nobility which it claimed to be against.

For nobles, there were potentially vast cultural compensations in this for the material losses which they had sustained as a consequence of the other abolitions of 4 August. It would perhaps have been sound policy to leave them with all their baubles and vanities, with the addition of this solid and tangible gain, in order to attach them firmly to all the other things that the revolution was doing. In that light, the abolition of nobility itself and all its outward symbols has often seemed a peculiarly gratuitous act of triumphalism, stamping on a vanquished opponent, something hardly explicable. The reality of noble power had gone: what was the use of trying to obliterate even its remaining symbols?

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[20] Doyle, *Venality*, pp. 163–7; Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, *La noblesse au xviiie siècle: de la féodalité aux lumières* (Paris, 1976), pp. 48–9.

This is the problem posed by the law of 19 June 1790. Why did it happen at all? It seemed to come right out of the blue. Lambel, who first proposed it, was a member of no established group and had hardly spoken before. He seemed to be acting on impulse. But why then did Goupil de Préfelne just happen to have a draft decree for abolition in his pocket? To try to explain it fully, we have to turn to the specific circumstances of the spring of 1790. First of all, if we comb through the explosion of publicity that the revolution had unleashed, we find that the idea of abolishing nobility had been in the air for some months. Some pamphleteers had been arguing that a separate role of sorts might still be found for the nobility, and in response radical journalists had begun to warn that titles kept the memory, and perhaps the hopes, of a vanished noble hegemony alive.[21] It is clear that during that spring many people thought 'aristocrats' had not given up the struggle.[22] Quite a few prominent nobles had emigrated by then, and were showing no desire to come back. February 1790 saw the trial and execution of the marquis de Favras, said to be the author of a plot to spirit the king out of Paris.[23] That he was hanged rather than beheaded vividly demonstrated that yet another noble privilege was no more; but the whole episode kept suspicion of nobles very much alive. The king himself felt obliged implicitly to dissociate himself from any such machinations by coming to the National Assembly on 4 February to declare himself fully in favour of

[21] See, for example, the anonymous *L'anéantissement total de la noblesse héréditaire ou requête urgente à L'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, 1789), which seems to have been published some time after 14 July (B[ritish]L[ibrary] FR Tracts 127 (4)); anonymous too is *Essais politiques et philosophiques sur ce qu'on appelle les trois ordres de la France* (Paris, 1789), which appears from internal evidence to be after 4 August (BL FR Tracts 14 (1)); attempts to find the nobility a role are exemplified by Delacroix, genealogist of the Order of Malta, *Hommage à ma patrie: considérations sur la noblesse de France* (Paris, 1790), dated 18 March (BL FR Tracts 90 (11)).

[22] For much of the preceding century, the term 'aristocracy' had been used almost interchangeably with 'oligarchy'. Only in the spring of 1789 did it come to be applied to nobility more specifically, as in (Nicolas Bergasse), *Observations sur le préjugé de la noblesse héréditaire* (London, 1789), p. 48. The first use of the term 'aristocrat' appears to have been in the Dutch pamphlet *Aan het Volk van Nederland* (Ostend, 1781) by the patriot polemicist (and nobleman) Joan Derk van der Capellen Tot den Pol: Simon Schama, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands 1780–1813* (London, 1977), p. 66. Thereafter it was in common usage to describe the partisans of the Prince of Orange who triumphed with the help of the Prussian army in 1787. Meanwhile the pamphlet was translated into French, German and English. In France in 1789–90 the word *aristocrate* was mainly applied to conservative noblemen and their supporters, only to widen out again after the abolition of nobility to take in any perceived enemies of equality, as in Marat's famous comment in *L'ami du peuple*, 30 June 1790: 'What will we have gained in destroying the aristocracy of nobles, if it is replaced by the aristocracy of the rich?'

[23] See Barry M. Shapiro, *Revolutionary Justice in Paris, 1789–1790* (Cambridge, 1993), ch. 6.

all that the revolution had done and promise to put himself at the head of it. On the other hand he urged caution in the future, and among a number of other pleas he exhorted the deputies to protect and respect the titles of what he called (implicitly accepting traditional noble self-definition) the 'honoured race' of nobility, 'a distinction that nothing can destroy'.[24] This was enough to awaken radical apprehensions, echoing all the royal attempts since the previous June to stall attacks on noble prerogatives.

Other things at this time perhaps heightened awareness of past noble iniquities. One was the finalisation of legislation implementing the decrees of the previous August to abolish 'feudalism'. The debate went on sporadically in the Assembly throughout March, reminding all onlookers of the bizarre range of powers, prerogatives and privileges that the honoured race had once enjoyed. Then there was the publication in April of the so-called *Livre rouge*, the hitherto secret list of pensions granted by the crown since 1774. The vast majority of beneficiaries of these handouts were shown to have been nobles. And although it is true that most pensions were quite small, and granted to arguably deserving cases such as retired or wounded army officers, what caught the eye, or at least the eye of radical journalists, were the bigger sums and sinecures paid out to the courtiers of Versailles for no obvious service at all; people like the queen's favourites the Polignacs, who seemed to symbolise the greedy and parasitic worthlessness of the old ruling class. For weeks on end lurid revelations from the *Livre rouge* dominated the press.[25]

And fabricating a further attack on the nobility was perhaps seen by some, in this new world of parliamentary politics, as a relatively cheap and easy way of establishing radical and populist credentials, and outbidding rivals. The spring of 1790 saw the emergence of some violent and personal rivalries among leading deputies, and particularly noble ones. The power of Alexandre de Lameth in the booming new Jacobin club soon came to be resented by ambitious rivals like Lafayette and Mirabeau.[26] No doubt they were pleased by the embarrassing revelation in the *Livre rouge* that the Lameths had been in receipt of royal pensions for no obvious services. In any case, this rivalry culminated in the establishment of a rival club, the Society of 1789, late in May. That grew, in turn, out of a series of much less formal groups, or self-styled 'committees' led by liberal nobles. And it was in one of these, which met in the lavish apartments of the duc

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[24] *Archives parlementaires*, XII.430.

[25] For example, *Révolutions de Paris*, 39, 6–12 avril 1790; *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, nos. 21, 22, 23.

[26] Louis Gottschalk and Margaret Maddox, *Lafayette in the French Revolution: From the October Days through the Federation* (Chicago, 1973), pp. 316–17; Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary*, pp. 278–80.

de La Rochefoucauld (the translator, in 1783, of the new American state constitutions, several of which proscribed nobility), that a legislative plan for abolishing nobility first seems to have been mooted.[27] Quite what the rationale was is uncertain. We only learn about it, in fact, from a letter of Mirabeau, that same Mirabeau who had denounced nobility so roundly in 1784 at the instance of Franklin, but who now was quite scornful of the whole idea of abolishing it.[28] Whether that was because he had changed his mind about the nobility, or because he now thought the issue supererogatory, or simply because this time the idea was not his, is hard to tell. He certainly was not there at the session on 19 June; but the way those other two deadly rivals, Lameth and Lafayette, leaped into the debate as soon as the question had been unexpectedly raised suggests that they were scrambling to jump on a bandwagon that both wished they had launched themselves.

Were there other contributory factors? What happened afterwards certainly raises an intriguing possibility. Lots of nobles protested against the decree, as we shall see.[29] But so did the king's leading minister, Necker, who was unafraid to publish his opinion later.[30] He was by this time well aware that the huge popularity he had enjoyed the previous year was fast melting away, and he had little to lose. What he did not reveal was that he had urged the king in council to veto the 19 June decree. So had other ministers. And so, it appears, although he was not a minister, had Lafayette.[31] It would seem, in fact, that some people backed the decree because they thought the king would never accept it. So far in the revolution he had never vetoed anything; and in fact he did not use this power until the famous vetoes of 1791. But there seems to have been a strong feeling among liberals and moderates, both inside and outside the Assembly, that the king ought to be looking for an occasion to use the veto, just to show that he could, to establish a precedent. So perhaps some of those ostensibly in favour of this measure never really expected it to take effect.

But if that was the rather tortuous plan, it evidently backfired. The king had no interest in vetoing anything. Apparently he believed that the more extreme and absurd things he sanctioned, the more it would show

[27] Gottschalk and Maddox, *Lafayette in the French Revolution*, p. 409.

[28] Ad. de Bacourt (ed.), *Correspondance entre le comte de Mirabeau et le comte de La Marck pendant les années 1789, 1790, et 1791* (3 vols., Paris, 1851), II.34. Mirabeau to La Marck, 4 juin 1790.

[29] See below, n. 32.

[30] Jean Egret, *Necker, ministre de Louis XVI* (Paris, 1975), pp. 420–6; Henri Grange, *Les idées de Necker* (Paris, 1974), pp. 128–30.

[31] Egret, *Necker*, p. 422; Gottschalk and Maddox, *Lafayette in the French Revolution*, pp. 426, 429.

he was a helpless prisoner, and perhaps win him sympathy and help. So he did nothing to protect the 'honoured race'. And meanwhile the targets of the decree were mostly outraged.[32] They protested that it had been sprung on them without warning, in an evening session when many nobles were absent. Constitutional issues were supposed to be discussed only in the morning. There was a nasty wrangle on the floor of the Assembly about whether this *was* a constitutional matter, but, not surprisingly, the protesters lost. The only principled objection from the stunned noblemen present came from the Alsatian count Landenberg-Wagenbourg. His constituents, he declared,[33] would never have authorised him to vote for this. 'They will know that they live with the blood they were born with, and that nothing can prevent them from living and dying as gentlemen.'

And that was the central point, much emphasised in the protests that poured in over the next few days from outraged noble deputies and others beyond. As the marquis de Ferrières, normally a coolly detached observer, put it in a letter to a fellow nobleman:[34]

> The renunciation of pecuniary privileges, the admission of all citizens to military and civil employments, the abolition of seigniorial justice, parish lordships, noble chapters, equal inheritance, had already destroyed the nobility in reality. No other distinctions were left but that deriving from opinion, resulting from long-lived habits of respect. It is, then, this opinion that the decree wishes to destroy, but will not destroy, because opinion is beyond the power of the law; because it is impossible for every man not to be his father's son; because nobility will be passed on, as before, by tradition, and the bond of identity will always exist between the nobleman of today and his most distant posterity.

For the first but not the last time, the Assembly had run up against the limits of its power. It could not abolish beliefs, or the identities which those beliefs expressed. Nobles could not be prevented from thinking themselves noble, and behaving in ways that they thought being noble demanded. The Assembly would make a similar, but even bigger, mistake later in the year when it interfered with religious beliefs, and as a result split the entire nation. That was certainly the most profound wound inflicted on France by the overconfidence of the revolutionary legislators. But we should not underestimate the fateful importance of the earlier attempt to legislate for beliefs. If the abolition of venality had

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[32] Their protests were not printed in the *Moniteur*, but can be found in *Archives parlementaires*, XVI.379–89. See also Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary*, pp. 294–5.

[33] *Archives parlementaires*, XVI.374.

[34] Henri Carré (ed.), *Marquis de Ferrières: correspondance inédite, 1789, 1790, 1791* (Paris, 1932), p. 207. A Monsieur de Chacé, 20 juin 1790. Habermasians might note that in these invocations of public opinion it constitutes a curb on revolutionary power quite as great as on that of the old monarchy.

turned the nobility into a closed society, the abolition of titles, arms and liveries made it into a sort of secret society, unable to show its face in public. That made it even easier to believe in the ubiquity of plots and conspiracies, which the revolutionaries were all too prone to fantasise about in any case.[35] And it must have made many a nobleman more inclined than ever before to sympathise with such machinations, because the evidence is overwhelming that most nobles were completely outraged by the decree: 138 deputies, nearly half the order, and more than half of the nobles still active in the Assembly, issued and printed a formal protest during the next few days. Protests poured in from outside the Assembly, too, and the press was full of them. A correspondent of Thomas Jefferson wrote to the former ambassador that noblemen seemed more upset by this than by all their previous material losses.[36] But perhaps that is not so surprising. The decree of 19 June deprived them of their last claim to distinction, the identity they had grown up with. It appeared to be saying there was no place for people who considered themselves noble in regenerated France, however much they might accept all that regeneration had brought about. The jubilant way in which ordinary people over the next few weeks insisted on the destruction or obliteration of coats of arms showed them what their fellow-citizens thought of them, too. So this was the moment when most nobles parted company with the French Revolution. It was not even easy for them to take solace in continued loyalty to the king, since he too had betrayed them by sanctioning the decree. Many noble army officers felt bound to him by the oath of loyalty they had taken on appointment, and did not feel absolved from that until Louis XVI attempted to escape and was brought back a captive a year later. Then, huge numbers of them registered their disgust by emigrating.[37] Their last link to the country of their birth had now gone.

And yet, as many of the noble protesters of June and July 1790 predicted, it proved impossible to abolish nobility. All that was possible was to refuse to recognise it. That was radical enough in an eighteenth-century context, where only a handful of years beforehand almost nobody had

[35] A growing literature on this theme goes back to Geoffrey Cubitt, 'Denouncing Conspiracy in the French Revolution', *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 33 (1989), pp. 144–58. Important recent additions are Timothy Tackett, 'A Conspiracy Obsession in a Time of Revolution: French Elites and the Origins of the Terror', *American Historical Review* 105 (2000), pp. 691–713, and various contributions to Barry Coward and Julian Swann (eds.), *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe: From the Waldensians to the French Revolution* (Aldershot, 2004).

[36] Julian P. Boyd (ed.), *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton, 1950–), XVI.571. William Short to Thomas Jefferson, 25 June 1790.

[37] Donald Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, 1951), pp. 24–6. See also Higonnet, *Class, Ideology and the Rights of Nobles*, pp. 286–95.

considered any such thing even theoretically possible. But the French Revolution did demonstrate that in practical terms nobility was neither invulnerable nor impregnable. Even if it could not be comprehensively eliminated, it could be attacked, and seriously wounded. And one form of it actually could be destroyed – an open one. Even those nobles under the old regime who had deplored the way newcomers could buy their way in, had often been prepared to allow for entry on merit, as a reward for services, or courageous, virtuous or otherwise beneficial actions.[38] By 1789, very large numbers were of this opinion, perhaps even a majority.[39] But the abolition of venality closed the buy-in option, and the withdrawal of any public recognition for noble status made the public service argument redundant, since the public was no longer interested in regulating a status it did not recognise.[40] As the king had predicted in February, the revolution could not destroy nobility. But it could, and inadvertently did, create a new type of nobility, a closed one, a private body of individuals, entirely self-regulating.[41] It could almost be said that the French Revolution was a sort of emancipation for the nobility, setting it free from a state tutelage which had moulded its entire development since the sixteenth century. Henceforth, nobles alone would decide who was one of them and who was not, defining themselves solely on grounds of acceptable ancestry.[42] The only way into this caste now was by usurpation – always an important way for people to join a nobility, but never, by definition, a legitimate one.

Whether this unintentional recasting of the nobility, by revolutionaries whose only hope was to destroy it, did nobles and their ideals much good seems open to doubt. Ultimately it turned them into their own caricature: selfish, snobbish, inward-looking, fiercely reactionary. The bitter experience of emigration only accentuated these trends. So that the old order which they dreamed of restoring when the Bourbons came to enjoy their own again after Napoleon's overthrow was not in fact old at all,

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[38] See Smith, *The Culture of Merit*, passim; Rafe Blaufarb, *The French Army 1750–1820: Careers, Talent, Merit* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 12–74.

[39] The classic argument (which has not however gone uncontested) of Chaussinand-Nogaret, *La noblesse au xviiie siècle*, pp. 219–22.

[40] When Napoleon decided, in 1808, to create a new service nobility of his own, it was minutely regulated, precisely in order to eliminate what the noble-born Corsican saw as the flaws of the *ci-devant noblesse*: their ignorance, their idleness, their indiscipline and their tendency to impoverish themselves. See Jean Tulard, *Napoléon et la noblesse d'Empire* (3rd edn, Paris, 2001).

[41] Rather like, in fact, the American Society of the Cincinnati, who soon abandoned the 1784 renunciation of heredity, and who exist as a closed hereditary body to this day.

[42] It was scarcely surprising that, despite the willingness of over 700 *ci-devants* to accept titles from the Emperor Napoleon, most were content to bask in an older status beyond his control.

but a figment of reordered memory, a monstrous distortion of what things before 1789 had really been like. To that extent, however, the Restoration nobility was even more repugnant to anyone who believed still in the revolution and its legacy. If the revolutionaries failed in their attempt to abolish the nobility in addition to their more successful abolition of its power, at least they succeeded in making what survived look ridiculous, and preoccupied with absurd dreams and ambitions. And that was enough to ensure that the French nobility was never again likely to achieve the power and hegemony that it had enjoyed in the carefree days before 1789, when it had seemed blissfully impervious to criticism.

15   Foreign policy and political culture in later eighteenth-century France

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Amidst the panoply of political-cultural studies of eighteenth-century France published in the past two decades, foreign policy has been relatively neglected.[1] Given the importance of the states-system in furnishing a comparative, competitive context for critical public discussion at the time, this is perhaps surprising, until one recalls how unfashionable foreign policy has been among historians during the past generation.[2] It was never thus among the later eighteenth-century 'public'.[3] Readers within this self-consciously important community tended to be urban, literate and comfortably off, perhaps employed in one of the professions, in trade, or as royal officials. They were often members of literary salons or reading clubs, whose purchase of legal titles (and promotion of illegal ones) helped to create a 'buzz' – that is to say, a 'public opinion' – and

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[1] A good starting-point remains the influential series *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, vol. I, ed. Keith M. Baker, *The Political Culture of the Old Regime* (Oxford, 1987); vol. II, ed. Colin Lucas, *The Political Culture of the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1988). For a current bibliography, and a fuller treatment of some of the themes discussed here, see Gary Savage, 'The French Revolution and the *secret du roi*: Diplomatic Tradition, Foreign Policy and Political Culture in Later Eighteenth-Century France (1756–1792)', (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2005).

[2] Blanning, for one, has emphasised the link, e.g. with regard to the formation of national identities; see T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), p. 24 and passim. He has also made a point of showing how the revolution must once again be understood as contemporaries understood it; that is to say, in its wider European context; Blanning, 'The French Revolution and Europe', in Colin Lucas, ed., *Rewriting the French Revolution: The Andrew Browning Lectures 1989* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 183–206.

[3] See Mona Ozouf, 'Public Opinion', *Journal of Modern History* 60 supplement (1988), pp. s1–s21; Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Durham and London, 1991), esp. pp. 20–43; Dale Van Kley, 'In Search of Eighteenth-Century Parisian Public Opinion', *French Historical Studies* 19 (1995), pp. 215–26. On the 'popular' as opposed to 'bourgeois' public sphere, and its formative relationship with government, see Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*, trans. R. Morris (University Park, PA, 1995). Also useful are Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (London, 1996), esp. ch. 10; and Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows, eds., *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760–1820* (Cambridge, 2002).

a potential readership of thousands for all sorts of titles, including those on political economy and diplomacy.[4] The extant correspondence between the *premier commis* at the foreign ministry, Rayneval, and the head of the *bureau de la librairie*, Neville, confirms the interest of contemporary writers and publishers, as well as readers, in questions of foreign policy.[5] Though increasingly flexible in what they would sanction – for reasons of commerce as much as common sense – the authorities naturally strived to suppress anything which might be construed as prejudicial comment on the interests or conduct of France and her allies.[6] Literary 'patriots' were convinced, on the other hand, that the critical exposition of affairs of state was essential to the public good (and, at least in the case of entrepreneurially minded journalists like Simon Linguet, the private purse).[7] The consequence was a ferment of wide-ranging diplomatic debate which has yet to be fully explored by historians.

Mercifully, though it remains something of a footnote in the more canonical treatments, the interplay of foreign policy and political culture in the old regime and revolutionary periods has begun to receive greater scholarly attention in recent years.[8] It is to be hoped that the trend away from predominantly endogenous studies will continue in favour of an approach which, if it does not accord primacy to foreign policy, at least restores it to the heart of political discussion as contemporaries would have expected and recognised. In the case of France, much can certainly be learned from an examination of the way in which public debate, played

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[4] Michael Kwass, *Privilege and the Politics of Taxation in Eighteenth-Century France: Liberté, Egalité, Fiscalité* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 216–17; Orville T. Murphy, *The Diplomatic Retreat of France and Public Opinion on the Eve of the French Revolution, 1783–1789* (Washington, DC, 1998), pp. 137–8.

[5] Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (AAE), Mémoires et Documents (MD) France 582 (censure politique). Several of the works discussed and vetted were histories of the Seven Years' and American Wars. The foreign gazettes were also cited regularly in the correspondence.

[6] See e.g. Rayneval to Neville, 30 June 1782; AAE MD France 582, fo. 185; Neville? to Rayneval, 1 May 1786; ibid., fo. 259.

[7] See Darline Gay Levy, *The Ideas and Careers of Simon-Nicolas-Henri Linguet: A Study in Eighteenth-Century French Politics* (Chicago, 1980). He and Vergennes shared a mutual antipathy; but the foreign minister still read his best-selling journal, the *Annales politiques*, as did the king, voraciously; ibid., p. 193.

[8] See e.g. Thomas Kaiser, 'Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia and the Queen', *French History* 14:3 (2000), pp. 241–71; Kaiser, 'From the Austrian Committee to the Foreign Plot: Marie-Antoinette, Austrophobia and the Terror', *French Historical Studies* 26 (2003), pp. 579–617; Kaiser, 'The Evil Empire? The Debate on Turkish Despotism in Eighteenth-Century French Political Culture', *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), pp. 6–34. See also Michael Hochedlinger, '"La cause de tous les maux de la France": die "Austrophobie" im revolutionären Frankreich und der Sturz des Königtums 1789–92', *Francia* 24 (1997), pp. 73–120; and Gary Savage, 'Favier's Heirs: The French Revolution and the *secret du roi*', *Historical Journal* 41:1 (1998), pp. 225–58.

out in a range of media, informed, critiqued and ultimately derailed the Bourbon monarchy's half-hearted attempt to modernise its foreign policy in the interests of security and prosperity on one hand, and its own legitimacy on the other. The monarchy's failure to find a satisfactory or lasting fit between the two – in effect, between the national and the dynastic interest – produced a public reckoning against criteria established in the public sphere; criteria which would in turn inform both the foreign policy and wider political discourse of the revolutionary regime which followed. In short, an examination of the later eighteenth-century debate about France's place and role in the world not only illuminates the politics and political culture of the old regime, but of the French Revolution itself.

Published under the Consulate in 1801, the priest, sometime diplomat and historian Jean-Louis Soulavie's *Mémoires historiques et politiques* raises several issues germane to a discussion of foreign policy and political culture in later eighteenth-century France. Tabulating foreign policy since the sixteenth century in terms of a dialectic between 'unnatural' Austrian and 'natural' anti-Austrian systems, Soulavie argued that, since the first Treaty of Versailles between France and Austria signed in May 1756 – the linchpin of the so-called Diplomatic Revolution – two foreign policies had struggled simultaneously for supremacy at the French court. By this reckoning, the invidious pro-Austrian policy of Mme de Pompadour, the duc de Choiseul, Marie Antoinette and Loménie de Brienne had been pitted against the patriotic policy of the old Dauphin, the ducs de Richelieu and d'Aiguillon and the comte de Vergennes. There could be no doubt where Soulavie's own sympathies lay:

> The Austrian opposition, organised in France against our territorial diplomacy, has always been an artificial construction of leagues, Frondes, conspiracies and turbulent associations against the French government; while the opposition against this 'Austrianised' government was always, by contrast, a national, natural business, established on a deep science of diplomacy and eternal, invariable principles which underpinned the conservation of the state [and] society established in the space between the Rhine, the Ocean, the Pyrenees and the Alps, whether the government is monarchical or republican.[9]

Nevertheless, only the appointment of the so-called Girondin ministry in March 1792 finally secured what Soulavie called an 'anti-Austrian revolution' – a revolution underpinned by the denunciations of patriotic writers like Claude-Charles de Peyssonnel and politicians like Jacques-Pierre

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[9] Jean-Louis Soulavie, 'Tableau des relations politiques de la maison d'autriche, allemande et espagnole, avec la maison de Bourbon, avant et pendant la revolution, pour servir d'intelligence à l'Histoire de la lutte sécrète, établie dans l'intérieure de la cour de Louis XVI entre le parti de la Reine et le parti opposée', in Soulavie, *Mémoires historiques et politiques du règne de Louis XVI, depuis son mariage jusqu'à sa mort* (6 vols., Paris, 1801), v.118.

Brissot against Marie Antoinette's putative Austrian Committee and its ministerial lackeys.[10]

Although the historian is naturally suspicious of tidy typologies, there is much to be said for Soulavie's characterisation of French foreign policy and the way it was debated in the last decades of the eighteenth century. Those who saw the potential value of an alliance with Austria, chiefly as a means to enable France – liberated from the grand illusion of 'amphibious' domination both on the continent and overseas[11] – to concentrate upon the threat posed by British maritime power, encountered visceral opposition from their more traditionally minded detractors, who would rather bury the so-called modernisers than cast a shroud over the kind of European primacy achieved by Louis XIV. For example, one of the architects of the Austrian alliance, the foreign minister at the time, the abbé (and future cardinal) Bernis, insisted that it was entirely consonant with diplomatic tradition because it would help France to maintain what he called her 'superior role' in the states-system by reducing an overmighty Britain.[12] By contrast, the fiercely anti-Austrian publicist Jean-Louis Favier countered that the best means to cut Britain down to size lay precisely in maintaining the historic continental alliances of France's traditional, that is to say broadly seventeenth-century, foreign policy.[13]

Favier's first critique of the Austrian alliance was commissioned by the *dévot* (broadly conservative, traditionalist, 'devout') marquis d'Argenson; but its chief themes were recapitulated when he later served as the comte de Broglie's apologist for Louis XV's traditionally oriented secret diplomacy, the *secret du roi*.[14] The original purpose of the *secret* – other than to elevate the prince de Conti to the Polish throne – was to restrain Austria

[10] Ibid., pp. 96–7; Augustin Challamel, 'Le Comité autrichien', an appendix to Challamel, *Les clubs contrerévolutionnaires* (Paris, 1895), pp. 523–40.

[11] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 60–4.

[12] 'Mémoire pour servir d'instruction à M. le comte de Stainville, ambassadeur du Roi à Vienne, Compiègne, 31 juillet 1757', in *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France depuis les traités de Westphalie jusqu'à la Révolution française*, vol. 1: *Autriche*, ed. Albert Sorel (Paris, 1884), p. 356.

[13] Jean-Louis Favier, *Doutes et questions sur le traité de Versailles du 1er mai 1756 entre le Roi et l'Impératrice-Reine de Hongrie*, printed in the invaluable Louis-Philippe, comte de Ségur, ed., *Politique de tous les cabinets de l'Europe pendant les règnes de Louis XV et de Louis XVI* (3 vols., Paris, 1801), III.251–366. On Favier's life, see Jules Flammermont, 'J.-L. Favier: sa vie et ses écrits', *La Révolution française* 36 (1899), pp. 161–84, 258–76, 314–35.

[14] J.-L Favier, 'Conjectures raisonnées sur la situation actuelle de la France dans le système politique de l'Europe; et réciproquement sur la position respective de l'Europe à l'égard de la France; enfin, sur les nouvelles combinaisons qui doivent ou peuvent résulter de ces différens rapports, aussi dans le système politique de l'Europe (1773)', in Ségur, ed., *Politique*, I.211ff. See also Didier Ozanam and Michel Antoine, *Correspondance secrète du comte de Broglie avec Louis XV (1756–1774)* (2 vols., Paris, 1956–61); and the duc de Broglie, *Le secret du roi: correspondance secrète de Louis XV avec ses agents diplomatiques 1752–1774* (2 vols., Paris, 1878).

and Russia by means of alliances with Sweden, Poland, Prussia and the Porte: the so-called *barrière de l'est*.[15] In the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, it became anti-British and revanchist.[16] It was also a rallying-point for all those, often but not exclusively aligned with the *parti dévot* at court, who opposed Choiseul's pragmatic belief that the pursuit of a maritime policy necessitated some kind of withdrawal from France's former continental commitments. Thinking within this developing tradition, Favier rejected the *choiseuliste* persistence with the Austrian alliance, insisting that global recovery *vis-à-vis* Britain could only be achieved by pursuing the *de facto* domination of the continent through a network of alliances with smaller powers against the kind of imperial aggression which might distract France from the maritime theatre and undermine her international reputation.[17] In short, only with the security and prestige ensured by a powerful military and with solid alliances like the old *barrière de l'est* could France hope to recover, 'on sea as well as land, the dignity and pre-eminence of the crown'.[18]

This argument between foreign policy 'modernisers' and 'traditionalists' was a fixture of later eighteenth-century diplomatic discourse. In support of their particular positions, traditionalists lamented the partition of Poland as a direct consequence of the abrogation of France's European responsibilities since forging an alliance with the Habsburgs; while modernisers celebrated the American War as evidence of the benefits of that alliance as a means to deny Britain a useful continental ally. The former failed to appreciate Frederick the Great's manifest unwillingness to play the part they ascribed to him in their script for French revival; the latter tended to ignore Russia's aggrandisement in eastern Europe and the Levant as a by-product of France's retreat from those theatres. Neither side quite fits the mould of Soulavie's portrayal of a struggle between patriots and traitors, as this debate was largely a question of genuine policy differences over the best way to tackle British power. In essence, it pitted those who were prepared to contemplate a reversal of alliances to keep the continent quiet while France paddled in more global waters, against those who continued to insist that the *barrière de l'est* could shackle the

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[15] Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 5–6; H. M. Scott, 'The Decline of France and the Transformation of the European States System, 1756–1792', in Peter Krüger and Paul W. Schroeder, eds., '*The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848': Episode or Model in Modern History?* (Marburg, 2003), p. 106.

[16] Lucien Bély, *Les relations internationales en Europe (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris, 1992), pp. 591–2.

[17] Albert Sorel, *Europe and the French Revolution*, vol. I: *The Political Traditions of the Old Regime*, trans./ed. Alfred Cobban and J. W. Hunt (London, 1969), pp. 339–40.

[18] Favier, 'Conjectures raisonnées', in Ségur, ed., *Politique*, II.195.

predatory imperial powers, Austria and Russia; maintain France's European reputation; and on that basis facilitate her more global ambitions. Factional rivalry helped to solidify these differences at court; but this was nevertheless a technical debate among French policy-makers driven by the consciousness of, and deep anxiety about, changing geostrategic realities, notably the emergence of a 'pentarchy' of great powers, including Russia and Prussia, after 1763.[19] Both sides saw Britain as the major threat; the debate was all about means.

That Soulavie could dramatise and simplify this debate into a Manichaean conflict between the partisans of treacherous 'Austrian' and patriotic 'anti-Austrian' systems perhaps says more about the mythologising power of the *secret du roi* and its advocates than about his qualities as an historian. The truth about late old regime foreign policy was that most commentators, both inside and outside the ministry, felt anxious and ambivalent about the future. Typical of the flailing nervousness of ministerial memoirs at the time was a survey of the possibilities open to France in a world of competitive commerce by the baron de Waldner, which was predicated on the (unlikely) fear of a Spanish–Russian alliance.[20] To offset this, Waldner wanted agreement with Holland, Venice and Portugal, whose global possessions could be co-ordinated by France from a power base conquered in Arabia which would also contain and offset imperial and British as well as Spanish ambitions.[21] Only if the imperial powers conquered the Porte, he argued, should its partition be entertained by France; but in that case, the acquisition of Egypt would clearly reinforce her possessions in Arabia and thus her global influence.[22] The comte de Saint-Priest, former ambassador at Constantinople and bitter rival of the foreign minister, Vergennes, was a higher profile convert to the cause of a French-backed imperial partition of the Ottoman Empire. So was the navy minister, the marquis de Castries, who saw Egypt as a useful springboard for an attack on British India – though he was more hostile to Austria, and baulked at the prospect of an outright Ottoman partition.[23] Both were protégés of Marie Antoinette; and views like theirs

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[19] H. M. Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756–1775* (Cambridge, 2001).

[20] Baron de Waldner, 'Projet sur un traité d'union et de garantie territoriale en Asie et en Afrique entre la France et la République d'Hollande, et traité de commerce avec la République de Venise pour la mer Méditerranée, compromis avec la Porte Ottomane. Partage au besoin des terres Ottomanes tant en Europe, en Asie qu'en Afrique (1783)', AAE MD Turquie 15, pièce 6, fos. 50–107.

[21] Ibid., fo. 98.   [22] Ibid., fos. 105–7.

[23] It was for proposing such a policy that Saint-Priest had been recalled by Vergennes in 1784; see C. L. Lokke, *France and the Colonial Question: A Study of Contemporary French Opinion 1763–1801* (New York, 1932), p. 92.

clearly had an impact on thinking at the highest level, both at Versailles and at the Porte.[24]

However, for every minister or publicist prepared to sacrifice the Porte on the altar of global mastery, there were others determined to maintain France's role as the guarantor of the European balance of power through the defence – supposedly selfless but in truth rationally self-interested – of its weakest members. Not least among these was Vergennes himself. According to one of his first biographers, '[h]e knew that it was essential to hate the English, preserve Spain, treat the Emperor with care, get on well with Prussia, win over the Dutch, protect the Turks, defy Russia, manage Sweden, hold Rome in respect, maintain the nascent America, pay off the Swiss and keep an eye on the colonies'.[25] Indeed Vergennes, himself a former initiate of the *secret du roi*, was in some respects as anti-Austrian and pro-Turk as Favier – a fact not lost on the queen.[26] But in the public mind, at least, his subtle and pragmatic system was intrinsically bound up with the 'unnatural' Austrian alliance which he maintained, *faute de mieux*. This was partly because Vergennes was unwilling or unable to handle the press effectively;[27] but it was also because the diplomatic vision of his opponents was more aggressively dynamic than the circumspect foreign minister could comfortably entertain.[28] With the exception of the American War – which only fuelled the public appetite for success – Vergennes failed to convince the public that moderation and retrenchment were sufficient returns on their tax investment in the national interest; and attempts to censor debate were no substitute for positive news-management. In a polity where government and public were increasingly antagonistic, and in which the monarchy had already acknowledged the claims of the nation in trying to resolve the domestic impasse,[29] the presentation and justification of foreign policy, like any other policy, was critical.

In the space left by the absence of a coherently articulated (or, indeed, coherent) ministerial foreign policy, the *dévot-secret* criticism of official diplomacy, beginning at court, created a stick with which Favier's successors as the cheerleaders of French diplomatic tradition were able to give a very public beating to the royal government. In this sense, if

[24] Schroeder, *Transformation*, p. 23.

[25] C.-C. de Rulhière, *Le comte de Vergennes, première cause des Etats-Généraux* (Paris, 1789), in *Œuvres*, ed. P. R. Auguis (2 vols., Paris, 1819), p. 176. This was probably commissioned by Rulhière's patron, and Vergennes's rival, the baron de Breteuil; see Munro Price, *Preserving the Monarchy: The Comte de Vergennes, 1774–1787* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 233–5.

[26] Rulhière, *Comte de Vergennes*, pp. 151–2.   [27] Ibid., pp. 170–1.

[28] Franklin L. Ford, *Europe 1780–1830* (London, 1970), p. 75.

[29] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 13, 425–6.

Vergennes's greatest failure was that he allowed his detractors to portray him as being out of sympathy with French tradition, his tragedy was perhaps that he was not; instead he bequeathed to his successor, the comte de Montmorin, a tortuous foreign policy whose modernising aspects – recognition of the necessity of the Austrian alliance; tentative moves towards a *rapprochement* with Britain (in pursuit of both European stability and maritime advantage) – were hamstrung by a continuing belief that France could simultaneously continue to dominate the continent. The bankruptcy of this notion was starkly exposed by France's humiliating paralysis during the 1787 Dutch crisis.[30] By raising (or failing to quash) such 'amphibious' expectations, and then manifestly being unable to fulfil them, Vergennes ensured that Montmorin would have no answer to the traditionalist critique of French foreign policy articulated by the advocates of the *secret du roi*: that the 1756 alliance had empowered Austria at the expense of France and her erstwhile allies, betraying national security, history and identity for the sake of corrupt, self-absorbed, even despotic dynastic whim.

In what turned out to be the final years of the old regime, such was the power of this critique and its capacity to establish 'patriotic' criteria for France's relations with other powers, and thus her sense of self, that Soulavie's portrayal of a struggle for France's soul played out through its foreign policy begins to look more convincing. After 1789, defenders of the Austrian alliance among the new political class, like Mirabeau and Barnave, saw it as a means to preserve international stability in order to consolidate their vision of a constitutional monarchy; by contrast, opponents of the alliance, like Brissot, sought war in order to radicalise or destroy that vision. That their arguments ultimately prevailed owed much to the power of the anti-Austrian myth of which Soulavie's typology is itself evidence, especially when that myth was recast in revolutionary terms, and the Austrian alliance made a trope for old regime moral degradation and the pressing need to expunge it from the body politic.

Jean-Louis Carra, who openly lionised Favier, did this repeatedly in the pages of the newspaper he came to dominate, the *Annales patriotiques et littéraires*.[31] In October 1789 he wrote:

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[30] Simon Schama, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands 1780–1813* (2nd edn, London, 1992); Alfred Cobban, *Ambassadors and Secret Agents: The Diplomacy of the First Earl of Malmesbury at the Hague* (London, 1954). For the perspective from Versailles, see Price, *Preserving the Monarchy*, ch. 8 passim.

[31] Stefan Lemny, *Jean-Louis Carra, 1742–1793: parcours d'un révolutionnaire* (Paris, 2000), pp. 175–6. Over 1,200 Jacobin clubs across France were subscribers to the journal by 1793; see Hugh Gough, *The Newspaper Press in the French Revolution* (London, 1988), p. 198.

Instead of seeking to misguide the true principles of society and the rights of nations in premature and insidious questions on the heredity of the crown, should there not have been an immediate examination of the 1756 alliance between France and the Habsburgs? . . . Should not a decent minister of state put the glory and security of his nation above all personal considerations? The love and glory of my country lead me to denounce these treaties with the Habsburgs as moral and political calamities which have afflicted us for thirty-two years, and from which the National Assembly must deliver us.[32]

But Carra was a dyed-in-the-wool radical from whom the accusatory rhetoric of offended virtue might be expected. More striking is that seemingly Establishment figures like Peyssonnel also recast Favier's arguments in revolutionary terms. The author of sixteen treatises on foreign policy between 1765 and his death in 1790, this thoroughly old regime operator – former French consul in Smyrna and intimate of the foreign ministry – possessed a fashionably unsentimental appreciation of *raison d'état* as the wellspring of international relations.[33] He also assumed the crucial role of history and tradition as the chief compasses for states in pursuit of their natural interests. Responding to Volney's celebrated pamphlet on the Russo-Turkish War (1788),[34] Peyssonnel rejected the view that, because the world was constantly changing, states should alter their policies and alliances regularly. On the contrary, '[t]he European balance', he declared in a naturalistic simile, 'is like the population of a state; deaths do not undermine it, because they are replaced by births'.[35] Thus, if the states-system was in a condition of permanent but self-adjusting flux – whereby, for example, Sweden had been replaced by Prussia, and British America by the Russian Orient – then good statecraft inhered not in Volney's short-termism but in the consistent application of sound maxims which alone can lead to a mastery of events.[36] In this light, accidents like Louis XVI's marriage to the Austrian archduchess Marie Antoinette were irrelevant, as 'the consanguinity of sovereigns does not change the natural interests of Empires'.[37]

The language of weights, measures and relative proportions of power – which Peyssonnel argued made a 'dinanomètre' more useful than a

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[32] *Annales patriotiques et littéraires de la France*, 8, 10 October 1789, pp. 3–4. Carra recommended both Favier's *Doutes et questions* and Peyssonnel's *Situation politique* (see n. 39, below), advertising the booksellers of both; ibid., p. 3, n.

[33] Sorel, *Political Traditions*, pp. 42–5.

[34] C. F. C. Volney, 'Considérations sur la guerre actuelle des Turcs (1788)', in *Œuvres, deuxième édition complète* (8 vols., Paris, 1825–6), II.345–445.

[35] Claude-Charles de Peyssonnel, *Examen du livre intitulé* Considérations sur la guerre actuelle des Turcs *par M. Volney* (Amsterdam, 1788), p. 146.

[36] Ibid., p. 147.   [37] Ibid., p. 135.

gazetteer in reading the states-system[38] – was typical of late old regime commentators, as was his tendency to describe the interests of the 'nation' rather than the 'crown' – though he was generally at pains to stress the king's exclusive control of, and sensitivity to, the nation's foreign policy.[39] However, as the revolution gathered pace, Peyssonnel's tone grew bolder, and he began to articulate Favier's arguments in the more radical language of Carra and Marat, helping to render the Habsburgs an ideal enemy for revolutionaries seeking a scapegoat for their sense of vulnerability abroad and lack of unity at home: despotic, anti-national and unnatural, an enemy of French interests but, more importantly, the interests of humanity. In a speech to the Paris Jacobins in March 1790, for instance, Peyssonnel recommended that the National Assembly establish a permanent committee to ensure the foreign ministry abandoned the 'perverse [1756] system'; appoint only patriotic generals to defend the frontiers; and purge the diplomatic corps of all those 'infected with the poison of the former regime'.[40] As he wrote elsewhere, in terms redolent of the elder Mirabeau's physiocratic manifesto, *L'ami des hommes* (1756–60),[41] France could thereby pursue a foreign policy worthy of the 'benefactress of humanity' and the friend of all peoples struggling against tyranny.[42]

Peyssonnel's personal radicalisation was also apparent in another speech to the Jacobins, this time on France's relationship with the Swiss cantons.[43] In this, he naturally celebrated a traditional alliance between two states sharing a common (Habsburg) enemy, but also urged the Assembly to take over foreign policy in order to prevent the ministry

[38] Ibid., pp. 133–5.

[39] For the fullest exposition of Peyssonnel's views down to 1789, see *Situation politique de la France, et ses rapports actuels avec toutes les puissances de l'Europe; ouvrage dont l'objet est de démontrer, par les faits historiques et les principes de la saine politique, tous les maux qu'a causés à la France l'alliance autrichienne, et toutes les fautes que le Ministère françois a commises depuis l'époque des Traités de Versailles, de 1756, 57 et 58, jusqu'à nos jours* (2 vols., Neufchâtel and Paris, 1789).

[40] Claude-Charles de Peyssonnel, *Discours prononcé à l'assemblée de la société des amis de la constitution par M. Peyssonnel, le mercredi 10 mars 1790* (Paris, 1790), in F.-A. Aulard, ed., *La Société des Jacobins: recueil de documents pour l'histoire du club des Jacobins de Paris* (6 vols., Paris, 1889–97), vol. I (1889), pp. 27–8.

[41] Victor Riquetti, marquis de Mirabeau, *L'ami des hommes, ou Traité de la population* (Avignon, 1757).

[42] J.-A.-N. de Caritat, marquis de Condorcet, *Bibliothèque de l'homme public; ou analyse raisonnée des principaux ouvrages françois et étrangères, sur la politique en général, la législation, les finances, la police, l'agriculture, & le commerce en particulier, & sur le droit natural & public. Par M. le marquis de Condorcet, M. de Peysonnel, M. le Chapelier, et autres gens de letters* (28 vols., Paris, 1790–2), vol. IV (1790), p. 195, n.

[43] Claude-Charles de Peyssonnel, *Discours sur l'alliance de la France avec les Suisses et les Grisons, prononcé à l'assemblée des Amis de la constitution le 3 mai 1790* (Paris, 1790), in Aulard, ed., *Société des Jacobins*, I.79–98.

undermining the relationship via old regime intrigue and corruption.[44] By the same token, Peyssonnel insisted that a strong lead now would ensure the ascendancy of the democratic cantons, undermine counter-revolutionary sentiment in the Swiss regiments and silence the aristocracy on both sides of the Alps.[45] He now drew a clear distinction between the monarch and the nation, favouring the abolition of the Swiss Guards on the grounds that 'nothing in the world seems less politic than to have two armies in the same empire, that of the state and that of the prince'.[46]

Peyssonnel would probably have supported the Brissotin campaign for war, but in the event he died just a few days later; an event the *Chronique de Paris* attributed to a heart attack which had delivered the Austrian Committee from its most courageous adversary.[47] Marat thought that he had been murdered.[48] The obituaries in both newspapers suggest that Peyssonnel's views were both widely known and respected, albeit radicalised in his final months to articulate that unstable contemporary mix of cosmopolitanism and nationalism which was inherited and intensified during the revolution.[49] The idealism of *L'ami des hommes* was thus fused with Favier's *Realpolitik* to create a discourse ideally suited to the revolution's messianic, paranoid political culture – and it focused squarely on the Habsburgs.

The popular resonance of the traditionalist discourse, successfully styled by its partisans as 'national' or 'patriotic', was partly rooted in the perception that the modernisers had failed miserably to overcome the relative decline of French fiscal-military power since the Seven Years' War. This was something which demanded domestic reform, but which the aristocratic military landed establishment preferred to blame on the emergence of a more maritime diplomacy and the consumerist culture it reflected. Something of this was reflected in Odet-Julien Leboucher's unremarkable history of the American War, published in 1787.[50] In Leboucher's view, France's great mistake was the failure to prioritise maritime considerations over more traditional European concerns, ensuring a continental dimension to Anglo-French conflicts which had allowed Britain to fight by proxy and build up her fleet unimpeded. By contrast,

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[44] Ibid., pp. 80–4.   [45] Ibid., pp. 85–6.   [46] Ibid., pp. 90ff.

[47] *Chronique de Paris*, 14 May 1790, quoted in Aulard, ed., *Société des Jacobins*, I.18, n.

[48] *Le Junius français*, 6, 9 June 1790, printed in *Œuvres politiques 1789–1793*, ed. Jacques de Cock et Charlotte Goëtz (10 vols., Brussels, 1991), II.851.

[49] The mix is abundantly apparent in the pages of the *Encyclopédie méthodique: économie politique et diplomatique* (4 vols., Paris and Liège, 1784–8).

[50] O.-J. Leboucher, *Histoire de la dernière guerre, entre la Grande-Bretagne, et les Etats-Unis de l'Amérique, la France, l'Espagne et la Hollande, depuis son commencement en 1775, jusqu'à sa fin en 1783* (Paris, 1787); Louis Gabriel Michaud, *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne* (45 vols., Paris, 1843–65), XXIII.476.

while vital revenues had been poured into the army, the French navy had been allowed to rot in the ports. Leboucher saw this as a consequence of 'the national prejudice' – perhaps reflecting military preferences at court – which had militated against the restoration of the navy.[51] This was a criticism which he could have read in the *Histoire des deux Indes*, which also condemned the amount of money lavished on continental war rather than maritime navigation. The causes of this neglect were, apparently, the stupidity of ministers and the intrigues of the court: 'Everything has prevented the nation from becoming in maritime terms what it has been on the continent, to reach at least an equivalence of power, if not a preponderance.'[52] According to this view, the neglect of the nation's marine was a national scandal.

Subscribers to the theory of the utility of the Diplomatic Revolution, like Choiseul, may well have agreed with that assertion; nevertheless, hostility towards the Austrian alliance in France was widespread. It certainly infuriated the emperor, who saw it as unjust in terms of past benefit and impolitic in terms of the present.[53] The point was made even more forcefully by the Austrian chancellor, Kaunitz, in a letter to the Austrian ambassador in Paris, Mercy-Argenteau, on 3 November 1789:

I have read the wholly absurd work by M. Peyssonnel, and the only thing I can say is that every one of its assertions relative to the alliance is manifestly false and, on the contrary and incontestably, France would be done for if we were the allies of Britain. It is only thanks to us that she has been able to recover as a maritime power, and there is no one else in Europe with whom she could replace us on all points. So, far from her current system being bad, it is impossible to imagine what could replace it.[54]

This was an assessment which Montmorin would doubtless have accepted as rational; but reason was in short supply in the polarised political culture which obtained after the Flight to Varennes (21 June 1791). In this climate, the avowedly anti-British ends of both sides in the old

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[51] Leboucher, *Histoire de la dernière guerre*, pp. x–xi.

[52] Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissemens et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (10 vols., Geneva, 1781), VIII.212. This 'national prejudice' is discussed in Edmond Dziembowski, *Un nouveau patriotisme français, 1750–1770: la France face à la puissance anglaise à l'époque de la guerre de Sept Ans* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 492–3.

[53] Joseph II to Mercy (3 November 1789), in Alfred d'Arneth and Jules Flammermont, eds., *Correspondance secrète du comte de Mercy-Argenteau avec l'Empereur Joseph II et le prince de Kaunitz* (2 vols., Paris, 1889–91), II.273–4.

[54] Kaunitz to Mercy (3 November 1789), in ibid., p. 281. Mercy acknowledged the influence of 'pitiful writings' like Peyssonnel's, 'who is besides generally regarded as a braggart of the first order'; and reported that the ministry, 'most pained by this shameful [anti-Austrian] delirium', would repress it if only it had the means; Mercy to Kaunitz (18 November 1789), in ibid., p. 287.

regime debate about foreign policy, modernising and traditionalist, were eclipsed. Instead, the Brissotins were able to transform Favier's depiction of the strategic need to abandon Austria into the leitmotiv of a much deeper mission to guide the universal conflict between slaves and tyrants (and get themselves into power); a conflict so right that it could even turn a pacifist like Condorcet into an apologist for a patriotic war against the despotic fount of its destructive principle: 'It is in detesting war', he piously explained, 'that I have voted to declare it.'[55]

The Brissotin campaign for war was anchored in the emotive power of national traditions like Austrophobia and Prussophilia which, transplanted into the demotic *demi-monde* and intensified by the seeming threat of domestic and foreign counter-revolution (the internal and external Coblenzes), wreaked havoc on the lingering commercial and maritime priorities, and Anglophobe instincts, of the Constituent Assembly. However, the Brissotins should not be regarded as slavish followers of Favier, nor their strategy as a simple implementation of his system. Just as Peyssonnel, after 1789, articulated that system with a utopianism which Favier would have found bizarre, so the Brissotins apostrophised it as part of a strategy to make France a republic, perhaps in alliance with Britain, which he would have found shocking. What the Brissotins basically took from Favier was the conviction that the reversal of alliances was a crime against nature and the nation. His posthumous reputation, the work of devotees like Carra and Peyssonnel, and the activities of the *émigrés* and the emperor made this a seductive combination. But the (early) revolutionary sense of political affinity with Britain initially deflated its status as a national enemy compared with the more immediate threat posed by Austria; and Habsburg iniquity was itself portrayed in ideological as well as, if not more than, power-political terms. Shifts like these ensured that Brissotin rhetoric and policy were certainly not examples of continuity *tout court*.

Something of this is conveyed by the reports which the soldier, adventurer and sometime Brissotin Charles François Dumouriez wrote about his June 1790 visit to Belgium, undertaken to investigate the recent revolution against Habsburg rule.[56] Indignant about France's exclusion from the great power conference at Reichenbach (July 1790), and from another planned to discuss the Belgian problem specifically, Dumouriez told the Assembly that the recent arming of forty-five ships of the line in support

[55] Quoted in Janine Bouissounouse, 'Condorcet: un pacifiste se jette dans la guerre', *Guerres et paix* 2 (1966), p. 38.
[56] S.-A. Berville and J. F. Barrière, *La vie et les mémoires du général Dumouriez* (4 vols., 1822), II.85.

of Spain against Britain over the Nootka Sound crisis should be matched
by the reinvigoration of the army and the frontiers; as 'if France was
engaged in a maritime war there would necessarily result a land war'.[57]

In truth, the Assembly's largely symbolic support for Spain, secured
after months of agonised debate, came far too late to effect any genuine
leverage over Britain, which soon prevailed in the crisis.[58] Nevertheless,
his awareness of France's 'amphibious' geography was one reason why
Dumouriez was determined that France should nurture Belgian inde-
pendence. Another was more ideological:

[The Assembly] would commit an unpardonable political error, and a moral
crime against the principles of the constitution, if it let itself be influenced by the
Austrian ambassador to the point of authorising the executive power to permit
the passage of [the emperor's] troops on French soil in order to take the brave
Belgians *à dos*, who should regard our frontiers as an inviolable barrier.[59]

To allow this would be to violate the rights of man, betray a free peo-
ple, invigorate Austria and endanger France, as 'Brussels would soon
become the lair of our *émigrés*, the hearth of our aristocrats, with fatal
results for our own constitution.' Dumouriez clearly linked the fate of
the new regime, and its (universal) ideology, with the inviolability of the
frontiers; and, although Britain was still identified as a threat, greater by
far in this respect were the Austrians, despotic and devious, seeking to
destroy the Belgians by a typically craven old regime manoeuvre *à dos*.[60]
Similar notions were to characterise Dumouriez's stint as (Brissotin) for-
eign minister, at the time of France's declaration of war against the King
of Bohemia and Hungary in April 1792.

The ideological dimension to revolutionary Austrophobia, and the ends
to which the Brissotins sought to exploit traditional diplomatic ideas,
serve to qualify Albert Sorel's assertion that the aims of French for-
eign policy were immutable. Similarly questionable was what he saw
as France's eternal desire to expand to the 'natural frontiers' cited by

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[57] (Charles-François Dumouriez), 'Réflexions sur les affaires Belgiques', Archives
Nationales (AN) F7 4689, plaq. 2, pièce 22, fos. 1–5. A later, different hand dated
this 1791, but the content clearly indicates 1790.

[58] See *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France*, 12 *bis*: *Espagne*,
ed. A. Morel-Fatio and H. Léonardon (Paris, 1899), p. 389; Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la
Révolution française* (8 vols., Paris, 1885–1904), II.94–5.

[59] (Charles-François Dumouriez), 'Situation politique et militaire de la Confédération
Belgique', AN F7 4691, plaq. 6, pièce 10.

[60] Ibid. By contrast, Dumouriez's memoirs – which tended to emphasise his commitment
to the (constitutional) monarchy – give the impression that he was sympathetic to the
Belgian people, but unimpressed by the 'chaos' of the revolt, from which therefore he felt
France could derive little immediate advantage; see Berville and Barrière, *Vie et mémoires
de Dumouriez*, II.85–91.

Soulavie – a doctrine which Gaston Zeller insisted emerged only after 1792.[61] In Zeller's defence, the pre-revolutionary *Encyclopédie méthodique* articulated what Peter Sahlins has alleged was an eighteenth-century reconception of 'natural frontiers' as 'natural boundaries', intended not as staging-posts for conquest but to delimit and rationalise the state's borders.[62] According to the physiocrat Guillaume Grivel, this was linked to diplomatic moderation, so 'we shall henceforward have nature and everyone's interest as allies, and the true *balance politique* will be ours'.[63] Similarly, Brissot claimed to see the natural boundaries as a means to defend a satiated people rather than as a platform for expansion.[64] So did Grivel's editor, Démeunier; but he also described the Low Countries as a legitimate target in war, hinting perhaps at unfulfilled ambitions towards the Rhine.[65] Peyssonnel told the Jacobins that the Rhine was a 'frontier indicated by nature' which France should aspire to if Germany were partitioned.[66] In this light, the expansion to the Rhine 'from Geneva to the sea' articulated by Dumouriez, Brissot and Danton in 1792–3[67] was not the turning-point imagined by Zeller any more than it was the straightforward continuity asserted by Sorel; it reflected the revolutionary transformation of an existing idea.[68] Just as the Brissotins turned Favier's Austrophobia into an anti-despotic trope to persuade the people to start a war, so they made the 'natural frontiers' a patriotic trope to persuade them to continue it. As Schroeder has argued, at root French policy was less concerned with the natural frontiers (an ambiguous slogan designed to conceal the divergence of French aims) than with security via hegemony in western Europe, an eternal aim which put France back on a collision course with Britain.[69]

The resumption of anti-British policies was predictable given France's political geography, the deep roots of Anglophobia, the logic of the

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[61] Gaston Zeller, 'Histoire d'une idée fausse', in *Aspects de la politique française sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, 1964), pp. 101–8.

[62] On the distinction between natural frontiers and boundaries and its effect on the development of French diplomacy and identity, see Peter Sahlins, 'Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century', *American Historical Review* 95 (1990), pp. 1423–51.

[63] *Encyclopédie méthodique: économie politique et diplomatique*, vol. I (1784), p. 284.

[64] J.-P Brissot, *Discours de J. P. Brissot, député de Paris, sur la nécessité d'exiger une satisfaction de l'Empereur, et de rompre le Traité du premier mai 1756* (Paris, 1792), pp. 18–19.

[65] *Encyclopédie méthodique: économie politique et diplomatique*, vol. II (1786), p. 482.

[66] Peyssonnel, *Discours prononcé le 10 mars 1790*, in Aulard, ed., *Société des Jacobins*, vol. I, p. 27.

[67] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (London, 1986), p. 137; Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars* (London, 1996), p. 91.

[68] Sahlins, 'Natural Frontiers Revisited', p. 1443.

[69] Schroeder, *Transformation*, pp. 115–17.

National Convention's Decree of Fraternity (November 1792) and the irresistible vulnerability of the Low Countries. Prior to his abortive mission to London in 1792, the bishop-turned-diplomat Talleyrand was told by Dumouriez to threaten Britain if it should refuse to ally or remain neutral in the impending war, as 'in two or three years', having secured the Low Countries as a guarantee, 'we will restore our fleets and take back the possessions that [Britain] will have usurped'.[70] But the dilution of Anglophobia after 1789, albeit shallow, was important, as it provided reassurance for the war against Austria demanded by the Brissotins in the Legislative Assembly which replaced the Constituent in October 1791. That this reassurance was fundamentally misplaced was revealed when the maritime conflict was resumed in 1793, and France duly confronted another Grand Alliance – precisely what *choiseuliste* modernisers had sought to avoid via the 'necessary evil' of the Austrian alliance.

Traditionalists, with their faith in Frederick the Great and the *barrière de l'est*, had always assumed France could manage such a conflict. In May 1761, for instance, as part of a damning indictment of Rousseau's reappraisal of Saint-Pierre's celebrated peace plan, the Grimms' *Correspondance littéraire* had published a trenchant critique of the Diplomatic Revolution and celebration of Henri IV and Sully, whose own conception of perpetual peace was rooted in the establishment of a lasting balance of power guaranteed by French justice and moderation, which would make the King of France 'the equivalent of a universal monarch'.[71] In truth, as Ségur pointed out in his critical commentary on Favier's writings, belief that France could fight simultaneously in two theatres before 1789 was completely misconceived; but afterwards, as Ségur himself acknowledged, the rules of the game were different, thanks to the revolution's astonishing capacity to mobilise the nation's resources.[72]

Nevertheless, the revolutionary priority was not, *pace* Bailey Stone, to revive French greatness in a competitive states-system,[73] but the regeneration of the individual, the nation and, ultimately, mankind. By this reckoning, international influence – whether of a kind envisaged by the elder Mirabeau or Louis XIV – would follow the revolutionary process rather than drive it. That is partly why the likes of Peyssonnel and Carra were so quick to exhort the new political class to recast France's alliance system immediately, rather than relying on moral regeneration as a means

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[70] (C.-F. Dumouriez), 'Réflexions pour la négociation d'Angleterre en cas de guerre, du 30 mars 1792', AN F7 4688, plaq. 3, fo. 40.

[71] *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc.*, ed. Maurice Tourneux (16 vols., Paris, 1877–82), vol. IV (1761), pp. 394–8.

[72] Ségur, *Politique*, III.221.

[73] Bailey Stone, *Reinterpreting the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 267.

to international recovery – which was their instinct and preference. But if the neo-traditionalists were initially impeded by the fact that revolutionary discourse tended to reject the claims of historical precedent and privilege and argue from rational, universal ideas predicated on natural law,[74] the rupture was to prove less decisive in practice, particularly in terms of foreign policy.

Brissot's pro-war speeches demonstrate how the old regime's legacy was transformed rather than obliterated, invoking history (to show Austria's perfidy before and since 1756) and international law (the Habsburgs had reneged on the terms of the treaty and its spirit) as well as universals (such a treaty was incompatible with a free people seeking universal fraternity not particular advantage) to condemn the Austrian alliance as an insult to humanity and to the nation.[75] The latter, especially when sanctified by the former, was particularly important in a political culture in which national interest, honour and glory remained vital. Indeed, one of the reasons why Brissot took Favier's critique as a starting-point for his campaign was its integration into the discursive landscape of the later eighteenth century, which, as David Bell has shown, witnessed an eruption of national tropes, referents and practices in opposition to (ministerial) despotism and the degeneration of France at home and abroad.[76]

Moreover, the focus of anti-Austrian publicists on the role of women like Pompadour and Marie Antoinette in causing France's diplomatic nullity also chimed with the republicanism of the revolutionary era in terms of its sense of gender difference between public men and private women, and the damaging effects on the polity which resulted if that boundary were crossed or corrupted.[77] In this light, the Diplomatic Revolution could be construed as effeminate, and anxieties about France's alliance system understood as the diplomatic parallel to moral concerns about the degeneracy of the French character.[78] In both cases, the solution was the same: a return to a putative natural order, not one imposed by the whims of women and despots.[79] The Austrian Committee allegedly made those whims concrete; it remained a popular trope on Grub Street,

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[74] Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (London, 2002), pp. 401, 424; Michael P. Fitzsimmons, *The remaking of France: the National Assembly and the Constitution of 1791* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 251.

[75] See e.g. Brissot's crucial speech in the Legislative Assembly on 20 October 1791; printed in *Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860: recueil complet des débats législatifs et politiques des chambres françaises* (AP), ed. M. J. Mavidal and M. E. Laurent (127 vols., Paris, 1879–1913), première série (1787 à 1799), XXXIV.309–17.

[76] David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2001).

[77] Ibid., pp. 127–8.   [78] Ibid., pp. 150–1.

[79] Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (London, 1992).

perhaps because it afforded a means to combine the reliably bankable salaciousness of the old regime with the kind of virtuous exposé of anti-national conspiracy seemingly demanded by the new.[80] One pamphlet accused a corrupt and venal Marie Antoinette of plotting with Joseph to despoil and dismember the kingdom and co-ordinating the *émigrés* and 'the hordes of Germany'. Needless to say, it also denounced the 1756 treaty with Austria, characterised as the product of Pompadour and the imbecile Louis XV, 'because the goal of his Council was to submit us to a foreign despotism in order to overcome his own'.[81] Hence the frequent calls for the removal of foreign policy from exclusively executive control, and indeed for the complete regeneration of the diplomatic corps and culture of the old regime.[82]

In this light, it was ironic that the *secret du roi* furnished the revolution with a foreign policy, given that revolutionary political culture so despised secrecy as the handmaiden of the *complot aristocratique*.[83] Nevertheless, operating within a doctrine of publicity which physiocrats like the elder Mirabeau had asserted against endemic old regime secrecy,[84] Favier's successors had subjected the state's foreign policy to critical scrutiny and championed, paradoxically, the maxims of the *secret*; not because they were secret, but because they were consonant with France's national traditions and thus appropriate to a polity in which the nation was now sovereign. This perhaps made the Austrian alliance and its emblem, Marie Antoinette, all the more unbearable in a way which commercial competition with Britain was not. Rivalry between two sovereign nations was virile and manly; the subversion of one nation secretly and basely by a dynastic despot was its opposite. In short, that the revolution eventually went to war against Britain was primarily a consequence of Dumouriez's drive into the Low Countries;[85] that it went to war against Austria was dictated by irresponsible Brissotin politicians operating within (and perhaps deluded by) a political culture which took one aspect of the old

[80] P. Bardin, *Désespoir de Louis XVI, et du comité autrichien des Thuilleries* (Paris, 1792).

[81] (Louise-Félicité Guinement de Keralio Robert), *Les crimes des reines de France* (Paris, 1791), pp. 433, 443–4, 446, 457–8.

[82] C.-F. Dumouriez, *Mémoire sur le ministère des affaires étrangères, par M. Dumouriez, maréchal-de-camp de la douzième division de l'armée* (Paris, 1791); F. Lobjoy, *Opinion de F. Lobjoy, ancien Maire de Colligis, député de l'Aisne, sur la nécessité d'organiser le département des affaires étrangères dans le sens de la constitution* (Paris, 1792).

[83] François Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*, trans. Elborg Forster (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 53–6; Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 38–44.

[84] Robin J. Ives, 'Political Publicity and Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century France', *French History* 17 (2003), p. 13.

[85] Blanning, *Origins*, pp. 158–9.

regime's diplomatic discourse and transformed it into an anti-despotic national crusade undertaken, apparently, on behalf of humanity.

Sorel's metanarrative insisted that the 'downfall of Europe' heralded by the old regime's partition diplomacy, wars of succession and the cynical pursuit of *raison d'état* was not arrested by the revolutionaries; tragically, they could only imitate it.[86] In truth, if the foreign policy of the old regime was not abandoned by the revolution, it was still transformed by it. According to Hauterive's *L'état de la France à la fin de l'an VIII* (1800), the law of nations – which had ceased to exist in 1789 – had been restored thanks to France, now back to her natural place at the centre of Europe and guarding its peace and security against aggressors like perfidious Albion. This vision combined old dreams of hegemony and universal monarchy with the *philosophe* critique of old regime practices and enthusiasm for the kind of ideal single state apparently emerging in America, creating a specifically Napoleonic sense of France's place and role in the world.[87] A crucial way station in the emergence of this kind of rhetoric was Favier's version of the *secret du roi*, given a revolutionary make-over by Carra and Peyssonnel – who made it the diplomatic handmaiden to the discourse of domestic regeneration – and then deployed by the Brissotins to provoke a 'just' war.

The revolutionary debt to the *secret* was acknowledged by Edmund Burke, who, like Soulavie, perceived two camps contesting foreign policy in eighteenth-century France, both seeking national aggrandisement, but differing over methods. In the astonishingly perceptive *Letters on the Regicide Peace* (1796), he stated that the first wished to prioritise the maritime struggle against Britain, without whose interventions the continental powers would soon succumb to French influence. The second, 'more numerous, though not the most outwardly prevalent at court, considered this plan for France as contrary to her genius, her situation and her natural means. They agreed as to the ultimate object, the reduction of the British power . . . but they considered an ascendancy on the Continent as a necessary preliminary to that undertaking.'[88] According to Burke, the traditionalists saw the failure of the maritime approach as evidence of the dangers of leaving national, natural interests to individual

[86] Sorel, *Political Traditions*, pp. 67, 115–18.

[87] F. H. Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace: Theory and Practice in the History of Relations between States* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 186–90. A similar vision of France as an anti-British *ami des hommes*, satisfied with its natural limits (sic) and devoted to the public peace, was outlined by Ségur in *Politique*, III.374–5, 382–3.

[88] Edmund Burke, *Letters on the Proposals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France* (1796), esp. letter II: 'On the genius and character of the French Revolution as it regards other nations', in Burke, *Works and Correspondence* (8 vols., London, 1852), vol. V, p. 334.

whim, unfavourably comparing 'the systematic proceedings of a Roman senate with the fluctuations of a monarchy'.[89] Their critique thus helped to undermine the monarchy, and bequeathed a war against civilisation by 'a new power of a new species'.[90]

The suggestion that the partisans of diplomatic tradition came to see the best cure for France's international decline in the shape of a republic perhaps reflected Burke's prejudices – which he was no more able to escape than Soulavie – more than historical reality. But 'republican' values of patriotic virtue and the sense of enduring natural interests articulated by the likes of Gabriel Bonnot de Mably[91] – neither of which were necessarily incompatible with monarchy – certainly influenced Favier's version of the *secret du roi*; and genuine republicans like Brissot were attracted to it as a means to their particular ends. Once war was declared, however, the revolutionaries had to navigate the realities of war rather than the rhetorical shadow-boxing of 1789–92. This led to some further flights of fancy, and some compromises. After the triumph of Jemappes (November 1792) the Convention declared that Austrians were to be pursued wherever they fled; yet the foreign minister Lebrun's response to a Neapolitan call for Austro-French negotiations was that an Austro-Prussian breach must precede it, and that the emperor could then seek compensation for the Netherlands by conquering Silesia![92]

Realpolitik like this – foreshadowing the cynical rapacity of the Treaty of Campo Formio (October 1797)[93] – serves to underline the unique qualities of the period 1789–92, when the political class in France was momentarily unshackled from the exigencies of old regime power politics, and was not yet bound by those of revolutionary war. In that peculiar bubble, though the revolutionaries were always conscious of the world without, their terms of reference were almost completely internal – not so much regarding France as part of the states-system, as regarding the states-system in terms of the revolution and its ideology. Hence the escalation of old regime Austrophobia into a revolutionary crusade and the popular delusions about Prussia and Britain. Such fantasies did not last long: Prussia fought alongside Austria; and from February 1793 France was at war with Britain and Spain into the bargain. Favier would have

[89] Ibid., pp. 335–6.
[90] Ibid., p. 331. Burke cited Favier's *Conjectures raisonnées*, which he had read in Ségur; ibid., p. 335, n.
[91] Norman Hampson, 'Mably and the Montagnards', *French History* 16 (2002), pp. 402–15.
[92] Jeremy Black, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon: The Fate of a Great Power* (London, 1999), p. 167.
[93] Blanning, *Origins*, pp. 174–5.

appreciated Jacobin attitudes towards Britain, Austria, Poland, the Porte and the empire; but war with Prussia and Spain would have appalled him, and the millenarian rhetoric and recklessness of the revolutionaries would have baffled him. After 1795, the familiarity of alliance with Spain versus Britain and Austria (and eventually Russia) would have been offset, in Favier's view, by Napoleonic contempt towards both the Ottoman and Holy Roman Empires. In short, despite some obvious similarities and the undoubted revival of French power once unshackled, as he would see it, from Austrian domination, Favier's system, and the world in which it had been constructed, was a shadow, not the substance, of international relations in the later 1790s. It was the revolution which had enabled the revival and unprecedented projection of French power; and it was the delusory impact of its ideology on assessments of how best to manage that power – what Blanning has called the 'Coppelia Effect'[94] – which occasioned war, and sustained it for a generation.

In France, the Austrian alliance and the debate attending it were a crucial part of this process of revolutionary transformation, a critical fault line between the desire to start afresh and the stubborn heritage of the old regime. The leitmotiv of a well-publicised old regime critique of royal policy since the Seven Years' War, this essentially Austrophobe discourse gradually established a notional 'national' standard against which the crown's running of French foreign policy along more global, maritime lines was said to be found wanting. Before 1789, few doubted that British power had to be confronted as the chief threat to French interests; the question was by what means, and at what price. Once the revolution had erupted, the anti-British stake at the heart of both sides of the debate was, for a time, subsumed by the anti-Austrian animus of the traditionalists, now articulated more ferociously than ever in press, club and pamphlet. Colliding with Enlightenment ideas and counter-revolutionary anxieties in the crucible of a new political culture, it effected – through the agency of the Brissotins – the reassertion and nationalisation of French diplomatic tradition against the more maritime trajectory of later eighteenth-century foreign policy, the transformation of revolutionary foreign policy, and thus of the regime itself.

[94] Ibid., p. 73.

16 Power and patronage in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* and *Die Zauberflöte*

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I

Giovanni De Gamerra, playwright and librettist, wrote in his 1790 *Osservazioni sullo spettacolo*:

> Theatrical spectacle, established on the basis of wise laws and of careful reform, can be regarded as a means always available to the sovereign power to inculcate in his subjects the most useful and important beliefs . . . Has our century not seen an emperor at a performance of *La clemenza di Tito* listening to the voices of humanity and forgiveness?[2]

These words do not actually refer to Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, whose music would be composed the following year, but to an earlier setting of Pietro Metastasio's text. The Metastasian tradition of court performance, old-fashioned but not obsolete, presented the monarch with the ideal of a benevolent, moral ruler, which, identified with himself, he would then re-present to the audience.

De Gamerra's first libretto, amended by Metastasio, was that to Mozart's – and subsequently Johann Christian Bach's – *Lucio Silla*. It achieved the near-impossible task of redeeming Plutarch's tyrannical Lucius Sulla, transforming him into an agent of Stoic clemency. 'Theatrical spectacle' was remote both from mere entertainment and from *l'art pour l'art*; it was a compulsory class in a school for ruler and ruled. Culture and power were inextricably intertwined in eighteenth-century opera, in terms of commission, composition, characterisation, performance and reception. These different aspects of the 'work' need not always work together; claims are contested as well as reconciled in the operatic arena.

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[2] Quoted in J. A. Rice, *La clemenza di Tito* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 11.

The perceived power of opera is illustrated by Leopold II's denunciation of the proposed appointment of De Gamerra as librettist to La Scala. Leopold warned his brother Ferdinand, governor of Lombardy, of De Gamerra's revolutionary inclinations: 'fanatic to excess, hot-headed, imprudent concerning . . . liberty, very dangerous'.[3] A public platform for a 'fanatic' might imperil the House of Habsburg – until, that is, De Gamerra prudently modified his behaviour and the Habsburgs graciously revised their opinion, resulting in reappointment in 1794 as court librettist in Vienna and renewed collaboration with Salieri. De Gamerra's skill and even Mozart's genius would come to naught without commission or performance. Artists must deal with authority, and it with them.

Both parties must also contend with the audience. De Gamerra's words indicate how Mozart's work would shortly be received, or rather its intended reception; the eighteenth-century public was far from a passive, uncritical receptacle. Indeed, as Tim Blanning has written, 'both the musician and the society are involved in the creative process'. Thus, 'whether Mozart was performing in palaces or public rooms, the audience consisted mainly of nobles . . . if it would be pushing the argument too far to classify Mozart's work as "aristocratic", it would certainly make more sense than to call it "bourgeois"'.[4] The word 'aristocratic' might seem more appropriate to *Tito*, an *opera seria* (an Italian opera based upon a time-honoured tragic or heroic subject), than to *Die Zauberflöte*, a 'popular' *Singspiel*. Such a work might seem to have less obvious connection with issues of culture and power, at least as introduced above, but such a conclusion would be misleading. These issues and some of their implications are the concern of this essay.

II

Mozart's operas were written with a variety of patrons and audiences in mind – which is not to claim that they were *only* written with them in mind. Let us consider a few examples. The aforementioned *Lucio Silla* was composed in 1772 for Milan's Regio Ducal Teatro and premièred on St Stephen's Day, opening the Carnival season. Archduke Ferdinand's prolonged attention to family correspondence resulted in a two-hour delay, yet this was followed by the success of twenty-five further performances, after which silence ruled until the 1929 Prague revival. Metastasio's *Il re*

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[3] Letter of 10 January 1791 in the Vienna Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Sämmelbande, Kart. 20, quoted in J. A. Rice, 'Giovanni de Gamerra', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (accessed 27 February 2006), www.grovemusic.com.

[4] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 178–9.

pastore, a celebration of Alexander the Great, was first set in 1751 by the court composer Giuseppe Bonno for Maria Theresa at Schönbrunn, and subsequently by about twenty-five other composers, including Gluck, whose 1756 version celebrated the birth of Archduke Maximilian Francis. The archduke's 1775 visit to Salzburg occasioned Mozart's serenata, which thereafter fell immediately into obscurity. *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was composed for Vienna's National Singspiel, founded by Joseph II and based at the Burgtheater. It ran until the Singspiel's closure in 1783, its fame spreading rapidly, witnessing first-year productions in Prague, Bonn, Frankfurt, Leipzig and Warsaw. Vienna, moreover, swiftly revived the piece in 1784, under the aegis of the German company at the Kärntnertor. The idea for an operatic version of Beaumarchais's anti-aristocratic – 'bourgeois'? – *Le mariage de Figaro* may have been Mozart's own; it was written in 1785–6 for the Burgtheater, the Singspiel having sold out to an Italian company. Although its fame took a little longer to spread than the more obviously 'popular' and 'German' *Entführung*, *Le nozze di Figaro* would soon be the toast of Europe, nobles included. The emperor's notorious prohibition of excessive encores attested to rather than denied its popularity; the success of its 1789 Vienna revival helped elicit the imperial commission for *Così fan tutte*.

First, then, we should consider the immediate context to our two operas, composed and premièred in 1791, the year of Mozart's death. He had never stood more isolated from the Viennese court theatre. Commissions fell to Salieri rather than to him, and the final blow came in March, when the latest in a line of scandals led to dismissal from his court post of Lorenzo da Ponte, greatest of Mozart's librettists. Recipients of such largesse as Joseph II could muster would not always find favour with Leopold II and his consort. They did, however, share an interest in *opera seria*; a successful setting might help secure subsequent commissions.

Tito arose from the Bohemian Estates' commission to the impresario Domenico Guardasoni and the Nostitzsches Nationaltheater in Prague to stage an opera in celebration of Leopold II's coronation as King of Bohemia. Despite having commissioned *Don Giovanni* for Prague in 1787 and presented it subsequently in Leipzig and Warsaw, Guardasoni's preference had been to engage Salieri, who, perhaps mindful that his operatic style would not please the emperor, declined five times.[5] Guardasoni then offered Mozart 250 ducats which, given his straitened circumstances, proved ample persuasion. The 8 July contract with the

5 J. A. Rice, *Antonio Salieri and Viennese Opera* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 507.

Estates makes interesting reading for post-Romantic readers convinced of artistic autonomy. Clauses include:

I promise to give . . . [the Estates] a *primo musico* [castrato] of the first rank, such as . . . Marchesini, or Rubinelli [etc.] . . . Likewise I promise to give them a *prima donna* . . . of the first rank and certainly the best of that level free of other engagements . . .

I promise to have the poetry of the libretto composed on [one of] the two subjects given to me by His Excellency the Burgrave and to have it set to music by a distinguished composer; but in the case it should not be at all possible to accomplish that in the short time remaining [two months], I promise to procure an opera newly composed on the subject of Metastasio's *Tito*.[6]

Mozart had far from a free hand and was firmly put in his place by the greater importance allotted to exemplified singers than to 'a distinguished composer'. He nevertheless set to work with haste, as needs must. *Tito* was composed between late July and September 1791 and received its first performance on 6 September, following the coronation. Admission was free, although restricted to ticket-holders. The *Krönungsjournal für Prag* reported: 'The house holds a great number of persons, and yet . . . the demand for tickets was on such an occasion so great, that the supply came to an end, because of which many natives and visitors, among them persons of quality, had to go away again.'[7] Thereafter, however, performances were poorly attended – with the exception of the final evening, which coincided with the première in Vienna of *Die Zauberflöte*.[8] Though not immediately popular, the number of performances increased from 1795, cannily promoted by Constanze Mozart to the public as a 'last work'.

Die Zauberflöte was born into a very different tradition: Viennese popular theatre. Despite Maria Theresa's disapproval, the genre had survived and in the 1780s experienced a revival. This was the first – and last – occasion that Mozart composed an opera for a non-court theatre. The suburban Freihaustheater auf der Wieden opened in 1787. Its audiences were mixed, as was its repertoire; alongside ephemeral popular fare, works by Goethe and Schiller were staged, including *Don Carlos* in 1791. Direction of the Freihaustheater had been assumed in 1789 by Emanuel Schikaneder, Mozart's librettist and creator of the role of Papageno. Music had always played a role in popular theatre; Haydn had

[6] Rice, *La clemenza*, p. 5.
[7] O. E. Deutsch (ed.), *Mozart, a Documentary Biography*, trans. E. Blom, P. Branscombe and J. Noble (London: Black, 1965), p. 405.
[8] See letter to Constanze Mozart, 7–8 October 1791, in W. A. Bauer and O. E. Deutsch (eds.), *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen. Gesamtasusgabe* (7 vols., Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962–75), IV.157.

set *Der neue krumme Teufel* for Gottfried Prehauser's Hanswurst company in about 1752. Schikaneder, a composer of sorts, nevertheless placed greater emphasis upon music than had generally been the case. He was, moreover, an old friend of Mozart.

Surprisingly little is certain about genesis and composition. Legend has it that Schikaneder, himself in straitened financial circumstances, came to Mozart to plead with the ailing and impecunious composer for assistance, while cynically denying our divine genius the sole rights from performances outside the original theatre. There is no basis to this, and considerable reason to doubt it. Much remains mysterious: no contract has survived, and Mozart's thematic catalogue simply dates the work 'im Jullius'.[9] Intensive research has nevertheless presented no reason to doubt the tradition that Schikaneder approached Mozart personally at some time during the spring. Studies of the autograph paper-types have shown that most of the music was written before the end of July – not, as used to be thought, after Mozart's return from Prague.[10]

Reception was largely rapturous: this, too late, was Mozart-the-composer's greatest popular success. Salieri attended a performance and declared it 'worthy to be performed at the greatest festival and before the greatest monarch'.[11] The first month saw twenty performances. Soon almost every German city would stage the work. The Prague National-altheater did in October 1792, and a Czech version followed from the Vlastenské Divadlo (Patriotic Theatre) company in 1794. This year witnessed De Gamerra furnish a translation, *Il flauto magico*, performed in Leipzig, Dresden and Prague (for the carnival) in Guardasoni's travelling production. The world of Italian opera could readily appreciate the opportunities afforded by *Die Zauberflöte*'s critical and commercial success. By 1797, Mozart's *Singspiel* had reached St Petersburg; its light has shone ever more brightly since.

III

Tito is in many respects a typical late *opera seria*.[12] Its text is by Metastasio, albeit in a revised version. As Daniel Heartz notes: 'Massive rewriting and substitution was the rule, not the exception.'[13] Metastasio continued

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[9] Ibid., p. 154.

[10] See P. Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 67–86.

[11] Letter to Constanze, 14 October 1791, in *Briefe*, IV.161–2.

[12] The term was infrequently used at the time; *dramma per musica* is the usual description on printed libretti.

[13] D. Heartz, 'Mozart and his Italian Contemporaries', in *Mozart's Operas*, ed. with contributing essays by T. Bauman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 301.

to be regarded as the author: 'poet' rather than 'librettist', as was the case in more 'popular' forms. The Caesarian court poet in Vienna, he had published the *Tito* text in 1734. First set by Antonio Caldara, Vice-Kapellmeister, to celebrate Charles VI's birthday that year, we know of forty subsequent settings prior to Mozart's, notably by Johann Adolf Hasse (1735, heard by Mozart in Cremona in 1770), the pre-reformist Gluck (1752) and Josef Mysliveček (1773). The text would continue to attract composers into the nineteenth century; its final composer, in 1839, was Giuseppe Arena in Turin. This celebrated text provided manifold connections with what has been dismissed as an 'outdated' musical tradition, yet which, Gluck's reforms notwithstanding, stubbornly continued to thrive, especially in Italy.

Wolfgang Hildesheimer describes *Tito* as 'probably the last *seria* in music history', therefore possessing 'only a museum-piece kind of beauty'.[14] This judgement, while plausible *a priori*, is dated. London had famously rejected *opera seria* during the 1730s, prompting Handel's decisive turn towards oratorio, but this was not typical of Europe. Joseph II's unwillingness to pay the extravagant sums commanded by the stars of *opera seria* had been the exception even in the German-speaking world. His successor wished to define himself in opposition to the predecessor who had apparently brought the Habsburg lands so close to the precipice, not least so that some of Joseph's reforms, particularly those relating to education and religion, might quietly be salvaged. *Opera seria*, far from being a throwback, might present a contrast of benevolent tradition. Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, whose productions did much to reintroduce *Tito* to the repertoire, declared it the genre's crowning example.[15]

However, the situation is not quite so straightforward. *Tito* incorporates formal aspects characteristic of comic opera (*opera buffa*) and French *tragédie lyrique*.[16] In Caterino Mazzolà's sometimes drastic revision of the text, three acts become two and plentiful blank verse is transformed into musical ensembles, creating a first-act finale on a scale hitherto considered appropriate only to *opera buffa*. Rewriting of the text was one thing, such structural transformation another. 'Small wonder', as one commentator has written, that the work 'took its imperial audience aback. Nothing like this . . . had ever been done to the great poet laureate of the

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[14] W. Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, trans. M. Faber (London: Dent, 1982), pp. 308–9.

[15] Quoted in D. Borchmeyer, *Mozart oder die Entdeckung der Liebe Insel* (Frankfurt and Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 2005), p. 220.

[16] On problematical aspects of the commonplace distinction between *buffa* and *seria*, see Heartz, 'Mozart and his Italian Contemporaries', pp. 299–300.

century.'[17] Originality was not universally considered a virtue; yet, in this respect, Romantically inclined writers such as Hildesheimer allow 'a kind of genius', lauding Mozart's opening up 'the static tableau of these scenes and the hollow rhetoric of these puppets . . . breathing into it a refreshing *buffo* spirit'.[18] The classical conception of o*pera seria* as spoken theatre with additional music came into conflict, both in work and in reception, with later eighteenth-century aesthetics, which ascribed greater importance to music.

Returning to the occasion for which the work was written, Leopold's coronation was important in affirming both the power of the monarch and of tradition, and the consent and privileges of the Bohemian Estates. Having regained control of the Austrian Netherlands, Leopold was not inclined to repeat Joseph's refusal to recognise traditional privileges and therefore to be crowned King of Bohemia, as all of his Habsburg predecessors had been. We should nevertheless err to consider Leopold a supplicant; he had already rejected some of the Estates' constitutional claims, not least those to represent the 'nation' and to determine Bohemian citizenship. It behoved the Estates to win Leopold's favour, for no one suspected that he would die the following year, ruling for no longer than the historical Titus.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus (AD 79–81) had been acclaimed by many eighteenth-century writers as a model, proto-Enlightenment ruler. Montesquieu called him 'the delight of the Romans'.[19] Gibbon held that, under the 'mild administration of Titus, the Roman world enjoyed a transient felicity, and his beloved memory served to protect, above fifteen years, the vices of his brother Domitian'.[20] If only the equally short reign of Leopold-Titus had *preceded* Joseph-Domitian's 'vices'. Even when Joseph's careful stewardship of public money is echoed, Tito's response is gracious rather than puritanical. Publio announces the Senate's decision to erect a temple for worship of the god Tito, to which the *emperor* Tito responds: 'Romans, the only object of Tito's desires is your love.' The spoils of recent campaigns would be better spent aiding victims of Vesuvius's recent eruption.

Yet we should beware positing too strong an opposition between our Habsburg Titus and Domitian. Adam Wandruszka argued that *Tito*

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[17] M. P. McClymonds, 'Mozart's "La clemenza di Tito" and Opera Seria in Florence as a Reflection of Leopold II's Musical Taste', *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (1984/5), p. 66.

[18] Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, p. 307.

[19] C. L. de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*, ed. G. Truc (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1954), p. 83.

[20] E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (2 vols., Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), I.30.

glorifies the Habsburg tradition of Enlightened rule, the idea of *clementia austriaca*, although his article says little about the work itself.[21] Joseph and Maria Theresa had identified a specifically Habsburg clemency with the retention of underperforming ministers. Drawing upon Seneca's *De clementia*, specifically intended to persuade Nero of the need for imperial clemency, the transformation of an argument from utility to one based upon Christian virtue was not arduous. A broad, traditional conception of clemency as an imperial virtue encompassed availability to all citizens and willingness to discard the panoply of empire, to behave as a citizen oneself. Indeed, Tito's words might have sprung more readily from Joseph's mouth than Leopold's. *Tito* reaffirms Habsburg tradition against the excesses of the 1780s, while echoing Joseph's clemency in the traditional sense. It is not a full-scale rehabilitation of the late emperor – yet, the audience, Leopold included, would recall Joseph's positive attributes.

This is the time-honoured tragic realm of conflict between love and duty, public and private: AMOR/ROMA. The classical, subsequently Petrarchan, dilemma is resolved by a noble, in this case imperial, character judiciously exercising will over private inclination. Tito's momentary desire to avenge his betrayal by Sesto and Vitellia yields to the clement duty to act *pro bono publico*. Annio tells Vitellia: 'Tito has command over the world and over himself.' These two forms of power are coincident. Having avowed her love for Annio, Servilia agrees to marry Tito, should this still be his wish. Tito lauds her honesty and instructs that she yield to the one she loves, occasioning a reminder to subjects of their reciprocal duties:

> Ah, would that all those
> close to my throne were so sincere;
> this vast empire would bring me
> happiness instead of torment.
> Rulers should be relieved
> of the painful task
> of distinguishing between
> deceit and flattery.

The dotted-rhythm martial figure, which, from the Overture through the festal March, has suggested and accompanied various manifestations of Tito's power, occurs once again, when he tells of his 'vast empire'. This serves to remind both ruler and ruled of their responsibilities, their good fortune and their interdependence. The elaborate development section

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[21] A. Wandruszka, 'Die "Clementia Austriaca" und der aufgeklärte Absolutismus. Zum politischen und ideellen Hintergrund von "La clemenza di Tito"', *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* 31 (1976), pp. 186–93.

of the Overture has already presented 'learned' counterpoint and fugue, which, in eighteenth-century Austrian music from Fux onwards, had been specifically identified with the House of Habsburg.[22]

Tito offers a resounding affirmation of traditional monarchy against revolution in France and revolt within the Habsburg monarchy. Even if the internal situation upon Leopold's accession had seemed worse than it actually was, it had definitely seemed this way – and continued to do so in retrospect.[23] Mazzolà's revision emphasises the shame and violence of revolt, warning potentially fractious subjects that a compact imposes responsibilities upon both parties. Whereas Metastasio had been 'able to enliven his opera with some moving talk in favour of revolution', Vitellia's original references to breaking of the fatherland's shackles and the need for 'our century [to] have its own Brutus', now must be jettisoned.[24] Joseph had enlivened the Austrian Netherlands and Hungary more than enough, while France was producing a surplus of Brutuses. In the transformation from three acts to two, revolt is shifted to a more prominent position: the Act I finale. The conspiracy in which Sesto, owing to his passion for Vitellia, has involved himself has gone too far for either of them to halt it. Her change of heart is owed to the news that Tito would now make her empress, Sesto's to consideration of the emperor's virtue and patronage. 'And whom do you betray? The greatest, the most just, the most merciful prince in the world, to whom you owe your power and all that you are.' The Capitol is now, however, ablaze; rebels must answer for their treachery.

Mozart's portrayal of the chaotic terror of rebellion is masterly. Trumpets, drums and string tremolos underline the sudden tonal wrench to C minor, already prefigured in the dark opening of the recitative in which Sesto wrestles with his conscience. C minor is the key Haydn would employ for the Representation of Chaos that opens his *Creation*, leading towards the celebrated C *major* of 'And there was Light'. So ultimately will Mozart's tonal plan, though we must await the final scene for the definitive restitution of the C major Overture's festal triumph. We are still mired in the minor mode of rebellion, and it is the Roman people,

[22] See M. Bent and W. Kirkendale, *Fugue and Fugato in Rococo and Classical Chamber Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979).

[23] Blanning, drawing on Pavel Mitrofanov's inaccessible, fragmentary biography of Leopold (*Leopold II avstriiskii: vneshniaia politika* (Petrograd, 1916)), argues that the threat of disintegration was exaggerated. ('An Old but New Biography of Leopold II', in T. C. W. Blanning and D. Cannadine (eds.), *History and Biography: Essays in Honour of Derek Beales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 62.) See also M. Z. Mayer, 'Leopold II, the Prussian Threat, and the Peace of Sistova, 1790–1791', *International History Review* 26 (2004), pp. 473–514.

[24] Rice, *La clemenza*, pp. 40–1.

not the authorities, who provide the true voice of suffering horror. As the trumpets and drums of previous rejoicing have turned to despair, so has the populace. The off-stage chorus interjects several times *in distanza* the cry 'Ah!' upon diminished-seventh chords, furthering dissolution of the tonal stability so sturdily represented in earlier pomp and circumstance. Each cry brings with it another key in which the soloists try and fail to find resolution. After such frenetic activity and dislocation, the strange *Andante* with which the first act concludes – most unusual practice for an eighteenth-century operatic finale – sounds all the more funereal. 'O black betrayal, o day of sorrow!' intones the desolate populace, joined by the perpetrators, who believe themselves guilty of regicide. Chromatic betrayal ('tradimento') bursts forth *forte*, from chorus, soloists and orchestra, to the dotted-rhythm of imperial power. A former stronghold sure has, it seems, been corrupted and transformed into a threat to the tonal and political peace. The finale ends in E-flat major; yet, punctured by chromaticism and darkened by dolorous instrumental colours, it is a major tonality as sombre and resigned as one might conceive: E-flat first and foremost as the relative major of C minor.

These conflicts are resolved in the final scene. Vitellia's rondò, in which she resolves to seek the emperor's mercy, leads directly into Tito's entrance into 'a magnificent square before a vast amphitheatre'. Delivered from misfortune, he is acclaimed by the Romans as 'the thought and love of the heavens and gods'. This magnificent chorus has been described as:

> the greatest compliment ever paid to the aspirations of Metastasian opera to idealise the worth and dignity of those who hold temporal power. . . the chorus and the sovereign it celebrates assume a far-reaching scope of vision that extends back over the preceding darkness, as if the whole course if Vitellia's agonised self-searching lay already within Tito's ken – a benign omniscience that in *The Magic Flute* is invested in Sarastro.[25]

Indeed, Tito, like Sarastro, lays claim to omniscience, even if both fall short of that divine quality. Rebellion having been suppressed and Sesto having confessed his guilt, Tito has resolved upon clemency rather than adhering to the letter of the law, yet this is at first known only to himself and to the audience. Trumpets, drums and the martial rhythm of imperial power appear for the first time in the second act. On the verge of announcing Sesto's pardon, Tito is confronted with Vitellia, arrived to confess her guilt. Having despaired that he will ever 'find a loyal soul', he resolves that his mercy must prove more constant than the treachery of

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[25] T. Bauman, 'At the North Gate: Instrumental Music in *Die Zauberflöte*', in Heartz, *Mozart's Operas*, p. 296.

others. 'Let it be known in Rome', Tito resolves, 'that I am the same and that I know everything, absolve everyone, and forget everything.'

This is a public pronouncement of clemency ancient and modern. Leopold had insisted on Beccaria's presence on the commission for the revision of Joseph's 1787 draconian *Strafgesetzbuch*.[26] Beccaria, himself a Habsburg subject, had argued against *Tito*-style absolution on account of its arbitrary nature. Clemency was 'the most beautiful prerogative of the throne . . . the most desirable endowment of sovereignty'. So far so good. 'But one ought to bear in mind that clemency is a virtue of the lawgiver and not of the laws' executor, that it ought to shine in the legal code and not in particular judgements.' To pardon was to make 'a public decree of impunity', through 'a private act of unenlightened kind-heartedness'.[27] While this constitutes a rational assessment of the AMOR/ROMA dilemma, the Enlightenment house boasted many salons, some less rationalistic than others. These might hold a strong political interest in asserting that the quality of mercy should not be strained, that Seneca's justification for leniency regarding punishment of an inferior was not obsolete.

A prince's personal justice upheld both understandings of clemency better than a modern state's indifferent administration. Frederick the Great had intervened in judicial proceedings to correct what he perceived to be an unjust verdict in the Miller Arnold case. Such intervention seemed less of a 'judicial catastrophe' to contemporaries, at least outside Berlin, than to subsequent historians, given Frederick's 'strong suspicions of a socially lopsided jurisprudence'.[28] To respond to direct petitions and to grant a personal audience, as Frederick had in this case and Joseph II had in many others, was far from an outmoded form of communication between monarch and subject. Modern clemency was at worst a minor sin whose advantages in a particular case might readily outweigh ideological objections. A touch of personal monarchy, Hohenzollern or Habsburg, tempered suspicion of a bureaucratic machine-state and reminded subjects of the monarch's benevolent power. *Princeps legibus solutus est*. Only Tito – this 'great, generous soul' – has the power of clemency, just as only Frederick could have delivered his celebrated fiat against the insubordination of the Prussian *Kammergericht*. The prince's

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[26] A. Wandruszka, *Leopold II. Erzherzog von Österreich, Grossherzog von Toskana, König von Ungarn und Böhmen, Römischer Kaiser* (2 vols., Vienna and Munich: Verlag Herold, 1963–5), II.142.

[27] C. Beccaria, *On Crimes and Punishments and Other Writings*, trans. R. Davies, eds. R. Bellamy et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 111–12.

[28] D. M. Luebke, 'Frederick the Great and the Celebrated Case of the Miller Arnold (1770–1779): A Reappraisal', *Central European History* 32 (1999), pp. 380, 401.

majesty is maintained and enhanced; there is more to Enlightened conceptions of law than codification and strict observance thereof.

This final ensemble restores the C major tonality of prior rejoicing, the dark chromaticism of revolutionary chaos replaced by bright and sturdy diatonic harmony, tonic and dominant so prevalent that even the Beethoven of the Fifth Symphony's finale might have blanched. Trumpets and drums once again re-present the panoply of imperial power and rejoicing. Tito shuns praise and honour to declare that, should the day come 'when the good of Rome is no longer my sole care', the eternal gods should end his days. Selflessness can serve *and* increase power – and vice versa. This is the great lesson taught in *Tito*'s school for ruler and ruled.

IV

Die Zauberflöte is a different beast: a *Singspiel* and a *Zauberoper*. What does this mean in terms of structure? Not much in itself, for these forms are less clearly defined than *opera seria*. By the late eighteenth century, *Singspiel* usually entailed a work in the vernacular, combining musical numbers and spoken dialogue. Mozart, however, simply used the word *Oper* to refer to both *Die Entführung* and *Die Zauberflöte*. The latter's hybrid character enables it to draw without fear from almost every operatic and instrumental genre; but the miraculous synthesis that emerges can only be ascribed to Mozart. Wagner, for whom this constituted the first true German opera, remarked admiringly: 'This is folklorish. If it can be said of us Germans that we have no art, we can at least reply that we do have a folk tradition; art stands midway between academicism and folklore, for there have really been no genuine artists since the Greeks.'[29]

The clearest example of this is the simplest form on offer: that of five strophic songs, which are nonetheless often varied with great subtlety. It is no coincidence that two of these songs are sung by the *Naturmensch*, Papageno, and that he is a duettist in another. This does not straightforwardly relate to social status, however, since other examples are Sarastro's 'In diesem heil'gen Hallen', and his aria with chorus, 'O Isis und Osiris'. Nobility as well as *naïveté* can reside in simplicity; great art, moreover, can lie in the *appearance* of simplicity, often deriving from musical sources most 'unfolklorish'.

As befits a *Singspiel*, Italian-style *recitativo secco* is avoided, but not only in favour of spoken dialogue. Some of the work's most 'expressive'

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[29] M. Gregor-Dellin and D. Mack (eds.), *Cosima Wagner's Diaries*, trans. G. Skelton (2 vols., London: Collins, 1978–80), 8 March 1872.

dramma per musica comes through a highly developed style of orchestral recitative, in which so much of the drama lies in the orchestra that one is tempted to look forward to Wagner as much as to discern origins in Gluck's reform operas. The recitative exchange in the Act I finale between Tamino and his priestly interlocutor presents a prophetic dialectic in which vocal line and orchestra increasingly influence and come to resemble each other. Even the staid Second Priest's vocal line occasionally blossoms into arioso; for Tamino, the more dynamic character, this happens more frequently. Introducing a choral element into this exchange, Mozart further breaks down those often-tedious boundaries, omnipresent in earlier *opera seria* and yet so foreign to the heyday of Venetian opera, between recitative, aria and chorus. This is not unique to *Die Zauberflöte*; yet it is more advanced than in Mozart's coronation opera, which, for all its radical revision of *seria* form, could never have progressed quite so boldly. In restoring opera's Monteverdian dignity and anticipating its Wagnerian destiny, there can be no question of a *primo musico* or *prima donna* constituting the main attraction.

Adorno suggests why this might be so:

> Prior to the emancipation of the subject, art was undoubtedly in a certain sense more immediately social than it was afterward. Its autonomy, its growing independence from society, was a function of the bourgeois consciousness of freedom that was itself bound up with the social structure. Prior to the emergence of this consciousness, art certainly stood in opposition to social domination and its *mores*, but not with an awareness of its own independence.[30]

One might cautiously say that *Tito* is 'old', and *Die Zauberflöte* is 'new'. *Tito* stands in opposition to an emerging world of commercial self-interest, in favour of a modified traditionalism. *Die Zauberflöte* presents what Adorno viewed as the greater integration of bourgeois art into society, the 'influx of experiences that are no longer forced into *a priori* genres, the requirement of constituting form out of these experiences, that is, from below. This is "realistic" in purely aesthetic terms, regardless of content.'[31] Hence the Romantics believed Beethoven to have burst formal, schematic forms; this, however, preceded Beethoven, the owl of Minerva spreading its wings only at dusk. Transitions are more blurred than has often been recognised, but they do not vanish completely. What has often been overlooked is that the musico-historical impetus originates perhaps as much in 'aristocratic' *tragédie lyrique* – Gluck and, beyond

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[30] T. W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, eds. G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann, trans. R. Hullot-Kentor (London: Athlone, 1997), p. 225.

[31] Ibid., p. 225.

him, Rameau – as in 'progressive', 'bourgeois' *opera buffa*.[32] Wagner commented:

> Mozart is the founder of German declamation – what fine humanity resounds in the Priest's replies to Tamino! Think how stiff such high priests are in Gluck. . . consider this text, which was meant to be a farce, and the theatre for which it was written, and compare what was written before Mozart's time . . . – on the one side the wretched German *Singspiel*, on the other the ornate Italian opera – one is amazed by the soul he managed to breathe into such a text.[33]

Wagner unsurprisingly found the birth of German declamation in French tragedy impossible to swallow in 1870, but he was otherwise aware of the precedents or lack of them for Mozart.

The musico-dramatic emergence of the subject is not universal. Nietzsche would write memorably of the 'type of man [who] *needs* to believe in an unbiased "subject" with freedom of choice, because he has an instinct of self-preservation and self-affirmation in which every lie is sanctified'.[34] Papageno is not wicked, but lacks the cultivation necessary to attain such freedom. He will live a contented if unexalted life without it: clemency less magnificent than Tito's, yet still clemency, for transgression of Papageno's vow of silence is treated leniently. The rhetoric of the subject is nevertheless reiterated throughout by Sarastro, his priests and those who will be converted, to the entire spectrum of morality: from the Queen of the Night and Monostatos, through Papageno, to Tamino and Pamina. The Queen is driven by passion: she is 'a proud woman', as Sarastro admonishes Pamina. He repeats this phrase at the beginning of the second act, elucidating: 'That woman hopes to bewitch through deception and superstition, and to destroy the sure foundation of our temple.' Tamino, he continues, will help strengthen the order and, once initiated, will himself reward virtue and punish vice. The celebrated *dreimalige Akkord*, its ritual, almost Brucknerian silences as crucial as the chords themselves, is intoned, reminding us that Freemasonry informs this Enlightenment individualism.

Indeed, silence is very important throughout *Die Zauberflöte*. The Three Boys counsel Tamino, successfully, and Papageno, unsuccessfully, to observe it. Mozart told Constanze that the usual numbers were encored, 'but what gives me most pleasure is the *silent approval*', indicating 'how this opera is becoming more and more esteemed'. One should

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[32] During Rameau's lifetime, composers and librettists preferred the term *tragédie en musique*. The arrival in Paris of Gluck's operas during the 1770s definitively changed this. See G. Sadler, 'Tragédie en musique', *Grove Music Online*.

[33] Gregor-Dellin and Mack (eds.), *Cosima Wagner's Diaries*, 29 May 1870.

[34] F. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. C. Diethe, ed. K. Ansell-Pearson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 29.

not exaggerate, but this might represent a harbinger of Romantic, even bourgeois, attitudes towards how one ought to behave. It contrasts with Mozart's report from the same letter of tremendous applause during the final Prague performance of *Tito*.[35] The mystical importance of silence in *Die Zauberflöte* suggests that it is the only Mozart opera truly to exhibit signs of German Romanticism. One might argue for a precedent in the instruction to Gluck's Orpheus not to speak in Hades; this is not, however, absolute silence, but a character's silence, relying upon the extended communicative power of music. Both forms are important in *Die Zauberflöte*. Poetry, incorporating but not limited to reason, would be mankind's tutor, drawing sustenance from mystical currents of eighteenth-century culture. Mesmerism had informed the comedy of *Così fan tutte*. Now the hermetic, esoteric mysteries of Rosicrucianism, an order of celebrated secrecy, might move Enlightenment beyond mere logical deduction to discovery of hidden meanings comprehensible only to initiates. Alchemy could be spiritual as well as physical; the goal of Tamino's trials of purification is spiritual perfection, even divine wisdom.

The Queen and her cronies fall physically and tonally through a C minor chromatic sequence: 'Our power is shattered; we are all plunged into eternal night!' Mozart's music then turns decisively to the tonic of E-flat as Sarastro guides us into the final chorus, declaring: 'The sun's rays chase away the night; the hypocrite's devious power is vanquished.' So far this seems to represent a straightforward victory of Light over Darkness; in a sense, it is. However, the chorus sings of strength (*Stärke*) victorious, crowning with its 'eternal crown' not the power of reason, whether *Verstand* or *Vernunft*, but *Schönheit und Weisheit*: 'Beauty and Wisdom'. Reason has not vanished; it is *aufgehoben*. The words '*Weisheit* . . . *Schönheit* . . . *Stärke*', occur in the St John Masonic ritual, and form the central triangle of the Thirty-third Degree of the Masons' so-called Scottish Ritual, of partly Rosicrucian inspiration, its motto *Ordo ab Chao*.[36] To construct order out of chaos is now more of an artistic deed than Enlightened Absolutism would have held. Tito is no artist or magician; Sarastro *is*, if far from a perfect example. An unidentified writer, perhaps Hegel or Schelling, wrote in 1796 or 1797 that the idea uniting all others should be beauty. 'The highest act of reason is an aesthetic act since it comprises all ideas . . . *truth* and *goodness* are fraternally united only in beauty.' Poetry would thereby 'gain a higher dignity . . . again become . . . the

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[35] 7–8 October 1791, in *Briefe*, IV.157.
[36] H. C. R. Landon, *1791: Mozart's Last Year* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), pp. 128–30.

teacher of humanity'. Not only the 'great multitude' needed a 'religion of the senses', but the philosopher too.[37]

Sarastro must therefore learn from his mistakes and from the example of others, that he might create order out of his own chaos. His role in acquiring Pamina appears murky: taken for her own 'protection', she is not free to leave, and it is hinted that he may have had amorous intent. Pamina and Tamino – a prince, but crucially, in an echo of traditional clemency, *ein Mensch* – therefore purify not only themselves, but also Sarastro; their love is divinely ordained and thus trumps any alternative Sarastro might have entertained. This is Enlightened in that it would purify the mythical realm, but proto-Romantic in its conception of love. Schleiermacher would soon argue that love, not the rational self-interest of Enlightenment utilitarianism, was the most powerful engine of human activity. The individual must constantly look to the rest of mankind, not least in order to 'maintain consciousness of his selfhood'. 'Without love,' Schleiermacher claimed, 'the dreadful disproportion between giving and receiving will soon unhinge the mind in its first efforts at self-realisation, driving it from its proper course.'[38] The *raison d'état* of Tito renouncing his beloved Berenice in favour of Rome appertains, by contrast, to another age. Tamino's loss of Pamina is temporary, a stage in his trials; it is never their purpose. Thomas Bauman accurately observes that Mozart's music renders Tamino a much more reflective character than Schikaneder's libretto would otherwise suggest.[39] From his Portrait Aria onwards, Tamino is no cipher, but a character of great nobility and integrity, who will attain greater heights through initiation into the order's mysteries.

In *Die Zauberflöte*, the agency of historical subjects is stronger than in Tito's opera. Nevertheless, there remains a striking similarity, for Tito as well as Sarastro may be seen, to quote Paul Nettl, to embody the 'all-forgiving . . . principles of Masonic tolerance'. While the impetus for its more extended equivalent in *Die Zauberflöte* came more directly from composer and librettist, it is worth remembering that 'those who had the last word concerning the choice of the subject might also have been motivated by these same thoughts: the Counts Thun, Canal, Pachta' et al., were all Freemasons, 'who, through their vows, were obliged to propagate humanitarian ideals whenever possible'.[40] Such men also comprised a good number of the first audience.

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[37] Anon., 'The Oldest Systematic Programme of German Idealism', in *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*, trans. F. C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 4–5.

[38] F. D. E. Schleiermacher, 'Monologues', in Beiser (ed.), *Early Political Writings*, p. 179.

[39] Bauman, 'At the North Gate', p. 281.

[40] P. Nettl, *Mozart in Böhmen* (Prague: Verlag Neumann, 1938), pp. 184–5.

The authorities' attitude towards the Craft was uncertain. Although Francis I had been a Mason, Maria Theresa – who may have had something of the Queen of the Night about her – repressed the movement after his death. Joseph II instituted a more liberal regime for the first five years of his sole rule, but his 1785 Masonic Patent rationalised the number of lodges and imposed severe limits on membership. This led many, though not Mozart, to resign from the order. One who did was Ignaz von Born, master of Haydn's lodge, 'Zur wahren Eintracht', and dedicatee of Mozart's cantata, *Die Maurerfreude*, KV 471. Born has often been claimed as a model for Sarastro. Leopold kept his cards close to his chest, while many of his advisors were actively hostile. Confusion persisted until Francis II closed down the lodges in 1794–5.

If we should beware too emphatic a Masonic interpretation of *Tito*, there are nevertheless clear correspondences between Tito's Act I aria, in which he asks, 'If I am deprived of showing mercy, what is left to me?' and Sarastro's Act II 'Within these sacred halls, revenge has no place'. Both of these 'mercy' or 'forgiveness' arias are in F major, in moderately slow quadruple time (*Andante* and *Larghetto*), and the harmonic contours of their opening bars are identical. Given that Tito is a tenor and Sarastro a bass, the vocal lines are surprisingly similar too. Where Tito's form of address is monarchical, Sarastro's is fraternal: 'Within these sacred walls, where man [*Mensch*] loves man, no traitor can lurk, for enemies are forgiven. He who does not delight in this teaching is undeserving of the name of Man.' This difference should not surprise, however, given the divergence of dramatic context and audience, and Sarastro's brotherhood remains unashamedly autocratic. Tito also wishes that no traitor should lurk in his kingdom, that men should forgive their enemies; this is secured by clement example, engendering moral improvement in Sesto and even in Vitellia. Just exercise of power and the constitution of a just society evoke a strikingly similar response in both works.

Sarastro and Tito are both lauded in their respective first-act finales for their dispensation of justice. Both show forgiveness, although ambiguously in Sarastro's case, when one considers his treatment of Monostatos. (Perhaps different rules apply to Moors.) According to the contemporary *Charakter und Eigenschaften eines echten Freimaurers*, an initiate 'should have an honest, true, humanity-loving, tender and feeling heart, be sympathetic to the misfortunes of others', and evince neither hatred nor vengefulness. This is not exclusively Masonic. One might say the same about a Christian – which is often the point. What may subsequently have been taken as opponents, competitors even, were not necessarily thus considered by contemporaries, certainly not in Mozart's case. Indeed, the first point of the *Charakter und Eigenschaften* was that a member should

be 'a freeborn man, raised in the Christian religion, and not under twenty years old'.[41]

A significant difference between our two works relates to the social hierarchy presented through the characters. Stark differentiation was unlikely to arise in an *opera seria* dealing with no one of less than noble rank, but hierarchy is clearly delineated in *Die Zauberflöte*. Papageno and Papagena are the humblest characters. Depicted in straightforward, often folk-like music, they will lead a decent life together. They will never be admitted, however, to Sarastro's order. Instead, they will find domestic bliss with 'first a little Papageno . . . then a little Papagena', and so forth. They do not reappear in the final scene, having nothing to do with the initiates' future.

At the other extreme is the Queen of the Night. She is essentially a *seria* character, kept apart from 'popular theatre' aspects of the action. Her music puts one more in mind of *Idomeneo*'s furious Electra than of any intervening character, with the possible exception of Vitellia. All three characters are not only seekers after power, but are women who have some degree of justification to their claims; their lust for power nevertheless leads them to abandon reason, to become hysterical. The richness of the Queen's orchestral recitative is in keeping with *seria* tradition rather than formally innovative as a Gluckian development of *opera buffa*; it introduces what she is about to sing, the presentation of an emotion or decision, rather than furthering the action. Yet her arias paint a different picture. As early as *Idomeneo*, Mozart had displayed impatience with the formal imperative of recapitulation; but here, as Erik Smith noted, 'vestigial recapitulation . . . becomes the rule'. Even in her second-act aria, the return of the tonic D minor presents not a repeat of the opening, which in fact never returns, but a figure extracted from the second subject.[42] Ferocity is not denied but heightened by such economy; there is a dialectical relationship between restraint befitting royal dignity, and a constraint that verges upon Romantic dissolution of formal bonds. One might expect to find formalism more evident in the classicising *Tito*. However, whereas both the Queen and Electra are dispensed with immediately prior to their works' celebratory final scenes, Vitellia's rondò leads into the concluding rejoicing. She has shown contrition, is shown mercy, and participates for justifiable dramatic reasons. Relative fluidity of genre is highlighted by the fact that there is a more *buffo* character to this villainess's music than to that of her *Zauberflöte* counterpart.

[41] E. Grossegger, *Freimaurerei und Theater, 1770–1800: Freimaurerdramen an den k.k. privilegierten Theatern in Wien* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1981), p. 11.

[42] E. Smith, 'The Music', in Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte*, p. 115.

It is worth dealing here with charges of misogyny. There is certainly an unreconstructed attitude within Sarastro's order towards women, but we should not confuse characters' voices with that of the composer. For instance, the priests' duet at the beginning of Act II both marks a stage in Tamino's journey – something to be overcome – and presents them as objects of ridicule. Anyone taking at face value the warning 'Guard yourself from women's tricks; this is the first duty of the Order!' would have been minded to do so anyway. Mozart's frivolous setting suggests no portentous message, but rather a *divertissement* prior to the real trials Tamino must undergo. If the Queen is driven by her passions, Pamina remains the very model of feminine *Bürgerlichkeit*. It is unreasonable to expect her to accept Tamino's silence towards her, for unlike Tamino and Papageno, she is not informed of the nature of her trials. Unlike Papageno, however, she succeeds, and is admitted on equal terms with Tamino, which must have given a jolt to Masons in the audience. Born, in his 1784 essay, *Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier*, had specifically excluded women. Egyptian priests, he argued, had doubted female discretion with good reason.[43] The priests heed Born and Egypt; Mozart does not. A role for women was not unprecedented: Parisian Freemasons had created a subordinate order for women, 'les loges d'adoption'.[44] There was no precedent, however, for raising Pamina to the level whereat she and Tamino finally appear bedecked in priestly robes, subordinate only to Sarastro. No longer her mother's daughter, she seems set to become Queen of the Light. Tamino and Pamina together, as man and wife, have overcome both the deceptions of the feminine world of the Night and the hidebound traditions of Sarastro's brotherhood. It would be exaggerated to see those two worlds as equivalent; Pamina renews the latter, whereas Tamino eschews the former. Nevertheless, the work recognises that, to paraphrase Lampedusa, for at least some things to stay the same, some will have to change.

Both finales restore their works' opening tonalities: C major in *Tito* and E-flat major in *Die Zauberflöte*. Both works also allot a special role to C minor: the fundamental tonality's tonic minor in the former work, and its relative minor in the latter. In *Die Zauberflöte*, C minor has been associated with darkness and death from the very first scene, in which Tamino enters, pursued by a great serpent. Things are not quite what they seem, however, for although the Three Ladies slay the serpent with their javelins, they threaten to send the novice prince along the wrong path, that of darkness and therefore ultimately of death. As James Stevens Curl explains, the

[43] Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte*, p. 23.
[44] See R. le Forestier, *Maçonnerie féminine et loges académiques* (Milan: Arche, 1979).

serpent is a symbol of Freemasonry, slain by the 'Three Veiled Ladies (veiled because Enlightenment cannot reach them)'. Tamino is terrified of the serpent, the crucial points being that 'his terror is due to ignorance', and 'the ladies show their true colours right at the start by attacking the Craft and trying to annex the young man for their cause'.[45] Another danger and potential triumph comes early in the Act II finale, with the archaic contrapuntal severity of the Bachian C minor chorale prelude for the Two Armoured Men. Startlingly for Catholic Vienna, though less so for ecumenical – or heretical – Freemasonry, this employs the melody of a Protestant hymn, a setting of Luther's metrical version of Psalm 12, 'Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein'. This closely corresponds to the Armoured Men's talk of elemental purification:

He who travels along these paths so full of troubles is purified by fire, water, air and earth. If he can overcome his fear of death, he will raise himself heavenwards from the earth; he will be Enlightened, at this level, to dedicate himself wholly to the mysteries of Isis.

This is more than a benevolent ruler's clemency. On the one hand, we see the agency of the Enlightened subject, and on the other, the abstraction of general principles of benevolence. Tamino and Pamina succeed in walking, 'by the power of music, in joy through death's dark night', to reach the 'joyful moment' in which 'the joy of Isis is accorded to us'. They bring us to an interim chorus of triumph in the tonic major, also a key of Light, although not our final destination. Now the chorus from within invites them to enter the Temple itself. Mozart's symbolism of Darkness and Light is clear in the final transformative scene-change from the C minor machinations of the Queen, the Three Ladies and the renegade Monostatos, to the E-flat celebration of the failure of their attempt to destroy the Temple of Wisdom. The Masonic tonality of three flats represents two sides of the same coin. Enlightenment surpasses yet incorporates *the* Enlightenment. One can only attain the wisdom of beauty, truth and Enlightenment when there remains an opposing force; for what could Light mean without Darkness? About as much as culture could mean without power, or power without culture. Beauty, truth and Enlightenment further the cause of social, cultural and political advancement – but not for all. Such is the dialectic of Enlightenment.

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[45] J. S. Curl, *The Art and Architecture of Freemasonry* (London: Batsford, 1991), p. 143.

V

Both works affirm hierarchy; in this sense, both are 'aristocratic'. In the case of *Tito*, there remains a paradox, for the work's initial 'courtly audience rejected or looked indifferently upon . . . [it], whilst the bourgeois [*bürgerlich*] public around 1800 emphatically approved'.[46] The social structure had not been transformed within a decade, but the audience differed significantly from that at the coronation première. *Bürgerlich* approval was owed in no small part to the extent to which *opera buffa* had informed the spirit and style of Mozart's coronation opera. London presented the first performance outside Germany and, more surprisingly, its first production of any Mozart opera in 1806. Yet by the 1830s, fashions had changed across Europe; *Tito* would be revived only occasionally, as Hildesheimer's museum-piece.

Mozart's da Ponte operas, especially *Figaro*, evinced a different attitude from both works considered here. Beaumarchais's social criticism is toned down but still present. The servant's triumph over his master is explicit, as is that of the wronged wife over her husband, even if one suspects that the Count will fight another *folle journée*. Perhaps this has led many commentators to view *Die Zauberflöte* either as standing in this line, or else as an apolitical fairy-tale, while skirting past *Tito* as Mozart's late *seria*-Cinderella. Yet, while there remains a case for differentiating between the two in terms of a modified opposition between 'aristocratic' and 'bourgeois', this is not it. For instance, having described *Tito*, otherwise accorded scant attention, as 'a justification and celebration of the monarchy', Brigid Brophy contrasted *Die Zauberflöte* as a justification of 'the proletariat'.[47] Mozart never sympathised with such a social class, nor with anything approximating thereto, reporting dismissively of Joseph II's inclusion of the 'Viennese rabble' (*Pöbel*) at a Schönbrunn ball. Such rabble, he wrote, would always remain just that.[48] The social conditioning of Tamino and Pamina aids their initiation, just as that of Tito has prepared him to be emperor; likewise, Papageno's lowly birth helps deny him constancy, the cultural accomplishment requisite for admission to the order. This is neither lamented nor lauded, but presented as the natural state of affairs. Abuse of position is, hardly surprisingly, abhorred in both works, but not position itself. The relationship between culture and power is as pronounced a theme in Mozart's *Singspiel* as in his final *opera seria*.

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[46] Borchmeyer, *Mozart*, pp. 221–2.
[47] B. Brophy, *Mozart the Dramatist: The Value of his Operas to Him, to His Age and to Us*, revised edn (London: Libris, 1988), p. 231.
[48] Letter to Leopold Mozart, 5 December 1781, in *Briefe*, III.178.

The influential Leipzig professor of poetry and philosophy Johann Christoph Gottsched, instructed that the poet must first decide upon the moral claim to be advanced by his work. Everything else – plot, characters and so forth – followed from this central thesis.[49] It is not unduly fanciful to see this aesthetic applying to, perhaps even influencing, both operas. The message of *Die Zauberflöte* is Enlightened and Romantic. Light's victory over Darkness presents a strong rather than a weak defence of hierarchy, as consonant with Pope as with Novalis. Whereas *Tito* is very much of the eighteenth century, standing towards the end of an 'aristo-cratic' line, *Die Zauberflöte* is ultimately more the work of its time, in that it looks back and looks forward. The former work is classicistic, the latter so timely, so rare, that it qualifies as classical.

Blanning, while acknowledging his debt to Habermas, is rightly critical of his historical understanding.[50] When dealing with particular artworks, it may be more helpful to think in terms closer to Adorno. Not only might the history be more accurate, but the works themselves may yield some of their historical secrets. In *Die Zauberflöte*, the historical subject and individual freedom seem to constitute reality; if Kant could never prove the moral law's logical necessity, Mozart appears effortlessly to demon-strate it. Johann Jacob Breitinger had formulated, in his 1740 *Critische Dichtkunst*, a literary theory of the wondrous and its relationship with both the natural world and the human mind. Imagination was the cru-cial faculty in literary composition, creative rather than imitative. This would better enable literature to fulfil its role as a 'school for the reader', promoting truth and virtue, and punishing vice.[51] Wieland suggested, in his 1789 preface to the third volume of *Dschinnistan*, that fairy-tales could bring one as close to the 'palace of *Wahrheit*' as any other form of literature.[52] Mozart showed that a fairy-tale opera, its libretto indebted to Wieland's collection, could do better still. It is no coincidence that Romantics such as E. T. A. Hoffmann considered Mozart almost as much as Beethoven to be one of them, for *Die Zauberflöte* shows how art might vanquish antinomy. 'Mozart', Hoffmann declared, 'calls for the super-human, the wondrous element.'[53] 'The operas that most purely satisfy

[49] J. C. Gottsched, *Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), p. 161.

[50] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 5–14.

[51] J. A. McCarthy, 'Philosophy and Literature in the German Enlightenment', in N. Saul (ed.), *Philosophy and German Literature, 1700–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 38–9, 44.

[52] C. M. Wieland, 'Dschinnistan', in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1909–), part I, vol. XVIII, p. 12.

[53] E. T. A. Hoffmann, 'Beethoven's Instrumental Music', trans. O. Strunk, in J. Hermand and M. Gilbert (eds.), *German Essays on Music* (New York: Continuum, 1994), p. 61.

the requirements of the genre', Adorno would claim, 'almost always correct myth through music.' *Die Zauberflöte* thus witnessed and exemplified opera's participation in Enlightenment 'as a total societal movement'.[54] If late Beethoven would tragically reveal that what was necessary in terms of human freedom was or had become impossible, Mozart's *Zauberoper* signalled the wondrous moment of its dramatic immanence.

[54] T. W. Adorno, 'Bourgeois Opera', in *Sound Figures*, trans. R. Livingstone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 21.

17 Between Louis and Ludwig: from the culture of French power to the power of German culture, c. 1789–1848

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In his award-winning study of old regime culture, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture*, Tim Blanning shows how the representational culture that had dominated the European cultural scene for the best part of a century, was progressively eroded by the rise of the public sphere. In this essay, I shall attempt to take Blanning's treatment of European culture beyond the momentous watershed of 1789, by extending it through the revolutionary and Napoleonic period into the restoration era, which was brought to a close by the return of revolution to the continent in 1848. To this end, I want to suggest that if the eighteenth century was dominated by the culture of French power, then the first half of the nineteenth was dominated by the power of German culture.[1]

If the culture of French power had been synonymous with the name Louis XIV and Versailles, the power of German culture was bound to that of Ludwig I of Bavaria and his capital, Munich.[2] Between 1825 and 1848, this 'artist king' transformed Bavaria into the 'kingdom of art'.[3] As one contemporary observer explained:

When the art-loving prince ascended the throne in the year 1825, there were no more significant buildings in Munich than the breweries. The old Bavarian was born, drank beer and then passed away. Foreigners came to Munich – whose art treasures were at that time limited to the designs on its beer tankards – mostly by accident or driven by desperate thirst. Then King Ludwig waved his mighty

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[1] This represents not merely a rephrasing but also an extension of Blanning's formulation, 'when dusk had settled around France's much vaunted cultural hegemony, Germany's renaissance dawned'. See T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), p. 256.

[2] For Blanning's definition of representational culture see ibid., p. 7; for his exposition of Louis XVI's cultural policy and its realization in the court complex at Versailles, see ibid., pp. 32–41.

[3] N. Lieb, *München. Die Geschichte seiner Kunst* (Munich, 1971), p. 284; H. Gollwitzer, *Ludwig von Bayern. Königtum im Vormärz. Eine politische Biographie* (Munich, 1986), p. 745.

wand, and with one great magic stroke, a new life emerged in sluggish Bavaria. Ancient temples for the sacred objects of art rose up from the ground, magnificent churches next to them, streets upon streets appeared, statues were placed in public squares, the call was sent out to painters, scholars and poets.[4]

Ludwig's reign saw not only the construction of the Neue Residenz, the decoration of the Hofgarten, the foundation of the Glyptothek, the Alte Pinakothek and the Neue Pinakothek, the erection of a Catholic cathedral, the Ludwigskirche, on Ludwigstrasse, Munich's new monumental thoroughfare, but also the city as a whole become the seat of what contemporaries called the 'modern German school' – a school of national and religious painting that was founded upon the revival of fresco.[5] According to the contemporary art historian Athanase Raczynski:

In no other country and in no other period, has one seen a greater fecundity; when one remembers that all this that has been done here has been achieved in ten years, one cannot help but feel astonished and full of admiration.[6]

It had been the conviction of Jean Baptiste Colbert, Louis XIV's *contrôleur général*, that 'nothing does more to signal the grandeur of princes than buildings, and all posterity measures them by the yardstick of the superb palaces which they construct during their lifetime'.[7] This proved to be the case for Ludwig – during the first half of his reign at least – because contemporaries united in praise for the Bavarian king, proclaiming him the greatest monarch of the day. The British writer William Howitt, for example, who was 'no flatterer of kings', conceded that:

I have never beheld with more admiration and approval the works of any man than I did those of the King of Bavaria on walking through Munich . . . No king of modern times has conferred so substantial glory on his capital or such decisive benefits on modern art.[8]

Munich had been transformed into 'not only the first city of Germany, but unquestionably of modern Europe'.[9]

At first glance, the culture established by Ludwig in Munich seems to have much in common with the representational culture of the old regime; the perseverance of monarchical patronage is, as James Sheehan

[4] R. Horn and I. Rückert, *Ludwig I. von Bayern. Der königlichen Mäzen* (Munich, 1986), p. 14.
[5] J. Strang, *Germany in 1831* (London, 1836), p. 364.
[6] A. Raczynksi, *Histoire de l'art moderne en Allemagne* (Paris, 1839), II.144.
[7] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 35.
[8] W. Howitt, *The Rural and Domestic Life of Germany* (London, 1842), p. 312.
[9] Ibid., p. 311.

has pointed out, a case in point.[10] Its 'personalized' character – Ludwigskirche – is another.[11] We might have expected this, too, situated as Ludwig's reign was in the heart of the restoration era. However, even if we allow for the fact that Ludwig's art patronage brought him tremendous fame and admiration – he could not have followed Colbert's advice any more closely had he tried – there were nonetheless crucial differences between the cultures of the old regime and the restoration.

In contrast to Louis's cultural policy, self-aggrandizement was not the purpose of Ludwig's art patronage, nor was his personal glory its goal.[12] Instead, the king strove, explained the Austrian playwright Franz Grillparzer, 'with an unshakeable consistency that shrinks from neither sacrifice nor effort' after one 'great goal: to promote art'.[13] Ludwig's love of art was so heartfelt, that according to the artist Friedrich Pecht, he 'jumped for joy in the street' when one of his art projects was realized.[14] Art meant everything to him; so much in fact that between 1825 and 1848 he spent over 10.6 million gilders of his personal fortune on it.[15] Recalling the fateful year of 1848, when he was forced to abdicate his throne following his indiscretions with the infamous Lola Montez, Ludwig maintained:

It was no sacrifice for me to relinquish my crown, the only shadow this cast was the impossibility to do more for art as I had been able to do before: even when at last everything has sunk into nothingness, art will remain eternal.[16]

But this is not to say that Ludwig promoted art as an end in itself; the notion of art for art's sake was yet to emerge. Ludwig subscribed to Friedrich Schiller's belief that 'if man is ever to solve that problem of politics in practice he will have to approach it through the problem of the aesthetic, because it is only through beauty that man makes his way to freedom'.[17]

Ludwig sought to confront the multiplicity of political problems that Bavaria faced through aesthetics. Conceding that given its geographical size and relative diplomatic unimportance, his kingdom could not play a prominent political or military role on the international stage, Ludwig had resolved to use art to attain the status of a great power: 'as Bavaria is

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[10] J. Sheehan, *Museums in the German Art World: From the End of the Old Regime to the Rise of Modernism* (Oxford, 2000), p. 101.

[11] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 35.

[12] Blanning explains that 'purpose of the Versailles complex was the representation and enforcement of the glory of Louis XIV' at ibid., p. 37.

[13] M. Dirrigl, *Ludwig I. König von Bayern 1825–48* (Munich, 1980), p. 204.

[14] Ibid., p. 206.   [15] Ibid., p. 167.

[16] L. Hüttl, *Ludwig I. König und Bauherr* (Munich, 1986), p. 106.

[17] F. Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, trans. E. Wilkinson and L. Willoughby (Oxford, 1967), p. 9.

far too small for me to become a great prince; nothing else remains but to become the art patron of Europe'.[18] Art could simultaneously fulfil the same function in German power politics. While Bavaria could not realistically compete with Austria and Prussia in the struggle for mastery in Germany, Ludwig could establish his capital as 'the spiritual kernel' of the German nation.[19] His professed desire was 'to turn Munich into a city, which shall so redound to Germany's honour, that no one will be able to say that he knows Germany, if he has not seen Munich'.[20]

Art could also potentially solve the problem of domestic politics. The Freistaat Bayern was perhaps the greatest beneficiary of the territorial redistribution that followed the demise of the Holy Roman Empire at the hands of Napoleon. Bavaria was not only elevated to the status of a kingdom, but also acquired no less than eighty-five new territories. Such expansion came at a price: the imperative to integrate these formerly sovereign territories, each with their distinct political, legal and religious traditions and cultures, into an aggrandized state. For Bavaria to consolidate, it was essential to forge a sense of state identity. And according to his councillor, Joseph Freiherr von Hormayr, Ludwig's 'most powerful arms' lay in:

knowledge and art, in every intellectual predominance, in national education, especially in the talents, that he collects around his throne, and in public opinion, which nowadays rules the world far more than arms.[21]

In the wake of the French Revolution, the ensuing experience of war and occupation, and the eventual drive for liberation, J. G. Fichte for one had emphasized the imperative of national education. In his *Speeches to the German Nation* of 1808, he had given a central role to the teaching of national history:

Among the individual and special means of raising up the German spirit, a very powerful tool would be a rousing history of the Germans from this period, which could serve as a national book for the people.[22]

The realities of the post-revolutionary political universe required a new political culture, and one, as Hormayr appreciated, that made a direct appeal to the public. Given its 'active connection to religion and history,

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[18] Horn and Rückert, *Ludwig I.*, p. 9.   [19] Dirrigl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 162.
[20] Horn and Rückert, *Ludwig I.*, p. 15.   [21] Gollwitzer, *Ludwig von Bayern*, p. 750.
[22] F. Büttner, 'Bildung des Volkes durch Geschichte. Zu den Anfängen öffentlicher Geschichtsmalerei in Deutschland', in E. Mai, ed., *Historienmalerei in Europa* (Mainz, 1990), p. 84.

and thus to the total spiritual and educational life of the *Volk*', art could serve as a potent tool of both *Bildung* and *Bindung*.[23]

Ludwig's public arts policy, in which history and religious paintings were assigned special priority, was to mend the pre-1789 breach between dynasty and nation, sovereign and state, court and public, by transplanting 'history out of the memory and into the heart', and thereby fostering a 'love of the Fatherland'.[24] At the same time, it was to counteract 'revolutionary innovation', 'impatient experiments', 'blinkered self-interest' and 'hard-mouthed *Rechtshaberei*'.[25]

This was the crucial difference between restoration and representational culture; rather than assigning a passive part to its audience as the latter had done, it ordained an active and participatory role for the public.[26] To amend an insight of Terry Eagleton's:

> The ultimate binding force of the social [and political] order [of the restoration era], in contrast to the coercive apparatus of absolutism, [was to] be habits, pieties, sentiments and affections. And this is equivalent to saying that power in such an order [would] become aestheticized.[27]

While this aesthetic approach to the challenges of the restoration era entailed the instrumentalization of art for political purposes, it was not cynical in conception. It was not intended to dazzle the public into submission.[28] Rather, it was idealist. Ludwig sincerely believed, as Grillparzer recognized, that in promoting art *for* the public, instead of merely *before* it as Louis's representational culture had done, he was pursuing 'a great goal: beauty – for his *Volk* – that would enhance and fulfil life; as an ideal reality, which solves and saves'.[29]

Ludwig's conception of aesthetic governance was an elaboration, as well as a combination, of several of the cultural, intellectual and political developments of the eighteenth century that Blanning identified in *The Culture of Power*. Firstly, it drew upon the example of the German enlightened absolutists. Both Frederick the Great of Prussia and Joseph II of Austria had been quick – quicker than their French counterparts – to

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[23] J. Freiherr von Hormayr, *Die geschichtlichen Fresken in den Arkaden des Hofgartens zu München* (Munich, 1830), p. 12.

[24] Ibid., p. 8. On the pre-1789 breach, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 369–71, 373, 378–9, 385–6.

[25] Hormayr, *Die geschichtlichen Fresken*, p. 8. The untranslatable term *Rechthaberei* suggests the insistent assertion of definable or codified rights.

[26] On the active and participatory character of the culture of the public sphere, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 8.

[27] T. Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford, 1990), p. 20.

[28] As had been the case with representational culture. See Bishop Bossuet's explanation in Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 41.

[29] Dirrigl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 203.

appreciate the imperative firstly, to cast themselves as the first servants of their states, and secondly to expand their conceptions of their states beyond the limited view of their traditional, negative and coercive police functions. To this end, they both embraced the positive potential of the *Kulturstaat*, in which the 'public good' was pursued by 'both sovereign and people' and reciprocal duties were fulfilled.[30]

Secondly, it not only rested upon, but also realized Herder's conception of the nation. It had been Herder who 'was responsible for making nationalism intellectually respectable', bequeathing to Europe an understanding of nations as communities rooted in a shared language and culture, out of which a 'patriotic public' could be forged.[31] In turn, the promotion of art for that public rested upon Herder's 're-location of cultural value'.[32] To paraphrase Blanning paraphrasing Goethe, 'Herder taught us to think of *art* as the common property of all mankind, not as the private possession of a few, refined cultural individuals.'[33]

This last intellectual maxim was given practical expression by the events of the French Revolution. On 10 August 1793, the anniversary of the attack on the Tuileries the year before, which brought the collapse of the constitutional monarchy, the establishment of the Republic and (within a matter of months) the execution of Louis XVI, the Louvre was renamed the Palais national des arts and opened as a public institution. It housed the former royal collection, which had been nationalized alongside religious works of art that had been secularized in 1789. Similarly, the Royal Academy, which since its foundation in 1648 had been the artistic arm of the monarchy, was now dissolved and its biennial exhibition was opened to all artists and all members of the public.[34] Art was no longer the luxury of an elite few, but the bounty of the public; no longer valued for its sumptuosity, but rather as a source of public edification.[35]

The possibility of edifying the public through art had been considered by Kant in *The Critique of Judgement* of 1790. Kant maintained that when the aim of art was 'merely enjoyment', it rendered 'the soul dull, the object in the course of time distasteful, and the mind dissatisfied'.[36] For Kant, the appreciation of beauty was both 'an aesthetic and moral act' which could be attained only 'when sensibility [was] brought into harmony with moral feeling'.[37] It could also only be collective, for the experience of beauty was possible only within a community in which it was 'nourished and shared'.[38] By cultivating taste, social identity could be intensified, by

[30] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 230, 441.   [31] Ibid., pp. 260, 256.
[32] Ibid., p. 259.   [33] Ibid.   [34] On the Royal Academy, see ibid., pp. 48–9.
[35] The former qualities had been characteristic of representational culture, see ibid., p. 7.
[36] Sheehan, *Museums*, p. 9.   [37] Ibid.   [38] Ibid.

increasing the individual's awareness of what he or she shared with his or her fellow members of an imagined community. It could thus serve as the means of promoting both 'individual virtue and social cohesion'.[39]

Schiller took this idea further in *The Aesthetic Education of Man* of 1795. Writing in revulsion from the degeneration of the French Revolution into the Terror, Schiller believed that the experience of beauty could heal the modern spirit and create the cultural harmony upon which true political liberty was based.[40] The aesthetic education of man could bring 'harmony into society, because it fosters harmony in the individual'.[41]

In the context of humiliation, defeat and occupation by the revolutionary and Napoleonic armies, these ideas were imbued with a particularly German character by the German Romantics. In *Heartfelt Effusions of an Art-loving Friar* (1797), Wilhelm Wackenroder articulated the Romantic notion that religious feeling was essential for the creation of true art. He celebrated the piety, childlike reverence and simplicity of the medieval and early Renaissance masters who, he believed, had revealed the word of God in their paintings.[42] Following his visit to the grand exhibition staged in the Louvre in 1802, in which a number of previously unseen early paintings plundered by Napoleon's armies were on display, Friedrich Schlegel gave this veneration of the early masters its most vigorous expression.

In the *Europa* essays of 1803–5, Schlegel declared his mission 'to lead back the taste of modern times, and to form it in some degree on the models of these old masters'.[43] The 'true object of art' was 'to lead the mind upward into a more exalted region and a spiritual world'.[44] Schlegel urged modern artists to 'return at once to the beaten track of the old masters'.[45] By 'drinking more deeply from the well spring of their genius', their own productions, he believed, could be imbued with the same 'earnest religious feeling, genuine devotion and immortal faith'.[46]

Wilhelm Waetzoldt has pointed out that Schlegel's thesis amounted to a 'philosophy of culture', in which religion and nationalism were the two essential ingredients.[47] Friedrich Schelling added monarchical patronage into the mix, when he proposed that art could best be promoted 'by the mild authority of a patriarchal ruler'.[48] On the occasion of the reconstitution of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Munich as a 'national

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[39] Ibid.   [40] Ibid., p. 45.   [41] Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, p. 215.

[42] W. Wackenroder, *Outpourings of an Art-loving Friar*, trans. Edwin Mornin (London, 1975), pp. 4, 51–2, 100–1.

[43] F. von Schlegel, *The Aesthetic and Miscellaneous Writings*, trans. E. J. Millington (London, 1848), p. 64.

[44] Ibid., p. 145.   [45] Ibid., p. 51.   [46] Ibid.

[47] W. Waetzoldt, *Deutsche Kunsthistoriker von Sandrart bis Rumohr* (Berlin, 1965), I.254.

[48] Sheehan, *Museums*, p. 59.

institution' in 1809, he called upon the German princes to 'increase the beneficial influence of the fine arts on the nation as a whole', by employing 'this mighty educational instrument' to 'ennoble the people spiritually and morally'.[49] It would become significant that the young crown prince of Bavaria was a member of Schelling's audience.

It was at this time that a group of young German art students at the Academy in Vienna, led by Franz Pforr and Friedrich Overbeck, joined together and formed the Brotherhood of St Luke, and in so doing became art's first secessionists. Disenchanted with the cold, universalizing, French manner they were expected to replicate, they found profounder inspiration in the writings of the Romantics, whose thesis was confirmed by their experience of viewing early paintings in the Belvedere, which had been opened to the public by Joseph II in 1777.[50] On the night of 10 July 1809, the Lukasbrüder promised each other that they would 'renounce every academic manner, live in a fraternal union and together seek out truth'.[51]

In 1810, they moved to the capital of the Catholic world. Rome had long been the Mecca for German artists seeking inspiration in its classical antiquities; this was the first time that artists had made the pilgrimage to study the Christian art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When they moved into a deserted monastery, began painting in the manner of the early masters, and grew their hair long and parted down the middle, as both Christ and Raphael were believed to have done, they gained the name the 'Nazarenes'.[52]

By 1814, the character of the Nazarenes had changed. While retaining their distinctive piety, they had become enthusiastic German nationalists. This was for three reasons. Firstly, integral to their study of the early painters was the conviction that they were returning 'to the source' of true art. It was thus not a retreat from the world but, as Schlegel had maintained, a path that could restore art to its former elevated state and then 'progressively onward to a new perfection'.[53] It was the means to establish a modern school of painting comparable to that which had existed in the Middle Ages.

Secondly, by 1814 the patriotic mood of the Wars of Liberation had reached the German artists in Rome. As Johann David Passavant explained:

[49] Ibid., p. 60. [50] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 439.
[51] Dirrigl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 155.
[52] M. Kunze and C. Keisch, eds., *Italia und Germania* (Berlin, 1976), entry for 1812 in chronology.
[53] Schlegel, *Aesthetic and Miscellaneous*, pp. 285, 294.

Currently in Germany, a great popular interest has now been aroused in the *Volk* . . . and the strivings of many courageous youths have won the day; it is also the case that these same convictions now reign among many disciples of art.[54]

The nationalist mood encouraged the Nazarenes in their artistic striving after a higher goal. They now 'dreamt not only of a new art, [but] also of a new society: a community based upon an elated sense of the public good above self-interest'.[55]

To this end, on 31 August 1814, twenty-six German artists, including all of the Nazarenes, sent a *Memorandum* from Rome to Metternich in Austria, Hardenberg in Prussia and Ludwig in Bavaria, requesting that art be made 'a subject of national importance'. The artists expressed their hope that 'the German princes would extend their support to the interests of German art' and called for 'commissions for artists . . . for the beautification of cities and public buildings . . . to refine and ennoble our nation'.[56]

Thirdly, by the late autumn of 1814 Peter Cornelius, who had joined the Nazarenes two years earlier, had formulated the means by which he hoped to 'awaken the world'.[57] In a letter addressed to the nationalist propagandist Joseph Görres, then leading the nationalist cause against Napoleon, Cornelius explained:

At last I come to what according to my innermost conviction would, I feel, be the most powerful, I would say the infallible, means of giving German art a new direction compatible with the great era of the nation and with its spirit: this would be nothing less than the revival of fresco painting as it was practised from the great Giotto to the divine Raphael.[58]

The return to fresco would restore to painting the 'public function' it had enjoyed in the service of religion.[59] As Passavant explained, 'only where art serves the glorification of public life, and only where all the strength of the *Volk* is aroused, can art be given a true foundation'.[60] For his part, Cornelius predicted that with public patronage, 'schools will rise up in the old spirit, whose true high art will pour forth with effective powers into the heart of the nation'.[61]

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[54] J. D. Passavant, *Ansichten über die bildenden Künste und Darstellungen des Ganges derselben in Toscana. Zur Bestimmung des Geschichtspunktes, aus welchem die neudeutsche Malerschule zu betrachten ist* (Heidelberg, 1820), p. 78.
[55] Ibid.
[56] M. Droste, *Das Fresko als Idee. Zur Geschichte öffentlicher Kunst im 19. Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1980), p. 13.
[57] E. Förster, *Peter von Cornelius. Ein Gedenkbuch aus seinem Leben und Wirken* (Berlin, 1874), I.153.
[58] Ibid., p. 155.   [59] Droste, *Das Fresko*, p. 100.
[60] Passavant, *Ansichten*, p. 36.   [61] Förster, *Peter von Cornelius*, I.156.

As a new era beckoned, Cornelius began to implement his plan. In January 1816, he seized upon the desire of the Prussian consul-general in Rome, Jacob Salomon Bartholdy, to have his residence decorated, and persuaded him to give the Nazarenes a commission. The significance of this 'first attempt to revive the elevated style of painting' was not lost on contemporaries: Raczynski described the Bartholdy frescoes as 'the first monument to the renaissance of modern art in Rome', while Ludwig celebrated them as 'the cradle of new German art'.[62] Impressed by their efforts, the Roman marchese Carlo Massimo provided the Nazarenes with their second commission.

Cornelius professed to having accepted Massimo's commission in 1817 'in order to show from Rome how my Fatherland could make use of me'.[63] When Ludwig visited Rome the following year, he was delighted by Cornelius's promise. The artist offered the means by which the prince could realize his plan for a spectacular revival of the arts once he succeeded to the throne. As had been the case with Johann Philipp Franz of Würzburg and Balthasar Neumann, there was again the fortunate co-existence of a patron in search of an artist and an artist in search of a patron.[64]

The two men were drawn to each other for two additional reasons. Firstly, both were enthusiastic German nationalists. Cornelius was already engaged in his own 'enthusiastic struggle against French tyranny and frivolity', while according to Raczynski:

No other German has felt more vitally than the crown prince the outrages and calamities which the French Republic has dumped on Germany . . . They have left a profound impression on his soul. It is to this sentiment, that the first symptoms of his love for the arts were linked. His love of art has always been in close connection with that of national glory.[65]

Secondly, they shared a devotion to Christianity and the belief that the revival of Christian art would help 'the old belief, the old love, and with them, the old power of the Father, rise again'.[66]

During his stay in Rome, Ludwig became so enraptured with the Nazarenes that he celebrated their activities in a poem, in which he praised their conviction that 'love and enthusiasm for Christianity and

[62] A. Raczynski, *Histoire de l'art moderne en Allemagne* (Paris, 1841), III.291, 287; Droste, *Das Fresko*, p. 7.
[63] K. Andrews, *The Nazarenes: A German Brotherhood in Rome* (Oxford, 1964), p. 48.
[64] Paraphrasing John Steegman, *Consort of Taste* (London, 1950), p. 31; Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 73.
[65] Förster, *Peter von Cornelius*, I.159; Raczynski, *Histoire*, II.95.
[66] H. Ebertshäuser, ed., *Kunsturteile des 19. Jahrhunderts. Zeugnisse-Manifeste-Kritiken zur Münchner Malerei* (Munich, 1983), p. 30.

Fatherland' were 'the most worthy and inspiring source of the artist's spirit'.[67] The poem continues, 'only where these exist, can we imitate the old masters, who celebrated their religion and history in their art: only then will art become part of our nature, our flesh and blood'.[68] In 1819, Ludwig invited Cornelius to Munich to decorate the Glyptothek with frescoes, in the hope that 'just as we have seen German fresco at Bartholdy's as a child, and at Massimo's as a youth, so we will see it at Munich, but as a man'.[69]

In 1825, the year Ludwig ascended the Bavarian throne, the goal of fresco painting was explained in the Munich-based *Kunstblatt*:

Fresco painting . . . corresponds to the dignified goal of public self-determination to which it is dedicated. It is essential for the embellishment of great public buildings, churches, palaces, assembly halls, town halls, which are lacking essential decoration . . . With strength, truth and a noble character, the artist must speak to his audience through the medium of his works; he must glorify and celebrate the teachings of religion, the fame of the Fatherland, the actions of noble men, the flowering of poetry and the general spiritual education of the people.[70]

The following year, Cornelius suggested to Ludwig that he allow the Hofgarten arcades to be decorated with frescoes of scenes from Bavarian history 'to pay tribute to the just national pride of Bavaria, to enliven love of the Fatherland in young people, to show foreigners that we revere the great actions of our fathers'.[71] In 1829, the year in which the Hofgarten frescoes were unveiled to the public, the journal *Inland* declared 'through the contemplation of beauty, the *Volk* will become more able to ennoble its spirit, its nature, its customs, its morals'. This was 'especially when its histories and its actions are recalled in pictorial representations'.[72]

The Hofgarten frescoes proved to be extremely popular. *Inland* was delighted to report that:

Each market day or public holiday, the arcades are full of country folk, who have travelled here from afar and who observe these pictures with such devotion, with their hats removed and often on bended knee.[73]

The enthusiasm was shared by members of the Bavarian *Landtag*. In a debate in 1831, Deputy Rabel spoke in similar terms:

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[67] G. Scheffler, *Deutsche Künstler um Ludwig I. in Rom* (Munich, 1981), p. 10.
[68] Ibid. Horn and Rückert, *Ludwig I.*, p. 8.   [69] Dirrigl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 235.
[70] *Das Kunstblatt* 25 (1825), p. 97.
[71] F. Büttner, 'Bildung des Volkes', p. 82; Cornelius's reasoning is strikingly similar to Blanning's definition of power, see *The Culture of Power*, p. 5.
[72] *Inland* (1829), p. 1243.   [73] *Inland* (1830), p. 732.

Often I have been alone in the Hofgarten arcades and I have been amazed at just how often the country lads, who have come off the land, have stood, as if their souls had been saved.[74]

Deputy Kapp underlined the arcade's importance as a national monument:

It is of great profit, when a *Volk* possesses many subjects that recall its history. The knowledge of national history is a powerful means of fostering love of the Fatherland; the sight of great events and instruction in the glorious actions of our early history elevate the mind of men.[75]

Foreigners likewise joined in the enthusiasm. Following her visit to Munich, the British writer Anna Jameson explained that Ludwig's patronage was motivated not by 'the caprices of the king or individual vanity' but by an 'honest anxiety for the glory of the art and the benefit of the public'.[76] She drew the conclusion that:

appealing to the sympathy and gratifying the pride of his subjects of all classes, by allowing them – inviting them – to take an interest in his magnificent undertaking, to consider them national as well as royal [was] a wise and benevolent policy.[77]

'By taking those especially appropriated to the fine arts under his immediate direction' Ludwig had succeeded in transforming his capital into the 'unrivaled queen of modern art'.[78] The arts of fresco painting had not merely been 'revived', but 'carried to their former perfection'.[79]

Just as eighteenth-century commentators 'dared to claim that the culture of contemporary France was the equal of that of the Greeks and Romans', so their counterparts in the second-third of the nineteenth century readily and repeatedly compared the rise of German art to the Italian Renaissance.[80] In 1831, for example, the British travel writer John Strang had been 'tempted to predict that the arts in Germany may ere long rival those of Italy in the fifteenth century'.[81] Within a decade, Howitt was pronouncing Ludwig's reign a 'new era in art'.[82] Jameson declared that, 'Me thinks this magnificent prince deserves to be styled the Lorenzo de' Medici of Bavaria', while the poet Heinrich Heine claimed

[74] Büttner, 'Bildung des Volkes', p. 80.   [75] Ibid., p. 81.
[76] A. Jameson, *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad* (London, 1834), II.47.
[77] Ibid., I.241.
[78] J. Barrow, *Tour in Austrian Lombardy, the Northern Tyrol, and Bavaria in 1840* (London, 1841), p. 316; Howitt, *Rural and Domestic*, p. 311.
[79] J. Murray, *A Handbook for Travellers in Southern Germany* (London, 1837), p. 28.
[80] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 51.   [81] Strang, *Germany in 1831*, p. 365.
[82] Howitt, *Rural and Domestic*, p. 332.

that Cornelius 'belongs to the cycle of great masters . . . which blossomed at the time of Raphael'.[83]

For his part, the French artist Pierre Gérard told Cornelius:

You occupy an honourable place in the history of art. You have returned to the genius of painting its first youth and its first vigour, and for Germany you have the honour of having accomplished all that the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries promised by their example.[84]

It is important to note, as Gérard did, that the return to the painting of the past was not retrogressive. This can be explained with the aid of John Hutchinson's insights in *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*: 'the past is used . . . to re-establish the nation at a new and higher level of development'.[85] It is 'not a flight from the world but a means to catapult the nation from present divisions to a more advanced stage of social development'.[86] Blanning also draws our attention to the 'cultural surge' that took place in Germany in the second half of the eighteenth century.[87] The German artists who rose to prominence in the first half of the nineteenth century certainly stood on the shoulders of those German literary, philosophical and musical giants that had 'created a confident belief . . . that their culture was becoming supreme in Europe'.[88]

Just as it had been France 'that set the standards in all the arts' in the eighteenth century, by the second-third of the nineteenth, it was Germany.[89] And like Louis XIV's example before his, Ludwig's was now emulated across Europe.[90] Echoing Frederick the Great, Howitt noted:

A spirit of truly glorious emulation has grown out of the spirit and achievements of the King of Bavaria . . . The flame of emulation has already spread far and wide . . . Is it not a proud thing for the King of Bavaria that he has given this impulse to art? That he has planted this feeling for the great and beautiful in the heart of the most influential nations? That statesmen begin to consider how they too may introduce similar tastes and similar works amongst their countrymen?[91]

In 1842, the year in which the new Prussian king, Frederick William IV, successfully emulated Ludwig by harnessing Cornelius's services for Berlin, Howitt declared that 'it is with the liveliest feelings of pleasure that I have seen of late this emulative flame communicating itself to

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[83] Jameson, *Visits and Sketches*, I.230; N. Huse, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte Münchens* (Munich, 1990), p. 130.
[84] Raczynski, *Histoire*, II.285.
[85] J. Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism* (London, 1987), p. 10.
[86] Ibid., p. 33.   [87] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 215.
[88] Ibid., p. 261.   [89] Ibid., p. 49.   [90] Ibid.
[91] Frederick the Great's comment that 'all Europe sought to imitate the France it admired' quoted in Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 53; Howitt, *Rural and Domestic*, p. 315.

England'.[92] Given the nature of British political culture – its characteristic combination of parliamentary governance, patriotic Protestantism, voluntarism in cultural provision and the pursuit of materialism – this is the place one would least expect to find such emulation.[93] Yet, in June 1841, a British parliamentary select committee, appointed 'to consider the promotion of the fine arts of the country in connection with the decoration of the new Houses of Parliament', had recommended not only that fresco should be the style of painting employed to embellish the walls of the new parliament but also that the example set by Ludwig in his patronage of the arts be used for guidance.[94]

The relationship between Bavaria and Britain inverted that which had existed between Würzburg and France in the eighteenth century: in the latter case, a minor German bishopric emulated the greatest European power; in the former, what was arguably the greatest European power emulated a 'petty' German state.[95] Würzburg had been desirous of the culture that projected the image of power; Britain sought to appropriate and exploit the power of culture. In the eighteenth century, that power was French, in the nineteenth, that culture was German. This shift was more significant than the semantic inversion suggests: it marked the accession of German *Kultur* as the dominant force in European culture and the relegation of French cultural influence that had reigned supreme since the reign of Louis XIV.

The culture of French power had been carried by the universalizing code of classicism, which, according to the German art historian Gustav Waagen, imposed upon a subjugated Europe the 'cold general rule' of 'monotonous uniformity'.[96] It was, he continued, during his testimony before the first ever select committee appointed to consider the promotion of the fine arts in England in 1835, destitute of 'feeling' and had 'deadened the national talent'.[97] This was because, 'it was a culture devoid of any national character'.[98]

In contrast, the power of German culture lay in its espousal of cultural pluralism. Thomas Wyse, one of the Fine Arts Commissioners

[92] Howitt, *Rural and Domestic*, p. 315.
[93] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 306–7, 313, 317, 319–22.
[94] E. L. Winter, 'German Fresco Painting and the New Houses of Parliament at Westminster, 1834–1851', *Historical Journal* 47 (2004), p. 291.
[95] On the construction and decoration of the Residenz at Würzburg, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, pp. 73–6; for a contemporary description of Bavaria – undoubtedly for rhetorical effect – as a 'petty' state, see 'Historical Painting', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 41 (1837), p. 198.
[96] 'Report from Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures, together with the Minutes of Evidence and Appendix', *Reports, Committees, Misc.* (1835), v.385.
[97] Ibid.   [98] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 234.

responsible for implementing the fresco scheme in the Houses of Parliament, explained that in the wake of the further universalizing tendencies of the French Revolution and Napoleon, 'the world has begun to reconstruct' itself with the aid of the 'three great regenerators: religion, history, country'.[99] 'The religious-historic-national is the school not of this or that country, but the school of Europe.'[100] It was this transnational movement 'to which we now seek to unite ourselves', while retaining a national commitment 'to preserve always our own times and our own idiosyncrasy'.[101] It promised the realization of Herder's ideal of 'unity in diversity'.[102]

It is ironic that just as Ludwig's reputation was reaching its apogee abroad, it was beginning to crumble at home. When Cornelius had devised the plan to decorate the Hofgarten, he had proposed that the frescoes depict the history of Bavaria. Due to Ludwig's personal intervention, however, the scheme was altered so that the frescoes depicted not *national* history, but the Wittelsbach *dynasty*.[103] Instead of the *Volk*, Hormayr observed 'absolutism stood at the centre'.[104] The *Landesvater* was depicted as the exemplar of virtues, but any suggestion of suffering under the Wittelsbachs was avoided. This raised the question of why the sovereign lord was doing so little to meet the material needs of his people.

Ludwig came in for sharp criticism during the *Landtag* debate of 1831 over whether to extend the king's budget. While deputies Kapp and Rabel praised Ludwig's art patronage, there were others who were less impressed. Ludwig's magnificent building projects were criticized as 'useless' when improved social housing was desperately needed.[105] Deputy Lechner sarcastically proposed themes for further arcade paintings:

My second painting shows us a country schoolteacher, eating his lunch with his poorly clothed family. On the table one sees potatoes and black bread, the cost of which he meets with the afternoon's lesson. The broken windowpanes permit a view over the Odeon in Munich or the Cursaal in Brückenau.[106]

While Ludwig might 'rather chew on potatoes instead of pineapples, in order to get mosaics or paintings', this was not the case for his hungry

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[99] (Thomas Wyse), 'Report of the Commissioners on the Fine Arts', *British and Foreign Review* 15 (1843), p. 205.
[100] Ibid., p. 206.   [101] Ibid.   [102] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 256.
[103] Ludwig's intervention is reminiscent of Louis XIV's for 'more direct treatment' from Charles Le Brun in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, see ibid., p. 38; J. Erichsen, '"Aus dem Gedächtnis ins Herz". Zum Verhältnis von Kunst, Geschichte und Politik unter König Ludwig I.', in J. Erichsen and U. Puscher, *Vorwärts, Vorwärts sollst du schauen . . . Geschichte, Politik und Kunst unter Ludwig I.* (Munich, 1986), p. 399.
[104] Büttner, 'Bildung des Volkes', p. 86.   [105] Hüttl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 73.
[106] Droste, *Das Fresko*, p. 117.

subjects.[107] When it came to the vote, fifty delegates voted to supplement the king's budget, but seventy-four voted against on the grounds that 'the glorification of the past may not be bought at the price of the neglect of the most urgent needs of the present'.[108]

The defeat was a great blow for Ludwig, coming as it did in the wake of, and largely encouraged by, the revolution of 1830. Drawing on the public opinion that the revolution made manifest, the delegates were seeking to assert their position in the face of the monarchical clampdown – press censorship and the removal of radical voices from within the *Landtag* – that followed. When 30,000 people assembled at the Hambacher Schloß between 26 and 30 May the following year to celebrate the anniversary of the promulgation of the Bavarian constitution in 1817 and to demand further 'legal freedom and German national dignity', Ludwig was left shocked and embittered.[109] Experiencing the constitution as a corset rather than the sanctuary of regulated freedoms, he became increasingly inaccessible and intransigent, and, like Louis XV before him, taken to declaring, 'I will tolerate no opposition!'[110]

Ludwig also began to exert tremendous pressure upon his artists, seeking to make them the tools of his desire to create what increasingly resembled a representational culture at the minimum of cost and the greatest of speed. While executing the *Nibelungen* frescoes in the Neue Residenz in 1834, the Nazarene Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld lamented, 'the pressure of the king drove me to excessive effort'.[111] Even the 'jewel in [Ludwig's] crown' was not spared.[112] Though it seemed that Cornelius and Ludwig had established the ideal relationship between an artist and a patron, the honeymoon did not last.[113] By August 1840, Cornelius had become so disenchanted with Ludwig's 'artistic despotism' that he confessed he would 'not be bound to Bavaria forever'.[114]

Ludwig's growing political and artistic absolutism was matched by religious conservatism. By the late 1830s, German politics had become intensely confessionalized as a result of the Cologne Episcopal Dispute of 1836–8. Swept up in the confessional fervour, Ludwig began sponsoring a conservative ministry under Count Karl von Abel. According to

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[107] Hüttl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 50.
[108] Büttner, 'Bildung des Volkes', p. 90.   [109] Hüttl, *Ludwig I.*, p. 84.
[110] Ibid., p. 109; Huse, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte*, p. 132. On Louis XV's infamous autocratic declarations at the *séance de la flagellation*, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 379.
[111] Droste, *Das Fresko*, p. 45.
[112] Huse, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte*, p. 132. On the 'proprietorial' character that Ludwig's kingship increasingly shared with Louis XV's, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 379.
[113] Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 93.
[114] Ibid., p. 92, where Blanning describes Frederick the Great as a 'despotic patron'; Förster, *Peter von Cornelius*, II.131.

Heinrich von Treitschke, 'he forgot that he was the heir of the Protestant palgraves, and that his Bavarians had acquired their position in modern Germany only in alliance with Prussia, and succumbed to a clericalist outlook which had originally been more antipathetic to his more liberal sentiments'.[115] Ludwig's clericalism became ever more pronounced, as was made plain in the infamous *Kniebeugverordnung* of 14 August 1838, which required all Bavarian troops, regardless of confession, to genuflect before the host during mass.[116]

Such a sectarian policy was not only hazardous in a state with mixed confessional allegiances, but also a solvent of Ludwig's national claims. In 1825, Schnorr had turned down an appointment proffered by Prussia 'because his desires spoke absolutely in favour of Munich'.[117] Confessional allegiance had not induced the Protestant artist to prefer Protestant Prussia, for Ludwig showed every indication of being a liberal in religious affairs. By 1841, however, even the Catholic Cornelius was ready 'to kneel at the feet' of the new Prussian king, Frederick William IV.[118] Nor was he alone; according to Cornelius's former student Ernst Förster, now editor of the pre-eminent *Kunstblatt*, 'public opinion in the entire Fatherland was for him'.[119]

The loss of Cornelius was a great blow for Ludwig. He tried to deny its significance, protesting that 'the art of Munich is not bound to Cornelius! I, I the King, am the art of Munich!', but the die was cast.[120] Capitalizing on Munich's vulnerability in the early 1840s, an offensive was launched by the leading critics of the day. Its timing was sparked by the arrival in Germany of history paintings in oil by Louis Gallait and Edouard de Biefve, the leading members of the new Belgian school. The most celebrated among them, Gallait's *The Abdication of Charles V*, reached Munich in 1843 where it was exhibited to great acclaim.

The Belgian pictures led Jacob Burckhardt to wonder, given that 'the German governments, especially King Ludwig, have had so many representations out of our national history painted, why we are so far behind our neighbouring peoples?'[121] His senior colleague, Franz Kugler, replied that this was due to the lack of a genuine 'public life' in Germany.[122] Theodor Vischer, Germany's most influential aesthetician, concurred. The purpose of art was 'to provide the people with a consciousness of their history, tradition and origin', but the only source from which true art could flower was 'the substance of the people's spirit'. Those

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[115] H. von Treitschke, *History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, 1975), VI.281.
[116] Hüttl, *Ludwig I.*, pp. 91–3.   [117] Förster, *Peter von Cornelius*, I.375.
[118] Ibid., II.148.   [119] Ibid., p. 131.   [120] Huse, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte*, p. 132.
[121] *Das Kunstblatt* (1843), p. 1.   [122] Ibid., p. 247.

who spoke of 'a modern epoch of art in Germany' were thus mistaken, because 'without the corresponding development and formation of public life among the people, the rebirth of German art is certainly not fully possible'.[123]

What excited these critics most about the Belgian paintings, as well as the public that flocked to see them, was the link they suggested between national art and national development. For these commentators, art was, as indeed it had been for the Romantics, 'the mirror picture of the nature of a nation. Art affects the national spirit and this in turn reacts upon art'.[124] Enthusiasm for the Belgian pictures was thus a way of expressing support for the newly founded Kingdom of Belgium. As Passavant explained:

Just after the formation of the new political relations, which united the provinces of the Netherlands into a united kingdom, the national feeling of the people raised a characteristic artistic tendency to match.[125]

Thirty years earlier, during the national liberation period, Passavant had held similar hopes for German art under the leadership of the Nazarenes. By the early 1840s, these hopes lay in tatters. Nazarene art had moved into the service of the monarchical restoration and severed its connection with the political hopes of the people. Philipp Veit was the exception, having retained his liberal nationalist credentials, by rejecting Ludwig's munificence in favour of a post free from monarchical patronage at the Städel institute in Frankfurt. Veit's painting *Germania*, which depicts a blonde German goddess, cloaked in the red, black and gold flag of Lützow's Freikorps, in which Veit had served, would adorn the Paulskirche in which the National Assembly convened during the revolutions of 1848–9.

In 1845, the critic Anton Springer let forth 'the most determined protest against the extent to which the Munich school has been called a national and historically significant art'.[126] He began by satirizing the customary account of its rise under Ludwig's patronage:

From that time 'a new, glimmering era of art for the whole of Germany' arose like a phoenix out of the ashes of bad taste. Its capital city, Munich, has become a 'wonder to behold!' From being a 'third rate' capital, Munich 'suddenly has become one of the first rank' . . . one speaks again of a 'new German art, which demands and deserves the respect, even astonishment, of foreigners'.[127]

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[123] Ebertshäuser, *Kunsturteile*, pp. 110–11.   [124] Ibid., p. 110.
[125] Droste, *Das Fresko*, p. 119.   [126] Ebertshäuser, *Kunsturteile*, pp. 74–7.
[127] Ibid., p. 74.

Springer denounced this verdict on the political and religious grounds that 'the breath of freedom . . . missing'.[128]

The German Protestant spirit is not represented in Bavarian art, while a German national basis is similarly totally lacking. Free art, as the inevitable output of the modern spirit, is far more democratic, taking its origin from the *Volk* and then returning to it. The present-day religious and political movements are democratic and art will also develop itself democratically. The creator of the 'glorious era of art' in Munich is King Ludwig. For this reason, the art of Munich is less than local, it is a private undertaking.[129]

What gave these criticisms of Ludwig's patronage their purchase was not only the evidence furnished by the Belgian pictures, but also the emergence of an alternative source of patronage at home. As the critics were reaching their crescendo, the *Kunstvereine* were enjoying their greatest popularity to date. These art unions were subscription clubs that purchased works of art directly from artists, exhibited them to the public and then distributed them by lottery. According to Adolf Stahr:

The *Kunstverein* supports the growing awareness that art must enter into the public sphere . . . The 'public' is the life-giving principle which makes art vital. Our time has recognized this fact: exhibitions and *Kunstvereine* have become the means of realizing this public; the means by which art can pass into life.[130]

The *Kunstvereine* were public, participatory and egalitarian. The constitution of the Munich *Kunstverein*, established in 1823, stipulated that 'all members have the same rights; the same deciding vote in the affairs of the *Verein* which will be decided by majority rule'.[131] And to many of their members their participation in art anticipated participation in politics.[132] During the 1820s and 1830s, the munificence of Ludwig's patronage *for* the public swamped the progressive ideas and voluntary activities of the *Kunstvereine*. By the 1840s, the public was not only competing, but challenging the royal patron, by generating art *for itself*. To paraphrase Blanning, Ludwig 'had lost control of the Salons'.[133]

Just as David's *Oath of the Horatii* seemed to foretell the political events that followed in the train of its exhibition, so the Belgian pictures, the cultural commentaries they provoked and the activities of the *Kunstvereine* foreshadowed the political events of 1848.[134] Like Louis XVI before him, increasingly isolated and alienated, charged with absolutism and betrayal of the national interest, Ludwig sought comfort in the arms of his foreign mistress, adding hypocrisy and profligacy to the case against him.[135] By

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[128] Ibid.   [129] Ibid., pp. 75–6.   [130] Ibid., p. 97.
[131] Huse, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte*, p. 132.
[132] On how the 'critical habits' developed within the public sphere were easily and readily extended into the realm of politics, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 10.
[133] Ibid., p. 437.   [134] Ibid., p. 435.   [135] Ibid, pp. 435–8.

1848, Ludwig's approach to governance was bankrupt and outdated, a fact confirmed by his removal from the throne, the sole German monarch to suffer such a fate, during the revolutions of that year.

During the course of the revolution, the Munich *Kunstverein* petitioned the National Assembly to make art 'a national concern'.[136] This echoed the *Memorandum* to the German princes of 1814. While the revolution proved too short-lived to fulfil this demand, within less than a decade the *Kunstvereine* had, by their own efforts, acquired a national voice: in 1854, they joined together to form the Union of German Art Unions for Historical Art. In 1858, this organization staged the All German Historical Exhibition in Munich.[137] Within a decade of Ludwig's fall, the art patronage of the monarch had been replaced by the paying public.

Christopher Clark has noted the prevalent tendency of European historians to characterize the period that lay between the Battle of Waterloo and the return of revolution to the continent in 1848 in terms of these momentous historical bookends. It has been cast either as the era of restoration or as the *Vormärz*.[138] However, neither paradigm is particularly helpful for evaluating the historical significance of the cultural power of Ludwig I of Bavaria between 1825 and 1848. At best, the former paradigm allows us to appreciate Ludwig's patronage of the arts as the last gasp of representational culture, while the latter renders it part and parcel of the seemingly inevitable triumph of art for the public.

As is the case with all periods, the period 1815–48 contained elements of both continuity and change, of survival and innovation, of restoration and progress. Too fine a focus on what it had in common with the periods that preceded or followed it, can obscure its uniqueness. The aesthetic character of governance was the period's most distinctive characteristic. This was a peculiarly German response to the multifarious challenges that Europe as a whole faced in the post-revolutionary age. As Wyse acknowledged, 'in no part of Europe perhaps has it been so marked and instructive as in Germany, and in no part of Germany . . . as in Munich'.[139] Here society 'is a brotherhood', a '*Tugendbund*' bound together by art.[140]

[Here art] speaks not to the learned and luxurious in their cabinet, but to the people. Often have I seen Tyrolese peasants explaining in their weekly visits on Sunday mornings to their children, their faith and fatherland from the paintings of the Allerheiligen [hofkapelle] or the Hofgarten, or the Residenz.[141]

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[136] 'Art in Continental States', *Art Union* 10 (1848), p. 246.
[137] E. Holt, ed., *The Art of All Nations 1850–1855* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 223–40.
[138] C. M. Clark, 'Germany 1815–1848: Restoration or Pre-March?' in M. Fulbrook, ed., *German History since 1800* (London, 1997), pp. 38–9.
[139] (Wyse),'Report of the Commissioners', p. 210.
[140] Ibid., p. 212.   [141] Ibid., p. 213.

'Spread upon these walls' was 'art in its place of power and blessing', where 'she kindly enlightens, as well as soothes and delights'.[142]

Yet, aesthetic governance was not Ludwig's exclusive prerogative; its currency was open to all, and was indeed tapped not only by the British, but also by the Russians, the Austrians, the Belgians, the Danish and the Portuguese (not to mention local and municipal governments). This draws our attention to the special character of nationalism in this period: it was Romantic, liberal and cosmopolitan; it was culturally pluralistic rather than imperious. As Yael Tamir has explained in her theoretical study of *Liberal Nationalism*, it could combine 'praise for the particular' at the same time as an 'awareness of universality'.[143] This enables us to appreciate why the German Romantics believed that there was no contradiction in emulating the early Italians in order to foster their own national culture, and equally why the British thought they could emulate the Germans' emulation of the Italians.[144]

Religion was the other crucial ingredient of aesthetic governance.[145] In the wake of the religious policies of the French Revolution, Christians across Europe found affinity, albeit only for a circumscribed period, in their common revulsion from secularism. It was an archetypal case of one's enemy's enemy becoming one's friend. This was an important part of the appeal of the early Italian example; it dated from the age of universal Christianity, before the Reformation divided Christians into Protestant and Catholic confessions.

The revival of fresco painting, the Christian art form *par excellence*, promoted unprecedented interest in the Italian painters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which culminated in the reappraisal of their merits and the expansion of the art-historical canon to include them. In the years after the revolutionary experience of 1848–9, when the currency of aesthetic governance had collapsed, the early masters were liberated from their service to the present, and entered Europe's national galleries as artefacts, to be appreciated as powerful expressions of the culture of their times.[146]

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[142] Ibid., p. 214.   [143] Y. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, 1993), p. 82.

[144] Though this did not prove to be the case in practice, see Winter, 'German Fresco Painting', pp. 319–29.

[145] On the frequent and fruitful alliance between nationalism and religion, see Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 23.

[146] See E. L. Winter, 'The Transformation of Taste in Germany and England, 1797–1858' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2005).

Index