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. Pasi Ihalainen

. THE DISCOURSE ON POLITICAL PLURALISM
. IN EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND
. A Conceptual Study with Special Reference to
. Terminology of Religious Origin

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The Discourse on Political Pluralism in Early Eighteenth- Century England

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Completing the first major research often takes longer and involves more people than one is ever capable of imagining when first initiating with the theme. Research projects on the past of foreign cultural spheres tend to be time-consuming, especially if one wishes to contribute to the already abundant scholarship in the Anglo-American history of political thought. Even if primarily self-guided, such projects are facilitated by the cooperation of those whose comments have at least an indirect effect on the course of the study. As to the remaining shortcomings of the research, however, it is naturally the writer himself who is responsible.

I first encountered early eighteenth-century English history in a seminar supervised by Professor Anssi Halmesvirta (Jyväskylä) nearly ten years ago. Dr Halmesvirta mentioned the *Spectator* as potential source material for a student with a yet vague interest in eighteenth-century England. In the essays of this famous periodical, I already found signs of a wonderfully intense yet somewhat awkward discussion on political parties. My first essay on the party-spirit of the friends of Sir Roger Coverley began to develop towards something more substantial as Professor Erkki Kouri (Jyväskylä and Helsinki) supported my application for a year of study at the University of Kent. It was a course led by Dr Grayson Ditchfield (Kent) that finally directed my interests towards early eighteenth-century England, yet disturbed my image of it as a precursor to modernity by focusing attention to the role that religious disputes played in the history of the period.

My work for a master's thesis, guided by both Professor Halmesvirta and Dr Sisko Haikala (Jyväskylä), led me to focus on Joseph Addison, the periodical essayist who wrote some of the most vivid anti-party essays of the period. In Addison's texts, I came across confusing expressions that described every Briton as 'a freethinker in politics'. Attempting to reconstruct the sense of expressions of corresponding kind gave rise to the present study which focuses on the application of religion-associated terminology to phenomena that a late twentieth-century reader would categorise as political.

In my licentiate thesis, which was supported financially by the University of Jyväskylä and the Faculty of Humanities headed by Rector Aino Sallinen and Dean Jorma Ahvenainen respectively, I discussed both the questions of politicisation and political parties. My study of Addison gave way to several other authors of the period 1700–1720, and my method developed towards a combination of British contextualism and German history of concepts. The role of religious language was present, yet further work towards my doctoral thesis demonstrated that early eighteenth-century understanding of political pluralism remained to be chiefly dependent on what many would define as religious discourse.

My search for an appropriate approach was aided by constructive criticism from Dr Haikala and Dr Markku Peltonen (Helsinki), the examiners of my licentiate thesis. I am likewise grateful to Professor Bernard Capp (Warwick) for a detailed commentary which guided me to the invaluable source of early eighteenth-century diaries. Dr Ditchfield's comments directed me towards secondary sources that increased my awareness of the interplay of the political and the religious in the eighteenth century. In the clarification of the method, numerous seminars organised by Academy Professor Kari Palonen (Jyväskylä) played a significant role. In one of these seminars, Professor Quentin Skinner (Cambridge) commented on a summary of my manuscript.

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Koivuniemi, Keitele, August 1998

Pasi Ihalainen

■ List of Abbreviations

<i>BBA</i>	<i>British Biographical Archive</i>
<i>BCE</i>	<i>The Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment</i>
<i>BL</i>	<i>The British Library</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>The Craftsman</i>
<i>CL</i>	<i>Cato's Letters</i>
<i>COPC</i>	<i>The Century of Prose Corpus</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>The Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>The Examiner</i>
<i>ESTC</i>	<i>The Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue, the later English Short Title Catalogue</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>The Freeholder</i>
<i>FT</i>	<i>The Free-Thinker</i>
<i>G</i>	<i>The Guardian</i>
<i>GG</i>	<i>Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe</i>
<i>GM</i>	<i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i>
<i>HCET</i>	<i>The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts</i>
<i>IW</i>	<i>The Independent Whig</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>The Review</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>The Spectator</i>
<i>s.a.</i>	no date given
<i>s.l.</i>	no place given
<i>T</i>	<i>The Tatler</i>

■ Introduction

Whereas studying the eighteenth century in order to understand developments towards modernity is certainly important, focusing on conceptualisations among eighteenth-century Englishmen who were experiencing a transition from a traditional polity – in which the uniformity of political values formed the ideal – towards a more diverse polity is also of particular interest to an historian. This latter approach is to study past thought via the terms of eighteenth-century people themselves and not merely on terms set by what late twentieth-century observers conceive as having had a significant role in later intellectual change.

Historians studying intellectual history now generally agree that reactions to political innovations should be studied by analysing the language of politics and conventions of political discourse, political discourse being a series of mostly written and published utterances addressing a public question in a given time period.¹ The political discourse which forms the subject of this study concerns increasing diversity of political values within early eighteenth-century English society. This plurality of political values meant a break with the ideal of unity which had been characteristic of traditional early modern societies. Pluralism in thought was connected with pluralism within the polity: the connected structural developments include the emergence of perpetual party divisions, a possibility for the political elite and even the public at large to choose between alternative political groupings, the extension of public political debate and the rise of parliamentary opposition. Instead of such structural developments, however, this study focuses on how the early eighteenth-century political nation experienced and conceptualised the plurality of values in general and the plurality of political parties in particular. With political pluralism is meant: (i) the existence of rival value systems in political thought, and (ii) the open competition of party organisations for power within one polity. With discourse on political pluralism is meant early eighteenth-century utterances addressing the phenomena (i) and (ii). In some utterances, the existence of rival value systems in political thought and rival party organisations within the polity were recognised and even approved, but a genuinely pluralistic society did not yet emerge. A pluralistic society, which was only in formation, can be defined as one in which groups of people holding differing political values can coexist and cooperate with other groups in some political issues while continuously differing in others. In a pluralistic society, it is commonly believed that the

1 According to Wilson, discourse stands for public and organised ways of speaking about constituted subjects – politics, medicine, science, society – in a specific historical period. Wilson 1995, 15–16.

existing political differences are of a lasting, not of a temporary kind.² In this study, the concept political pluralism is used simply as a way of translating two connected early eighteenth-century phenomena to modern language. This study does not claim that the early eighteenth-century English thinkers possessed some modern concept of political pluralism. They were using their own terminology to discuss developments that *we* connect with political pluralism. It is the purpose of this study to determine what that terminology consisted of and what kind of alternative meanings it carried. Indeed, the discourse on political pluralism in early eighteenth-century England concerned much more than merely the possibility of recognising political parties.³

The growth of political pluralism was a development that could not escape the attention of the political elite even if many of its members wished to close their eyes to such an undesired transformation. Indeed, pluralism was a major factor distinguishing eighteenth-century England from other early modern nations.⁴ For conceptualising their experiences of an emerging political pluralism, participants in political discourse could only use terminology they had inherited from previous centuries. Of course, they had possibilities for innovation when using language to describe contemporary developments. Still, the associations and connotations of the available terminology set strict limits to such possibilities. Indeed, it is obvious that, in the early eighteenth-century context, what *we* would call 'political discourse' could not be purely 'political' in the late twentieth-century secular meaning of politics. In a parallel manner, 'political pluralism' could not be a purely 'political' issue in the late twentieth-century meaning of the term.

Why can political discourse in early eighteenth-century England not be defined in the same way as political discourse today, knowing that the concept even today remains far from strictly defined? Why can it not be said for sure, for instance, that a text discussing political parties belongs to political discourse whereas another discussing the right of religious communities to exist side by side in a country does not? Why must early eighteenth-century political discourse be approached from a different perspective?

The reason is plain: the present understanding of various discourses being political or religious dates from a far later period than the early eighteenth century. In the seventeenth century, religion and politics had been deeply intertwined, and political debate had been conducted by appeals to Scripture.⁵ Still in the early eighteenth-century context, religion is as difficult to separate from politics as economics is from late twentieth-century politics. The general understanding of politics differed from that of today. For us, 'politics' can signify any actions or opinions expressed in the public sphere that have a

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2 For a useful definition of a pluralistic society, see Martin 1990, 67.

3 An historian is obliged to make use of modern concepts in order to make the past understandable from the point of view of the present. But when using a modern concept with reference to the past, an historian must make it clear that these tools of his are themselves historically conditioned. For applying modern concepts to the past, see Van Horn Melton 1996, 26, Pocock 1996, 55, and Skinner 1998, 116.

4 For the speciality of English pluralism, see Bradley 1990, 36.

5 For the seventeenth century, see Bennett 1975, 3, Ashcraft 1995, 75, and Hill 1995, 58.

potential effect on public policy. 'Religion', as we understand it, belongs to the private sphere of each individual with which the state has nothing to do. In the early eighteenth century, however, 'religion' was far from a private matter; it was necessarily a public matter of first importance, as a fundamental unity between Church and state was generally held and the public significance of religion widely maintained. For early eighteenth-century English thinkers, 'religion' concerned matters such as public morals and ideology which today we would readily define as political discourse. Therefore, the wide twentieth-century conception of politics, when applied to the early eighteenth century, must also include religious issues.⁶ As an example of this interplay between religion and politics is the suggestion that political parties and religious sects were for long intimately linked.⁷ Political pluralism was connected with ecclesiastical pluralism, and the conceptual aspects of this linkage are of particular interest to this study.

Furthermore, in the study of early modern political thought, religion must be understood as a much wider phenomenon than simply theology or religious beliefs which may have been ambiguously defined and indifferently followed and may indeed have had little direct impact on politics. At the same time, religious conventions and customs had a considerable influence on political behaviour and thought.⁸ In early modern England, religion was an identity comparable to gender or socio-economic status, and such a religious identity was not necessarily based on either theological knowledge or active piety.⁹ It is the significance of religious conventions to the debate of political pluralism that must be placed in focus and not the potential political meaning of abstract theological tenets. Religion should be seen as an umbrella concept. Even if its political dimensions may have been secondary to its main purposes, several of its aspects necessarily had connections with political life, as spiritual beliefs had a fundamental impact on people's conceptions of the purpose of life and their understandings of their real interests.¹⁰ In those circumstances, it was natural to practise political theology, that is, to use religious symbols to justify or to criticise political events and systems. The discourse on political pluralism was frequently based on such political theology.

In early modern England, political discourse was not the dominant area of

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6 Phiddian 1989, 66–7.

7 Mansfield 1965, 10, took up the suggestion that the toleration of political opposition was the secular product of religious toleration. This suggestion goes so far as to claim that political parties were secularised sects. Religious parties became parties in party government when the idea of toleration was extended from religious to political freedom. Mansfield did not carry this suggestion much further, and it has received little attention in subsequent research. Recent revisions in the study of the intellectual history of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, however, give reason to reconsider the mutual dependence of the spheres of politics and religion in this respect. The linkage between sect and party is also visible in Sommerville's point that Protestant Dissenters were pioneers in the primary secular form of power, that is, in political party organisation. Secular parties were to copy the techniques developed by early eighteenth-century Quaker and dissenting religious organisations. Sommerville 1992, 124.

8 Bradley 1990, 4.

9 Albers 1993, 319–20.

10 Hole 1989, 3.

discourse but, instead, was dominated by more powerful areas of discourse. The powerful areas of discourse include, in addition to the religious discourse of Anglican¹¹ Protestantism, martial language, the legal discourse of common law, and, to some extent, even the discourse of traditional medicine. An entirely independent terminology of politics hardly existed. Whenever terminology was needed to discuss what we would call politics, religious, legal and medical vocabularies were there to provide useful analogies and concepts already familiar to large audiences.

By the early eighteenth century, the language of politics was being increasingly influenced also by secular, or at least heterodox, elements of discourses such as those of classical republicanism and Lockean Whiggism. The growth of classical republicanism and secular, progressive and potentially modernising discourses has received much scholarly attention in Anglo-American research, particularly among the prevalent Anglophone history of discourses, languages or ideologies. The two dominant interpretations of eighteenth-century political thought in English-speaking countries have been that of 'liberalism' and that of 'English republican, classical republican, republican, or civic humanism'. The former has focused on Lockean concepts such as rights, consent, liberty, equality and reason. By the 1990s, however, this Lockean natural rights paradigm has been almost totally replaced by the neo-Machiavellian civic humanism as the most conventional means of interpretation. The latter, advocated by John Pocock and Quentin Skinner among others, has considered concepts of the classical tradition, which were revived at the Italian Renaissance and applied by the opposition to Walpole in its criticism of those in power, as worth particular attention. These concepts include virtue, corruption, patriotism, empire, arms and property, and they are seen to have formed a dominant meta-discourse of politics. Classical republicanism was particularly concerned with civic virtues of individuals and their active participation in the government of their communities. It viewed with suspicion trade and vindicated agrarian values, cared for political morality and criticised corruption, and emphasised the importance of the ancient constitution. Standing armies, luxury, placemen, electoral bribery and long Parliaments were its main objects of criticism.¹²

The influence of this tradition of civic humanism on ideas of pluralism, however, was inconsistent. Whereas, in principle, ideas of equality and openness within a republic would seem to have justified diversity, a typical fear of privatism as a threat to the commonwealth contributed to calls for uniformity. Though classical republicanism underscored the need of men 'to come together in a union of an honourable and mutually beneficial kind if they are to succeed in realising their highest potentialities',¹³ its advocates generally rejected parties. Hence classical republicanism did not offer a discourse

11 It should be noted that Anglican is an anachronism but a widely used one with reference to the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Pocock 1995, 36.

12 Colley 1982, 90; Hamowy 1990, 273; Greene 1994, 28; Klein 1994, 145, 150; Kramnick 1994, 56; Matthews 1994, 14; Miller 1994, 102; Skinner 1998, ix.

13 Skinner 1996, 2, paraphrasing Cicero.

unambiguously supporting political diversity. Neither did pluralism form a dominant theme within the tradition of civic humanism in the early eighteenth century.

Both the discourse of natural rights and that of classical republicanism were undoubtedly present in early eighteenth-century England. However, this study does not aim at examining the already much studied concepts of 'liberalism' or 'republicanism' which rarely appeared in the discourse on political pluralism. The concepts of classical republicanism were not the only dominant concepts in contemporary political discourse. Isaac Kramnick, for instance, has referred to the continuous importance of the discourse of 'political' Protestantism.¹⁴ The dominant traditions of historical interpretation have not, until very recently, seen this underlying religious discourse as one deserving critical analysis in the study of the history of political thought. Recent studies suggest, however, that religious concepts were of the utmost importance to the early modern political discourse. This study focuses on the use of religious concepts in the discourse on political pluralism while it also takes the secular aspects of that discourse into consideration.

Even though the achievements of the history of discourses, languages or ideologies are considerable, they should not prevent an historian from asking slightly different questions, from applying alternative methods and from consulting more varied sources. This possibility for an alternative approach becomes particularly worthwhile when it is taken into consideration that the republican paradigm, despite the best of the historians' intentions, may have involved a tendency to overemphasise the role of canonical authors. An emphasis on the rising secular discourses may also have led to linguistic continuities and transformations within what may be considered more traditionalist discourses being ignored simply because such continuities and transformations appear as essentially non-progressive, non-secular and non-modernising.¹⁵

While excellent research has been devoted to the secular character of late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century political discourse, the influences of traditional religious discourse, for instance, have thus far received only marginal attention. Instead of focusing on the well researched secular areas of political discourse, this study addresses the rather more traditionalist religious influences in political discourse. Though potentially less significant for *later* developments in political thought, religious terminology as applied in political discourse may reveal essential features about patterns of thought that were important to early eighteenth-century English thinkers themselves, including collectively shared assumptions about the character of the political system.

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14 Kramnick 1994, 59.

15 Pocock himself has recently pointed out that historians all too easily consider the orthodoxy of any given moment as essentially static and look for changes only from heterodox thought opposing it. Orthodoxy or traditionalism as such is not usually conceived as worth studying, whereas its destruction is. In his recent writings, Pocock has argued in favour of studying the history of orthodoxy as well. Pocock 1995, 35; In previous research, traditionalist thinkers such as Robert Filmer have, of course, been taken into consideration.

Indeed, everyday applications of religious terms in political discourse, which was so characteristic particularly in the first two decades of the eighteenth century, may tell more about the then prevalent assumptions about the political system among Englishmen at large than do secular contemplations of abstract philosophers that later generations have come to consider as particularly significant figures.

This study hopes to contribute to current debates within the history of political thought by providing an alternative approach. This approach builds, to a great extent, on the results of previous work within this school but asks different questions, employs a greater variety of sources, and applies an overlooked methodology, which might lead to new findings. In this study, the method of the history of concepts – a methodological approach developed by continental researchers of conceptual change – has been applied to English source material which have conventionally been studied through other methods. This present study, rather than representing an attempt to repeat the methodological approaches followed in the history of political thought, represents a modified version of the history of concepts.

In the history of concepts, the results of the work always remain somewhat preliminary, as by increasing the amount of sources and limiting the number of concepts the analysis could be extended into more and more detail. As John Pocock has pointed out, modes of discourse may change and fragment, and a historian can never argue that he has reconstructed a complete picture of them in any given period.¹⁶ In this study, the concepts analysed have been limited to ones which appear to have been closely connected with the major theme: the early eighteenth-century discourse on political pluralism. Yet it has been considered necessary to study several politico-religious concepts instead of merely concentrating on some few, as changes in the meanings of a concept are likely to have caused changes in the meanings of other concepts. In the case of most of the concepts analysed below, source material has been so wide that it has started to 'repeat' itself. In other words, the introduction of new sources has not brought about differing senses of the concept.

The history of concepts is inherently contextual, although the relationship between structural and conceptual changes can be difficult to prove. Also the variety of source material serves to diminish possibilities for detailed contextualisation. In order not to suggest simplistic connections between political and religious change and changes in the meanings of political and religious concepts, a separate chapter has been dedicated to summarising the major features of early eighteenth-century contexts; whereas conceptual developments are discussed in detail in the body of the study. Should the reader be unfamiliar with the major features of early eighteenth-century English history, it is advisable to consult chapter four before proceeding to chapters two and three (which discuss the state of research, methodology and sources). An informed reader, however, may well skip the first half of chapter four.

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¹⁶ Pocock 1988, 161.

Political and conceptual change often have different paces, and the time limits of a conceptual study cannot be decided strictly on the basis of momentous historical events. The timing of this study between 1700 and 1750 is a fluid one and could, with good reason, be extended to both directions. Therefore, texts written in the 1690s and dictionaries first published after 1750 have also been consulted for this study. However, fifty years can be considered an optimal length for a conceptual study, as it is long enough to reveal noteworthy linguistic change but is not excessively long to prevent proper contextualisation of the source texts. In the course of the study, the 1720s appeared as a period of accelerating change in the concepts of political pluralism, and, therefore, it was considered necessary to study both the preceding and following decades. As will be shown in the discussion on the state of research in chapter two, the beginning of the eighteenth century has often been considered a turning point in the secularisation of the language of politics. The late seventeenth-century language of politics has been discussed in recent scholarship, whereas less work has been done on the early eighteenth-century political discourse. The early eighteenth century was, however, the time of a considerable intensification in party division and discourse on political pluralism. 1750 as another time limit may also appear as arbitrary. Yet it finds justification not only in the need of limiting the scope of the study but also in the fact that late eighteenth-century English society already differed considerably from that of the early century. The fall of Walpole's government (1742) brought about no sudden conceptual changes, and some of earlier language was revived in connection with the crisis of the mid-1740s, but the concepts of political pluralism had already experienced some noteworthy changes by the end of the 1740s. The question of the time limits will be recalled in chapter three when the thesis of a conceptual transition to modernity is discussed.

In the history of concepts, quotations of primary sources are essential to clarify the exact formulations of contemporaries when applying given concepts in their texts. The content of a past statement can usually be expressed through paraphrasing, but this involves the risk of slight nuances of meaning being lost. Quotations have been used in abundance because some key points in primary sources may be difficult to explain exhaustively without giving the complete citation for the reader's consideration. When quotations are used in this study, their initial capitalisation and spelling have been modernised in a way that is unlikely to have caused any shifts in meaning. The changes that modernisation requires are modest, as the standardisation of English had proceeded far by the turn of the eighteenth century. Punctuation has been reproduced unchanged, whereas the numerous italics that were fashionable in early eighteenth-century texts have been omitted. Short titles for primary works have been used, as early eighteenth-century titles tend to be particularly long, often summarising the major points of the work itself. The place of publication for each title is London unless otherwise indicated.

Before discussing the differences of the methodological approach and source basis in more detail, and in order to show that this study attempts to contribute

to actual research questions within Anglophone historiography, it is necessary to place this study in the context of the current debate on the role of religion in early eighteenth-century political culture. By combining this relatively novel approach to eighteenth-century history and some features of a methodology not yet applied to early eighteenth-century source material, the following discussion wishes to bring new light to questions addressed by several English-speaking historians within the last decade or two.

■ Religion in Early Eighteenth-Century English Political Culture: State of Research

A country of privatised religiosity or the second Israel?

The late twentieth-century world provides examples of societies in which a strong union between religious and political institutions is strengthened by the denial of religious alternatives. This continual interconnection between religion and politics in some contemporary states should facilitate a realisation of the potential importance of religion to early modern political culture; political culture understood as referring to the sphere of political values and ideologies, the forms of their expression, and the mechanisms of their communication and transformation.¹ The linkage between spiritual and temporal power may also have survived in western European societies for much longer than many twentieth-century historians have been ready to recognise.

Historians are spokesmen of their own time and wish to discover the roots of the modern world in the past. Late twentieth-century historians consider – and with good reason – contemporary western societies highly secularised and regard religion as a marginal personal matter with little connection to dominant areas of public life such as politics or economics. When they wish to determine, for instance, which factors explain the uniquely progressive character of eighteenth-century English society when compared with her continental counterparts, they not infrequently focus on radical change and apply twentieth-century categories in interpretation. Among these categories, religion has no, or has, at best, only a very limited role.

The history of Anglo-American research into late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century political thought forms no exception to the tendency to teleological interpretations of the past. Wishing to underscore the relevance of the writers of that period to subsequent developments, above all to Britain's rise to greatness and the American Revolution, Anglophone historians have often focused on thinkers who seem to have brought radical novelties to political discourse. Attempting to make past political thought more accessible to twentieth-century readers, historians have applied twentieth-century conceptions of politics, characterised by the secular nature of political activity and thought, to the history of political thought. The problems that arise from such an approach include an excessive emphasis on change at the cost of

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1 For a useful definition of political culture, see Wilson 1995, 12.

continuity of much of political culture, and the tendency of twentieth-century secular conceptions of politics to distort our picture of a period when conceptions of politics as independent of religion may not have existed.

However, distortions of eighteenth-century history caused by twentieth-century interpretative categories have become increasingly rare in Anglophone historiography as, since the mid-1980s, the prominence of the religious context for much of early modern political thought has achieved growing attention among historians. A new type of revisionist historian wants to appreciate the fundamentally different character of early modern societies and has expressed the need of historians to endeavour to understand the past on its own terms without anachronistically imposing conceptions that only developed later. A wider, and, some would argue, ideologically motivated division in Anglo-American historiography can be detected here: Whiggish, Marxist and liberal schools, with emphasis on progress, change and revolution, have been challenged by a new generation of revisionists, who consider continuities and the evolutionary character of transformations equally valuable objects of research.

What follows is a review of the current historiographical debate on the relationship between religion and politics in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century England. The purpose of this review is to offer suggestions on how scholarship could proceed to find fresh approaches to the political culture of a society that certainly was, in a number of ways, a forerunner to modernity. The review will begin by summarising works that defend the thesis of a secularisation of English politics and the privatisation of religion by the dawn of the eighteenth century. The discussion then proceeds by reviewing works that challenge simplifying secularisation theses and, instead, suggest that no decisive decline in the importance of religion in political life occurred in the course of the eighteenth century. Finally, the review will discuss such recent interpretations of the character of politics and political thought in which religion has been allowed its due status in a gradually modernising society that willingly considered herself an elect nation, the second Israel. These studies date the start of decline in the impact of religion on English politics differently: According to some, it declined rapidly after the ascendancy of a new German dynasty to the English throne in 1714. Others regard the 1730s as a decisive point. Some consider the impact of religion on politics having continued well into the nineteenth century. In this study, the continuous significance of religion to English political culture all through the early eighteenth century is asserted, yet its gradual decline taken into consideration.

Vindications of the secularisation thesis

The secularisation thesis, based on an assumption that the significance of religion in society decreases as a consequence of modernisation, has been a major object of research for sociologists. Such a theoretical framework with

reference to a universal, linear and unavoidable decline of religion has been criticised by some historians who have pointed to continuous religiosity in western societies. The supporters of the thesis have answered by distinguishing between two secularisation developments. They have argued that a decline in the political and social role of religion does not necessarily entail the disappearance of private religiosity.² It is the diminishing *public* role of religion in which researchers of secularisation are mainly interested, and not so much the *personal* beliefs of past individuals. This division is followed also in this study: the emphasis is on the continuity and gradual decline of the public role of religion in political discourse, not on the religiosity of individuals.

The thesis of extensive secularisation in most areas of life and thought in early modern England has been strongly defended by C. John Sommerville in his study on what he has called 'the change from a religious culture to religious faith'. For Sommerville, secularisation was a revolution within religion itself and a fundamental transformation in the character and position of religion in society during which several areas of life and thought were separated from religious values. According to Sommerville, in an entirely religious culture, a number of activities do not need to be translated into religious concepts because they already belong to the sphere of religion. Importantly, he warns us not to take some areas of life in traditional societies as inherently secular. However, in an entirely secular culture, it makes little sense to link various autonomous areas of life to spiritual concerns.³ Sommerville's definitions suggest that, in a traditional political culture, religious concepts might be used to describe politics because politics was considered to belong to the sphere of religion, whereas, in a secularised culture, political theology would have appeared as dubious.

Sommerville has insisted that the secularisation of English society was complete by the end of the seventeenth century. The major arguments on which such a claim rests are the appearance of objective explanations of what was really behind religion, spreading indifference towards religion, and the rise of critical questions about Christianity and even religion in general. Interestingly Sommerville suggested that transformations in conceptions of religion were reflected in conceptual shifts. The only true 'Christian faith' became first replaced by the term 'religion', though in dictionaries the terms 'true', Christian and religious were continuously represented as synonymous expressions. In the next phase, Englishmen started to speak about 'religions' in plural, and finally they began to refer to their own religion as 'Christianity'.⁴ While the terminology of religion was transformed, vocabulary for expressing religious

2 Wallis and Bruce 1992, 8–9, 11, 21; Sommerville 1988, 76; For criticism of social scientific theories on the secularisation of politics after the Reformation, see Clark 1994, 223, 225.

3 Sommerville 1992, 3, 9, 11; See also Sommerville 1988, 77, 79–80.

4 Sommerville 1992, 12, 16, 53; Harrison, in turn, has pointed out that the modern concepts of religion and the religions emerged in the English language at a relatively late stage, starting from the early seventeenth century. Still in the late Middle Ages, the term religion had referred to a monastic order. In the course of the seventeenth century, attention changed from faith to religion, and the term religion came to refer to the external aspects of religious life. Harrison 1990, 1, 11, 39.

doubts started to emerge. On the basis of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Sommerville has referred to the 'first' appearances of the terms libertine (1563), atheism (1587), sceptic (1587), atheistical (1603), deist (1612), sceptical (1639), scepticism (1646) and deism (1682). Without having carried out basic conceptual research on early eighteenth-century sources, he has claimed that, by 1700, religious discourse had already become dependent on vocabulary borrowed from other areas of discourse. The year 1700, the final point of his own study, thus appears as a decisive watershed between dominantly Christian and secular political culture. Religious writing after 1700 was, according to this secularisation thesis, a product of personal faith and not of a universal religious culture.⁵

Nor has Sommerville been alone in arguing in favour of a profound linguistic transformation in the relationship between religion and politics by 1700 yet failing to provide adequate conceptual evidence for the claim. In a parallel manner, Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker have maintained that one of the most consequential shifts in the language of politics in the seventeenth century had been the gradual recognition of politics as a distinct sphere independent of ethics and religion. This transformation, they have suggested, was reflected in linguistic usage by the early eighteenth century.⁶ However, their study on this issue has not been conclusive, as it has been based on seventeenth-century literary sources, whereas a conceptual study of early eighteenth-century political literature is also needed.

As to implications for political culture, Sommerville's interpretation of secularisation would mean that religion had lost its dominant position over politics and had instead become a contested political issue. He has seen the Restoration of 1660 as a triumph of popular sovereignty in religious questions, emphasised the extension of religious toleration after the Revolution of 1688, and interpreted the dominant Whig party as essentially secular. Any early eighteenth-century attempt to restore religious culture he has seen as the futile designs of secular politicians. Even if much of politics still concerned religious matters, secular politicians were already making decisions concerning religion and agreed in attempts to keep the truly religious out of power. For Sommerville, this secularisation of political structures appears as a conscious choice within society. The state was its primary force and preceded the change in prevailing attitudes when, in spite of requests for religious uniformity, its legislation allowed religious diversity. It abandoned the traditionalist idea of an essential connection between the health of an organic society and religious uniformity, concluding that religious faith was no more a matter of political order but rather of private choice. Diversity was expected to exist in a secular

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5 Sommerville 1992, 44, 53–4; Sommerville 1988, 77, 85–6.

6 Sharpe and Zwicker 1987, 5: According to these historians of literature, before the Civil War, politics had referred strictly to the Aristotelian-Christian tradition, whereas after the Civil War, political manoeuvrings and programmes had become an actuality in everyday life; Another advocate of an increasing secularisation in early eighteenth-century English politics has been Jacob 1981, 6; A further assertion that the Bible lost its position as an authoritative political guide by the end of the seventeenth century can be found from Christopher Hill. Hill 1995, 63, 65.

state. Sommerville has further suggested, that some politicians may even have wished that extended religious liberty in an 'enlightened' society would contribute to greater agreement in political opinion.⁷

A parallel interpretation of secularisation in politics has been provided by David Zaret. Zaret has suggested that the mid-seventeenth-century sectarian attempts to apply Protestant tenets to politics had given rise to instability which the political elite attempted to counter by changing conceptions about the relationship between religion and politics. Individual utility, instead of religion, was made a major motivation in politics. This project was based on natural religion and on what Zaret calls a 'liberal-democratic ideology'. Appeals to reason also entered religious discourse. For 'the liberal-democratic ideologues', natural religion provided a means to legitimate tolerance as a precondition for a pluralist search for utility. As natural religion gave no support to claims that some form of religion or government was divinely sanctioned, the separation of religion from politics became possible and religion might even be presented as irrelevant to politics.⁸

Yet the separation between religion and politics was more complex than that. Zaret has also argued that, in the seventeenth century, religious discourse was probably the primary way of defining and debating issues in the political public sphere. The popular character of Protestantism provided a model and justification for the emergence of a parallel public sphere in politics. However, religious ideas on spiritual equality were not simply transformed into democratic models of politics, as politics may also have given a pattern for democratic ideas in religion. Zaret's interpretation probably goes too far when it suggests that, before long, appeals to reason and utility made divinity completely irrelevant to political discourse. His claim that the model for rational discourse in religion and politics was derived from empirical science may also be an oversimplification.⁹

There is no reason to question the existence of a long-term process of secularisation. However, the major problem connected with these various versions of the secularisation model of seventeenth-century history is that they easily lead to an excessive emphasis on non-religious aspects of thought, particularly as far as the eighteenth century is concerned. Change in the history of early modern thought is likely to have been much more complex and gradual than the secularisation model, based on twentieth-century perspectives, suggests.¹⁰

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7 Sommerville 1992, 15, 111, 121–7, 137. The opposite assumption of the linkage between religious and political party strife appears in most early eighteenth-century discussions concerning religious toleration. Furthermore, it is anachronistic of Sommerville to talk about genuine tolerance in the sense of indifference of religious belief in this context. It is also questionable to claim that clergymen had no more say in political discourse. Indeed, clergymen dominated at least the discourse on political pluralism long into the eighteenth century. It would be a grave mistake to ignore that discourse as merely theological.

8 Zaret 1989, 165, 172–6.

9 Zaret 1992, 213, 220–1, 224–7.

10 For parallel views, see Force 1981, 221–3.

Revisionist interpretations

In recent research, the ideological indispensability of religion, and Anglicanism in particular, for the eighteenth-century English political system has been most vigorously advocated by Jonathan Clark. According to Clark, the established Church was not merely abused for political purposes but rather provided the basic framework of loyalty within which the activities of the state were understood. The sphere of politics remained far from separate from the sphere of religion. Clark has also pointed to a connection between heterodoxy and radical political thought, arguing that the intellectual foundation for criticism of the established political system was theological, the critics of the state building their arguments on religious heterodoxy. It was only the extension of religious freedom in the late 1820s that, according to Clark, enabled the emergence of a new political discourse in England.¹¹

Clark's study on eighteenth-century English social and political thought (1985) initiated an intense debate on the basic character of eighteenth-century English society. Every writer on the Hanoverian period has ever since been compelled to take a stand in relation to Clark's revisionist programme. Out of numerous reactions to Clark's thesis of England's *ancien régime* as a 'confessional state' can be mentioned that of Joanna Innes, who has been irritated by Clark's criticism of explaining intellectual transformations on the basis of economic changes. In Clark's work, ideological and above all religious disagreements form major forces explaining political conflicts. In Innes's view, historians have increasingly depicted eighteenth-century England as a society where traditional and modern elements were mixed. The question is, which elements the historian allows to dominate the interpretation. Innes has welcomed the revival of interest towards the importance of religion in political ideology but has rejected Clark's views on a universally traditionalist English society where progressive socio-economic developments or Britain's rise to great-power status had little effect on contemporary thought. She has also questioned a causal relationship between religious heterodoxy and political radicalism, the limited extent of religious toleration, and Clark's suggestion that English society did not differ considerably from eighteenth-century continental societies.¹²

In his replies, Clark has continued to applaud what he sees as the destruction of the assumption that 'traditional' society rapidly withered away 'just after the last chapter' of books written by historians.¹³ He has stayed firm in his determination that twentieth-century historical writing has overestimated the modern features of the eighteenth century while failing to consider its traditional elements. A more authentic picture of change can be constructed by including what he has called the hegemonic status of Anglicanism – not monopoly as the established Church was challenged by religious alternatives –

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11 Clark 1985, 87, 277–8, 281–2, 318–19, 348.

12 Innes 1987, *passim*.

13 Clark 1989, 458.

into the history of political theory. According to Clark, studies in economic history, which have demonstrated that structural change in eighteenth-century England was gradual and evolutionary rather than revolutionary, support his hypotheses of political discourse and theology as inseparable and of the survival of the ideal of a unitary state until well into the 1830s.¹⁴

Clark's own recent work on Anglo-American political discourse in the long eighteenth century contains further arguments against a simplified thesis of secularisation of politics. Some of Clark's major hypotheses will be taken into serious consideration also in this study. He has argued that (i) growing denominational diversity was a characteristic feature of Anglo-American Protestantism ever since the Reformation; (ii) religion retained its status as a primary concern for those eighteenth-century Englishmen that were involved in political discourse; and (iii) pluralism in eighteenth-century Anglophone political discourse was closely linked to sectarian diversity. When listing sources for commonly used idioms of eighteenth-century Anglophone political discourse, Clark has mentioned the everyday phenomena of trade and war yet emphasises the dominant, though by no means uncontested, position of law and religion. According to Clark, there were few concrete alternatives in political discourse for the dominant discourse of Anglicanism which had played a central role in the formation of the English state. Whereas the languages of commerce, ancient constitution and natural rights were used, in varying ways, by most participants in political discourse, real differences in political discourse can be found in denominational religious discourse. Religion continued to provide definitions and symbols for group identity among people whose religious awareness was high. Denominational politics created the limits of and potential for political mobilisation, theological developments often gave force to such mobilisation, and everyday problems such as religious discrimination further increased its intensity.¹⁵

Clark's hypothesis of the influence of religious language on political discourse finds some support in Conal Condren's recent work on the seventeenth-century language of politics, particularly in his discussion on the semantic field of politics. According to Condren, the seventeenth-century English were generally aware of differing spheres of politics, law and religion, and some of them were concerned about metaphorical transference between the different spheres and the instability that involved. The reason for the concern was that, in such transference, politics was most likely to lose its independent identity to either law or religion. The vocabulary of politics developed through

14 Clark 1987, 201, 207; Clark 1989, 450–2, 458, 461–2.

15 Clark 1994, 4, 11, 22, 35–6, 41, 141–2, 190, 224. Clark's hypothesis on the connection between pluralism in political discourse and sectarianism is problematic in a sense that, for centuries, Protestantism had also worked as a uniting and not simply a separating force in the English political culture. As to the centrality of Anglicanism in English political culture, it should be born in mind that the sixteenth-century break with Rome and the formation of the Church of England had been led, to a great extent, by the reigning monarch and his/her ministers. Pocock sees religion and law as the leading modes of political discourse among the ruling elite of the mid-seventeenth century, whereas Clark wishes to extend this to concern the eighteenth century as well. See Pocock 1988, 161.

constant manipulation, the political remaining ambiguously defined, as political activity could always be expressed in terms that twentieth-century historians may not comprehend as political. This ambiguity of the seventeenth-century sphere of the political was caused by the lack of independent and standardised political terminology, by the traditionally imprecise character of political concepts, and by constant metaphorical loans from close and often stronger areas of discourse. The most authoritative of these areas of discourse were religion, law and, to a much lesser extent, science. Lawyers dominated the Parliament, priests preached and wrote much of the texts discussing politics, and, one might add, physicians applied medical metaphors in their numerous political treatises. It was natural to all these professional groups to interpret politics in their professional terminology.

The legal and theological interpretations of politics had been major rivals in seventeenth-century internal conflicts. Even after the Civil War, public discourse continued to be dominated by religious issues such as toleration. Religious terminology continued to be applied in political discourse, as religion was universally associated with the rules that held society together. By pointing to a library catalogue from the 1690s that lists texts which we would easily define as 'political' under the self-marks for 'theology' and 'law' instead of 'politics', Condren has drawn the significant conclusion that the political had remained unstable and dependent on other areas of discourse, lacking standardised vocabulary that would have distinguished it from other areas of discourse, till the end of the seventeenth century.¹⁶

This dependence of the political discourse on other discourses may have continued well into the eighteenth century. The political was not essential for understanding public activities, as these could be understood through other discourses. The implication is that, in order to understand the political, one should study 'political' discourse which employed legal, religious and even medical vocabularies as well. Much has already been said in previous research about the part played by law in English political thought. Yet early eighteenth-century lawyers seem to have had only a limited interest in questions of pluralism. Compared to the attention that the law of nature and ancient constitution have enjoyed in historiography, political discourse through religious terminology has been neglected.

Rise of a new history of religion

After Clark's interpretation of eighteenth-century England as a confessional state, British scholars seem to have become increasingly aware of the extent to which religious sentiments continued to affect political identities of the period. Out of several writers on the subject can be mentioned Justin Champion, Tony

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16 With semantic fields of politics, Condren refers to relatively cohesive and interdependent groups of terms within the hypothetical totality of political vocabulary; Condren 1994, x, 1, 4–7, 32–3, 39, 47–8, 71; Compare with Clark 1994, 11; See also Nenner 1993, 191.

Claydon, Linda Colley, John Walsh, Stephen Taylor and David Hempton. Their scholarship is highly relevant also from the point of view of the discourse on political pluralism.

Champion has emphasised the significance of religious disputes for late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century political culture. He has declared religion 'a culturally dominant language, a co-ordinating matrix in which ideas about social reality were conceived and debated' and criticised the interpretation of the period as an age of a transition from faith to reason, of secularisation and the start of modernity. Deviating from previous research, Champion has argued that excessive emphasis on classical republicanism and the secular political has obscured the fact that it was often religious reform for which the radical thinkers of the period campaigned. Religion and politics were continuously conceived as branches of the same discourse, and crises at least up to the 1720s can be interpreted as religious, the relationship of Church and state being at stake. Champion has suggested that no conceptual separation between religious and political matters were drawn;¹⁷ yet his study does not supply a detailed examination of the conceptual interdependence of the spheres of religion and politics.

Claydon, who has studied the political languages of the 1690s, has also questioned interpretations of the period as a time of rapid secularisation of political discourse and has regretted concentration on secular concerns such as constitutional, economic and social questions at the cost of religious languages, which were far from declining. The principal language of the royal court, for instance, remained that of 'a deeply Christian ideology, which rested upon a set of Protestant and biblical idioms first developed during the Reformation'. Even though constitutional issues concerning succession to the throne were debated at times of crisis, confessional issues such as the status of the Dissenters were more decisive in creating division between political parties and motivating their nationwide support. Whatever infrastructural changes society experienced, it remained dedicated to religion. Even if there was less apocalyptic rhetoric in political language and even if discourses such as classical republicanism challenged the early Protestant interpretation of history, the traditional ideological thought patterns did not disappear. The political elite of late Stuart England continued to make use of early Protestant concepts in their discourse.¹⁸ Claydon's study implicitly suggests that the early Protestant worldview continued to influence English political discourse also after the 1690s, as there were no signs of its immediate disappearance at the turn of the century.

Colley has argued that Protestant religion played a central role in the formation of a British understanding of politics in the eighteenth century. Much of political thought was based on commonly shared beliefs such as the one considering England the second Israel, which made thinkers turn to the easily accessible popular religious literature for answers to acute political questions and apply biblical language in descriptions of political events. This Protestant

17 Champion 1992, 3–6, 13, 15–16, 18–19, 170–2.

18 Claydon 1996, 1, 3–4, 15, 42–4, 229–31.

worldview was so dominant in that it influenced British thought no matter how little individuals were devoted to Christianity¹⁹ and it unquestionably shaped experiences of domestic politics as well. The high number of religious publications illustrates how England continued to be a religious nation. It is noteworthy, however, that religion no longer gave rise to open violence like it had done in the seventeenth century. Disagreements were stridently expressed in print, and attitudes towards religious dissent were also moving in a more positive direction.²⁰

Among recent interpretations of the relationship between religion, politics and pluralism must also be mentioned that of Walsh and Taylor. They have argued that the change in the Church-state relations brought about by the allowance of limited religious pluralism in the Toleration Act (1689) remained a traumatic experience for a considerable number of Englishmen. Many still longed for an authoritarian government in both Church and state that would restore the lost religious uniformity *and* unitary state. Those recognising the growth of religious pluralism often did so reluctantly. Many were unable to regard religion and politics as independent spheres, as the Church continued to be linked with those political interests with which people identified. As popular Anglicanism was not particularly theological but rather constituted a general worldview shared by almost every Englishman, the Church remained an important metaphor for political allegiances. Walsh and Taylor have seen the 1730s as the period when this symbiotic relationship between religious and political issues started to wither away as party rivalry calmed down both in Church and state.²¹

A useful summary of the role of religion in eighteenth-century English political culture has also been provided by Hempton, according to whom, the Anglican Church continued to be an inseparable part of the eighteenth-century political system. The English almost universally considered the well-being of Church and state interdependent. Attacks against this basic assumption remained unrepresentative minority opinions and hardly led to any immediate reconsiderations of the shared truths among the majority of Anglicans. Indeed, they may have strengthened orthodox traditions. It should also be noticed that anticlericalism, or criticism against shortcomings among the clergy, was by no means identical with criticism of the Church herself. Among the strengths of the established Church in the sphere of politics Hempton lists a powerful providentialism based on English history and the role of the Church as the major mediator of the traditions of the nation. The Church was the institution for cultural and communal identification, offering continuity with the past and influencing the common usage of language. To put it briefly, the Church appeared as the sole institution that could supply a religious foundation to what the English generally – and also a growing number of continental Anglophiles – considered the best constitution in the world.²²

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19 Colley 1992, 19–21, 26–7, 31–2, 34–5.

20 Colley 1982, 12–13, 112, 116.

21 Walsh and Taylor 1993, 16–17, 21–2, 27, 29, 34, 46, 54, 61.

22 Hempton 1996, 2–4, 12–14, 17–18.

Modified defences of secular politics

Clarkean revisionism and new religious history have found some defenders in research literature, but these alternative approaches have only gradually entered textbooks of the long eighteenth century written by historians such as Geoffrey Holmes, Paul Langford, H.T. Dickinson. In studies of the history of political thought, secular interpretations of early eighteenth-century politics have continued to appear, though with some modifications.

Holmes has argued that, in the period 1690–1720, which was otherwise characterised by innovation and change, politics and religion were both marked not so much by novelties but by continuity. Religion remained a major concern for the contemporaries. The unusually high publication rates of religious texts, for instance, can be considered an indicator of a continuous significance of religious ideals and phobias. An intensification of High-Church preaching in this period was a reaction to the threats posed to a traditionalist political theory and an entire religiously motivated concept of state by the alteration of the line of royal succession by parliamentary decisions. The inherited ideals of a close alliance between the Church and state were revived, and the period experienced ‘the climax and final subsidence’ of a religious conflict that had continuously influenced English politics ever since the Reformation. However, Holmes has suggested that the nature of religious controversy changed decisively after this High-Church revival. In the early 1720s, religious debate became calmer and more restricted to an ecclesiastical and academic public.²³ Even though disagreements on religious principles remained a major concern for several politicians, and religious issues still caused political tensions in the 1730s, the status of religion in society was changing. A crisis of confidence among the Anglican clergy caused by late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century intellectual rationalism contributed to this change which could be seen in declining rates of religiously motivated political activism.²⁴

The transformation in the status of religion in public discourse, to which Holmes refers, has been dated in various ways. John Gascoigne has dated the turning point to the reign of George II (1727–1760) during which theological disputes within the Church started to lose intensity.²⁵ William Speck and Tim Harris have both placed the fundamental change in the relationship between religion and politics to a slightly earlier period, distinctly within a few years of the Hanoverian Succession in 1714. Religious enthusiasm that had still been typical of the reign of Anne suddenly disappeared after 1714, to be followed by a new relationship between religion and politics. After the ascension of the German dynasty, religious issues were much more seldom seen in political

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²³ Holmes 1993, 350–1, 357–8, 362; Compare with Holmes 1975, 4.

²⁴ Holmes and Szechi 1993, 7, 46, 48, 80, 112–14; Ronald Stromberg suggested that the early eighteenth century was a period of transition during which the strong habitual association between religion and politics only very gradually waned. Religion remained related to politics for as long as the contemporaries felt that the principal forces uniting them were religious. However, by 1750, religion had become increasingly secondary to political discourse. Stromberg 1954, 124–5, 135.

²⁵ Gascoigne 1989, 140.

debates. The Hanoverian Succession has thus been presented as the starting point of decline, both in party strife and in religious conflict.²⁶ But as studies reviewed above illustrate, religious issues do not seem to have evaporated suddenly after 1714.

Langford has laid the emphasis on other changes such as the conventional thesis on the rise of the middle class. Though he has discussed the influence of religious issues on politics of the 1730s, referring to the Dissenters' disappointment with the failure to extend toleration, the debate on deism, the growth of Methodism and party disputes within the established Church, he has presupposed that political issues dominated, and argued that religious toleration was enhanced through the decline of political tensions in religious disputes. On the other hand, however, Langford has pointed to the reluctance among eighteenth-century Englishmen of accepting change and their tendency to emphasise issues that had remained unchanged in order to feel secure in a changing world. Importantly, he has referred to preferred terminology as 'significant of the potential strain between the inherited mentality of the age and its material progress'.²⁷

Among historians who have modified their previous interpretations emphasising secularisation yet who have retained focus on change, Dickinson appears a prominent figure. He has underscored the economical, social and political transformations experienced by the English, arguing that it was the growing manufacture, commerce, middling sorts and urbanisation that were decisive in questions such as the acceptance of religious toleration. Dickinson has acknowledged the use of religion to support established political authority, but he has laid the emphasis on religious liberty, on the unwillingness of governments to get involved in religious disputes and to intervene in religious issues.

For Dickinson, eighteenth-century England with her divided Church, Dissenters, sects and awakenings was already a pluralist society. Yet it was a society where religion on the lines of Anglicans versus Dissenters was probably the strongest ideological force dividing the voters. It was a society where the established Church formed one of the most powerful interest groups with considerable political influence at every level. The machinery of the Church of England for propagating values, if mobilised to oppose any extensions of toleration for religious minorities or other 'innovations', was exceptionally efficient. The common people remained prejudiced in favour of the established order in Church and state as opposed to all alternative religious groups. And to enjoy the full support provided by the alliance between Church and state, most

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26 Speck 1972, 25; Harris 1989, 53.

27 Langford 1989, xi, 7, 9, 38, 235, 238, 258, 271, 292, 679, 723; Langford's study, when combined with results of revisionist studies, suggests that religious language may have had a continuous role in political discourse. The influences between religion and politics may also have functioned in an opposite direction so that the relaxation of religious tensions in politics led to an increasing toleration of political parties. What Langford could have added is that religion was seen by many as the safest source of stability as opposed to constant change, and it was often religious terminology that most strongly reflected the prevalent traditionalist patterns of thought among Englishmen experiencing change.

governments refrained from violating the favoured position of the Church. The ideological importance of the Church was based on the shared assumption that government was, after all, ultimately commissioned by God. Suggestions that public morality or political duties could exist independently of Christianity, or the established Church, simply made no sense to the majority of contemporaries.²⁸

Among historians of political thought, an emphasis on secularised politics enjoys a firm status. For instance, in his much cited *Machiavellian Moment* (1975), Pocock suggested that interpreting English politics in terms of grace declined rapidly after the Restoration. Only some of it survived in preaching, in parts of published literature, and also in the public mind.²⁹ In later scholarship, however, the linkage between intellectual developments in politics and religion have become increasingly recognised. Pocock himself has modified his interpretation by arguing that some issues in English history have been inherently political, ecclesiological and theological at the same time,³⁰ and he has conceded the continuous significance of traditionalist Anglicanism. But his own work has focused rather on the creation of a 'civil religion', that is, the reduction of religion by deists to a function of society, a function that no more dominated the entire society.³¹

Historians of political thought have often discover purely secular political motives behind late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century religious developments. J.R. Jones, for instance, has recognised the *political* importance of the gradual development from limited acceptance of religious diversity towards unambiguous religious liberty. He has suggested that cautious pragmatic changes facilitated the adaption of the prevailing mentalities to such transformations brought about by modernisation processes.³² Cautious changes probably also contributed to a gradual transformation in attitudes towards pluralism, whether religious or political.

Another interpretation underscoring the *political* nature of religion has been offered by R.K. Webb who has argued that the Anglican ideal of unity was, to a great extent, politically motivated. Anglican preachers used calculated language in sermons for political purposes. Even if political party division reflected diverse mentalities in spiritual affairs, the primary causes for their emergence were secular. The influence of religion was decreasing, while politics dominated and contributed to a gradual widening of religious toleration and liberty.³³

Likewise, Gordon Schochet has considered the existence of religious dissent outside the Anglican Church and the entire Church of England as fundamentally *political* phenomena. The established Church was, in a state where the governing elite considered religious diversity a threat to the established political order and to the entire organised society, the major propagator of

28 Dickinson 1995, 1–6, 55, 81–2, 84–5, 97, 132, 140–1, 190–1, 219, 261–3.

29 Pocock 1975, 403.

30 Pocock 1995, 38–40.

31 Pocock 1993, 59–61.

32 Jones 1992a, 8–9.

33 Webb 1992, 158–60, 165, 167, 169, 191.

political obedience and unity. Anglican attitudes towards dissent were politically rather than theologically motivated. For any religious group, alternatives are difficult to approve, and to confront threatening rival doctrines, the Anglicans turned to political power. A union between religion and politics was also welcomed by those holding political authority, as it established the strongest possible orthodoxy. According to Schochet, religion was not necessarily reduced to politics, but the closeness of religion and politics was self-evident. For instance, religious dissidents may have been accused of 'schism' or 'heresy' simply to hide the accusers' political motives, their uncertainty about the state of the world, and their incapability of accepting diversity. The cautious widening of religious liberty in the Toleration Act of 1689, which reflected political concerns and had political effects, weakened and, in the long run, gradually destroyed these links between the spheres of politics and religion.

In the eighteenth century – Schochet's argument continues – the debate concerned what the state should or should not do in religious issues, such as the treatment of religious heterodoxy. The state was not yet considered 'conceptually' incompetent to intervene in religious practices. No sudden break in value structures could occur, as commonly shared religious beliefs formed a central element of the personal values of each individual, and questioning these beliefs was apt to provoke reactionary attacks and irrational adherence to inherited values. According to Schochet, religious and legal discourses were transformed towards a self-conscious and even quarrelsome secularism, which had an effect on political discourse. Whereas many 'political' issues were continuously of religious origin, the form of debate was becoming increasingly legalistic. However, the 'meaning in use' of the inherited vocabularies of religion, law and humanism, when applied to political discourse, did not necessarily turn secular.³⁴

Appreciation among historians of political thought towards the significance of religion is also visible. Mark Goldie has lamented the concentration on constitutional theory, natural law, country ideology and classical republicanism at the cost of religion. The model of a sudden change from a religious world-view to rational, scientific, secular and modern forms of thought has distorted much research. It has all too often been assumed that post-revolutionary England already enjoyed a religious toleration envied by the rest of Europe, possessed a controlled Church that had suffered a defeat at the hands of rising religious pluralism, and was inhabited by people whose religious enthusiasm had turned into cynicism towards all matters religious. Goldie himself has argued that the establishment Whigs of the early eighteenth century created a civil religion, supportive for public life, through both a traditional language of Protestant reform and the secular languages of law and republicanism.³⁵

34 Schochet 1990, 85, 87; Schochet 1992, 126–9, 135, 156; Schochet 1993, 4, 7; Schochet 1995, 129, 139–40.

35 Goldie 1993c, 31–3, 35; Goldie sees the revival of interest in the history of religion, to some extent, as the reverse side of the decline of class as the explanatory model for early modern society and the decrease in interest in radicalism as a major object of research among

An awareness of the importance of including religion in the study of intellectual history can be detected also in the works of Lawrence Klein and Peter N. Miller, who otherwise follow the republican paradigm. Klein has characterised early eighteenth-century England as 'post-godly', meaning neither secular nor secularised but a system in which religion had been subjected to intellectual discipline and political control. Religious spirit had not disappeared, but the dominance of religion in public discourse had declined.³⁶ Miller has paid attention to the impact of religious discourse on definitions of key republican concepts, conceding that a divine moral code had been traditionally conceived an indispensable part of all spheres of life. Hence religion was continuously considered necessary for the preservation of political society and the functioning of everyday politics, and an alliance between religious and political rulers appeared as self-evident. In questions of toleration, however, Miller has emphasised the role of Locke, ignoring much of early eighteenth-century discourse on the phenomenon. As to political discourse, he has concentrated on continuity in the language of 'common good' and the rise of arguments defending commercial interests. Without a doubt, economic matters also became frequently involved in political discourse.³⁷ They did not dominate the discourse on political pluralism, however.

Religious terminology in study of the discourse on political pluralism

The relationship between religion and politics in early eighteenth-century England has been interpreted in varying ways within the last decade of intense historiographical debate on the issue. Some historians have maintained that the influence of religion on political life ceased after the Restoration or at least by the end of the seventeenth century. Others have placed the transition towards a secular political culture at the Hanoverian Succession of 1714, or the 1730s, when the debate on the question of religious dissent started to calm down. Some have claimed that there was no sharp decline in the significance of religion for political life before the early nineteenth century. In most studies, the early eighteenth century appears as a transformatory period in the relationship between religion and politics. Thus far, this complex process of secularisation of politics does not seem to have been approached by the means of a conceptual analysis.

In the history of political thought, the importance of ancient secular traditions of political thought, natural rights, and the rise of the language of commerce for eighteenth-century political discourse have been frequently discussed. This scholarship is, however, of limited applicability for conceptualisations of

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conservative historians, yet points out that parallel interpretations critical of an easy secularisation have emerged among Marxist historians.

36 Klein 1994, 9-10.

37 Miller 1994, 28-9, 34, 73, 153.

38 Mentioned in Skinner 1998, 12.

political pluralism, as political pluralism was most commonly discussed in terminology that was not of secular origin. Even though the adoption of classical republican discourse by the opposition to Walpole played a role in the transformation of attitudes towards political opposition,³⁸ it is obvious that political pluralism was usually discussed in language that was either openly religious or at least pseudo-religious. As the purpose of this study is to understand contemporary experiences of political pluralism, it is essential to focus on the language with which these were discussed. In early Hanoverian England, politics still was, to a great extent, 'religious'. Any political issue could have religious aspects, and the language describing political conflicts also reflected the primary importance of religious questions.³⁹ The prevalent trends of thought continued to be linked to religious interpretations of society, and they tended to abhor diversity in both politics and religion.

The need for emphasis on conceptual developments has also been indirectly recognised in recent Anglophone historiographical discourse. Sommerville has referred to significant shifts in religious terminology, to decisive changes in the relative weight of religious and political terminologies, and to the rise of the vocabulary of scepticism. Condren has demonstrated the dependence of seventeenth-century political vocabulary on the continuously dominant religious discourse; yet early eighteenth-century political language has not been studied in a corresponding manner, and Condren himself has focused predominantly on secular political terms. Champion has maintained that early eighteenth-century Englishmen did not generally draw conceptual distinctions between matters political and religious, but his own work offers no conceptual analysis. Claydon's suggestion that early Protestant concepts continued to influence the political discourse of the 1690s raises the question of their potential effect on the early eighteenth-century discourse on political pluralism. Hempton has pointed to the influence of the Anglican religion on the English language without specifying such influence. Holmes has referred to an important change in both the status of religion in society and in religious discourse, yet he has not problematised the potential reflections of these changes in contemporary conceptualisations. Langford has referred to the importance of inherited terminology in the continuation of traditional values at the time of accelerating structural change, yet he has failed to specify of what that inherited terminology consisted. Jones has mentioned the political importance of the development of religious diversity but has left conceptual connections between religious and political pluralism unexplored. Schochet's work leaves open the question of how the state gradually became 'conceptually' incompetent to control religious issues. Finally, Clark's hypothesis of the confessional character of the eighteenth-century English state, though controversial, suggests that it might be worthwhile to focus on the part that concepts of the discourse on religious heterodoxy played in the early eighteenth-century discourse on political pluralism. A conceptual approach

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39 For statements connecting religion and politics explicitly, see Harris 1993, 8, and Clark 1994, 22.

might also be a good way of testing Clark's hypothesis on the key status of religious idioms in political discourse in general.

In spite of these recognitions of the importance of considering the conceptual dimension of political discourse, concrete attempts in that direction have not really emerged. More particularly, no study appears to have focused on the application of concepts of religious origin in political discourse as a way of conceptualising contemporary experiences of political changes, such as the plurality of political values becoming a constant part of political life. The slowly changing meanings of major politico-religious concepts have not been systematically analysed through the study of a variety of sources.

This study attempts to fill some of the gap in our understanding of early eighteenth-century experiences of political pluralism and changes that occurred in these experiences. All of the open questions introduced above cannot be answered within the confines of a single monograph, but most of them will be addressed in what follows. This is done by focusing on developments in the meanings of religious concepts that were applied in the discourses on pluralism, both religious and political. Particular attention is paid to estimating the potential influences of the use of religious concepts on common understanding of plurality in political values. In most cases, of course, such influences entail continuity in shared conceptions, but, in some cases, developments in the meanings of religious concepts may also have facilitated change in political conceptions.

This study proposes that the more traditionalist early eighteenth-century languages of politics should not be ignored by historians on the basis of our present understanding of what constitutes political discourse. The following discussion demonstrates the continually close links between the language of religious rivalry and party conflict and the implications these links had for the possibilities of recognising and approving a society with a plurality of political values. Attention has been focused on a selection of concepts that originated from religious contexts but were employed in polemic on public affairs that twentieth-century observers could well interpret as 'political'. It is another basic assumption of this study that not only revolutionary change but also continuity deserves to be studied. It is suggested that interesting conceptual changes may be discovered in traditionalist languages of politics if they are approached without excessive weight on politics as a secular affair. Terminology of religious origin still played a considerable role in eighteenth-century political discourse and deserves to be studied in its own right. As politics and religion were highly intertwined, caution is needed in estimating the extent to which English political discourse was secularised by the early eighteenth century. It can be argued that, in early modern value systems such as those still prevailing in early eighteenth-century England, in spite of gradual structural changes in politics, 'political toleration' in the form of recognition (and at a later stage acceptance) of elite involvement in competing political parties became possible only after a considerable extension of religious toleration.

After defining the objectives of the present study and its relation to previous studies in the field of early eighteenth-century political discourse and political culture, it is now time to proceed to a more detailed and critical introduction of the method applied in this study.

■ Methods and Sources for a Conceptual Approach to Political Discourse

State of research in the history of concepts

The history of concepts is a branch of the study of past thought which takes the changing meanings of concepts as major units of historical analysis. Concepts thus replace alternative objects of historical study such as authorial intentions or long-term political languages. In the history of concepts, conceptual change is taken as a register of change in political and social history. The genre is based on the assumption that the concepts that people use, their beliefs and their practices are related to each other and change together, though not necessarily at the same time. Some historians have also suggested that conceptual change might be an active contributor to political and social change, but this interpretation remains controversial.

The history of concepts typically focuses on contemporary experiences of change during what has been called a transition to modernity between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Its purpose is to gather reliable information about semantic change and to discover how contemporaries experiencing changes in political realities understood and conceptualised them. In practice, the conceptual method, not unlike the study of historical semantics, involves a systematic collection of numerous citations containing key concepts from a wide variety of primary sources and a careful analysis of these concepts within their proper semantic fields and social and political contexts.¹

Conceptual history, or contextual history of concepts, which is the preferred translation, has achieved remarkable results within the German cultural sphere. Ever since the late 1960s, a project known as *Begriffsgeschichte* has produced massive dictionaries of historical, political, social and philosophical concepts, the eight-volume *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* being the major illustration of its potential. No matter how comprehensive the achievements of the history of concepts may have been, however, the genre may not be familiar to an English-speaking audience and thus deserves closer discussion below.

Writing histories of words in the English language is not, of course, a new idea. Much of accumulated knowledge of semantic change in English was gathered in the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* already in the nineteenth century, and a revision of the national dictionary is currently in progress. Dictionaries such as Raymond Williams's *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture*

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¹ Koselleck 1985, 76, 84; Some of these basic purposes of the history of concepts have also been summarised in Richter 1996, 10–11; For the linkage between conceptual and political change, see Farr 1988, 21, 23; For the study of semantics, see Ullman 1964, 61, 67.

*and Society*² and the *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* have also been published; and some recent collections of articles have paid attention to conceptual change. However, scholars are agreed that no adequate dictionary of English historical semantics, as far as the development of political and social language is concerned, has yet been compiled.³

In the last ten years, the necessity of applying the conceptual method also to English history has been most visibly advocated by Melvin Richter, who has considered it a major deficiency in the historiography of the English-speaking world that no comprehensive account of the formation of its main conceptual categories exists.⁴ In his recent book, he has provided an introduction to the genre of the history of concepts for English-speaking audiences. He has informed his readers about differences in the theoretical objectives, research programmes and practical approaches of German and Anglo-Americans researchers, but he has also stressed the compatibility and common background of the two traditions in that both have derived from the 'linguistic turn' of historical research and from the growing interest in the study of meaning. Referring to research that the history of concepts has motivated in other European countries, Richter has pointed out that the methodology is applicable to the history of any country and any language. He has argued strongly in favour of applying these methods also to the history of political thought as practised in English-speaking countries, which could learn much from the approaches, systematic methods and variety of sources of the German genre.⁵

Summarising work already done in the history of concepts, Richter has stated that its points of focus include continuities, shifts and innovations in major political and social concepts, particularly in times of crises. He has pointed to the German historians' interest in groups rather than in individuals, to the effects of the reception theory on their emphasis on audience rather than on authorial intentions only, and to their focus on the question of modernity. He has also found innovative use of linguistic techniques, historical contexts, and combinations of synchronic and diachronic analyses in the German history of concepts and has called attention to its method of studying both conceptual and

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2 Williams pointed out that the history of language is full of 'conscious changes, consciously different uses: innovation, obsolescence, specialisation, extension, overlap, transfer', as well as inconspicuous changes of meaning. Williams 1983, 15.

3 Not all the explanations given for the small number of English conceptual histories have been very convincing. Geoffrey Hughes, for instance, has proposed that the lack of comprehensive studies of semantic change in English has been caused by the heterogeneous and abundant character of its vocabulary when compared with the more homogeneous German language. Hughes 1988, 3. Yet it is difficult to believe that the method of studying past thought that has proved so successful in German historiography could not be applied to English even though there are differences between the two languages.

4 Richter's writings have provided this study with a number of new ideas, but, above all, they have encouraged the study of the history of concepts in English. The choice of a conceptual approach to early eighteenth-century English history in this study predates reading Richter's recent thought-provoking writings but has been in a significant way motivated by his thesis on the applicability of the history of concepts to English source material. See Richter 1996, 18.

5 Richter 1995, v, 3–7; Reviewed in Ihalainen 1997a, 142–51; Richter has previously developed analogous arguments in Richter 1986, 632–4; Richter 1987, 248, 263; Richter 1989a, 71; and Richter 1990, 39; See also Pocock 1996, 69.

structural change. He has underscored the prominent position held by the social history of structures or mentalities in conceptual research and emphasised the need for simultaneous study of both conceptual change and transformations in political, social and economic structures. Such a combination of the history of concepts and social history, Richter argues, should reveal both the intentions of a particular text and illustrate various conceptualisations of contemporary experience.⁶

Comparing and combining the history of concepts with the history of political thought

Richter has compared the methods of Skinner and Pocock on one hand and those of the history of concepts on the other, suggesting that the two could be combined,⁷ as both are interested in the history of political languages and study political vocabularies in contexts. What the Anglophone historians of political thought have been most interested in has been the interrelations between political language, thought and action. Wishing to create appropriate methodologies for studying these complicated issues, they have identified and analysed various alternative early modern political languages. The political languages that have received most attention from Pocock include the ancient constitution, classical republicanism or civic humanism, and the various forms of Whiggism. The followers of Pocock and Skinner have been interested in these *political languages*, which have also been called *discourses* or *ideologies*, and *not* so distinctly in *concepts* as such. According to their approach, each of the available political languages has made use of concepts in a way that produces particular meanings.⁸

In anticipation of opposition to his suggestion of combining the history of concepts and that of political thought, Richter has also discussed Skinner's methodological writings that seem to question the very foundations of writing a history of concepts.⁹ Even if Skinner has emphasised the necessity of knowing the concepts an individual writer possessed so that his values and attitudes can be understood, he has also stated that 'there can be no histories of concepts as such; there can only be histories of their uses in argument.'¹⁰ Skinner's students have found it difficult to accept an idea of the history of concepts being as significant as the history of political argument or political ideologies. It has

6 Richter 1986, 619–20; Richter 1995, 10–11, 17, 28, 35, 44; Richter 1996, 10–11.

7 Richter 1995, 138.

8 Richter 1996, 16; Richter 1990, 50, 56; Importantly, however, the political languages that have interested Pocock have not included, until very recently, that of Anglican religious discourse, a discourse which is more likely to provide the key to changing conceptions of political pluralism than any of the above-mentioned. The central role of religious discourse is explained by the fact that no completely secular political discourse yet existed in early eighteenth-century England; For Pocock summarising the method of the history of discourse, see Pocock 1986a, 21–2, 30, and Pocock 1986b, 9, 13, 18.

9 Richter 1995, 133–4.

10 Skinner has discussed the role of concepts in Skinner 1980, 62; He has built on the same argument in Skinner 1988a, 120–1, and in Skinner 1987, 20; Skinner 1988b, 283.

been pointed out that the synchronic studies of language produced by the history of concepts needs to be supplemented with 'more traditional historical methods to be assembled into anything meaningful at all'.¹¹ Pocock also seems to share the assertion that intellectual historians should write history of several linguistic phenomena from which concepts cannot be separated and made independent objects of research. Pocock, Skinner and James Farr have all emphasised the need for studying what has been *done* with language in the past, as they consider a concept an effect of the use of language. They have pointed out that, when writing the history of a concept, an historian comes across a high variety of contents and uses of language from which conceptualisations cannot be separated.¹²

A major methodological disagreement between Anglophone history of political thought and German history of concepts thus seems to concern the unique character of speech acts, or written or spoken uses of language with which something particular was *done* with language. Pocock and Skinner remain dedicated to the view that each speech act is unique and appears in a specific context. Consequently, they assume that each occurrence of a concept is also unique. This assumption, when applied to conceptual change, was condensed by Terence Ball and Pocock when they stated that 'conceptual innovations are brought about by action, practice, and intention, rather than by unintended structural change occurring in the historical context.' In other words, conceptual changes are results of arguments used in order to achieve a temporary goal.¹³

In contrast, Reinhart Koselleck, the leading theorist of the history of concepts, maintains that political concepts cannot simply be reduced to speech acts of individual participants in discourse because such concepts have accumulated long-term meanings which do not disappear as a result of changing circumstances. The long-term meanings of a concept cannot be freely changed by individual users of the language. Koselleck has suggested that conceptual change in the language of politics is generally more gradual than political change, and these two types of change do not necessarily correspond. Koselleck does concede the necessity of viewing specific language in specific linguistic and extra-linguistic contexts, but points out that the habit of 'recycling'¹⁴ inherited political concepts in texts changes their contexts and meanings. What the history of concepts does is to study the translation of past concepts for the use of the moment of writing a text and the consequent changes and continuities in the meanings of concepts. The history of concepts endeavours to discover which meanings of a concept endure, which of them can be translated, which ones are rejected, and what kind of new meanings are introduced. It also studies those long-term structures contained by language which set the conditions for conceptualising events.¹⁵

11 Rayner 1988, 496–8; Compare with Richter's reply in Richter 1989b, 297–8.

12 Pocock 1996, 53; Farr 1988, 16.

13 Ball and Pocock 1988, 1–2.

14 'Recycling' language is, of course, a metaphor very much connected with its time of writing. Where else could one expect such a metaphor emerge than in Germany of the 1990s?

15 Koselleck 1996, 62–8; Burke has paid attention to this contention in Burke 1997, 57; For the tendency of a semantic field to conserve ideas, values and attitudes by passing them to new

There is clearly a decontextualising tendency in the Koselleckian conceptual method when used in diachronic comparisons to reveal long-term conceptual changes.¹⁶ When applied to very long time spans, it may fail to contextualise its source texts properly. Some scholars whose research interests come close to the history of concepts have gone so far as to suggest that it is only words in texts that remain for an historian to study. These scholars maintain that the lost reality of the past cannot be a direct object of study and can only be reconstructed by summarising heterogeneous sources. Some of them also assert that words and concepts in historical texts cannot be interpreted only by references to contexts that the historian has declared – somewhat arbitrarily – ‘relevant’ to a particular text.¹⁷

But when used synchronically for the study of a relatively short period, the history of concepts, as understood in this study, pays as much attention to contexts as is reasonable; the high variety of sources and number of authors limiting, of course, the possibilities of contextualising a single use of a concept. Yet any adequate conceptual study must be somewhat contextual. Contexts should be made use of, even if they were constructed on the basis of existing research literature, even if they must be reduced in a research report to background information, and even if causal relationships between historical events and conceptual shifts cannot generally be proven. On the one hand, the history of concepts cannot be studied without considering the contexts in which the texts were written and read, above all changes in political structures. On the other hand, an excessive emphasis on various contexts or some particular context reconstructed by a historian may not only lead to misinterpretations but is also likely to make the application of a large range of sources – an essential feature of the conceptual method – impossible. The history of concepts must find a balance between the one extreme of writing decontextualised history and the other of becoming a prisoner of a context imposed upon the sources.

The dominant Anglophone line of methodological thought, which sees intellectual history as the history of what has been *done* with language, seems to reject the possibility of writing a history of concepts. This is partly because Skinner’s research interests differ from those of the practitioners of the history of concepts: he is interested in contextualising political theories, in showing how linguistic conventions both make legitimations of politics possible and also set limits to them. He wishes to make these individual political theories understandable as intentional speech acts.¹⁸ Skinner’s purpose and method are valuable and fit perfectly to the study of individual authors. However, it should be clear by now that they do not aim at providing answers to questions concerning contemporary experiences and conceptualisations of change in a society as a whole. The research strategy to be followed must be chosen on the

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generations and by thus setting the limits for conceptualising the world, see Ullman 1964, 198, 202, 211, 250.

16 Palonen 1997, 46.

17 See Condren 1994, 9–12, 21, 29, for instance.

18 Richter 1996, 17; Skinner has explained his method in Skinner 1969, *passim*, and Skinner 1996, 7–8. It is also discussed in Boucher 1985, 200–1, and Tully 1988, 9–10.

basis of the focus of the study. This study does not concern *microhistorically* the political theory of some individual(s) but rather more *macrohistorically* the question of how the early eighteenth-century English political elite at large understood the growth of political pluralism. Whereas Skinner's method does not seem to provide answers to questions this study wishes to address, Koselleck has argued that it is the major feature of the history of concepts that it is capable of analysing a variety of divergent usages of concepts typical of a chosen period.¹⁹ The history of concepts thus seems to offer at least some of the proper tools for answering the questions this study wishes to address.

Reception of the history of concepts in the Anglophone world

Like previous attempts to introduce the history of concepts to Anglophone audiences, Richter's theses may meet with limited success in convincing their readers. Even if some Anglophone historians lament the tendency to study British history in isolation from Europe and would welcome a dialogue between the English, German and French approaches to the history of ideas, many more still prefer studying England as an exceptional case without references to continental contexts. Even methodologies may be interpreted as culturally restricted. As Richter himself has suggested, few may be prepared to apply a 'German' methodology to British history.²⁰ Also in the future, the work of fitting British history into the European context, which is undoubtedly a worthwhile project, may remain a task for non-native English-speakers.²¹

Concrete examples of writing the history of concepts in English are few, Ball being a solitary figure who has attempted something parallel with his 'critical conceptual history'. Following the lead of the Cambridge School, Ball has seen 'the ways in which speakers shape and are in turn shaped by their language' as the research objects of conceptual history. What is particularly interesting in Ball's approach is his statement that conceptual changes can take place through the entrance of concepts and metaphors of specialised discourses – such as the discourse of religion or that of medicine – to the field of political meanings. When religious terms enter politics, they may alter the terms of discourse and contribute to conceptual changes. This may have been particularly true of the early eighteenth century, when we take into consideration that religion was then not merely a specialised discourse but a dominating one.²²

19 Koselleck 1996, 65.

20 Richter 1995, 144.

21 The *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* frequently refers to developments in English history of concepts but its handling is restricted to major thinkers. This German interest in Anglo-American history has also been illustrated by Willibald Steinmetz, who has recently discussed English political discourse during the early 19th-century debate on parliamentary reform in Steinmetz 1993. What he has suggested to have done is, however, neither the writing of a history of ideas nor the history of concepts but an 'analysis of elementary sentences'; The latest project to compare conceptual developments in English and continental political cultures has been launched by Kari Palonen.

22 Ball 1988, 6–10, 12, 15; See also Ball and Pocock 1988.

No Anglophone writers focusing on conceptual change seem to have declared themselves followers of German models in the history of concepts. Conceptual studies have rather been presented as modifications of the history of political thought which allows some variety as to whether the emphasis is placed on historical context or conceptual innovations. It is also noteworthy that Ball's reviewers have rightly pointed out that Anglo-American conceptual histories continuously seem to be based on canonical texts rather than on a wider conceptual context.²³

Some of Condren's work also resembles the history of concepts due to its focus on semantic fields of seventeenth-century politics. The major difference when compared with the German history of concepts is that Condren regards the words themselves rather than the past socio-political reality as the major explainers in the study of political thought.²⁴ In other words, Condren maintains that it is not political history but merely the concepts that deserve the attention of the historian.

Concrete work on the history of concepts in English is scarce, but some commentary on the genre is available. Peter Burke, for instance, has referred to the diverse traditions of intellectual history in the Anglophone world, France and Germany, pointing out that neither the French history of mentalities nor the German history of concepts have been taken very seriously in Anglo-American historical writing. The alien status of these approaches is reflected in the application of foreign terminology, English-speaking historians, if familiar with the genre at all, talking about *Begriffsgeschichte* rather than the history of concepts. The language barrier cannot be the sole explanation of unawareness, as Koselleck's essays on the history of concepts were translated into English in the mid-1980s, but, still in the late 1990s, Burke points out that they 'cannot be said to be well known among English-speaking or at least among British historians'.²⁵ Some interest towards the history of concepts has occurred, however. Favourable comments include, of course, those of Keith Tribe, the translator of Koselleck's essays, who has seen the Koselleckian history of concepts as such a wide and detailed project that the theoretical and historical traditions of the Anglophone world would hardly have given rise to anything comparable. Burke himself has seen the history of concepts as a type of social history of ideas which makes use of sources that illustrate everyday conceptual practices and also focuses on the ways that conceptual changes affect ordinary life. Furthermore, Burke has considered it important that, in the history of concepts, words are placed in a wider semantic field which includes opposite expressions as well as synonyms.²⁶

23 These commentators on conceptual history in English include Strong 1991, 1437–8, and Manicas 1992, 402–3.

24 Condren 1994.

25 Burke 1997, 55. Some British universities do, however, include *Begriffsgeschichte* in their courses of methodology.

26 Tribe 1989, 180, 182, 184; Burke 1997, 56; Furthermore, Irmeline Veit-Brause – obviously of German origin – has seen it as one of the major aims of the history of concepts to compare and reveal differences between what really happened during the transition to modernity and the subjective experiences of the contemporaries as expressed in the concepts they used. Veit-Brause 1981, 63, 66–7.

The most notable Anglophone commentary on the history of concepts has been that of Pocock, who has stated that the history of political languages is in no need of innovative methodological solutions from the history of concepts. For him as well as for Skinner, a *language* or *discourse* is 'a complex structure comprising a vocabulary; a grammar; a rhetoric; and a set of usages, assumptions, and implications existing together in time and employable by a semi-specific community of language-users for purposes political, interested in and extending sometimes as far as the articulation of a world-view or ideology'. Political language thus appears to them as much more than simply a group of concepts, and, therefore, they do not willingly dissolve languages into concepts and study their change through time. As several political languages may exist side by side, affecting each other and being simultaneously available to the users of political languages, the writer of a text may base his use of concepts on several and even contradictory languages, and hence it may be difficult to find instances of a concept being used in an uncontested way. Because of this complexity of political languages, these historians willingly focus on short-term analyses in which a particular text of an individual author is interpreted in its proper contexts.²⁷ However, notable long-term analyses from this genre also exist.²⁸

Pocock's starting points differ clearly from those of the history of concepts, but he does not rule out the study of linguistic change in historical concepts presented in their changing contexts. The study of political languages can also find an interest in 'the slower, multi-authored, and socially or historically induced processes of change that take place within and among the languages available in specific societies and cultures over specific and variously prolonged periods of time'. In fact, Pocock has expressed his conviction that a method studying each concept separately would most probably produce interesting findings because of differing questions that would be asked and differing ways of organising practical research work.²⁹ A difference in emphasis would still remain: whereas historians of concepts would do some sort of supplementary work when studying change by focusing on concepts, Pocock would rather focus the study on one or more of the political languages.

Anglophone reception of *Begriffsgeschichte* has varied from enthusiastic admiration to questioning the very basis of conceptual research. Scholars seem to agree that the German history of concepts has such particular features that it is difficult to incorporate in the discourse within the Anglophone history of political thought.³⁰ As Pocock has stated, the two genres can affect each other, but they remain historically, culturally, and nationally specific, so that they cannot be applied *as such* to the other cultural sphere.³¹ Yet several historians believe in the potential in the history of concepts of bringing new points of view to the historiography of English-speaking countries.

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27 Pocock 1996, 47–50; Ball and Pocock 1988, 4–5.

28 See Pocock 1975, Skinner 1980 and Peltonen 1995, for instance.

29 Pocock 1996, 48, 50.

30 Junker 1996, 6; Richter 1996, 16–17.

31 Pocock 1996, 58.

Modifying the history of concepts

It is argued in this study that an application of a modified type of the history of concepts to English history indeed leads to interesting findings. It has become clear by now that the conceptual method, when applied to English history, cannot be purely Koselleckian. Introductions to the history of concepts and Anglo-American commentaries on the Koselleckian methodology give rise to several points worth closer critical attention.

The first reservation concerns the applicability of some of the basic hypotheses of the German history of concepts to English history. In fact, the German form of the history of concepts has not aimed merely at compiling reference works on conceptual change through time; it has also aimed at demonstrating the validity of a particular theory of history developed by Koselleck. Koselleck's theory on the different ways of experiencing time in different historical periods maintains that German concepts became increasingly future-oriented during a *Sattelzeit* or *Schwelienzeit*, a period of accelerating conceptual change and transition to modernity between 1750 and 1850. 'Transition to modernity' refers to several simultaneous long-term structural changes in politics and related areas of life that gradually transformed a pre-industrial, traditional society towards more modern forms of political culture. Koselleck's hypothesis assumes that, in this period, conceptual changes in Germany followed certain general patterns. The French equivalent of accelerated conceptual change has been dated between the years 1680 and 1820.³² Inevitably, a question concerning the existence and timing of an English *Sattelzeit*, or a period of fast conceptual and structural transition to modernity, is also raised.

Sattelzeit can be translated into English by metaphors such as 'watershed'³³ or 'threshold'.³⁴ In England, structural transformations connected with such a 'watershed' might include the growth of religious diversity, the introduction of less eagerly controlled printing, financial and agricultural revolutions, accelerated urbanisation, secularisation and rationalisation of thought, and progress in empirical sciences.³⁵ As to structural transformations in politics, one might add the emergence of political parties after the Civil War, the gradual secularisation of politics, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the ensuing debate on its significance, the settlement of the succession to the crown on a parliamentary basis, the rise of an organised parliamentary opposition in the age of Walpole, and the increasing popular involvement in public discourse. However, the timing of an English 'watershed' remains obscure. Koselleck, who has done little research on English history, has not taken a definite stand in this question but has suggested that England experienced the 'democratisation of linguistic usage' approximately a century earlier than Germany, that is, in the

32 Junker 1996, 5; Richter 1996, 7–8, 11; Koselleck 1996, 60–1; Koselleck 1997, 16; See also Palonen 1997, 56–7; The timing of the French *Sattelzeit* is based on Richter 1987, 249.

33 Burke 1997, 56.

34 Koselleck 1996, 69.

35 For the concept modernisation in historiography, see Ritter 1986, 273–5.

late seventeenth century. With such a transformation, he has referred to an emergence of a possibility for speaking to the entire population at the same time not only in theological but also in political issues. Through the growth of publishing, Koselleck argues, political language was extended to encompass the entire political elite and later on the public at large.³⁶ Like Koselleck, Richter has contended for a rather ambiguous timing of an English 'watershed' some time between the seventeenth-century revolution and the early Industrial Revolution.³⁷ Burke has suggested that the mid-seventeenth century is probably the most proper period for searching for an English 'watershed',³⁸ and, likewise, Ball and Pocock have seen the Civil War and the Glorious Revolution as periods when rapid changes in the meanings of English concepts occurred.³⁹ Elsewhere, Pocock has suggested that England experienced a 'watershed' also between the early 1780s and the early 1830s, when the Whig discourse, which had dominated the scene since the Civil War, was replaced by a novel Victorian discourse. Clark has also argued that, by the early Victorian period, an early modern political discourse, that had remained relatively unchanged ever since the 1660s, started to give way to a modern one. According to Pocock, this 'watershed' is not analogous to that of Koselleck's. English society differed from German society particularly in its degree of centralisation, and, therefore, no analogous conceptual transition from an *ancien régime* society to a modern one is traceable.⁴⁰

In spite of the revolutions of the seventeenth century, England is unlikely to have experienced an irreversible conceptual transition to modernity by the end of the seventeenth century. Indeed, England may have experienced several slight 'watersheds'. If there had been a 'watershed' in the seventeenth century, as statements of several historians suggest, there may also have been a reversion after the Restoration to traditional political languages. The early eighteenth century as a whole was a period of slow transition in political structures and in the language of politics. In spite of these transformations, it does not deserve to be called a 'watershed'. It was only towards the end of the century that another 'watershed' emerged. Even that may have been less fundamental than the German *Sattelzeit*.

In fact, the helpfulness of the concept of *the* 'watershed' in connection with early eighteenth-century history is questionable, particularly as the *Sattelzeit* hypothesis is not an inevitable part of the methodology of the history of concepts.⁴¹ The history of English concepts can be studied without concentration on a period of revolutionary conceptual change. It is equally important to reveal conceptual continuities and slight conceptual transformations during periods of evolutionary development, such as characterised early eighteenth-century England. Furthermore, it is arguable that conceptual change was accelerating in the period under study.

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36 Koselleck 1997, 22–3.

37 Richter 1995, 146–7.

38 Burke 1997, 57.

39 Ball and Pocock 1988, 1.

40 Pocock 1988, 177; Pocock 1996, 56–8; Clark 1994, 142.

41 Koselleck 1996, 69.

Together with the *Sattelzeit* thesis must be rejected artificial applications of connected hypotheses to English history, as they might lead to serious distortions of interpretation within another linguistic sphere and another historical period. Commentators have been cautious not to take stands on the significance in English history of what Koselleck has called historicisation, democratisation and politicisation of concepts and the increasing incorporation of concepts into ideologies.⁴² These hypotheses are not applied in this study, and their applicability to English history requires closer illustration in future work. Pocock has questioned attempts to test these hypotheses derived from German history against British history, because British society and political discourse differed considerably from those of Germany.⁴³

Another reservation to the Koselleckian approach to the history of concepts concerns the application of social history to the study of the history of concepts.⁴⁴ Social history, whether that of mentalities or structures, has been rarely used as a major explanatory component in Anglophone studies of past political thought, even though there are studies in which changing social circumstances contribute to explaining shifts in political attitudes. In the German history of concepts, social history has been variably incorporated. A sceptical approach to the actual possibilities of studying all the assumed 'relevant' structural contexts of the great variety of sources typically consulted by conceptual historians is indeed realistic. In a study based on hundreds of diverging texts, the contextualisation of a single text is necessarily restricted to some basic facts concerning the writer's intentions, motivations and his other works – if traceable – and on the genre of the text, as well as its political and cultural contexts. In most cases, of course, these contexts have to be reconstructed on the basis of existing research rather than an analysis of particular historical documents. A further problem remains: relating changes in meanings to structural transformations is difficult if not impossible. Attempts to explain conceptual shifts with simplistic references to some particular historical events are, therefore, open to criticism.

Special features of writing the history of concepts in English

Even if the idea of applying the methods of the history of concepts to the history of the English-speaking world has met with sometimes well-founded criticism from Anglophone scholars, the potential of a history of concepts has not been fully refuted. A history of concepts remains a noteworthy option that may be capable of producing results that can be interestingly different or at least supplementary to those provided by the history of political thought. However, when its methodology is applied to early eighteenth-century English history, it is important to take into consideration some special features of such a study. These concern the status of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) as an

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42 See Richter 1995, 36–8, for instance.

43 Pocock 1996, 52, 57–8.

44 Richter 1995, 18, 125.

authority of English word history, the possibilities for extending the source basis in the study of political discourse, the usefulness of electronic sources for conceptual research, the necessity of studying networks of concepts or entire semantic fields instead of a single concept, and the need to focus on contemporary conceptions of the nature of language.

The criticism which Richter has directed against the authoritative status of the *Oxford English Dictionary* can be considered justified. Many Anglo-American scholars depend on customary references to this source despite the fact that its emphasis on literary sources has made numerous entries on political terminology inadequate.⁴⁵ Eighteenth-century usages and the language of politics in particular have been neglected by earlier compilers of the dictionary. A considerable time may have passed before political neologisms entered those literary texts which the compilers have used, and a linguistic analysis may not have reached all the alternative political senses a word could have in various contexts. Richter has questioned the reliability of the current version as the only source of information on the senses and first appearances of political vocabulary, but he has correctly seen the existing corpus of historical semantics as a good starting point for a computerised history of concepts in English, once it is supplemented by previously neglected genres.⁴⁶ This study wishes to make a contribution, even if a modest one, to the direction of creating reliable accounts of semantic change in the political vocabulary of the English language in the early eighteenth century.

The great variety of sources studied by German historians of concepts should make English-speaking intellectual historians also consider the possibility of extending their source basis. In addition to classics, newspapers, journals, pamphlets, documents, memoirs, letters and diaries, they could also make use of dictionaries of various types. When the source basis is extended, problems may rise, as levels of abstraction and potential for linguistic innovations vary from text to text. However, a balanced account of conceptual developments requires that diverging sources and texts of both familiar canonical authors and forgotten anonymous writers are consulted.⁴⁷

In passing, Richter has touched the question of constructing textbases for research in the history of concepts, without carrying the point any further. Thus far, historians studying concepts have generally rejected databases consisting of historical documents and criticised attempts via computer-based political lexicology.⁴⁸ This scepticism has been well-grounded, given inadequacies in technology, the amount of work required by the compilation of textbases, and the sheer impossibility of measuring ideas numerically. Calculating frequencies of words should always be supplemented with a qualitative analysis of the sources. Of course, opportunities for partly computerised analysis of political concepts may be increasing with the creation of new electronic text corpora and

45 Burke has agreed with Richter on this in Burke 1997, 57.

46 Richter 1995, 45, 147–57; Richter 1986, 622; Richter 1987, 263; Richter 1990, 41.

47 Richter 1995, 34, 45, 50–1, 139, 157.

48 Richter 1995, 47, 87, 99.

with developments in text analysis programs.⁴⁹ One application of electronic sources is unquestionably useful and does not need to lead to a neglect of contexts: readily available electronic texts can be used in tracing additional occurrences of concepts. This study aims at no breakthrough on the field of electronic conceptual analysis but draws some benefit from existing textbases and text analysis programmes.⁵⁰

Several commentators on the history of concepts have taken up the limitations connected with studying the history of merely one concept. As changes in one concept affect other concepts, it is advisable to reconstruct entire networks of concepts within a genre to reveal which concepts remain unchanged, which disappear, and which replace earlier concepts.⁵¹ In this present study, entire networks of concepts are analysed. Vocabulary used in discussions on political pluralism forms a loose semantic field, or, a group of words connected with each other. This semantic field can be divided into several semantic subfields which can be analysed synchronically.

Finally, this study wishes to take into account an additional context that contributes to research on conceptual developments. This context is formed by disagreements on the proper use of language among participants in past discourses⁵² and by the prevailing theories about the nature of political language.

Sources for the conceptual study of political discourse

In this study, methods from the history of concepts have been applied to several hundred early eighteenth-century English texts concerning the desirability of pluralism, particularly in political values and party organisations. In principle, any contemporary text can reveal aspects of political language. The major criterion of the selection of sources has been that the found text can be considered a contribution – though not necessarily a conscious one – in the discourse on pluralism. Another criterion is the representativeness of the source material. To ensure representativeness, a high variety of genres and writers have been consulted. The sample of sources includes dictionaries, political treatises, periodical essays, pamphlet literature, political sermons, liturgical texts, political catechisms, minor genres of political writing and popular literature, and edited manuscript sources such as diaries and correspondence from the entire period 1700–1750.

Dictionaries provide definitions of contemporary politico-religious terminology and have been systematically consulted for this study,⁵³ although

49 See Olsen and Harvey 1988, 449–52.

50 As to compiling a special corpus and application of linguistic computer programmes to it, these cannot be considered worthwhile because of the lack of adequately homogeneous series of sources and defects in technology for scanning early eighteenth-century sources.

51 Richter 1995, 103, 108.

52 Richter 1995, 89–90.

53 For details on lexicographers and dictionaries as well as references, see Appendix A.

availability has had some effect on chosen editions. Little is known about most lexicographers other than that many were practical men such as teachers, physicians or minor authors rather than scholars. Some were mathematicians or found an interest in navigation, astronomy and geography. The dictionaries themselves were in most cases compiled for everyday purposes rather than for scholarly use.

As some of the dictionaries reprinted in the early eighteenth century had been compiled much earlier, they hardly followed in detail all semantic developments. For instance, John Bullokar's and R. Browne's *English Expositor* (shortened Bullokar-Browne) had been originally published already in 1616 and continued to be reprinted in fourteen editions until 1731. This continuous reprinting can be taken as an illustration that the use of seventeenth-century definitions in a dictionary on sale did not overly annoy early eighteenth-century Englishmen, which in turn tells us about the slow pace of linguistic change. Furthermore, many lexicographers based their work on earlier dictionaries. For instance, Edward Phillips's *New World of Words* (1706, 1720), re-edited by John Kersey, and the anonymous *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707) were originally based on Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* (1656).

Even though the sources of this study have usually been limited to English ones, Pierre Bayle's *Dictionary*, first published in the late seventeenth century, has also been included, as evidence exists of Englishmen welcoming the work. The English elite became well aware of Bayle's work by the 1730s. Though many of its ideas were condemned as heretic, the work as a whole was acknowledged as useful.⁵⁴ Another dictionary translated from French was that of Louis Moréri, the second English edition of which appeared in 1701, edited by Jeremy Collier.

Dictionaries first compiled in the early eighteenth century are most likely to reflect contemporary usages. Many of them had a long life. For instance, Kersey's *New English Dictionary* (1702) sold continuously for seventy years. Nathan Bailey's *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (originally 1721, the consulted edition 1733) was more comprehensive than any previously published and appeared in thirty editions throughout the eighteenth century. Bailey also revised George Gordon's *Dictionarium Britannicum* before publication in 1730. Particularly authoritative, though hardly used by a wide public, became Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*, first published in 1728. Other consulted dictionaries include those of Thomas Dyche and William Pardon (1735, the consulted editions 1740 and 1750), Benjamin Norton Defoe (1735, the consulted edition 1737), Daniel Fenning (1741), which was probably compiled only a short time before its first publication and thus introduced several up-to-date definitions,⁵⁵ and Benjamin Martin (1749), which already took particular care to distinguish between various senses of words.

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⁵⁴ Redwood 1976, 33, 35.

⁵⁵ Some library catalogues suggest that Fenning's dictionary was only published in 1761, not 1741 as printed in the book, which would mean that Fenning was copying from Samuel Johnson and not the other way around. This timing is also supported by the fact that Fenning is not mentioned as a source for Johnson in Reddick 1990.

The only lexicographer still remembered today was Samuel Johnson, whose dictionary of 1755 (compiled between 1746 and 1755) achieved authority as a major step in standardisation of the English language. Johnson's dictionary is interesting for the tendentious nature of many of its theological and political entries. However, many of its definitions for the vocabulary of pluralism were not particularly original but were based on earlier dictionaries such as Bailey and Chambers and thereby on Kersey and Phillips. What was new was the use of quotations from famous authors to illustrate the specific meanings of words. Johnson also increased the number of senses that were discussed separately in the entries. In addition to Johnson, I have included three other dictionaries published after 1750 to increase the possibilities of discovering conceptual changes. A popular dictionary of the early 1750s is represented by the anonymous *Pocket Dictionary* from 1753. John Wesley's *Complete English Dictionary* (1753, the consulted edition 1764) appears to have been directed to the general public, whereas John Trusler's wordbook from 1766 is interesting because of a rare concentration on questions of synonymity.

Another integral group of sources have been *treatises*. These include canonical works such as Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* and writings of Halifax, Bolingbroke, John Locke, Shaftesbury and Bernard Mandeville. Out of canonical authors, David Hume's treatises have been excluded because most of his writings were published after 1750, also because he represented the Scottish Enlightenment which differed considerably from English developments, and because his original thought is rather unrepresentative of the age and thus deserves specialist discussion. Less known treatises with a focus on constitutional issues include those by Roger Acherley, Peter Paxton, John Toland, Sackville Tufton, William Warburton and William Whiston. Some interesting anonymous treatises were also consulted. Treatises connected with the deist controversy were those written by Anthony Collins and John Toland. Occasional medical treatises that shed light on aspects of political thought include ones by Richard Blackmore and George Cheyne.

A considerable proportion of sources consists of *periodical essays*, a favourite genre among the political elite, which are usable because of their compact nature, their tendency to focus on current problems such as 'party-spirit', and because of their availability on microfilm and in recent critical editions. The leading early eighteenth-century titles, the first discursive essay journals of their type, have been consulted. Whig periodicals written by Richard Steele, Joseph Addison, Ambrose Philips, and other famous authors include the *Tatler* (T) (1709–11),⁵⁶ the *Spectator* (S) (1711–12, 1714), the *Guardian* (G) (1713), the *Freeholder* (F) (1715–16) and the *Free-Thinker* (FT) (1718–20). Daniel Defoe's *Review* (R) (1709–10) contains views of Whig governments, while Jonathan Swift's *Examiner* (E) (1710–11) represents the views of leading Tory ministers. Importantly, Defoe and Swift were both employed to appeal for the cause of the government against 'partisan' opposition of all kinds.⁵⁷

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⁵⁶ The abbreviation used in the study and the years consulted are given in the brackets.

⁵⁷ Rogers 1978, 90; Downie 1979, 12, 64.

The leading periodical titles of the period after 1720 include the *Independent Whig* (IW), *Cato's Letters* (CL), the *Craftsman* (C) and the *Gentleman's Magazine* (GM). The *Independent Whig* (20 January 1720 to 18 June 1721) and *Cato's Letters* (5 November 1720 to 27 July 1723) belong to the most widely read and influential polemical works, which were reprinted a number of times after their first publication. The papers, the tone of which was explicitly anticlerical, criticised traditionalist orthodoxy and clerical malpractices in the Church and corruption in the state. Many of the essays were motivated by the financial shortcomings of the Whig rule as revealed by the South Sea Bubble crisis of 1720.⁵⁸

The *Craftsman*, started in 1726, was a common project of opposition leaders William Pulteney (Whig) and Bolingbroke (Tory). It published satire against 'corrupt' government policies, advocated the abandonment of party names, and called for a 'coalition of parties' in the name of a 'patriot' ideology. It was capable of blackening the reputation of Prime Minister Walpole as a betrayer of the inheritance of the Glorious Revolution but could never fully bring together the diverse interests of rival opposition groupings. The opposition remained a quarrelsome coalition which the public came to know only through essays published in its main organ. Though the *Craftsman* was not representative of the whole 1730s, its effects on political discourse have been estimated as considerable. The paper experienced its heyday in 1734-5, when up to thirteen thousand copies were sold weekly. Thereafter, the popularity of the paper declined, as Bolingbroke's contributions became rarer.⁵⁹

The *Gentleman's Magazine*, which first appeared in 1731 with Edward Cave as its editor, collected and republished news and commentary from other newspapers and periodicals but also published some articles and reviews written particularly for the magazine. What makes it an especially valuable source is the uncomparably high variety of topics the magazine discussed.⁶⁰ Through reprints in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, it has been possible to read a number of papers published in the 1730s and 1740s that are hardly accessible elsewhere. These include both governmental and oppositional publications as well as the High-Church *Weekly Miscellany*.⁶¹

Early eighteenth-century periodicals forgotten by posterity were Thomas Gordon's *Humourist* (1720), Matthew Concanen's *Speculatist* (1725-28) and Henry Fielding's *True Patriot* (1745). Furthermore, some papers in the Burney Collection of the British Library such as the *Daily Gazetteer*, the *Westminster Journal* and the *London Evening Post* have been checked for political discourse in the 1740s. Newspapers of the period have not proved particularly useful in an analysis of the discourse on political pluralism because of their avoidance of commentary and concentration on foreign news.

58 Robbins 1959, 115-17; Champion 1992, 174-5; Wilson 1995, 118; The Bubble Crisis led to a stock market crash in connection of which malpractices in the public finance came into the public sphere.

59 Goldgar 1976, 28, 42-4; Langford 1989, 47; Wilson 1995, 123; Hill 1996, 75.

60 Langford 1989, 91.

61 On the *Weekly Miscellany*, see Walsh and Taylor 1993, 33.

Political pamphlets and tracts were written primarily for higher orders, but in coffee houses and taverns they were available to readers and listeners of various backgrounds.⁶² Their strength as sources for the history of concepts is their immensely high number. Pluralism was discussed in hundreds of pamphlets and tracts during the first half of the eighteenth century, out of which over one hundred have been referred to in this study. The most productive pamphleteers on questions of pluralism include Francis Atterbury, Daniel Defoe, Charles Leslie, Jonathan Swift and Matthew Tindal. The major problem involved with this group of sources is its heterogeneous nature and the variety of its themes. Furthermore, the majority of pamphlets are anonymous or pseudonymous,⁶³ which means that possibilities for their contextual interpretation are severely limited, and the historian often has to focus on textual evidence when placing the author among the politico-religious groups of the period. Importantly, a considerable proportion of pamphleteers were clerics, which calls for attention to the role of the clergy in political discourse. Many of the pamphlets were also written for some specific purpose such as an election campaign or a current debate in Parliament or Convocation, and this ephemeral character of the texts easily led their writers to ironical exaggerations that may sometimes confuse an historian, particularly as some of them made use of dialogue form or other forms of satire. In spite of these interpretative difficulties, pamphlets form a valuable group of sources for a history of concepts, particularly as many of them have been ignored in previous research.

Political pamphlets have an analogous genre in *political sermons* which gathered large audiences and formed a significant genre of political commentary. Sermons probably continued to be the most common genre of printed literature. Their prices were low and they were expected to sell well, which meant that publishers willingly printed them. Many sermons containing political arguments were remarkably popular, some sermons becoming the best-sellers of the late Stuart period.⁶⁴ Given the impact a single political sermon could have, this group of sources may be the most seriously neglected in the study of the history of political thought. For an understanding of conceptualisations of pluralism, however, the consultation of political sermons is indispensable. This study contains references to approximately twenty printed sermons preached both by minor clergymen in parish churches and leading bishops in front of the monarch. The influential sermons of Henry Sacheverell (1702, 1709, 1713) and Benjamin Hoadly (1717) are included. Many of the sermons were originally preached in connection with political events such as assizes, elections or a national anniversary of a major historical event. Such major anniversaries included the coronation of the reigning monarch, the 'martyrdom' of Charles I, and the 'double deliverance' of Gunpowder Treason and William of Orange's invasion. Most political sermons

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62 Wilson 1995, 110.

63 For the popularity of anonymity, see Richards 1972, 7. Richards has explained anonymity by referring to the consequences of offending the authorities and to a public distaste for partisanship.

64 Claydon 1996, 87.

date from the two first decades of the century, but, interestingly, political preaching on pluralism experienced a revival after the Jacobite rising of 1745.

Liturgical texts are represented by the most authoritative of all, by different editions of the *Book of Common Prayer*. In addition to being a service book, it was used universally as a manual for family and private devotion.⁶⁵ As to specifically theological treatises, few references have been made to them; yet many of the analysed texts contain considerable theological elements. An interesting intermediary genre was made up of *political catechisms* and creeds. They combined the resources of authoritative religious language and form with political themes in order to create political persuasion that most orders could understand. Heterodox authors such as Bolingbroke, Gordon and Tindal favoured this genre, but the political catechism of Charles I also continued to be reprinted.

Several *other genres* of political writing are also represented among the sources of this study. Political plays, novels, historiography, manuals, poems and popular literature such as ballads can reveal some of prevailing political feelings and at least much of the methods of political persuasion. These genres also illustrate to what extent the major concepts of pluralism reached a larger public. Indeed, the themes of eighteenth-century chapbooks – often the only reading for the lower orders – suggest that the concepts of pluralism did not necessarily reach the general public through popular literature. Though the themes of the chapbooks varied, they hardly ever concerned contemporary politics.⁶⁶ Sermons may have popularised the concepts more efficiently. Ballads and news-sheets had also become a noteworthy form of political propaganda, presenting simplified issues in a limited vocabulary that avoided developed abstractions.⁶⁷ Ballads in particular were directed to large audiences, and political poems and plays could be taken much more seriously than a twentieth-century observer may at first realise. For this study, the representatives of these genres have been chosen purely on the basis of their titles, and their number among the sources is restricted to a few instances. The literary form of the genres complicates conceptual analysis, but a quotation from a play, poem or ballad can sometimes be revealing as to prevalent ways of understanding political pluralism. Historiography, which played an important part in political culture, is an easier source in this respect.

As the emphasis has been on public discourse, originally published literature constitutes an overwhelming majority of the sources. In addition to published texts, however, *edited manuscript sources* such as diaries and correspondence of members of the political elite have also been consulted. The authors of these sources advocated various political and religious views and represented different sectors of life. The diaries read in search for the key concepts of pluralism include those of John Evelyn, David Hamilton, Thomas Hearne, Thomas Naish, William Nicolson, Dudley Ryder, John Wesley, Adam

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65 Walsh and Taylor 1993, 25.

66 *Chap-books of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. John Ashton, 1995 (1882).

67 Condren 1994, 75.

Williamson and James Yonge. Correspondence has been used in samples from writers such as Joseph Addison, John Byrom, John Locke, Jonathan Swift and Horace Walpole. As the number of diaries and correspondence collections printed posthumously is high, there has been no need to use private papers in manuscript form. This group of sources could, of course, be easily extended in future research. Another excluded group of sources are pictures. The history of concepts conventionally focuses on written texts, and a detailed analysis of visual material would have demanded a special methodology which the history of concepts cannot provide.

At a preliminary stage of this study, two computer-based historical corpora were also used. The *Century of Prose Corpus (COPC)* contains text selections from 120 eighteenth-century English authors representing numerous genres. The *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (HCET)*, which terminates around 1710 and includes several genres as well, has contributed to a search for seventeenth-century usages. Texts in these corpora are mere samples chosen by specialists on the basis of their assumed representativeness. The corpora should be seen as no more than anthologies of primary sources which can be used for tracing the fixed or changing state of the language. This technique enables a more extensive use of sources, but it can never provide more than supplementary material to the conventional reading of sources. The texts in the corpora are limited samples, but the number of writers and the variety of genres make interesting discoveries possible. The corpora reveal both long-term shifts in the meanings of the terms and the diversity of contexts in which a term could be used in any one period. Whenever a corpus text has been cited in this study, the reference has been given both to the corpus and to the writer and date of the original work.

The number of consulted identified authors is high, exceeding one hundred, and introductions of individuals cannot be given here. However, Appendix A lists the identified authors with information on their professions, social status and political and religious sympathies (whenever available from secondary sources) and thus provides some data for considerations of authorial intentions. Among the authors, some loose groups are discernible. The authors can be categorised roughly into 'traditionalists'⁶⁸, 'moderates'⁶⁹ and 'radicals'⁷⁰, if an

68 Among traditionalists can be listed the sub-groups of Nonjurors, Jacobites and traditionalist Anglicans (Charles Leslie, Jeremy Collier, John Sage, Francis Atterbury, William Shippen, George Lockhart, Henry Sacheverell, Thomas Hearne, Henry Stebbing, John Byrom), Anglican bishops (Edward Synge Jr., Edward Tenison, Matthias Mawson), Anglican divines with a special status (John Strype, Samuel Pycroft, Edmund Chishull, Thomas Dawson, John Middleton, William Warburton), ordinary Anglican churchmen (William Baron, Elisha Smith, William Stevenson, James Bramston, William Gilpin, Zachary Grey, Randolph Ford, John Giffard, Matthew Hole, John Lawrence, James Miller, John Needham, Thomas Naish, John Shuttleworth, J. Borrough, Langhorn Warren, Thomas Rennell, John Plaxton, Conyers Place) and Tory writers (William King, Edward Ward, James Drake, George Sewell, Jonathan Swift, Joseph Trapp).

69 Among moderates one would willingly include Low-Churchmen (Gilbert Burnet, Samuel Bradford, William King, William Nicolson, White Kennett, Benjamin Hoadly, John Lewis, John Balguy, Zachary Pearce), Whig writers (John Dunton, Abel Boyer, Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, John Oldmixon, Ambrose Philips, Eustace Budgell, Thomas Tickell, Matthew Concanen), and writers with obvious Whig connections (Roger Acherley, Simon Clement, Adam Williamson, Henry Fielding, Horace Walpole).

70 Most historians would agree on classifying the following writers as radicals or republicans:

important reservation is taken into account: an application of twentieth-century political terms such as 'conservative', 'moderate' and 'radical' to an analysis of political arguments expressed before the French Revolution is problematic, as such anachronistic interpretative vocabulary can mislead both the historian and the readers. In this study, the term conservative is rejected in favour of the term traditionalist, that is, one defending inherited values such as monarchy and the established Church. The term moderate refers to those whose attitudes were neither extreme nor vehemently dedicated to the defence of traditional values. This does not mean that they were committed to change or represented an exact middle position between the traditionalists and radicals. They were merely looking for a compromise between the extremes of Catholicism and absolute monarchy on one hand, and radical Calvinism and anarchy on the other. The term radical, although appearing frequently in twentieth-century scholarship, did not occur in a political sense in the early eighteenth century. In this study, this well-known anachronism is used to refer to extreme religious and political doctrines such as deism or popular sovereignty, which might later be named as radicalism, but not to someone 'democratic', 'progressive' or 'socially innovative', as the modern sense might suggest.⁷¹ This classification into traditionalists, moderates and radicals also receives support from some contemporary categorisations. Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* (1728), for instance, divided the 'state Tories' into violent and moderate and the 'state Whigs' into republican and moderate, adding that the moderate wings of both parties were close to each other, which would suggest a tripartite division into violent defenders of absolute sovereignty, moderate advocates of the ancient constitution, and republican advocates of commonwealth.⁷² In addition to traditionalists, moderates and radicals, there are approximately a dozen seventeenth-century authors⁷³ who have been included for conceptual background, writers who cannot be categorised according to the used classification⁷⁴, Nonconformists⁷⁵, and other authors participating in the

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- Whig philosophers (John Locke, Shaftesbury), Country Whigs (Thomas Gordon, John Trenchard), and deists (Matthew Tindal, John Toland, Anthony Collins, Mathias Earbery, Peter Annet). Freethinking ideas were also held by Ephraim Chambers.
- 71 For the terms conservative, moderate and radical in the historiography of the early modern period, see Clark 1985, xiii, 278, 347, and Condren 1994, 140–1, 143, 149.
- 72 The entry for Tories in Chambers 1728. Chambers based this division on Monsieur de Cize, a French officer.
- 73 The consulted seventeenth-century writers can be categorised as royalists, republicans, sectarians and politically ambivalent authors. Royalists include the politicians Clarendon and Thomas Osborne, and the diarist John Evelyn. Edmund Ludlow was a radical republican, while Henry Parker belonged to sectarian circles. Politically ambivalent authors were Thomas Hobbes, John Dryden and Halifax. Other seventeenth-century writers include Nathanael Carpenter, William Temple and John Tillotson.
- 74 Writers whose identity in contemporary divisions was variable include Charles Davenant, John Dennis, Bolingbroke and Daniel Defoe. Defoe, for instance, was a dissenter and a fierce critic of traditionalist Anglicanism but could write both for the Whigs and the Tories. He endeavoured to make his living out of writing, which explains some of the inconsistencies that can be found in his texts. In 1710, for instance, he changed sides purely for employment. Downie 1979, 13, 124; The political background of Robert Ferguson, Edward Cave, John Henley, Sackville Tufton, Narcissus Luttrell, Bevil Higgons, William Keith and Benjamin Griffin has remained obscure to this writer.
- 75 Nonconformists not mentioned in connection with other categories include Protestant

discourse on pluralism.⁷⁶

The academic and professional background of the writers can be summarised as follows: Most had a Cambridge or Oxford degree. Nearly half had studied theology, and as priests they often propagated the religious values of their university. Oxford graduates and teachers such as Henry Sacheverell and Francis Atterbury became famous for defending traditionalist values. Almost twenty per cent of the consulted writers had studied medicine. Several had pursued law studies as well. Members of the elite usually studied common law at the Inns of Court in London where the atmosphere was more secular than at the universities.⁷⁷ A few of the writers had also studied in dissenting academies. Many of the writers were academics in the mentioned subjects or in classics; only a few found a professional interest in the new natural philosophy. A couple of writers can also be characterised as businessmen or as professional soldiers. Few of the writers made a living by writing; many held minor government posts often granted as rewards for successful propaganda.

A new history of religion and the history of concepts combined

In this study, descriptions of the plurality of political values and the existence of rival political parties within the early eighteenth-century English political system are analysed. These descriptions were produced by members of the political elite who attempted to conceptualise their experiences of the phenomena. The recognition – and, in the long run, approval – of political pluralism refers to the gradually spreading conception that rival political groupings could be allowed to exist continuously side by side without this leading to a serious threat to the entire political system. This recognition entailed an abandonment of the inherited idea of the necessity of unity and uniformity within society.

In everyday usage, most of us regard political pluralism as a self-evident state of affairs, recognise it, and approve it. We are aware of the breakthrough that political pluralism has made in western history, even though we may not be aware of the painfulness of that breakthrough. By contrast, for the early eighteenth-century English, the idea of the necessity of political pluralism was far from self-evident. They conceptualised emerging political pluralism in a way that at first appears as foreign to us because the concepts, and the associations and connotations of the concepts they had at their disposal differ

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Dissenters (John Billingsley, Benjamin Grosvenor, Dudley Ryder), and sectaries (Thomas Story). John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, could as well be classified as a traditionalist.

76 These consist of philosophers following Locke and Newton (William Whiston, George Berkeley), physicians who wrote on politics (Peter Paxton, James Yonge, Richard Blackmore, David Hamilton, Bernard Mandeville, George Cheyne, John Trusler), and French writers whose texts were translated into English (Pierre Bayle, Louis Moréri, Jean Leclerc).

77 Bennett 1986b, 360–1.

considerably from those used today. In order to understand those conceptualisations, we must focus on the senses, associations and connotations of concepts used in that time period.

Most of *us* also consider the separate character of political and religious questions as an indisputable fact. For a great majority of early eighteenth-century people, however, it was a completely unfamiliar and senseless idea to separate political issues as independent from religious matters. The sphere of the political remains indefinite today, but it was particularly so in the beginning of the period under study. The distinction between politics as concerning public affairs and religion as a private matter had not yet emerged, or was only in the process of emerging. In the deficiency of specialised political terminology, 'political' phenomena were interpreted through religious, legal, martial and medical concepts and metaphors which were understandable for almost the entire reading audience. The applicability of religious, legal, martial and medical terminologies for discussing 'politics' was further enhanced by the fact that most active participants in political discourse had been educated in some of these dominant areas of life.

This study focuses on the importance of religious terminology in descriptions of political pluralism simply because that was the most widely used terminology. There is nothing surprising in this predominance given the long history of fragmentation within Christendom. The late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century English nation experienced a simultaneous and, as they understood it, analogous fragmentation of unanimity in both religion and politics. Another reason for focusing specifically on religious terminology is that, unlike legal and classical terminologies, it has until very recently been neglected in historical research. In this study, medical terminology is discussed only in passing, as the relationship between medical and political terminologies deserves to be studied in its own right.

When early eighteenth-century political discourse is approached from a conceptual point of view, the interconnection between religious and political pluralism appears as distinct. Given the continuously dominant status of religious discourse in relation to political discourse, it is obvious that continuity in religious terminology supported continuity in political discourse. The availability of inherited religious concepts facilitated contemporary conceptualisations of political changes which were generally experienced as negative, as concepts of religious origin provided an ideal starting point for arguments critical to change. Given the continuously influential role of religion in society, it can be assumed that many of the writers, when applying religious concepts in descriptions of political pluralism, honestly believed in the interconnection between religion and politics.

This study suggests, however, that shifts in the meanings and applications of religious concepts of pluralism also facilitated changes in concepts of political pluralism. As James Bradley has pointed out, the influence of religion on politics can work two ways: whereas religion often strengthens the established

order, the same religion may also contribute to change.⁷⁸ We should seriously consider the possibility that it was changes in the use of religious terminology by elitist writers for describing political pluralism that contributed to a gradual change of attitudes among the public so that the multiplicity of political values began to appear as a potentially positive phenomenon. A small but vociferous minority within the political elite did not necessarily need to reject traditional religious discourse but could rather exploit it for propagating views that point towards an increasing, if not yet complete, approval of political diversity. If an early eighteenth-century political writer wanted to introduce changes in the English polity, he had to manipulate the dominant politico-religious discourse in a convincing manner. A successful manipulation can change political discourse and thereby even the actual structure of the society. The most obvious sign of a success is that the new formulations are accepted into common use and become understood as descriptive and no longer argumentative.⁷⁹

Furthermore, as Shelley Burt has argued, traditionalist Anglican modes of political thought, when encountering pluralism, may have been gradually modified. Modifications in traditionalist concepts and language may have contributed to change to such a degree that change cannot be explained merely by challenges outside of the established Church.⁸⁰ In other words, transformations in political attitudes may have occurred as a result of changes within Anglican political discourse. Innovative applications of familiar religious concepts reflected changes in attitudes and facilitated expression of positive attitudes towards pluralism in a way that was easier for contemporaries to understand and to accept. The slow transformation towards the recognition and later approval of political pluralism became possible, at least partly, through changes in the meanings and applications of terms of religious origin. The study of traditional terminology borrowed from religion thus offers a key to an understanding of much of early eighteenth-century thought patterns concerning political pluralism.

The objective of understanding past experiences of political pluralism has called for a reconstruction of networks of concepts that appeared in a variety of sources during the first half of the eighteenth century. A reconstruction of alternative senses, associations and connotations of relevant politico-religious concepts reveals assumptions and presuppositions of the character of the political system. My purpose has been to reach an understanding of both the negative and positive reactions to the growth of diversity in political values. I have paid attention both to continuities and changes in these reactions.

The structure of this study follows the above-mentioned networks of concepts, each concept or a pair of counter-concepts forming a topic for each subchapter. The major contexts in which the analysed concepts should be placed are introduced in chapters four, five and six, though references to related contexts are also made in the body of the work in chapters seven to twelve.

78 Bradley 1990, 32.

79 Skerpan 1992, 3.

80 Burt 1995, 151.

Chapter four focuses on the general contexts of political events and cultural, intellectual and religious developments. Contemporary theories of language and the terminology of change are briefly discussed through conceptual analysis. Chapters five and six concentrate on early eighteenth-century understandings of the spheres of religion and politics and their mutual relationship. Chapters seven to twelve form the major 'empirical' part of the study. They discuss general concepts of uniformity and diversity, unambiguously religious concepts of pluralism, terminology of party and faction, associations of the prevalent party denominations, concepts of fanaticism and toleration, and associations between freethinking and political pluralism. The final chapter provides a summary of the major findings, focuses on later developments, and considers possibilities for future research.

■ The Contexts of the Discourse on Political Pluralism

Structure of politics

The English political system had experienced dramatic changes in the seventeenth century: an open civil war; the execution of the monarch; republican experiments; the restoration of the monarchy; a longstanding strife between emerging political parties on the possibility of altering the succession to the throne in case of a Catholic successor; and finally a foreign invasion and removal of a Catholic king, which came to be glorified as the best of all revolutions. This inheritance of instability was still present in early eighteenth-century political discourse which, despite change in the political system, had not adopted radically new directions.

The effects of the Glorious Revolution on the discourse on political pluralism were limited and indirect. Even though the revolution settlement weakened theories of the divine origin of monarchical power and contributed to a gradual secularisation of the political system, the Revolution as a whole had been traditionalist rather than radical. The continuously confessional character of the political system, or at least its rhetoric, is illustrated by the willingness of the new Protestant monarch to present his wars against Louis XIV as a continuation of the wars of religion. The most significant change, as far as pluralism is concerned, was that Protestant Dissenters were granted a limited freedom of worship. Furthermore, the Revolution can be seen as a starting point of cautious and evolutionary change towards an increasingly parliamentary limited monarchy, as the permanent presence of Parliament and a considerable increase in the frequency of parliamentary elections made political life more dynamic. In the period 1695–1715, general elections were held on average once in every two years. Constant warfare that followed the Glorious Revolution also moulded the political system by strengthening bureaucracy, leading to the creation of public credit, and increasing public participation in discussion, as papers started to report on the events of the day after the abandonment of pre-publication censorship in 1695. A Cabinet Council emerged, and the status of a prime minister became more distinct.

In the development of party government, the Revolution brought no breakthrough, as the new monarchs remained suspicious toward the entire phenomenon of political parties and consequently favoured coalition governments. The strengthened and regularised status of Parliament, frequent elections and intensified political propaganda, however, all contributed to the growth of political parties during the first two decades of the eighteenth

century. The development led to a situation where, from the turn of the century to the mid-1720s, practically the entire political nation was divided into two parties engaged in constant rivalry. The period 1708–17 in particular saw the emergence of a two-party system which only started to disintegrate after the Hanoverian Succession when the Whigs gained a monopoly of power and the maximum length of Parliament was extended to seven years.

Most contemporaries conceived the unparalleled nationwide party rivalry as a serious threat to unity. Such a concern was reasonable given the extent to which party views could play a role in almost any aspect of life: in religion, business and social life, including coffee houses, taverns, clubs, newspapers, periodicals, theatres and even hospitals. Yet English social customs seem to have changed after the Revolution of 1688. Violence declined while continuous discussion on public matters was gaining ground – open violence was being substituted by ‘the ritualised antagonism of party politics’.¹

From the 1690s onwards, the conflict between Whigs and Tories, the parties that had been developing since the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–81, concerned competition for office, religious issues such as the status of the Dissenters, and constitutional questions such as whether the Revolution of 1688 had meant legitimate resistance to a tyrant and how the Protestant succession to the throne after William, Mary and Anne should have been arranged. While most Whigs were ready to alter succession to the throne with parliamentary decisions, some of them advocating a contractual monarchy, the Tories continued more sympathetic to divine right theories of government, which accepted no changes in succession.

Religion was, however, the key factor dividing the English into Whigs and Tories. The intensification of party rivalry in the beginning of the eighteenth century had an important religious connection in the High-Church and Tory campaign, which declared that the Church of England was threatened by the Protestant Dissenters, and in the Low-Church and Whig counter-campaign disputing any such claims. The Tories’ anxiety about the suspected hostility of the Williamite and Whiggish governments to the established Church made them struggle to conserve Anglican dominance by safeguarding its privileges and by opposing toleration. The Whigs were less concerned about the privileges of the Anglican clergy and expressed sympathy towards the toleration of dissent, as they were not at all as convinced as the Tories about a breakdown of the Anglican monopoly leading to social and moral anarchy.

In an era of constant war and rising trade, foreign policy and a conflict of interest between landowning and trading orders also added to disagreements between the parties. The isolationist Tories disliked involvements in European conflicts, while the Whigs wished to see England as a major power resisting France. In financial issues, the Tories advocated the interests of the great landowners, who paid much of the landtaxes, whereas the Whigs had close contacts with the new financial establishment, which profited from lending

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¹ Jones 1961, 3–4; Jones 1992b, 35; Holmes 1993, 212, 220, 322, 324–8, 331, 334; Hill 1996, 15–16, 20–1.

money to the state for the costs of the continental wars.²

The ascendancy of the House of Hanover in 1714 did not remove domestic political conflicts or lead to disappearance of the universal party division. The change of the royal family solved none of the religious or even the dynastic questions that had troubled the nation ever since the 1680s. The Whig seizure of power in 1714 was successful, but it was followed by pro-Stuart rioting and an open rebellion in late 1715. Dismissals of Tories from office caused bitterness, and repeated Jacobite plots also added to continuous partisan divisions. Whig propaganda endeavoured to convince the audience that the Whigs were the only defenders of the Protestant Succession, English liberties and religion. It maintained that, to demonstrate one's hostility to the enemies of the Church, the new monarch and the ideal constitution, every loyal subject should have adopted a Whig identity. However, the Tory party continued to enjoy popularity based on its much emphasised role as the defender of the monarchy and the Church against the dangers caused by a union of Whigs, Low-Church Anglicans and Dissenters. The Tory party wished, above anything else, to be identified with the established Church, whereas it represented the Whigs as heirs to the king-killers and Church-abolishers of the mid-seventeenth century. The Whigs it identified with Dissenters and especially the Presbyterians, who, the High Churchmen feared, were continuously plotting with republicans to destroy what remained out of the ideal English union of Church and monarchy.³

The Early Hanoverian society experienced several crises and developments with considerable consequences to its structures. Colley has listed among these the two Jacobite invasions of 1715 and 1745, the Excise Crisis which reflected the rise of trade into a central political issue, Britain's rise as a colonial power, the beginnings of Methodism, the growth of provincial newspaper press, rapid urban growth, more active business life, and population growth.⁴ Speck and Holmes have argued that the pattern of politics was completely transformed by 1720–1722 with the fall of the Tories, the emergence of divisions among the Whigs and the disappearance of issues that had caused the split into Whigs and Tories. The stockmarket crash of 1720 hurt both Whigs and Tories. In political polemic, accusations of the Church being in danger were replaced by charges of widespread corruption. In government, the growth of bureaucracy contributed to the growth of political stability.⁵ It has also been argued that, after 1720, party strife was moving towards a more tolerant direction, towards an acceptance of an opposition party.⁶

Even though estimates of a momentous change in the structure of politics by the early 1720s may be exaggerations, some transformations certainly

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- 2 Holmes 1993, 338; Hill 1996, 10, 15; Claydon 1996, 149–52; See also Plumb 1967, 64, 131–2, 138–140; Speck 1970, 1–3, 6; Richards 1972, 154–6; Hill 1976, 26; Speck 1978, 81–9; Speck 1988, 149–50, 152, 159–60; Jones 1991, 5; Harris 1992, 701–2; Harris 1993, 108–9.
 - 3 Wilson 1995, 84–5, 96–7, 101, 107.
 - 4 Colley 1982, 5; For Excise Crisis, see Wilson 1995, 124–5, 130. The association of trade with patriotism and the national interest created a distinctly secular political discourse on trade and empire which started to provide an alternative to politico-religious discourse.
 - 5 Speck 1970, 2–3, 8; Speck 1978, 92–3, 96, 99; Holmes 1987, xiii, xv.
 - 6 Hill 1976, 231.

occurred. A major transformation in the structure of politics in the period 1715–42 was the shift from a clear two-party model to a system characterised by a contrast between Prime Minister Walpole and his opponents. Governments were consistently Whiggish, whereas opposition consisted of Tories and various Whig factions. Starting from the 1720s, Walpole's hegemonic government encountered new opposition in the form of these 'patriots'. The opposition campaign against Walpole in the late 1720s and early 1730s led to a transformation in the terms of political debate in a way that gave the opposition an increasingly important role in setting its tone. However, the opposition remained divided, and neither did the traditional party strife disappear with the fall of Walpole's government in 1742. The Tories remained an opposition party, whereas various Whig cliques could thereafter expect to be accepted into the government.

By the 1750s, the parties were already weaker, constant Whig governments having led to the rise of factions within the Whigs and to the decline of the Tories to a status of a secondary party. The party identities of both the Whigs and Tories, however, continued strong throughout the 1740s and 1750s. In connection with the Young Pretender's invasion in 1745, the majority of Tories demonstrated their loyalty to the House of Hanover. By the mid-eighteenth century, the division had changed so that the Tories once again felt sympathy towards the monarch while the Whigs grew increasingly worried about a politically active monarchy. The major religious sympathies of the parties, however, did not change. Also important is the fact that the Jacobite rising of 1745 revived much of politico-religious stereotyping characteristic of the early years of the century. This sort of polarisation seems to have continued at least until 1750.⁷

Cultural, intellectual and religious contexts

The early eighteenth century, though neither the time of the most spectacular breakthroughs of the Scientific Revolution of the late seventeenth century or the Enlightenment of the late eighteenth century, was a period of intellectual ferment, at least as far as the informed elite was concerned. Restoration England had already experienced the rise of intellectual trends that tended to weaken some basic assumptions both in religion and politics. These trends unavoidably concerned religious issues, as religion, and particularly the relationship between religion and politics, remained probably the most central topic of intellectual debate. One of the basic assumptions that became disturbed was that political stability would have been best achieved by uniformity in politics, religion and intellectual inquiry. Such an assumption was challenged by diversity in party ideologies, flourishing sectarianism and the methods of the new natural philosophy. By the early eighteenth century, English intellectuals

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7 Albers 1993, 329; Wilson 1995, 85, 134–5; Hill 1996, 11, 15, 58, 89, 91–4.

were well aware of the problem of global religious pluralism. At home, even though persecution had cut the number of religious dissidents, the elite had been unable to create such religious uniformity where alternative denominations would not have questioned the status of the established Church. Fundamental ideological disagreements of religious origin, or at least with intimate links to questions of religion, also led to the emergence of the political parties.⁸

The reality of religious diversity was indisputable. Ever since the Reformation, English Protestantism had been characterised by diversity in belief and practice, moderate and radical elements disagreeing about the direction of the Reformation. Religious pluralism had proved capable of producing serious political instability, and 'diachronic pluralism', or the changing relationships between the crown and Church characteristic of post-Reformation England, may have enhanced secularisation and at least facilitated comparisons between different forms of Christianity. The Church of England in its Elizabethan form had been presented as a middle path solution between religious extremes, but political factors had made the governments cautious in the persecution of religious dissidents, which contributed to the continuation of sectarian divisions in the seventeenth century. Full religious uniformity was hardly ever achieved. Particularly during the Civil War, the English had experienced a dissolution of the established Church and a rise of an unparalleled amount of religious alternatives.⁹ The Civil War also demonstrated to most Englishmen that religious division was a primary cause of rebellion against political authority.¹⁰ Such civil strife had a longstanding effect on the attitudes and prevailing mythologies of the nation. Like civil wars in general, the English conflict generated misleading historiography, deep-rooted bitterness, and often irrational emotions and loyalties. The Civil War gave rise to such mistrust, suspicion and readiness to believe the worst of fellow subjects that could not evaporate together with the generation who had fought the war.¹¹ Protestant Dissenters became major objects of mistrust as alleged anti-monarchists and enemies to the Church.¹²

Restoration England inherited from the republican period a state of religious pluralism in the form of flourishing sectarianism and religious diversity. The religious conflicts that followed can be seen as a continuation of the Reformation which was brought to at least a partial end with the Act of Toleration (1689) that gave legal recognition to most excluded Protestants and thus removed their willingness to rejoin the Church.¹³ The dominant Protestant dimension of religious diversity in post-Restoration England was the Church of England, the Presbyterians – most of whom also wished for a unified but differently organised Church – and the separatist denominations including the Independents or Congregationalists, the Quakers, the Baptists, and a number of small, often extremist, sects. A further religious alternative was offered by the

8 Harrison 1990, 10; Champion 1992, 227; Holmes 1993, 143.

9 Martin 1990, 67; Harrison 1990, 3, 28; Grell, Israel and Tyacke 1991, 2–6.

10 Pocock 1995, 42.

11 Rupp 1986, 72.

12 Haydon 1993, 246.

13 Schochet 1995, 121, 123; Schochet 1996, 183.

rare Catholics who were feared by all Protestant denominations.¹⁴ Because of the marginal role of Catholics in the reality of politics – depending on their small number and the prevalent anti-Catholic attitude that saw Catholicism as necessarily treasonous and denied political rights from its supporters – Catholics have been excluded from this analysis of politico-religious debate, as the debate mainly concerned the desirability of diversity among the Protestants. Anti-Catholicism had a momentous impact on political attitudes¹⁵ but rather influenced national identity than the question of political pluralism.

In spite of such diversity, however, less than ten per cent of early eighteenth-century Englishmen frequented services other than those of the established Church. Catholics were few and scattered, whereas the Dissenters were most numerous in the developed areas of southeastern England, where most of the publishing also took place. Furthermore, the number of Dissenters was declining quite dramatically between 1720 and 1750 from approximately 350,000 to less than 250,000. Dissent declined spiritually as well when the initially zealous sects turned into alternative Churches providing formal worship to urban audiences whose interests were increasingly commercial rather than religious. Active members became fewer as reason was strengthened at the cost of revelation, as scepticism won new ground, as some Dissenters assimilated socially with the Anglican establishment, and as 'rational' dissent failed to attract support from the common people.¹⁶

Religious dissent had several political dimensions as well. In general elections, the Dissenters regularly campaigned in favour of Whig candidates, and, throughout the eighteenth century, the local and parliamentary Whig party was defined through the alliance of the Low-Church Anglicans and Dissenters. The Dissenters also formed their own organisations designed to defend their rights. For instance, in 1715, a club of lay Dissenters was founded for the purpose of gaining greater toleration. In 1734 and again from 1736 to 1739, the Dissenters campaigned nationwide for the repeal of discriminatory legislation. The common theological background and experiences of political discrimination united various dissenting Churches and enabled this kind of cooperation.¹⁷ In the 1730s, however, the Dissenters failed to achieve any concessions because of the lack of cooperation from some dissenting circles and the Whig government. Walpole's government was unwilling to provoke religious hostilities by insulting the privileged position of the Church. Concessions to Dissenters were unnecessary also in the sense that the Dissenters were likely to support Whigs anyway.¹⁸ After the 1730s, dissenting political activism declined. In warfare and domestic rebellions Dissenters supported the Whig governments, and their declining numbers and economic welfare decreased motivation to campaign for extended civil liberties.¹⁹

14 Schochet 1992, 123–4.

15 Haydon 1993.

16 Harris 1990, 21–2; Bradley 1990, 91, 93, 95; Spurr 1991, 378, 387.

17 Bradley 1990, 29, 52–3, 106, 113; Trevor-Roper 1991, 397–8.

18 Stromberg 1954, 135.

19 Miller 1994, 297.

Declining numbers also meant that Dissenters were increasingly regarded as a politically insignificant group.

The response of the political elite to religious dissent was conflicting. In fact, attitudes toward dissent became the major and most consistent factor dividing the political elite throughout the early eighteenth century.

After the years of Interregnum, a great majority of Englishmen longed for a reintroduction of the traditional monarchy and established Church in a form that presupposed that every loyal subject would adhere to its doctrines. Both the monarch and Parliament considered religious diversity a political threat. The leaders of the Church of England wished to remove religious pluralism which they understood as a continuation of that sectarian violence and civil unrest the country had recently experienced. It was generally considered the mission of the established Church to work as a principal unifying force in the restored political order: whereas the state would support the Church in its work as the teacher of the nation's religious traditions, the Church would do its best to strengthen the cause of the restored monarchy. The monarch would have been ready to test the effect of indulgence for taming religious dissidents, but Parliament instead passed several repressive laws to eradicate them altogether. Subjects were divided into the established Church and Nonconformists who were to be compelled into conformity. Those unwilling to conform were excluded from the membership of the national Church and therewith from the full membership of the political society. Certain freedoms of worship allowed during the Interregnum were denied, which, of course, created a threat of open resistance.²⁰

The reintroduction of the confessional monopoly of the Anglican Church at the Restoration meant that England remained a divided nation where legislation legitimated persecution of dissident sects and where religious and civil authorities cooperated to enhance Anglican uniformity through compulsion. Persecution was a reaction to the collapse of orthodoxy and to the rise of heterodox and heretical sectarianism. It was a consequence of the failure of pure coercion in achieving religious uniformity. Persecution was based on the denial of pluralism and became justified by the assumption that religion was essential to the public good and could not thus be merely a private matter.²¹

The Act of Uniformity, passed in 1662, demanded that every divine and teacher had to acquiesce to the *Book of Common Prayer*. The Corporation Act, passed a year earlier, aimed at excluding potentially rebellious persons such as Dissenters from municipal offices by requiring all candidates for office to take an oath of allegiance and the Anglican communion before election. The Test Act of 1673 brought the same discriminatory conditions to elections for the offices under the crown. The 'Act of Toleration' (1689), which was passed after the Glorious Revolution to bring some relief to Dissenters, did not repeal former penal legislation and thus exclude the possibility of its reintroduction,

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20 Miller 1992, 58; Holmes 1993, 37, 41–2; Spellman 1993, 36–7; Schochet 1990, 86–7; Schochet 1992, 130; Schochet 1995, 123, 126.

21 Goldie 1991, 331; Schochet 1992, 123; Schochet 1995, 121, 128.

but suspended some laws designed to prevent nonconformist worship on the condition that the Dissenters took the oaths of allegiance introduced by the Williamite regime. This suspension concerned only 'loyal' Dissenters, whereas Catholics and anti-Trinitarians were denied any such relief. Even Trinitarian Dissenters were continuously denied access to political offices and university posts. Freedom of worship was granted to them on the condition that the preacher accepted most of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, that meeting houses were not locked during worship, that tithes were paid properly, and that the meetings were registered with the ecclesiastical authorities. The 'Act of Toleration' was not aimed at giving any sect a possibility of becoming a serious alternative to the established Church. The law provided no confirmation of a principle of freedom of conscience, and the entire concept of toleration remained absent. In the connected parliamentary debates, it was specifically denied that the law granted religious toleration.²²

Some historians have characterised the Act of Toleration as revolutionary because it brought a legal recognition of England as 'a pluralist society'. It has also been suggested that fundamental changes in attitudes must have taken place *before* Parliament could pass such an act, the political nation abandoning the idea of religious unity and adopting instead a pluralism that the state guaranteed. In contrast, it has been pointed out that contemporaries did not necessarily conceive the process as a *de facto* recognition to religious diversity in England. At least, they did not enunciate their recognition of pluralism.²³ Indeed, when formulating the Act, the legislators expected that it would be followed by a Protestant comprehension that would enable most Dissenters join the national Church. The Act was thus initially assumed to concern only a tiny group of Dissenters unwilling to join the Church but actually came to concern half a million Dissenters.²⁴

Interpreting the Act as a conscious recognition of pluralism is apparently an exaggeration. The Act did give a legislatively unparalleled amount of religious freedom to Protestant Dissenters, but its limitations remained considerable, few contemporaries were dedicated to genuine toleration, most expected a return to unity, and neither did they consider the Act as irreversible. The effects of the Act were felt only gradually as a result of what W. M. Spellman has called the destruction of the idea of the Church as the embodiment of moral authority in a society sharing basic values. Half a million people could thereafter live outside the disciplinary control of the national Church. In that sense English liberty of worship was unique.²⁵

Caution in estimating the meaning of the Act of Toleration is necessary, because several Anglican Members of Parliament only very reluctantly voted for it. Many supported the bill merely because they considered it a temporary measure to be repealed once circumstances allowed, that is, after most Dissenters had joined the Church. There was no talk about scepticism or the

22 * * * * *
Martin 1990, 71, 78; Bradley 1990, 49–52; Trevor-Roper 1991, 391.

23 Martin 1990, 67–8; Tyacke 1991, 41; Schochet 1996, 177, 186.

24 Bennett 1975, 11; Holmes 1993, 358–9.

25 Spellman 1993, 137–8.

ineffectiveness of persecution that would have rendered universal toleration sensible. The validity of honest religious differences was acknowledged only by the most moderate of churchmen.²⁶ Hardly any Englishman was ready to allow an anarchic plurality of separated sects.²⁷ Some historians have suggested that Dissenters were tolerated just because persecution had proved inefficient and had even produced the opposite of the desired effect. A considerable proportion of the members of the established Church, however, continued to oppose toleration as a solution to religious diversity.²⁸

Support for the law can also be interpreted as purely political: the purpose of the Act was to advance political unity by making some concessions in the direction of religious diversity. A limited toleration seemed to make sense, as persecution had brought no result and as a limited toleration might as well bring one, provided the political rights of the Dissenters remained restricted. Schochet has argued that the passage of the Act was merely politics of self-interest, there being hardly any genuine intention to enhance tolerance at the cost of prejudices. The Act of Toleration was a continuation of previous attempts to exclude Dissenters from political life. Schochet has suggested that most leading politicians were indifferent to religious considerations, and thus Tories voted for the bill in order not to lose seats to dissenting Whigs, which would have been probable if the Dissenters had been allowed to enter the Church of England. The Act may also have been motivated by the need to protect the Church of England, as a limited toleration or indulgence remained the only available means for controlling religious dissent after comprehension and persecution had failed and real toleration remained out of question.²⁹

It is important to notice that the passage of the Act of Toleration was no reflection of a rapid transformation in *attitudes* toward religious diversity. It rather represented a very slow development from official persecution of religious dissidents to official indifference towards them.³⁰ In the long run, of course, granting legal status to religious dissent fostered demands of genuine religious liberty. Even though Dissenters were discriminated against for another 140 years, legalised religious dissent provided an important precedent which could later be extended to dissent in other areas of life,³¹ including dissent in politics.

After the passage of the Toleration Act, attitudes towards religious dissent developed in different directions within the religious and political elites. Two parties were formed within the Church, and they felt increasingly alienated from each other. The lower clergy and their influential allies among country squires found the reasons for a crisis within the Church in the actions of the moderate Anglican divines. Therefore, they established the High-Church party to counter the so-called Latitudinarians. The High Churchmen continued to fear

26 Spellman 1993, 136–7.

27 Goldie 1993b, 157.

28 Grell, Israel and Tyacke 1991, 12.

29 Martin 1990, 71, 78; Schochet 1990, 95–6; Schochet 1995, 121–2; Schochet 1996, 166, 181–2.

30 Schochet 1990, 95; Schochet 1992, 154; Schochet 1995, 121.

31 Martin 1990, 78–9; Schochet 1996, 186–7.

the 'fanaticism of the sects' no matter how irrational such a fear may have been.³² The politically motivated assembling of the Convocation again in 1701 meant that they received a forum in which to express their frustration with the legalisation of dissent and the potential threat of heterodoxies spreading among parishioners. During the next ten years, the High Church criticised Whig governments for setting the Anglican Church in danger and Tory governments for the failure to promote the interest of the Church vigorously enough.³³

In 1702, the High Church and Tory party started a campaign against toleration and more particularly against the detested practice of occasional conformity. The campaign, which aimed at excluding Dissenters from all offices and thus eliminating their political influence, was also directed against the political allies of Dissenters, the Whigs. In 1702–4, three bills against occasional conformity were passed by the Tory-dominated Commons but were defeated in the Whig-dominated Lords. It was only in 1711 that a bill of Occasional Conformity passed both houses, and it was followed in 1714 by the Schism Act directed against the school system of the Dissenters.³⁴

The new discriminatory legislation remained short-lived. At the end of the 1710s, religious strife was once again intensified, as the leading Whig minister James Stanhope proposed the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts and the invalidation of the Test and Corporation Acts to relieve the status of the Dissenters and to strengthen Protestant interest in the country. As most Whigs were prepared to accept only a compromise restoring the legislative situation of 1689, the acts of 1711 and 1714 were repealed but the rest of the legislation left intact. Importantly, the legislative measure enabled Dissenters to hold office in local government.

Governments realised that the popularity of the rival Tories could be best restricted by limiting the intensity of the sectarian conflict, and that was best done by avoiding radical reforms in religious questions. The suspension of Convocation in 1717 also diminished possibilities for ecclesiastical controversies. Instead of extending toleration, Whig governments started to speak in favour of the established Church to gain its powerful support. Sympathy towards the Anglican Church naturally caused criticism among Whigs with dissenting sympathies, which contributed to the rise of Whig factions. On the other hand, the pro-Church attitude of the government decreased the relevance of religious issues in everyday politics, as Church leaders began to see the Whigs not as a danger but as the most influential defenders of the privileged status of the Church. In the 1720s, a shift in discourse occurred as religious controversy calmed and became gradually replaced by discourses such as the oppositional criticism of corruption. The relative calm did not mean, however, that religious disagreements ceased to influence political identities. Whereas the opposition of the 1730s might have agreed in opposing new taxation and criticising foreign policy, the attitude to dissent was still a divisive issue capable

32 Spellman 1993, 138–9.

33 Spurr 1991, 381–2; Webb 1992, 162–3.

34 Bradley 1990, 52–3; Trevor-Roper 1991, 392–3.

of reviving old party feelings.³⁵

From the 1720s onwards, religious freedom in England was considerable. Dissenters could have their own religious meetings, which may have increased relaxed attitudes towards religion also amongst conformists. Though acceptance for toleration may have grown, particularly as the number of the Dissenters decreased, the Anglicans, who dominated Parliament, agreed in their attempts to maintain at least some of the spiritual monopoly of the established Church. The amount of toleration increased only *de facto*, not *de jure*. In practice, however, punishments were not applied to preachers who denounced Catholicism and approved most of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the established Church. Repeated Acts of Indemnity, passed from 1726 onwards, and the dissenting habit of attending Anglican communion to qualify for any office also brought relief to the principally strict legislation. Furthermore, by 1750, a gradual transformation in favour of toleration emerged as the English religious life – following continental pietistic trends – turned increasingly devotional and, as tensions between faith and reason became all the more distinct, thus leading to a deeper crisis of authority. On the other hand, it should be born in mind that the picture of England as a tolerant society is misleading in the sense that open hatred of religious minorities survived.³⁶

Together with the permanent existence of religious dissent, England experienced the intellectual consequences of the Scientific Revolution, the spokesmen of which advocated an empirical method of research. Importantly, however, the new science did not become a particular problem to the Church of England, as the Church, in order to counter enthusiasm of sects, soon started to defend Christian doctrines on the basis of selected findings of the Newtonian natural philosophy. This adaptability produced a rather harmonious relationship between the Church and secular science, which remained an essential feature of eighteenth-century English society.³⁷ However, the rising experimental philosophy, though seemingly orthodox, wished to discuss even questions of faith without constraint, which entailed the danger of a conception of belief or even religion as mere debatable opinion. The paradox was that religion as a set of debatable opinions was certainly not what orthodox Anglicanism was looking for.³⁸

Unavoidably, Anglicanism was undergoing a crisis which culminated in the 1690s and again in the 1720s and 1730s. The 1690s was a distressing decade to the Church for a number of reasons: The Church had only recently lost its spiritual monopoly as a result of the passage of the Toleration Act, the Episcopal Church had been deprived of its established status in Scotland, and

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35 Trevor-Roper 1991, 393–4; Albers 1993, 330; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 54–5; Wilson 1995, 121–2; Hill 1996, 58, 63–4, 83. Hill and Wilson have interpreted the role of religious questions within the opposition differently.

36 Colley 1982, 12–13, 112; Langford 1989, 291, 293; Bradley 1990, 69–70; Webb 1992, 174, 176, 179–81; Haydon 1993, 245, 259; Miller 1994, 296; Hill 1996, 202. The Indemnity Act allowed candidates for office to take the sacramental test after entering office, not as a precondition. This did not, of course, remove the demand for conformity.

37 Gascoigne 1989, 2, 4; Holmes 1993, 145–6.

38 Pocock 1995, 47.

the clergy were expecting an intensified dissenting challenge also in England. In England, deism and Socinianism appeared to be gaining ground, sometimes questioning revelation and the sacred doctrine of Trinity. Clerical censorship of theological writings came to an end, and the lapse of prepublication censorship led to an increase in the number of heterodox titles. Open anticlericalism seemed to be becoming popular, and some of the populace showed signs of religious indifference by failing to attend services. As a consequence, all segments of the clergy could agree that the England of the 1690s was experiencing a wave of profaneness, immorality and danger.³⁹ The period saw the publications of innumerable titles expressing anxiety about the rise of deism and atheism, as numerous Christians, both divines and laymen, feared the rise of a licentious society where everything could be freely discussed and where even atheist ideas could go uncontrolled.⁴⁰

Another period of intense challenge was experienced by churchmen in the 1720s and 1730s, as deism seemed to be gaining popularity to a worrying degree among the political elite and became expressed as open anticlericalism in Parliament. Christianity appeared to be under attack and, paradoxically, defended by writers such as Matthew Tindal, commonly known for his advocacy of natural religion. At the same time, some theological positions proved difficult to defend, Whig governments wished to subordinate the Church to secular control, as many of the bishops showed more interest in temporal than spiritual affairs, and the Hanoverian court was suspected of heterodoxy. Some Tories also suspected that the Church might be promoting spiritual apathy and declining morality. In spite of repeated attempts to revive Convocation to resist new intellectual trends, it continued to be suspended. On the other hand, the deist challenge also did much to unite the previously hostile parties within the Church against a common enemy. In fact, Anglican orthodoxy was revived once the deist movement lost its vigour by the end of the 1740s. From the late 1730s onwards, the established Church also experienced the rise of a new threat to uniformity, this time in the form of the 'fanaticism' of the Evangelical Revival which called for a return to Reformation theology.⁴¹

The rise of new science, deism and anticlericalism has been customarily linked with the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment offers a potential interpretative context also for this study. It is a sympathetic concept used by historians to denominate not only an eighteenth-century intellectual movement characterised by secularisation, individualism, anti-traditionalism, emphasis on reason and belief in progress, but also a whole historical period,⁴² the Enlightenment being often used as a synonym for the eighteenth century. In this study, however, the synonymy of the two is questioned. The helpfulness of the universal term Enlightenment in connection with early eighteenth-century English history is not self-evident, as its use involves a danger of simplistic

39 Bennett 1975, 45; Tyacke 1991, 44; Spellman 1993, 132–3; Rose 1993, 177; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 17; Holmes 1993, 219–20.

40 Redwood 1976, 10–15.

41 Colley 1982, 116; Langford 1989, 238–44; Spurr 1991, 388; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 21, 60.

42 Ritter 1986, 133, 135.

generalisation. The term Enlightenment may make its user overlook the variety of early eighteenth-century political thinking and declare minor, often traditionalist, writers of the period unimportant and unprogressive, unable to introduce innovations, and hence difficult to fit to the universal picture of the Enlightenment.⁴³ These overlooked writers, however, no less than canonised thinkers, endeavoured to conceptualise their experiences of change in political structures. In fact, their texts may be more revealing as to the then prevalent frames of mind among the political elite and even the people at large than those written by canonised figures of the Enlightenment. As Holmes has pointed out, in early eighteenth-century England there flourished numerous lines of political thought that diverged radically both from Lockean theories of natural law and from classical republicanism. Furthermore, many of the prevalent thought patterns are hard to fit into any progressive pattern of the European Enlightenment.⁴⁴

In English historiography, it is usual to define the Enlightenment rather more restrictively: to progressive continental and Scottish *philosophes* of the later eighteenth century.⁴⁵ References to 'the English Enlightenment' have remained few. One reason for this rarity of use may be the illusion that, in a country far advanced in secularisation, the Enlightenment could have been only a modest imitation of the real French movement.⁴⁶ In contrast, it has been pointed out that hardly any Enlightenment thinker was an atheist, whereas much of the European Enlightenment aimed at reforms within Christianity rather than abolishing the established religion for good. Goldie has proposed that the possibility of an English Enlightenment should also be studied, as the eighteenth-century Church of England may also have provoked criticism of a corresponding kind.⁴⁷

Out of the many critical views toward the concept of Enlightenment can be mentioned that of Clark who has maintained that neither of the dominant sources of eighteenth-century English political discourse, law or religion, were characterised by features conventionally associated with modernisation. Given the strong support among the political elite for the Anglican Church, the term Enlightenment appears as an anachronistic and overwhelmingly positive explanatory model, particularly if considered identical to a process of secularisation and modernisation. In Clark's view, political texts of the Enlightenment conventionally interpreted as secular often contain arguments

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43 Enlightenment scholars have conventionally concentrated on mid- and late eighteenth-century thinkers. Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century thinkers they have often interpreted as predecessors of the Enlightenment proper. This approach may have entailed complexities and continuities of the earlier period having not been fully appreciated. See Kors 1987, 2.

44 Holmes 1993, 377.

45 Gascoigne has pointed to the rare use of the expression 'English Enlightenment', the Enlightenment being considered primarily a French phenomenon that had some influence in Germany, Scotland, and also in some other parts of Europe but hardly England. Gascoigne 1989, 1; According to Pocock, the term can justifiably be used with reference to Scotland, but it is not necessary for describing eighteenth-century England. Pocock 1988, 174.

46 Hill has suggested that no eighteenth-century English Enlightenment emerged because that had already taken place in the seventeenth century. Hill 1995, 67.

47 Goldie 1993c, 31–2, 45.

derived from religious discourse.⁴⁸ Likewise, Champion has questioned the use of the term Enlightenment which is rooted in the need to understand the French Revolution. The need to find the roots of the 'real' continental Enlightenment may distort historical interpretations of early eighteenth-century England, as it encourages a search for such links between it and the later continental Enlightenment that remain questionable, including a progressive breakthrough of rational Christianity, rival radical materialism, and 'democratic' thought. As a consequence of the use of the term Enlightenment, the vitality of traditionalist Anglicanism is easily overlooked.⁴⁹

An interpretation of 'the English Enlightenment' as a prelude to the later continental Enlightenment is, to some extent, based on French eighteenth-century anglophile literature which typically admired England's liberty and its constitution. Even if such admiration may have reflected the values of the writers themselves rather than the realities of early eighteenth-century England, much of it has been taken as evidence of a close connection between early eighteenth-century England and the rise of the Enlightenment. To avoid the risk of being misled by the employed terminology, however, it is best not to adopt the Enlightenment as a major explanatory device in this study. Particularly so, when the explicit purpose of the study is to focus also on what could well be called counter-Enlightenment, that is, thought that resisted secularisation and modernisation processes. Indeed, for the purposes of this study, it might be most helpful to ask how the contemporaries *themselves* understood expressions such as modernity, innovation, change and novelty.

Modernity, innovation, novelty and change in early eighteenth-century understanding

Historians are naturally interested in the emergence of modernity, particularly in eighteenth-century England, a country with a reputation as the forerunner in modernisation. Views on the importance of focusing on modernity diverge, however. Whereas Richter has regretted the way in which Anglo-American historians have paid only limited attention to the emergence of modernity,⁵⁰ Burke has pointed out that such a variety of meanings has been connected with the adjective modern that the helpfulness of the term as a tool for historians is questionable.⁵¹

Even if this is not merely a study on the rise of modernity, it is important to discuss how the early eighteenth-century English thinkers themselves understood the 'modern' vocabulary. They did not possess the expression modernity in the form used by twentieth-century scholars; yet they made use of terms related to things modern as opposed to things ancient. This vocabulary of modern consisted of terms such as modern, innovation, novelty and change, the

48 Clark 1994, 12, 14–16.

49 Champion 1992, 13–15.

50 Richter 1995, 125.

51 Burke 1997, 57.

senses of which are revealing as to contemporary attitudes towards change and modernity. These attitudes, in turn, were crucial to conceptual continuity and change, including the conceptualisations of political pluralism.

The early eighteenth century was undoubtedly a period of significant changes. It has been argued Englishmen experienced unprecedented changes in many areas of life, no country, economy or society having lived through parallel transformations before. The major changes included a rapid expansion in administration and finance caused by massive warfare. The speed of change has been suggested to have risen further after 1700, changes becoming continuous. Pocock has argued that political thought also became occupied by a conscious recognition of change in the economic and social foundations of politics, and the language of trade, connected with the concepts of foreign policy, entered political discourse.⁵²

Even though the trend existed, for an overwhelming majority of the early eighteenth-century English, continuity of traditions remained a priority concern and any change appeared as a painful phenomenon even to recognise.⁵³ No one was prepared to advocate openly change; even those entertaining radical ideas usually called for a return to the golden past, not progress through reforms towards a better society. It has been pointed out that, in seventeenth-century rhetoric, everyone wished to depict oneself as a defender of authentic tradition, and those alternative interpretations of tradition competed in public discourse.⁵⁴ The same rhetoric continued well into the eighteenth century. Continuity of rhetoric ensured that, at time of any crisis, people willingly referred to previous crises providing analogies of resistance to the same sort of threats.⁵⁵ In early eighteenth-century England, these analogies were mostly found in the politico-religious conflicts of the preceding century. It was typical, even of writers inclined to innovation, to legitimise their arguments by references to continuity with the national, collective and mythical past.⁵⁶

Contemporaries were aware that changes were taking place, both in everyday realities and public discourse, but their attitudes towards change varied according to the field of change. In science, the results of the new experimental method sometimes provoked overly optimistic expectations. Urbanisation, gradual industrial and colonial growth and developments in agriculture appeared differently depending on the observer. As far as the political system was concerned, however, any innovation and change continued to be viewed as destructive. In accordance with traditional thought patterns, changes were

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52 Pocock 1975, 423, 425; Langford 1989, 677; Jones 1992a, 8–9; Jones 1992b, 51.

53 See, for instance, *The Glorious Life and Actions of St. Whigg*, 1708, 15, and Benjamin Griffin, *Whig and Tory. A Comedy*, 1720, 10, in which a Whiggish character declared that 'the greatest blessing we enjoy is change' and was consequently interpreted to be a libertine; For paranoid fear of change, see also Clark 1994, 221.

54 Condren 1994, 158; If some distinction is to be drawn between the two parties in attitudes toward change, it is obvious that the Tories tended to be suspicious, whereas the Whigs were more inclined to think positively about change, even though this must be understood as only a slight difference, the Whigs being far from a party which advocated modernity. Gascoigne 1989, 147.

55 Clark 1994, 222.

56 Wilson 1995, 21.

considered signs of decline.⁵⁷ Throughout the seventeenth century, most thinkers had remained dedicated to the pessimistic belief that novelty in thought was always degenerate, as, according to a widely shared early modern presumption, change both in the universe and in human affairs was necessarily change for the worse.⁵⁸

Suspicious attitudes toward political change were of ancient inheritance, and were not significantly transformed in the course of the early eighteenth century.⁵⁹ Because of a shared appreciation for political traditions and suspicion of novelties, positive political change could be difficult to imagine. It was inconceivable to most Englishmen how the world's best political system could have been somehow improved, let alone the introduction of innovations. However, arguments about change frequently occurred in political discourse. It remained probably the most efficient rhetorical strategy to present one's own group as defenders of ancient conventions and the rivals as innovators violating inherited laws and customs.

Accusations of innovation and suspicions of conspiracy were most likely to rise when religion was somehow thought at stake. In religion, the rhetoric of tradition was usual in defending the writer's points, whereas a rhetoric of innovation was used against opponents. The same pattern of argument was easily applied to political discourse. When the opposition claimed that government was neglecting the inherited liberties of the subjects and violating the ancient constitution, government would answer by accusing the opposition of attempting to introduce innovations. In politics, however, arguments of tradition were not merely used for opposing change; arguments of tradition could also facilitate adaption to change or even forward change. Rhetoric of change was thus also tradition-centred.⁶⁰ This is a noteworthy point, as religious terminology was apparently used both to criticise change and to argue in favour of it.

The senses of the vocabulary of modern and change in the early eighteenth century offer little support for arguments that the transition to modernity had taken place by the end of the seventeenth century. The meaning of the term modern remained stable, only an occasional new derivation emerging, and these neologisms supported inherited suspicious interpretations of the term rather than added new positive and future-oriented senses to it. Most dictionary definitions of the term were neutral, whereas in public discourse its senses were overwhelmingly pejorative.

In dictionaries, modern was something like 'new, of late time'.⁶¹ Johnson (1755) also recalled the intellectual tensions between ancients and moderns. 'Moderns' was the term for 'those who have lived lately, as opposed to the

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57 Jones 1992a, 2–3; Skerpan 1992, 1–2.

58 Harrison 1990, 103.

59 See, for instance, Bolingbroke's statement in Bolingbroke, *Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 24, that most things in politics had changed for the worse, whereas the disappearance of the old party distinction was the only change for the better.

60 *London Journal*, no. 735, 28 July 1733, in *Gentleman's Magazine (GM)*, Vol. III, July 1733, Reel 134; Langford 1989, 677, 679–80; Clark 1994, 221; Condren 1994, 153, 158–9.

61 Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741.

ancients'. More particularly, it stood for seventeenth-century authorities as opposed to those of antiquity. Though politically marginal, the controversy between ancients and moderns may have led to an increasing tolerance of innovation and even to suspicion of tradition.⁶² An obvious neologism mentioned by Johnson in connection with modern vocabulary is interesting: modernism was a pejorative term referring to 'deviation from the ancient and classical manner' and thus conveying a touch of scepticism as to the justification of substituting ancient traditions with modern innovations. Such reservedness of modern vocabulary is important to recognise. Contemporaries did not merely welcome modernity; rather they opposed or remained indifferent to it.

Suspensions towards things modern are visible in political texts. In pamphlet literature, the attribute modern, when added in the front of a name of a party, regularly stood for a development towards something worse. Pamphleteers provided the reading audience of their own party with derogatory texts describing the character of 'a modern Tory', 'a modern Whig', 'modern pleaders for an absolute, unrestrained toleration', 'the modern way of freethinking' and 'modern politicians',⁶³ all suggesting a negative turn. Whereas the *Craftsman* lamented the 'few instances of modern patriots' as compared to the number of ancient ones, thus contrasting ancient Rome in a glorifying manner with eighteenth-century England, a governmental pamphleteer replied by writing an abusive history of 'the modern patriots'⁶⁴, as the opposition to Walpole wished to term themselves, thus giving the attribute modern its typically pejorative sense in a political context.

In the mind of a late-twentieth-century reader, the expression innovation invokes positive associations with progress as opposed to stagnation. At the threshold of the twenty-first century, things at their best are considered innovative. In early eighteenth-century England, in contrast, describing some development as an innovation was one of the surest ways of making the audience suspicious towards it. Innovation was an inherently pejorative term; no-one would have spoken in favour of innovation in that society. This contrast underscores the necessity of carefully interpreting each concept before declaring the early eighteenth century as a take-off period for modernisation.

Innovation was 'a bringing in of new customs or opinions, change, alteration',⁶⁵ or, 'change by the introduction of novelties'. The ambiguous connotative content of the term is visible in the quotations of Johnson's *Dictionary*. In the quotations with a negative undertone, traditionalists referred to the value of Christian and ancient authorities as opposed to innovation, either religious or political. Particularly interesting from the point of view of political

62 Condren 1994, 160.

63 *The True Picture of a Modern Tory*, 1702; Henry Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724; Thomas Dawson, *Good Advice: In a Letter to a Friend, Concerning the Modern Way of Free-Thinking*, 1731; *The Craftsman*, no. 312 (C312), 24 June 1732; C366, 7 July 1733; C368, 21 June 1733.

64 C213, 1 August 1730; *The History of the Modern Patriots*, 1732.

65 See, for instance, Gordon-Bailey 1730; Parallel definitions appear in Martin 1749, *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753 and Wesley 1764.

change is a quotation from Swift in which he appears to accept shifts in political structures provided that they were slow and did not violate the constitution. Such readiness to accept gradual innovation was rarely expressed in published texts, and even more surprising it is to find it in a text of a traditionalist such as Swift. There are no reasons to draw conclusions about the rise of a positive sense of the term innovation, however, when more occurrences are analysed. In the eyes of many, nothing was more despicable than attempts to 'innovate in matters of religion'.⁶⁶ The texts of traditionalist preachers offer examples of defining innovation in utterly scathing terms. Atterbury contrasted 'the bold innovators in the faith' with the respectable orthodox and warned for 'heresies and innovations'.⁶⁷ Sacheverell extended the term innovation to concern the affairs of the state as well, insisting in his sermon of 5 November 1709 that 'no innovation whatsoever should be allowed in the fundamental constitution of any state, without a very pressing, nay unavoidable necessity for it'.⁶⁸ Not unlike traditionalists, the organ of the opposition to Walpole considered innovations as something that 'must prove dangerous'.⁶⁹ Many a republican writer was also careful to demonstrate that 'ancient precedents' showed his proposal to be 'no innovation'.⁷⁰ An unanimous dissociation from innovation, both religious and political, is further illustrated by Langhorn Warren's sermon preached in connection with the rebellion of 1745. Warren urged his parishioners to 'have no communication with men of fluctuating notions, and unsettled principles, with respect to religion and government' as these were 'factious tempers, who love innovation'.⁷¹

People were equally afraid of being suspected for favouring novelty, for having an 'affection of novelty', or 'a fond desire after new, uncommon and odd things'.⁷² Novelty was a pejorative term arousing suspicions analogous to those caused by the term innovation. A novelty in politics was necessarily something breaking ancient customs which were generally regarded as the model for a mixed constitution. The *Craftsman*, for instance, presented robinarchy and robinocracy – both derived from the first name of the Prime Minister – as 'political novelties' that, they claimed, Walpole's government had introduced.⁷³

Innovation and novelty meant change, and change was what an overwhelming majority of early eighteenth-century writers feared. James Drake (1705) – an extreme case – maintained that Dissenters attempted to 'bring about . . . great change in the constitution of Church or state'.⁷⁴ Such Tory fears of

66 See e.g. *A Modest Defence of the Government*, 1702, 28; Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, 164.

67 Francis Atterbury, *A Letter to a Convocation-Man*, 1697, 13, 26.

68 Henry Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church and State*, 1709, 11.

69 C745, 11 October 1740.

70 Roger Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 19.

71 Langhorn Warren, *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 5.

72 John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 3.11.12; Dawson, *Good Advice*, 1731, 4, 33; *Old Whig*, No. 63, 20 May 1736, in *GM*, Vol. VI, May 1736, Reel 136.

73 C172, 18 October 1729.

74 [James Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 4; This originally anonymous pamphlet contributed to an intense debate that continued for over a year. The author, printer

change are also visible in the way Tory propaganda described Whigs as proponents of both religious and political change. Changing what was utterly unacceptable to change, such as Anglican Protestantism and the mixed form of government, could be presented as the main aim of the rival party.⁷⁵

Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* (1714) was one of the very few crosscurrent texts that dared to suggest that 'alternate changes in the civil society' were natural phenomena. For Mandeville, a physician himself, changes were so natural that he depicted them as parallel to some functions of the human body.⁷⁶ Similar views sympathetic towards change appeared sometimes among radical circles. John Trenchard, for instance, though not proceeding far in discussing the implications, pointed to the inevitability of both natural and political bodies experiencing 'variations and injuries of time'.⁷⁷ This was an indirect way of referring to the natural character of political change.

Such modernist views remained few. The *Craftsman*, for instance, though representing the views of the opposition, did not openly advocate political change. Quite the contrary, the paper wrote about how a majority of Englishmen had been so 'uneasy under the various alterations' during the Civil War that they had, after the crisis was settled, restored the 'ancient foundation' of their constitution.⁷⁸ Among the opposition to Walpole, belief in constitutional progress was almost nonexistent. These advocates of classical republicanism held negative views toward any change which they understood as a movement away from the preferred norms of stability, rationality and virtue towards degeneration, corruption and destruction of liberty and civic virtue.⁷⁹

In 1731, the *Craftsman* participated in a medico-political controversy which concerned, in passing, also the character of political change. A pamphlet had suggested that 'political, as well as natural bodies, are subject to changes' and that the British political system was in a 'declining state'. In his answer, the essayist of the *Craftsman* did not dispute the existence of political changes analogous to medical changes but took a more positive stand as to the possibilities of healing of what he saw as a corruptive illness in the political system. In a *Craftsman* published in 1733, the British constitution was depicted as 'a fleeting thing' that had changed in a manner analogous to changes in the human body caused by aging and illnesses. Such an organic analogical approach to the issue of political change survived in an essay published in 1740. Applying a multitude of medical terminology to the question of reforming the nation, the writer saw 'a total change' as inevitable in the British body politic. After pointing this out, however, he turned the essay into a humorous one so that the graveness of the statement remains questionable. As another essay published later the same year suggests, constant changes in the political system

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and publisher were eagerly looked for, and the publication itself was burnt by the common hangman. Tyacke 1991, 45.

75 *The True Genuine Tory-Address, And the True Genuine Whig-Address*, 1710, 3, 11.

76 Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, 1714, 258.

77 [John Trenchard], *Cato's Letters*. The Third Edition, Reissued at New York 1969, no. 69 (CL69), 10 March 1722.

78 C103, 22 June 1728.

79 Foord 1964, 158; Pocock 1975, 402; Greene 1994, 31.

were observed with caution among the editors of the *Craftsman*.⁸⁰

In other texts discussing political change, similar cautiousness is evident. In 1732, an anonymous author came to the conclusion that a free form of government, by allowing a widespread interest in political issues, made people 'dissatisfied with their present circumstance, and whimsically desirous of a change'. A nation such as the English was 'naturally fond of change'.⁸¹ Governmental writers replying to views presented in the *Craftsman* rather saw desire for political change among the advocates of the opposition. They suggested that the opponents of Walpole, being out of power and therefore discontented, wished to make use of people in order to carry out a political change favourable to their aims. In a parallel manner, a poem attacking the opposition and defending the stability of the Whig government lamented: 'Love of change the British race betray, And heaven's best gifts delight but for a day; With their own choice never can they long agree, Too wise for slaves, nor yet content when free'.⁸²

To this opposition to change which was based on the interests of the establishment should be added the opposition to change characteristic of religious communities, and not least the Church of England. Particularly in a time of crisis, Anglican pulpits offered sermons supporting the established order and presenting change of all types as impossible to accept. Warren, for instance, concerned about the consequences of the Jacobite rising of 1745, told his parishioners not to 'meddle . . . with them that are given to change', as a change was necessarily an unhappy event.⁸³ Changes were taking place in most sections of life, including politics, but the nation was taught to beware of them. The language of political pluralism is an exemplary case of such resistance to change.

Contemporary theories on language

In methodological writings on the history of concepts, prevalent conceptions of the nature of language have been seen as a valuable context when conceptualisations of politics are traced. Also in the early eighteenth century, the nature and proper use of language was debated, often in texts discussing pluralism. It has been suggested that seventeenth-century thinkers had been unable to trust ordinary language and had blamed it for confusing issues. The seventeenth century has been seen as having experienced a break between human and divine languages, so that language was no more considered God-given but created by ordinary people.⁸⁴ A radical Lockean minority of the political nation may have

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80 C245, 13 March 1731; C375, 8 September 1733; C704, 5 January 1740; C745, 11 October 1740.

81 *The Danger of Faction to a Free People*, 1732, 6, 12.

82 *A Political Lecture, Occasioned by a late Political Catechism Address'd to the Freeholders*, 1733, 10–11; *An Essay on Faction*, 1733, 4.

83 Warren, *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 5, 18.

84 de Grazia 1980, 319.

held such a view, but many Englishmen hardly yet believed in completely secular language. Interesting is that a new approach to religious diversity emerged when some English thinkers started to explain it by linguistic diversity, paying particular attention to the way in which commonly used words could carry misleading meanings.⁸⁵ A similar linguistic approach was sometimes also applied to the question of political diversity.

In this subchapter, early eighteenth-century theories on language are discussed on the basis of statements that appear in the consulted source material. Genuine theorists on the nature of language other than Locke have not been consulted. Though seldom offering abstract interpretations on the nature of language of the type of Locke, a number of political authors referred to how they perceived language affecting political discourse. Their comments, though habitually directed towards the abuse of 'political jargon' by opponents,⁸⁶ disclose the central role of certain religious concepts in political discourse. It was usually the critics of traditionalists who wrote about the deficiencies of language, often claimed to have been caused by vague use of religious terminology in politics.

Locke's writings on language, though by no means universally read nor approved,⁸⁷ may still have had an effect on conceptions of political language. At least they offer the most articulate formulation of a contemporary theory. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke dedicated considerable space to the philosophy of language. Highly conscious of linguistic change, he pointed out how new terms were constantly coming into use and old ones rejected. As customs and opinions changed, creating new combinations of ideas that were frequently thought and discussed, new terms were introduced to avoid unnecessarily lengthy descriptions. A great variety of ideas were absorbed in a single 'short sound'; yet there was 'a close connection between ideas and words, and our abstract ideas and general words have . . . [a] constant . . . relation one to another'. Words were 'immediately the signs of men's ideas, and by that means the instruments whereby men communicate their conceptions, and express to one another those thoughts and imaginations they have within their own breasts'.⁸⁸ This was how terms came into being and words and ideas were seen as inseparably interconnected.

Though not taking a stand on contemporary political discourse, Locke referred to a tendency to misleadingly connect independent ideas and thus give rise to religious and philosophical contradictions.⁸⁹ The close relationship between religion and politics taken into consideration, it may well have been of importance to the relationship between religious and political discourses that, according to Locke, one of the most dangerous errors arose when 'two different ideas, which a customary connection of them in . . . minds has . . . made in effect

85 Harrison 1990, 155–6.

86 *The Daily Courant*, 13 November 1734, in *GM*, November 1734, Reel 134.

87 Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* was more often ridiculed than praised in the 1690s. Spellman 1993, 84.

88 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 2.22.7, 2.33.19, 3.2.6.

89 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 2.33.18.

but one, fills . . . heads with false views, and . . . reasonings with false consequences'.⁹⁰ One of the most controversial elements of Locke's thought was his readiness to distinguish between the spiritual and the temporal. When another anticlerical Whig read Locke's statement, it may well have occurred to him to use it with reference to traditionalist churchmen who applied religious approaches to political issues. Those willing to draw distinctions between religion and politics may have read Locke's statement as an illustration of the consequences of mixing those areas of discourse. An example of shared conceptions can be found in Toland who argued that false aspects may have been connected with a concept, and such aspects could easily mislead naive persons using words uncritically.⁹¹

Locke also pointed to the misunderstandings that arose when people supposed a word to mean exactly the same to themselves and to other users of the word, where that was not necessarily the case. Using a word according to an imagined 'common acceptance of that language' did not secure that the idea the user connected with the word was identical with ideas connected to the word by other users. Writers failed to examine the exact significations of words and to define words they used. Furthermore, argued Locke, the very nature of words made many of them, particularly terms expressing complex ideas, unavoidably wavering in their meanings. Whereas common use regulated to some extent the meaning of everyday words, abstract terms were understood very differently by the speakers of the same language. These abstract words with undetermined significations included terms such as faith, religion and Church. It was difficult if not impossible for people to agree as to the meanings of these terms. Furthermore, argued Locke, there appeared intentional obscurity in terms for three reasons: (i) old terms were applied in unconventional senses; (ii) new ambiguous terms were introduced without bothering to define them; and (iii) terms were combined in ways that confused customary meanings. This linguistic ambiguity, or 'ill use of words', gave rise to numerous disputes. Locke was ready to go as far as to argue that 'the most I can find that the contending learned men of different parties do, in their arguings one with another, is, that they speak different languages'.⁹² All this was very real in early eighteenth-century use of politico-religious terminology.

Similar interpretations of political disputes as 'a meer war of words' were also put forward by less well-known writers.⁹³ Ryder was convinced, after reading Locke, that people would seldom differ in their opinions if only they consistently used the same words in the same significations: 'It is words that perplex us, and the difficulty is to get clear, distinct notions affixed to them'.⁹⁴ Lockean views on the inherent obscurity of language were also echoed in the

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90 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 2.33.18.

91 For Toland, see Harrison 1990, 157.

92 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 3.2.4, 3.2.7, 3.2.8, 3.9.8–9, 3.10.4, 3.10.6, 3.10.22; Differences in 'language and terms' between parties were also pointed to in *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 3.

93 See [Daniel Defoe], *The Ballance: Or, A New Test of the High-Fliers of all Sides*, 1705, 43.

94 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, ed. William Matthews, 1939, 24 December 1715. 155–6.

Independent Whig.⁹⁵ It may have represented more widely held conceptions of the role of language when an author started his pamphlet in 1713: 'The misunderstanding, and from thence, the misapplication of some popular or hateful terms, have many times been one of the principal occasions of those national distractions wherein this kingdom has been often involved'. The words this author listed as frequently used yet incorrectly understood include politico-religious terms such as Church, heresy, schism, faction, Tory, High Church, Whig and Low Church.⁹⁶ In 1731, Thomas Dawson suggested that sects among divines might have been caused by differences in appearance of matters arising from terms being differently understood rather than from genuine disagreements.⁹⁷ An awareness thus seems to have existed of the centrality and disputability of religious (and political) terms.

In many a preface, attention was paid to the universal problem of ambiguities in language.⁹⁸ A noteworthy instance of this sensitivity towards language is offered by the Bishop of Bangor Benjamin Hoadly's sermon *The Nature of the Kingdom, or Church, of Christ* (1717), which was preached in the royal presence and published by royal command, and which, with its views concerning the relationship between Church and state, occasioned the so-called Bangorian Controversy. When interpreting a Bible passage with constitutional implications, Hoadly expressed his views about the nature of language as well. Being aware of linguistic change through time, he stated: 'One of those great effects, which length of time is seen to bring along with it, is the alteration of the meaning annexed to certain sounds'. He then described how the signification of a word was 'very insensibly varied' when used by a variety of speakers so that a term finally came to stand for 'a complication of notions'. Further, argued Hoadly, words had affected the ways people perceived religious and other matters as they carried with them 'multitudes of new inconsistent ideas'.⁹⁹

The anticlericals of the early 1720s expressed parallel views of varying meanings of religious language, suggesting that priests abused 'scripture language' by leaving terms for complex ideas undefined or by defining them in opposition to the original sense in Scripture. Whereas there was abuse of words in 'civil life', abuse had been even greater in religion.¹⁰⁰ Gordon wrote a special essay on the abuse of words in 1720, pointing out that words tended to become equivocal so that they signified different things to different people. This ambiguity was particularly true of the words of religion which, according to Gordon, had been 'tortured into infinite variations, and puzzled and explained out of . . . original importance and signification'.¹⁰¹

95 [John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon], *The Independent Whig*, no. 35 (IW35), 14 September 1720.

96 [Daniel Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 1; The opposition to Walpole readily added the term constitution on the list. C405, 6 April 1734.

97 Dawson, *Good Advice*, 1731, 33.

98 See e.g. C405, 6 April 1734, for a conventional start to an essay consisting of a complaint about the abuse of words.

99 Benjamin Hoadly, *The Nature of the Kingdom, or Church, of Christ*, 1717, 3–5; Rupp has also paid attention to this aspect of Hoadly's sermon in Rupp 1986, 91.

100 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW22, 15 June 1720; IW36, 21 September 1720.

101 Thomas Gordon, *The Humourist: Being Essays upon Several Subjects*, 1720, 195–6.

The same theme of the abuse of words reappeared in periodicals published in the 1730s. A number of *Universal Spectator* (1735) began with the statement:¹⁰²

Words are themselves nothing, till they receive a reputation from the meaning they convey. It was therefore the idea that first created the word, till words by not being rightly understood began to convey false ideas, and so gave the first rise to the abuse of them. In divinity, there is not a word of any importance which has not been tortured a thousand ways, and defined, and explained till the original meaning was quite lost.

It is noteworthy that the writer spoke separately about the *civil* (i.e. political) sense of words such as 'king' and 'lord' but still chose to call attention to *religious* terms as the primary objects of the abuse of words. He referred to the importance of the connotations that various terms had gathered and to the possibilities that these connotations created for the conscious application of the terms for particular purposes. Without a doubt, religious terminology was, in the 1730s, still applicable for expressing political views as well.

The above statements reflect an awareness of the inherent ambiguity of vocabulary derived from the dominant religious discourse. Contemporaries were conscious of the plurality of meanings carried by each concept of religious origin and did not fail to make use of the existing ambiguities. They applied religious terms in new contexts to describe political change. They ventured to introduce a few neologisms for discussing political developments, though they seldom at first clearly defined what they meant with these novel terms.¹⁰³ In addition to religion, political neologisms could be borrowed from warfare and trade. Contemporaries also frequently created word combinations in which terms were used to describe analogous phenomena, though not necessarily in their original literal senses. In 1729, James Bramston described change in political language:¹⁰⁴

In state affairs use not the vulgar phrase,
Talk words scarce known in good Queen Bess's days.
New terms let war or traffic introduce,
And try to bring persuading ships in use.
Coin words: in coining never mind common sense,
Provided the original be French.

To things themselves if time such change affords,
Can there be any trusting to our words.

Sometimes fresh names in politics produce,
And factions yet unheard of introduce.

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102 *Universal Spectator*, No. 526, in *GM*, January 1735, Vol. V, Reel 135; Other essays on the abuse of words include *The Old Whig*, No. 20, 24 July 1735, in *GM*, July 1735, Vol. V, Reel 135.

103 Locke wrote that people seldom dared to coin new words because of a prevailing fear of being considered 'guilty of affection of novelty'. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 3.11.12.

104 James Bramston, *Art of Politicks*, 1729, 7–8.

This popular poem contains allusions to a tendency among politicians to favour French expressions at the cost of English ones, which was an understandable concern in a world where Francophone culture dominated. It also refers to political neologisms that had entered the English language after the golden age of Elizabeth, to the role of war and trade as sources of new terms – obviously as opposed to the traditional politico-religious vocabulary – and to the tendency of inventing new political expressions by abusing the inherited senses of old terms. The next two lines of the poem probably refer to a slight recognition of change and to the unreliability of words in expressing political realities. The final lines refer, with a negative undertone, to the number of names of political groupings that had emerged since the mid-seventeenth century.

The language of politics, though dedicated to traditions, was also undergoing change together with change in political structures. Above all, it was becoming increasingly secular. But secular political language had not yet made an overwhelming breakthrough. Concepts borrowed from religious discourse and applied to political discourse continued to dominate debates such as the one concerning political pluralism.

Later eighteenth-century disagreements about the language of politics have seldom been discussed by historians. Miller has argued that the small amount of theoretical debate about political concepts in Britain in the 1750s is explained by the shared attitudes of the opposition and government as to the common good.¹⁰⁵ This calming down of disagreements suggests that a consensus about political terminology had been achieved by the mid-century. Any such conclusion, however, requires further demonstration. The rise of vocabularies of commerce, empire and other secular discourses at the cost of politico-religious terminology may, of course, explain an emergence of a shared political vocabulary. Before its emergence, however, a conception of a separate character of the spheres of politics and religion must have become widely accepted.

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105 Miller 1994, 266.

■ Defining the Political: Alternative Senses of 'Polit' Vocabulary

Polity and politics

For a number of historians, the early eighteenth century has appeared as a transformatory period in the relationship between the spheres of religion and politics. It has been maintained that the role of religion in public debate declined and the secular character of political discourse strengthened. Instead of being content with mere estimates about a growing separation between the two spheres, however, it might be helpful to trace genuine contemporary understandings of the political and the religious and their mutual relationship. One way to analyse these understandings is to focus on vocabularies of the political and the religious and the connections and distinctions that contemporaries drew between the two.

This chapter has the limited goal of summarising alternative senses of early eighteenth-century 'polit' vocabulary. In the following chapter, contemporary conceptions of the extensions of the sphere of religion are contrasted with those of politics. Such an endeavour facilitates an analysis of the application of religious terminology in the discourse on political pluralism in the ensuing chapters. Previous studies on the conceptual boundaries of the eighteenth-century sphere of the political are few, which means that many of the alternative senses of the 'polit' vocabulary presented here were reconstructed on the basis of primary sources and studies concerning earlier periods.

The early modern concept of politics was shaped by diverse lines of development. According to the traditional Aristotelian and Christian conceptions, politics in its highest form was the art of good government for realising the virtuous life of citizens. Ethics was taken as a branch of political philosophy that aimed at depicting true virtue. Since the early sixteenth century, however, these conceptions had been confronted by ideas of politics as the reason of state, the art of acquisition and maintenance of power with little attachment to morality. Politics was no more universally taken as the noblest of human sciences but could appear as a dishonourable and corrupt activity. The simultaneous existence of these competing conceptions of politics was reflected in early modern political vocabulary.¹ The terminology of the political was far from unproblematic also to early eighteenth-century English thinkers.²

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1 Sellin 1978, 790, 794, 808–9; Viroli 1992, 1–2.

2 Compare with Koselleck 1988, 42, who has suggested that eighteenth-century Europeans used the concept politics 'in a seemingly neutral, objective sense'. Koselleck also argued that the eighteenth century experienced a 'widespread devaluation of politics'. The first point

The roots of the word *politicus* stretch back to the translation of Aristotle's *Politics* in the thirteenth century. The term, its derivatives and its Latin equivalent *civilis* were thereafter used with reference to the city or state, to a statesman actively engaged in public affairs, to the constitution of the state, or to that form of constitution where rulers were many and the common interest the goal of government. *Politicus* was customarily used to denote the features of republican government, while other derivatives from *polis* or *civilis* were employed in a wider sense with reference to the state in general. In England, John Fortescue applied the term, instead of to republican regimes, to descriptions of monarchical government. This extension of the meaning was followed by Niccolò Machiavelli, whose reputation as a secular innovator in political thought contributed incomparably to the uncertainty in the meanings of 'polit' vocabulary. Policy and politic, for instance, became used with reference to craftiness, deceitfulness and unethical conduct, not for constructive action.

The development of modern political theories since Machiavelli has been interpreted as increasing secularisation within an autonomous area of politics. Such an interpretation may be an oversimplification, however, as the reception of secular political theories remained conflicting. Noteworthy is also the transformation brought about by the expansion of vernacular languages. The impact of an expansion in 'polit' vocabulary could still be felt in seventeenth-century political discourse in the form of a continuous fear of the growth and instability of vocabulary.³ A further pejorative connotation of 'polit' vocabulary had emerged from the French religious wars, *politique* having been used to describe those who were prepared to make compromises in religious issues in order to reconcile political disputes. Englishmen consciously looked for French precedents when endeavouring to explain problems in their own political system, and the habit of referring to late sixteenth-century French history remained vital all through the first half of the eighteenth century. Contemporary political events, including discrimination against religious Dissenters, were compared with the French Wars of Religion. The French religion-related conflict had led to transformations in political theory and political concepts, and these transformations had an effect on English political thought as well.⁴ As a result of the mentioned developments, seventeenth-century 'polit' vocabulary was ambivalent, associated with religious and ethical indifference, yet carrying some constitutionalist meaning.⁵

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does not appear to fit early eighteenth-century England because of the multiplicity of meanings associated with politics and because of their frequently derogatory senses. Devaluation of politics was necessarily diminished by the already low status of political activity in public discourse.

3 Rubinstein 1987, 41–2, 45–6, 48–9, 52–6; Condren 1994, 27–30.

4 Salmon 1959, 3–5, 158–9, 165; For references to the French religious wars, see *Fog's Journal*, No. 237, 19 May 1733, and No. 261, 3 November 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, May 1733, and November 1733, Reel 134.

5 Compare with Sharpe and Zwicker who suggested that the conception of politics changed by the end of the seventeenth century: whereas early seventeenth-century Englishmen had seldom defined politics as a struggle for power between competing groups of politicians and their alternative political programmes, politics had become a respectable part of life by the

Late seventeenth-century 'polit' vocabulary was neither unambiguous nor entirely secular. The occurrence of 'polit' vocabulary alone does not prove that an unambiguous conception of the political existed. Neither does a failure to write in 'polit' vocabulary need to be considered a sign of a lack of political awareness. The general sense of public activity implied that writers on political theory could employ both legal and religious terminology, religion being associated with rules that held society together. The terms politic, politician and policy carried opposing connotations and did not refer to a particular sphere of human experience known as 'politics'. The word politic, for instance, was used pejoratively in areas of discourse which had nothing to do with political activity. The connotations of the 'polit' terms were primarily negative references to immorality, cunning and machiavellianism. However, references to good or true policy also occurred, and politic could occasionally stand even for prudence.⁶

The early modern clash between classical and modern political theories and the connected ambiguity of 'polit' vocabulary continued well into the eighteenth century. 'Polit' terminology did not refer to a specific area of 'politics', its connotations remained conflicting, and it was not infrequently religious in undertone. A continuous division between ancient and 'modern' politics is illustrated by quotations from traditionalist writers who eagerly directed their points against their political opponents, the Whigs. One of them summarised the development:⁷

... there has appeared a class of men, since the sixteenth century, (at whose head we may place Nicholas Machiavel) who have endeavoured to introduce a very different notion of policy. They have had no manner of regard to the natural and inviolable end of all reasonable societies; but only examined by what methods the heads of the societies may render themselves absolute masters of the laws, ...

William Whiston contrasted the traditionalist values 'truth, honesty, religion, and Christianity' with 'deceit, fraud, worldly politics, and knavery' represented by the Machiavellian alternative.⁸ A letter of Thomas Hearne, written during the Succession Crisis of the mid-1710s, gives another illustration of the continuous conflict between classical and modern understandings of politics, Hearne regretting how, at the University of Oxford,⁹

end of the century. Sharpe and Zwicker 1987, 5. Such a claim is, however, an exaggeration that needs to be re-examined in the light of early eighteenth-century conceptual developments. Sharpe and Zwicker based their interpretation on a letter of Swift reporting his having been involved in politics. It is highly questionable, however, whether a single letter can demonstrate a general change in linguistic usage.

6 Condren 1994, 17, 32, 43–4, 46–7.

7 *Le Parterre de Fleurs*, 1710, 163.

8 [William Whiston], *Scripture Politicks: Or, an Impartial Account of the Origin and Measures of Government Ecclesiastical and Civil*, 1717, 146.

9 Thomas Hearne to Dr Woodward, 6 September 1714, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, ed. C.E. Doble, Oxford 1885, Vol. IV, 402.

the study of modern politics is in vogue here, as well as at London, to no small disservice of learning. I wish the ancients were read upon this subject, which would be to the increase of virtue and learning.

A hint to the division between classical and modern learning can also be found in Benjamin Griffin's play *Whig and Tory* which criticised 'modern' politicians for changing their principles whenever the ministry changes.¹⁰ The expression 'modern politicians' also appeared in the *Craftsman* with a distinctly pejorative connotation.¹¹

The exact meanings of the ambiguous 'polit' words are not always easy to distinguish. Arnold Heidenheimer has suggested that, since the early modern period, policy carried a more noninstitutional, intentional kind of meaning related to administration and public affairs. As the term was increasingly applied not only to the political elite but also to the actions of common people, its positive connotations strengthened. When issues such as power, authority, conflict and participation were concerned, however, politics was regarded as the more proper concept.¹²

Early eighteenth-century dictionaries give illustrative insight into the meanings of 'polit' vocabulary. Polity and its synonym policy were generally defined as 'government of Church *and* state', or, as in Martin (1749), as 'Church *or* state', thus leaving the question of the separate status of the two institutions open. Secularisation of the 'polit' vocabulary is visible as some dictionaries started to reject reference to the Church and concentrate merely on the government of state. Chambers (1728) already pointed out that some - but not everyone - considered ecclesiastical government as a part of policy. Whereas in the beginning of the century, polity was still customarily linked with ecclesiastical affairs, many dictionaries from the 1730s onwards omitted this connection and defined polity as 'the governance or rule of a town, commonwealth, (state) etc'. Policy and polity could also be defined as 'the laws, orders, and regulations, prescribed for the conduct and government of states and communities'. Sometimes a distinction was also drawn between the two: For Fenning (1741), polity was 'a form of government, a civil institution' whereas policy stood for 'the art of government'. Most compilers of dictionaries continued to emphasise the crafty, subtle and prudent characteristics of policy. Johnson's authoritative definition for polity was based on both Richard Hooker and Locke, thus taking both extremes of seventeenth-century political theory into account. Johnson's definition itself, polity as 'a form of government; civil constitution', appears as a purely secular one.¹³ An

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10 Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 17.

11 C311, 17 June 1732.

12 Heidenheimer 1986, 4, 6-7, 14; Heidenheimer's thesis may well be valid but is weakened by being based merely on the *OED*, whereas a consultation of primary sources is clearly needed for such an analysis.

13 Coles 1701; Coles-Johnson 1732; Cocker-Hawkins 1704; Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Chambers 1728; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; Dyche-Pardon 1740; Fenning 1741; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755; Wesley 1764.

undeniable secularisation at the level of dictionary definitions for polity is thus traceable, and, in the case of polity, the development was leading to more strictly 'political' senses of the term being established.

At the same time, the term politics retained much of its inherited ambiguity. It was given two major senses, one referring to writings on government, the other to the actual art of governing. The emphasis between these two senses varied from dictionary to dictionary. Coles's seventeenth-century *English Dictionary* continued to define politics merely as treatises of government of either Church or state. The editors of Cocker's dictionary were not more conscious of conceptual change, as the definition for the term changed between 1704 and 1724 but its content remained essentially the same, politics being, in 1704, 'books or discourses about states' and, in 1724, 'treatises or common discourses of government in Church and state'. It is certainly difficult to fit the fact that the role of religion in political discourse was more distinctly stated in the latter edition to a pattern of linear secularisation of politics. Furthermore, politics remained simply a discipline in a very limited sense. The 1719 edition of Bullokar's early seventeenth-century *English Expositor* was also content with a secular but ancient definition of politics as 'books written touching the government of a city'.

Politics as written polemic is exemplified by Locke's letter in which he maintained (in opposition to general knowledge) that he was 'little acquainted with books, especially on these subjects relating to politics'.¹⁴ Swift often regretted his 'treating' the addressee of a letter 'with politics' and his having to 'talk politics', yet offered long descriptions of political events of the day. Other examples of politics as text discussing political issues are also numerous.¹⁵ For the writers of the 1700s and 1710s, politics continued to be essentially texts. Interestingly, however, the consulted material does not contain instances of politics having been used to refer to political polemic dating after 1720. The traditional sense of politics as text is unlikely to have disappeared overnight, but its uses were becoming less frequent, whereas the sense of politics as a more practical art of governing was becoming increasingly dominant.

The sense of politics as the art of governing became more frequently stated. Phillips-Kersey (1706) and *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707) already maintained that politics was 'the art of governing a state' though had a secondary sense of 'a book, or treatise of political affairs'. References to political literature were omitted by some dictionaries¹⁶ but restated by others¹⁷.

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14 Locke to [Richard King], 25 August 1703, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, ed. E.S. de Beer, Oxford 1982, Vol. VIII, 59.

15 For example, Swift to the Reverend William Tisdall, London, 16 December 1703, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Harold Williams, Oxford 1965, Vol. I, 38; Jonathan Swift, *Journal to Stella*, ed. Harold Williams, Oxford 1963, 25 August 1711, Vol. I, No. 39, 346, 18 December 1712, Vol. II, No. 57, 593, 25 January 1713, Vol. II, No. 59, 608; *A Presbyterian Getting On Horse-Back*, 1717, 33, 41; [Charles Davenant], *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented*, 1702, 2; *The Way to Bring the World to Rights*, 1711, 4-5; [John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon], *A Collection of all the Humorous Letters*, No. 3, 14 May 1720, 16.

16 Kersey 1715 and 1731; Fenning 1741; Wesley 1764.

The dual meaning of the concept remained so evident that Defoe's *New English Dictionary* (1737), which promised particularly to omit words of no real use, presented politics as either 'the art of government, or books which treat upon those subjects'. Johnson (1755) expressed the same by defining politics as either 'the science of government' or 'the art and practice of administrating public affairs'.

Politics as something more than mere writing appeared in varied but predominantly pejorative contexts, referring to politics as scheming or as a sort of national entertainment. In a dialogue, plot-shamming might be called 'one of the greatest turns in politics'.¹⁸ Adherents of classical republicanism, who were eager to undecore the role of virtue in politics, might argue that 'generosity, self denial, and private and personal virtues are in politics, but mere names, or rather cant-words, that go for nothing with wise men, though they may cheat the vulgar'.¹⁹ In a diary, the writer might report his relatives, who were supporters of the opposing party and eager to 'talk of politics', justifying the policy of the previous ministry by claiming that 'all their treachery, knavery, and cheating the nation and destroying its trade is to be accounted nothing else but politics', as opposed to morality.²⁰ In a comedy ridiculing public discourse on political issues in coffee houses, a coffee house politician declared: 'I say that politics are everything; it is the most noble of all sciences, the most useful of all arts, and the most delectable of all enjoyments'. While this fool of the play was enchanted by politics that 'governs kingdoms, upholds states, balances empires', his more civilised friend concentrated on poetry, the opposite of politics.²¹ Politics thus appeared as speculation and plotting on public affairs in at least a slightly sinister sense.

Evidence against a rapid separation of politics from ethics is offered by Chambers's (1728) and Gordon-Bailey's (1730) definitions which saw politics as 'the first part of ethics, or the art of governing a state or commonwealth, for the maintainance of the public safety, order, tranquillity, and good morals' and by Dyche-Pardon's (1740) definition of politics as 'that part of ethics or moral philosophy, that relates to the well-governing a state or kingdom'. Importantly, however, these editors did not refer to religious issues when defining politics.²² Politics and the Church were no more associated in mid-eighteenth-century definitions. The 1720s would seem to have been a turning point in the adoption of a narrower concept of politics concerning mere 'state matters'.²³

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17 Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; Martin 1749.

18 *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 43.

19 [Gordon], CL11, 7 January 1720.

20 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 24 June 1715, 42.

21 [James Miller], *The Coffee-House*, 1737, 5.

22 Potential continental influence on English thought is represented by Pierre Bayle's *Dictionary* (1697) which defined politics as 'the art both of governing and deceiving men' which was 'no new invention' but rather 'the same play acted over again; the same comedy, and farce'. The masters of the art of politics needed both qualifications to achieve public good. *The Dictionary . . . of Mr Peter Bayle*, 1734–38, Vol. 5, 752.

23 Compare with Phiddian 1989, 66, who suggests that the early eighteenth-century concept of 'politics' was essentially a narrow one.

One way of forming expressions for political discourse was to connect the word politics to another term by using the preposition *in*. This method was used creatively against political opponents; none of the found instances carried an unambiguously positive connotation of politics. John Evelyn, for instance, regarded Dr King, the Archbishop of Dublin, as 'a sharp ready man in politics', which was not necessarily a merit for a clergyman in post-revolutionary England. Early eighteenth-century texts also contained references to 'students in politics', 'striplings in politics', 'sages in politics', 'experts in politics', 'conjurers in politics', 'jobbers in politics', 'squabblers in politics', and 'Don Quixotes in politics', all used in a highly ironical sense. To these combinations should be added phrases such as 'saints in politics',²⁴ in which religious enthusiasm of the sort of the Civil War period was combined with politics in order to achieve a polemical effect directed against opponents. As late as 1742, cooperation among the opposition was rejected as 'Methodism in politics'.²⁵ All in all, politics appeared as an activity with which few writers wished to be openly associated. At the same time, political rivals were frequently accused of involvement in politics. Sometimes their activities were compared with what was seen as analogous religious phenomena.

Politic and political

The adjectives of the 'polit' vocabulary were experiencing at least two transformations during the early eighteenth century. The attribute politic was in the process of losing its inherited pejorative connotations and becoming synonymous with political, an attribute that became more frequently used and lacked unavoidably pejorative connotations. Both transformations decreased the relevance of religious associations in political discourse, including the discourse on political pluralism.

The term politic had originally referred to the *politiques* of late sixteenth-century France, an opportunist and moderate party that had regarded peace and political reform as more urgent than trying to solve religious quarrels by the use of arms.²⁶ It had initially been a proper party name in a confessional conflict, both major sides of which had condemned this sort of 'Machiavellian' thought seen as ready to tolerate several forms of religion and hence threaten the unity of the nation. The leading religious parties, which had both considered themselves as defenders of the Christian concept of politics, had depicted *politiques* as *machiavellistes*, heretics and atheists and inserted tyrannical and irreligious qualities into their image.

The same confrontation of traditional and modern concepts of politics

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24 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 4 June 1705, Vol. V, *Kalendarium*, 1690-1706, Oxford 1955, 597; *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 34; [Edward Ward], *A Fair Shell, but a Rotten Kernel*, 1705, 17; [Gordon], CL38, 22 July 1721; [Trenchard], CL82, 23 June 1722; C14, 20 January 1727; C170, 30 August 1729; C311, 17 June 1732; C380, 13 October 1733.

25 Colley 1982, 97.

26 OED: politic.

continued in most European countries throughout the seventeenth century²⁷ and provides background to early eighteenth-century use of 'polit' vocabulary against opponents who were willingly represented as supporters of heresies, irreligion and tyranny. The senses of the word politic in early modern English, when referring to persons, included 'apt at pursuing a policy, sagacious, prudent, shrewd' and 'scheming, crafty, cunning'. Among several sinister quotations offered by the *OED*, Satan was termed 'a politic hunter' and 'a politic or cunning man' was said to know how to compass his end. Politic had also stood for an indifferentist in matters of religion, Machiavelli being described as 'a politic not much affected to any religion' and a politic man being called 'a carnal fellow' and one 'who cares not what religion be'.²⁸ This sense of politic as a religious indifferentist, though suggested to have become obsolete, may well have survived in some early eighteenth-century texts. The writers knew that their audience was familiar with such a connotation and hardly failed to make use of it when a suitable chance appeared. In the translation of Moréri's *Great Historical . . . Dictionary* (1701), the only sense given to politics was that of the faction or party of *politiques* who did not concern themselves with religion during the French Wars of Religion.²⁹

Distinct instances of an exploitation of connotations derived from the French Wars of Religion are not easy to identify, as the term politic was often used in a parallel way with the term political before political was adopted in common use. Such exploitation may have been involved when a defender of the Occasional Conformity bill called the proponents of the rights of the Dissenters 'Modern Whigs, and Politic Dissenters',³⁰ thus implying that the Whigs had abandoned their original principles and Dissenters had moved from a religious to a political movement. Religious associations were also in use when Sacheverell claimed in 1713 that 'politic mutineers' abused religion by attempting to provoke fear among 'credulous and ignorant people'.³¹ The same rhetorical technique may have been employed when Addison wrote about the 'politic predecessors' of parish clerks, who on every Sunday at the time of Cromwell had been 'for binding kings in chains, and nobles in links of iron'.³² As late as 1718, Eubulus (pseudonym) accused 'some very politic heads' of dividing the English into High and Low Church,³³ which certainly carried an inherently pejorative sense.

By contrast, Steele's way of using the word politic in the *Tatler* was secular and comes very close to the term political when he stated that 'politic persons' were so 'public-spirited' that they neglected their own affairs while perusing

27 Sellin 1978, 812–13; Weinacht 1989, 1049–50.

28 *OED*: politic.

29 Other dictionaries seldom brought up this sense, and it should be noticed that this dictionary expressed a French understanding of the term which was not necessarily shared by all Englishmen; *Politiques* as *politicks* were also discussed in Peter Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 609–10.

30 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 4.

31 Henry Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government*, 1713, 15.

32 Joseph Addison, *The Freeholder*, ed. James Leheny, Oxford 1979, No. 53 (F53), 22 June 1716.

33 *A Letter to the Free-Thinker; with some Remarks upon his Conduct*, 1718, 8.

'transactions of state'.³⁴ It is also important to notice that politic could occasionally appear in a context that made it sound positive in its connotations, as in Charles Gildon's essay from 1694:³⁵

... like a politic and faithful statesman, he was continually studying the government, and the most proper methods for settling peace and tranquility throughout the whole kingdom, and in order hereunto, he resolved upon correcting the vices of the age, encouraging virtue, establishing good orders, and reforming corruptions ...

Particularly with reference to appreciated monarchs, politic could carry a distinctly positive sense. Whereas Defoe called the adored Queen Elizabeth 'a politic princess', he presented other leaders as 'impolitic'.³⁶ Ryder reported how an acquaintance of his had speculated on what George I should have done in relation to the Tory party in order to be 'prudent and politic'.³⁷

The connotations of the term politic thus remained highly contradictory. Only the context revealed the evaluative content of the term. The word still carried a burden of pejorative connotations derived from an assumed hostility of politic persons to Christianity and thus provided a powerful expression for political polemic. In dictionaries, politic was universally seen as crafty, subtle, cunning, artful and prudent, but, importantly, restricted to references to civil government, rather than religious issues. In a dialogue mocking the Tory party as potentially treasonous, one of the characters asserted that 'it was not impolitically done in our friends, thus to espouse the cause of the Church, ... [to] strengthen our party'.³⁸ A pamphlet writer started his protestations of impartiality by stating that 'it is no very politic thing to side with no party, when all people seem mad to be in one party or other'.³⁹ Finally, in a polemical title, impertinent appeared as an opposite of politic.⁴⁰

The term politic could also be employed in secular and less derogatory contexts in which its meaning was hardly distinguishable from its later synonym political. Dictionaries published after 1730 made no distinction between the term politic and its synonym. According to Gordon-Bailey (1730), politic and political both referred to something 'belonging to policy or politics'. Whereas Bailey (1733) omitted the term politic, Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) interpreted politic and political as synonyms for 'cunning, well-contrived, belonging to politics'. According to both Fenning (1741) and Johnson (1755), politic stood almost always for political or civil⁴¹, body politic and the general

34 Richard Steele, *The Tatler*, ed. Donald F. Bond, Oxford 1987, No. 1 (T1), 12 April 1709.

35 *The Century of Prose Corpus (COPC)*, ed. Louis T. Milič, Cleveland State University: Charles Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, 1694.

36 [Daniel Defoe], *A New Test*, 1702, 5; [Daniel Defoe], *An Essay on the History of Parties*, 1711, 26; Elizabeth was seen as politic also in *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 5.

37 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 22 July 1715, 59.

38 *The True Picture of a Modern Tory*, 1702, 5.

39 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, preface.

40 *The Political Quack's Advice*, 1705.

41 Civil was a near synonym of political lacking pejorative associations and being distinguished from religion as 'not ecclesiastical' by Johnson (1755). According to Gordon-Bailey (1730),

non-political sense of artful being the only exceptions.⁴² Out of numerous instances of the use of politic as a synonym for political can be mentioned Toland's *Christianity not Mystrious* (1696), in which he wrote about 'politic and secular affairs' as opposed to religion. Toland also employed the old derogatory sense of the word when suggesting that a man following nature might explain religion simply as 'a politic trick invented by statesmen to awe the credulous vulgar'. He mixed the two senses when hinting that, during a state of forced uniformity, religion was often 'purely embraced out of politic considerations'.⁴³ Likewise, a later defender of religious toleration offered 'politic reasons for toleration' in his pamphlet.⁴⁴ An unambiguous example of the synonymy of politic and political is offered by Defoe's suggestion, referring to the tendency to mix political and religious issues, that the Low-Church Whigs were not ready genuinely to support Dissenters as a 'religious party' but did accept them as members of their own 'politic party'.⁴⁵ In addition to demonstrating the synonymy of the mentioned attributes, this quotation is one of the few early eighteenth-century instances in which an unambiguous distinction between religious and political parties is drawn.

Political, if separately defined at all, was, in entries inherited from the seventeenth century, seen as 'belonging to government of Church or state', or, from the late 1720s onwards, simply to civil government. Chambers (1728) already defined it as 'something that relates to policy or civil government' and provided instances of expressions such as 'political interest', 'political views' and 'political discourses'. According to both Fenning and Johnson, political was related to 'the administration of public affairs' only, with an alternative sense of cunning and skillfulness.⁴⁶ An increase in the use of this attribute as an alternative to the term politic contributed to the disappearance of associations between political activities and religious indifference and thus facilitated secularisation of political discourse. In the beginning of the century, political was yet rather seldom used, Bishop Nicolson, for instance, recalling the 'bitter political controversy, in Church as well as state matters, in the years 1702-4' in connection with the bill for Occasional Conformity⁴⁷ and Swift reporting how he had received information from persons 'who are fonder of political refinements than I am'.⁴⁸

At the dawn of the century, politic was still the word generally applied by writers. The rise of the attribute political can be particularly well seen in the *Craftsman* which already wrote very positively about themes such as 'political affairs', 'the political art', 'a political seminary', 'political morality', 'political virtues', 'political regeneration', 'political duties . . . equally obligatory with the

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in its general sense, it was 'something that respects the policy, public good or repose of the citizens, city or state'. Dyche and Pardon (1740/1750) told that, in its political sense, civil referred to 'belonging to the management, regulation, and government of a city, state or kingdom'. Interestingly, some dictionaryists such as Fenning still followed ancient traditions so that they restricted the term civil to concern 'that which belongs to a city, or the government thereof', with no reference to state.

42 *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741; Martin 1749; Johnson 1755.

43 [John Toland], *Christianity not Mystrious*, 1696, v, 58, 162.

moral or Christian', and 'political jealousy'. In addition, the *Craftsman* mentioned, with a more critical tone, 'offences, of a political nature' as equally unavoidable with moral offences and sins, and accused the ministry of introducing 'political novelties' and 'political schemes and measures'. Bolingbroke's *Dissertation upon Parties*, originally published in the same periodical, contains dozens of instances of the attribute political being used in both positive and negative senses. In contrast, the previously dominant attribute politic does not occur at all.⁴⁹

Even if a minority usage in the beginning, a small linguistic shift could change much in the connotations of the concept of politics, particularly when applied by an influential moulder of political discourse such as the *Craftsman*. Though far from conclusive evidence of the suggested linguistic change, it is interesting to see how John Wesley, the leader of the Methodist awakening and one of the least radical of thinkers, who lamented the secularisation of politics, distinguished between 'political reasons' and 'providential reasons',⁵⁰ using the more neutral attribute for politics and separating simultaneously between the temporal and spiritual. The term politic had carried plenty of pejorative connotations derived from confessional conflicts, whereas the term political was a neutral if not even a positive expression.

Politicians, statesmen and machiavils

Like the entire 'polit' vocabulary, the term politician possessed conflicting meanings after its first occurrence in English in the late sixteenth century. The Latin *politicus* had been used for a political thinker and debater, for a political writer, or for a person using political learning in practice,⁵¹ and all these senses were assimilated in early modern English usage. The sinister sense of politician as 'a shrewd schemer, a crafty plotter or intriguer' was employed frequently: the devil might appear as the chief politician; a politician could be claimed to break oaths by profession; and it was suggested that a politician studied only his own ends.⁵² Such a cynical attitude towards politicians appeared frequently in

44 [John Dennis], *The Danger of Priestcraft to Religion and Government*, 1702.

45 [Daniel Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 40.

46 Coles 1701; Kersey 1715; Chambers 1728; Kersey 1731; [Defoe] 1737; Fenning 1741; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755.

47 *The London Diaries of William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle 1702–1718*, ed. Clyve Jones and Geoffrey Holmes, Oxford 1985, spring 1711, 570; In some early eighteenth-century experiences, 'political controversy' thus appears to have expanded into both religious and political institutions.

48 Swift to Archbishop King, London, 1 January 1708, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 62.

49 C31, 24 March 1727; C32, 27 March 1727; C78, 30 December 1727; C170, 30 August 1729; C172, 18 October 1729; C238, 23 January 1731; C304, 29 August 1732; C372, 18 August 1733; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, *passim*.

50 *The Journal of John Wesley: A Selection*, ed. Elisabeth Jay, Oxford and New York 1987, 12 September 1743, 76; Hole 1989, 23.

51 Sellin 1978, 815.

52 *OED*: politician.

the eighteenth century as well. Most dictionaries repeated the alternative senses of the term referring to 'crafty tricks, cunning shifts, artifices and intrigues'.⁵³ It has been suggested that 'the final devaluation of the term, to signify merely one who engaged in political activity rather than one who had an expertise in the art and craft of politics, belongs with the eighteenth century'.⁵⁴

Abhorrence towards what was seen as secular 'Machiavellian' politicians was expressed in texts such as Nathanael Carpenter's *True Picture of a Wicked Politician*, originally published in 1627 but still reprinted in 1703. Carpenter emphasised the contrast between Aristotelian-Christian and 'worldly policy', the first of which made politicians regret their sins whereas the latter encouraged modern politicians to contrive plots, that is, to 'strengthen the faction'.⁵⁵ Building on the prevalent threat of innovation, Sacheverell attacked in his sermon of 5 November 1709 'new preachers, and new politicians' (the Protestant Dissenters and Whigs) who, according to him, knew neither Christian religion. Such politicians, argued Sacheverell, were 'cunning, temporising politicians'.⁵⁶

In spite of repeated damnations of politicians, more positive definitions such as 'one that understands the art of governing, or judges of it according to the parts he has acquired' were also printed in dictionaries.⁵⁷ Politician was considered synonymous to statesman, 'a person skilled in the art of governing', particularly in foreign policy.⁵⁸ Some older dictionaries such as Cocker-Hawkins (1704), which followed a restricted definition of politics, termed authors of books concerning state affairs as politicians. This double meaning is also visible in Dyche-Pardon's (1740/1750) definition of politician as 'a practiser or studier of policy, or the well regulating and governing a state or kingdom; a wise or cunning man'.

Associations of the concept politician continued to be frequently derived from religion. It was a commonplace to suspect that politicians were interested in religion only as a means of advancing their goals, adherents of the opposing party being called 'impious politicians who in heart make no account of religion, yet will make show of giving reverence to it, because it is always seen to have a mighty influence upon all ranks and degrees'.⁵⁹ Suspiciousness towards the religious integrity of politicians occurred throughout the early eighteenth century, but the separateness of politics and religion was increasingly underlined:⁶⁰

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53 Phillips-Kersey 1706; Kersey 1715; Kersey 1731; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741; Johnson 1755.

54 Langford 1989, 719.

55 [Nathanael Carpenter], *Achitophel: Or, the True Picture of a Wicked Politician*, 1703 [1627], 26, 32–3, 36, 44, 48.

56 Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren*, 1709, 12, 21.

57 OED: politician.

58 Coles 1701 and 1732; Cocker-Hawkins 1704; Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755.

59 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 16.

60 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 4, also 10.

Politicians full of craftiness and design, . . . would do well to consider, first, what religion is, and, secondly, what is it they do, when they lug it in, to assist them to carry on their schemes of state!

A contrast between the terms politician and Christian remained common, as visible in the statement that 'I always looked upon religion as a very good thing, and am now about to consider it, not as a politician, but as a Christian'.⁶¹ The potential of unfavourable religious associations of politicians was used in debates such as the one on occasional conformity in 1705.⁶² Defoe, in his turn, suggested that a 'wicked politician' acted atheistically 'in direct opposition to his inward light and knowledge; that he may cunningly bring about his own private ends'.⁶³ Religious associations were likewise abused in a common metaphor of a hellish 'college of politicians' organised in the lines of Louis XIV's proposed 'academy of politicians'.⁶⁴ Also interesting is the denial of connections between Presbyterians and 'politicians and sectaries',⁶⁵ referring to the memory of the Interregnum when radical sects had had more than a fair share of political power. Especially noteworthy is the suspected alliance between politicians and religious sectaries.

An occasional occurrence of the term 'state politician'⁶⁶ raises the question whether there were, in early eighteenth-century conscience, other groups of politicians such as 'Church politicians'. Indeed, one of the most common associations between politicians and some professional groups was that between politicians and priests. Such an association was unavoidably anticlerical, criticising the churchmen's involvement in politics. Defoe the dissenter was particularly eager to warn about the disastrous consequences of cooperation between politicians and priests.⁶⁷ Also in the highly anticlerical *Independent Whig*, clergymen were considered to be 'but heavy intriguers, and sad[ly] want both the temper and talents of politicians', hence making poor 'doggerel politicians'.⁶⁸ Similar suspicions towards the engagement of divines in politics can be found in the *Craftsman's* description of a man who 'despairing to rise as a worthy churchman . . . determined to try his fortune as a politician, and has since wholly neglected spiritual, for the sake of temporal affairs'.⁶⁹ Anticlerical authors were always ready to curb these priestly 'excursions into politics'.⁷⁰

Together with indifference in religious questions among politicians went low morals in the more secular sense. Disregard of honesty, loose morals and the

61 *Schemes from Ireland, for the Benefit of the Body Natural, Ecclesiastical, and Politick*, Dublin 1732, 4.

62 *A Political Quack's Advice*, 1705, 12.

63 [Daniel Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 28-9.

64 [Joseph Addison], *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond, Oxford 1965, No. 305 (S305), 19 February 1712; *Advice from Shades Below*, No. 2, 1710, 7; C170, 30 August 1729.

65 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 57.

66 *A New Voyage to the Island of Fools*, 1713, 36.

67 [Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 21.

68 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW*, 1721, xvii-xix.

69 C28, 16 March 1727.

70 [John Middleton], *A Vindication of Liberty of Conscience*, 1734, 24.

primacy of one's own interest were seen as typical of all politicians.⁷¹ Ironical statements against the 'great politicians' of a rival political group were commonplace. It was suggested that 'good' or 'very great politician' was necessarily 'a very cunning fellow';⁷² it was hinted that a 'great politician' was ready to extend the power of the crown or the Parliament as best suited to him;⁷³ and it was implied that an ability to form a party was not a qualification for becoming a politician.⁷⁴ References to 'disaffected, subtle politicians'⁷⁵ appeared in abundance, but there were also occasional references to respectable 'sound politicians',⁷⁶ 'staunch politician[s]', 'able politicians and patriots', and 'the wisest politicians',⁷⁷ mainly in the writings of the opposition to Walpole. The use of the term politician was characterised by a deep conflict of senses, many of which remained pejorative and derived from associations with religious indifference.

The conflict of senses was not as obvious in the senses of its near synonym statesman. This more appreciative term⁷⁸ had three senses. In the first sense, a statesman, as 'one who takes a leading part in the affairs of a state or body politic, especially one who is skilled in the management of public affairs', lacked inherently pejorative connotations.⁷⁹ All early eighteenth-century thinkers would have agreed on mentioning Cicero, for instance, as 'the great statesman'.⁸⁰ The basic sense of the term statesman was positive, and extra attributes were needed to refer to corrupt forms of statesmanship such as cunning and irreligion.⁸¹ The second sense of statesman referred to a political polemist and the third to a commoner interested in reading and speculating on political news.⁸² This last belittling sense of a statesman belonging to the lower

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- 71 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 24 June 1715, 42, 27 September 1716, 337–8; *The Female Politician: Or the Statesman Unmask'd*, 1733, 87; *Reflexions upon the Politeness of Manners*, 1707, 212; Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, 214.
- 72 [Concanen], *The Speculatist*, 30 April 1726, 128.
- 73 *The Daily Courant*, 1 September 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, September 1733, Reel 134.
- 74 C372, 18 August 1733.
- 75 For example, *The Dangerous Consequences of Parliamentary Divisions*, 1742, 30.
- 76 *Rectius Declinandum*, Edinburgh? 1709, repeated four times on pages 5, 12, 14 and 24.
- 77 C23, 20 February 1727 (compare with C29, 13 March 1727); C392, 2 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 120; Compare with *The Daily Courant*, 6 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134.
- 78 This difference in connotation can be seen in William Bond's 'The character of a Wicked Politician' and 'The Portrait of a Good Statesman' in *The Manual of Epictetus*, 1734.
- 79 *OED*: statesman; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755.
- 80 [Sackville Tufton], *The History of Faction, Alias Hypocrisy, Alias Moderation*, 1705, 167; For other positive references to statesmen, see *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 45; Bernard Mandeville, *An Essay on Charity, and Charity Schools*, [1723], in *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. Phillip Harth, 1989, 320; C29, 13 March 1727; C160, 26 July 1729; C201, 9 May 1730; Bolingbroke, *A Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism*, 1736, 367; *Common Sense*, No. 27, 6 August 1737, in *GM*, Vol. VII, August 1737, Reel 136.
- 81 [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 8, 11; Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 10, 21; [Trenchard], CL12, 14 January 1720; CL37, 15 July 1721; [Gordon], CL66, 17 February 1722; C116, 21 September 1728.
- 82 *The States-Men of Abingdon*, 1702, 9; *The Political Quack's Advice*, 1705, preface; Steele, T67, 13 September 1709, T69, 17 September 1709; Addison, T18, 21 May 1709, T155, 6 April 1710, T160, 18 April 1710, *The Whig Examiner*, in *The Works of Joseph Addison*, eds. Henry G. Bohn and Richard Hurd, 1877–78, No. 5, 12 October 1710, S403, 12 June 1712,

orders was a temporary early eighteenth-century innovation, and it was commonly recognised as ironical, emphasising what a commoner involved in political debates was not.

Finally, no discussion of early modern 'polit' vocabulary can overlook the term machiavel or machiavilian, an anglicised and generalised form of the most famous of modern political theorists, which denoted 'a politic statesman and subtle politician', one who 'studies or practices the doctrine of Nicholas Machiavel', 'an intriguer, an unscrupulous schemer' and one who practises 'duplicity in statecraft or in general conduct'.⁸³ At the dawn of the eighteenth century, Machiavelli was still considered responsible for politics that 'have poisoned almost all Europe', and his political thought was declared as 'very dangerous' even in dictionary definitions.⁸⁴ Most English political thinkers remained wedded to the idea of the English as a Christian nation and ostentatiously declined to accept 'secular' Machiavellian thought. Machiavellian thought was considered such a challenge to commonly shared political values that any secular attitude toward politics was customarily linked with both Machiavelli and atheism. Accusations of Machiavellism, or the use of religion for political purposes, were commonplace, until they started to wane with the decline of the role of religious assumptions in political discourse.⁸⁵ At least three dictionaries published in the 1730s and 1740s no longer printed a definition for the general term machiavilian,⁸⁶ and most other dictionaries ceased to underscore tensions between machiavelianism and the Christian religion. In publications advocating classical republicanism, the general term machiavel being omitted, more positive references to Machiavelli reappeared from 1720s onwards.⁸⁷

The 'polit' vocabulary and its close associates employed in political discourse remained equivocal due to a simultaneous existence of traditional and modern conceptions of politics. At least at the level of published rhetoric, the Christian conception still had considerable significance. Ethics and religion

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S452, 8 August 1712, F53, 22 June 1716; [Trenchard and Gordon], *A Collection of all the Humorous Letters*, No. 3, 14 May 1720; *Universal Spectator*, No. 334, 1 March 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, March 1735, Reel 135.

83 *OED*: Machiavel, Machiavellian, Machiavellist; Cocker-Hawkins 1704 and 1724; Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

84 Coles 1701; Moréri-Collier 1701.

85 Hunter 1985, 155; Sommerville 1992, 144, 151-2; For criticism of machiavelianism on religious grounds, see Henry Sacheverell, *The Political Union. A Discourse Shewing the Dependence of Government on Religion In General: And of The English Monarchy on The Church of England In Particular*, Oxford 1702, 34; [Carpenter], *Achitophel: Or, the True Picture of a Wicked Politician*, 1703 [1627], 24; *A View of the Present Divisions in Great Britain*, 1708, 13; See also *OED*: body politic.

86 Kersey 1731; [Defoe] 1737; Martin 1749.

87 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW*, dedication in the 1721 edition, v; CL15, 11 February 1721; C19, 10 February 1727; C23, 20 February 1727; *The Craftsman* also contained at least one pejorative reference to a 'darling son of Machiavel and Tacitus' in C29, 13 March 1727; In the 1730s, *The Free Briton* forcefully defended Machiavelli against those abusing his name. *The Free Briton*, No. 258, 10 October 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, October 1734, Reel 134; See also *Fog's Journal*, No. 319, 14 December 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, December 1734, Reel 134; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 107, 155; Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 389-90, 393, 395.

continued to be seen as inseparable, and in texts of traditionalists and other writers, Machiavellian notions were criticised as un-Christian and even atheistic. The conflict of these conceptions had caused deep-rooted pejorative connotations to emerge for most of the words used by early eighteenth-century authors in debates, as in that on political pluralism.

■ Defining the Sphere of Religion: Conceptions of Clerical Political Activism

The clergy's status and use of biblical language in political sermons

The relationship between the spiritual and political spheres, to the existence of which sixteenth-century reformers had referred,¹ remained a central concern for politico-religious discourse for centuries to come. In England, religious diversities caused conflict for nearly two centuries after the Reformation. In the 1640s, religious and constitutional disagreements had led to an armed conflict, to the execution of the monarch, to the declaration of the Commonwealth of England, and to an expansion of religious separatism at the cost of the Church of England. During the Restoration, the victorious hard-line Anglicans had defended the reintroduction of the established Church in a form which had allowed no toleration for religious alternatives. Moderate Anglicans and Presbyterians had unsuccessfully defended reforms that would have made comprehension of Protestant Dissenters possible within the Church.

This victory of traditionalist Anglicanism initiated a conflict between the Church and religious dissent also in the state, as the traditionalists believed that a subject could not be loyal to the political system without being a loyal member of the Church.² The questions of freedom for religious minorities and the health of religion remained sensitive issues among the entire political nation. Many Tories believed that the Toleration Act (1689) and the freedom of the press had fostered the growth of dissent, heresies and even irreligion. They preferred ideological conformity, attempted to restrict the religious freedoms and, after a long campaign in the reign of Queen Anne, succeeded in passing the Act of Occasional Conformity (1711) and Schism Act (1714).³ Once the Whigs achieved power in 1714, the government rejected some of discriminatory legislation but was unwilling to extend religious toleration much further, which ensured the political relevance of religious dissent all through the early eighteenth century.

1 Jean Calvin had written: 'Il y a double régime en l'homme. L'un est spirituel . . . L'autre est politic ou civil, par lequel l'homme est apprius des offices d'humanité et civilité.' *Institution de la religion chrestienne*, 1536. Cited in Rubinstein 1987, 55.

2 The traditionalist point of view is illustrated by the statement that 'all religious dissention from the established Church' was 'naturally and necessarily attended with some disaffection to our civil constitution'. Conyers Place, *The Arbitration: Or, the Tory and Whig Reconcil'd*, [1710?], 27.

3 Speck 1970, 25; Holmes 1975, 8–9, 13–5, 19, 21; Speck 1978, 83–4; De Krey 1985, 74–5, 112, 116; Holmes 1987, xx; Clark 1985, 287; Reay 1989, 18; Rogers 1989, 393; Burt 1992, 20–1, 40; Harris 1993, 6–7, 42, 152–3; Clark 1994, 4, 142.

But how did early eighteenth-century Englishmen more exactly understand religion? Did a sole right religion exist? Dictionary entries illustrate different degrees of readiness to compromise as to the latter question. Some emphasised the unique status of the Christian religion while others approached religion more objectively as a universal phenomenon. What is noteworthy in Gordon-Bailey's (1730) definition, for instance, is its implication that there was not merely one established way of serving God. Likewise, Chambers (1728) referred to the Siamese who held the diversity of religions to be pleasing to God and commented that this Siamese belief was more just than a belief in the rightness of merely one religion. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) described religion as 'that awful reverence and pure worship that is due to the supreme author of all beings, called God' but added a cynical remark that religion was 'very often abused'. Also important is his introduction to several religions, avoiding partiality in favour of Christianity. For Fenning (1741) as well, 'any system of faith and worship' would suffice as religion, whereas the traditionalist Johnson did not admit such equality among religions. None of the dictionaries dared to vindicate the Anglican cause, however. Neither did the dictionaries draw clear lines of demarcation between religion and politics in such a way that intermixing politics and religion was not possible.

The relationship between religion and politics was most often discussed in connection with the issue of political activity among the clergy. The clergy was divided along party lines and was engaged in party conflicts at all levels: while the lower clergy usually voted for Tories, many of the bishops were inclined towards Whiggism. A major question in which religion affected politics and made clergymen take a stand was the question of religious dissent. The Tories defended the religious monopoly of the Church of England, the Whigs being more inclined towards toleration. In the eyes of the Tories, dissent appeared as such a religious rival to the Church that it might undermine the positions of the clergy, and the Whigs were suspected of being the political manifestation of dissent.⁴ Fear of Puritan fanaticism was used to persuade the audience to vote for Tories, who were ready to save the country from the threat of dissent.

Parsons did not merely preach Christian doctrine to their congregations; they also stated the principles of the political order, and did so more effectively than any alternative media, as religious rituals played a central part in the lives of early eighteenth-century Englishmen.⁵ Especially in the countryside, priests remained major deputies of the state who taught obedience to the crown and condemned all radical political alternatives.⁶ To an average subject, sermons were the commonest mode of discourse in prose; a great majority of the nation was exposed to sermons every Sunday; and a number of sermons were also printed.⁷ Sermons frequently restated the idea of the unity of the Anglican

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4 Rupp 1986, 74; Black and Gregory 1991, 8; Phillipson 1993, 213.

5 Champion 1992, 6–7.

6 Bennett 1975, 5; Spellman 1993, 138.

7 Rogers 1978, 30, 63; John Middleton pointed out that few read printed sermons but great numbers heard them preached. *A Vindication of Liberty of Conscience*, 1734, 24. Printed sermons are, however, the only available way of searching eighteenth-century preaching, as

Church and state,⁸ and governments willingly gave orders on what to preach and which official announcements to read from the pulpit, particularly on national days of commemoration.⁹ Political sermons were common on these anniversaries. In addition to preaching political sermons, bishops were engaged in pamphleteering and sometimes persuaded lesser clergy to support a particular side in elections. Neither did lesser clergy fail to grasp opportunities to propagate High-Tory views in election times.¹⁰ They often achieved popular support for advocating commonly shared traditionalist views and open resistance to Whig governments.¹¹ A Tory parson's status was strongest in communities in which he worked in cooperation with Tory squires.¹²

Among the clergy, it was common practice to draw parallels between contemporary society and the Bible. A Protestant world-view provided a prevalent conception of politics and justified the application of Bible passages, sometimes intentionally modified, to acute questions.¹³ The starting point of many sermons was that conformity to the established Church was a precondition for the survival of the political order.¹⁴ Though principally directed against religious schisms, many sermons could also be applied to party-political strife. Terms of conflict employed in sermons and in political literature could be almost identical. For instance, a sermon of John Needham against religious Dissenters emphasised the need of suppressing animosities, faction and division in a manner that, in the minds of listeners, was easily intermixed with timely political matters.¹⁵

The tendency among the clergy to interpret politics through biblical language was no new development, but the practice became widely debated at the turn of the eighteenth century, right after the extension of press freedom in the mid-1690s. In his *Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695), Locke demanded that those who wished to understand the Bible should focus on what had been originally meant by the writers. It was misleading to collect 'scattered sentences in Scripture-language' and then combine them as 'accommodated to our notions and prejudices'. Locke specifically stated that St Paul's epistles to the Corinthians – often cited in texts advocating unity in Church and state – had been written for particular occasions and did not constitute a universal law.¹⁶

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the use of manuscript sources would require extensive work and would still not guarantee a more authentic picture of what was really preached.

8 *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 556; *The Diary of Dudley Ryder 1715–1716*, 30 January 1716, 173; Joseph Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 47; Whiston, *Scripture Politicks*, 1717, ii; Speck 1970, 24, 88–90; Richards 1972, 16, 20–2, 24–5, 54, 74.

9 Claydon 1996, 83–4.

10 Speck 1970, 24, 88–90; Richards 1972, 16, 20–2, 24–5, 54, 74.

11 Wilson 1995, 106.

12 Addison, S106, 2 July 1711, provides a simplified stereotype of a country parson written by a political opponent of the Tory party; For the influence of party conflict in localities, see Addison, S112, 9 July 1711.

13 Colley 1992; Speck 1970, 88–9.

14 Schochet 1992, 126.

15 John Needham, *Considerations concerning the Origine and Cure of our Church-Divisions*, 1710, 3–5.

16 John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*, ed. George W. Ewing, Washington 1989 (1965), 186–9; A favourite Bible passage used by the Tory clergy to attack Protestant dissenters seems to have been 1 Corinthians 3:3,4: 'For ye are yet

Toland adopted a more provocative way of expression in his *Christianity not Mystrious* (1696), suggesting that people tended to overemphasise 'certain sounds' as if they constituted the most essential and unquestionable content of all religion, although, in reality, they signified nothing or had been purposely invented. Toland lamented how Scripture had been put 'to the torture to countenance this scholastic jargon' and denounced the use of the words of Scripture separately from their context.¹⁷

In numerous other publications as well, a typical High-Church preacher was accused of exploiting 'an abominable jargon of hard words, with which he amazes and deludes the ignorant, and confounds the understanding of the wise'.¹⁸ Critics claimed that¹⁹

... appellations, and the names of complex ideas, are often left untranslated, that they may pass for real beings, and signify whatever the priests have occasion for; and sometimes, where they have been translated, false and unfair meanings have been assigned to them, and they have been made to convey a quite different sense from what they import in Scripture.

As a result of this type of preaching, words such as heresy, schism and faction were suggested to be 'terms often used by the vulgar, though not one in ten of either side, understand the true and proper meaning of any of these words'.²⁰ One critic gave a long catalogue of 'synonymous appellations' said to reflect High-Church vocabulary but actually illustrated Whiggish contempt for Tory hints to their alleged antimonarchical, sectarian, freethinking and irreligious origins. The list contained, among others, the terms Whigs, Roundheads, king-killers, Republicans, Presbyterians, innovators, false brethren, fanatics, sectarians, self-opiniators, sceptics, lovers of anarchy, freethinkers, half-conformists, Nonconformists, infidels, heretics, schismatics, enthusiasts, deists and atheists.²¹ Many a Whig writer, however, was ready to boast that 'neither the names of heterodox, schismatic, heretic, sceptic, nor even infidel, or atheist itself, will in the least scandalise me, whilst the sentence comes only from your mouths'.²²

Francis Atterbury's influential *Letter to a Convocation-Man* (1697), a demonstration of High-Church disquiet for what they depicted as the rise of diversity of opinions throughout society, was also the most influential reply to criticisms of High-Church preaching. Deistical and even moderate Anglican texts were regarded by traditionalist divines as conspiratorial attacks against

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carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and division, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one faith, I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?': See Thomas Rennell, *The Nature, Causes, and Consequences of Divisions for the sake of Greater Edification*, s.l., [1705?], and Needham, *Considerations concerning the Origine and Cure of our Church-Divisions*, 1710.

17 [Toland], *Christianity not Mystrious*, 1696, xi–xii, xxv; Toland was twice prosecuted by the shocked clergy for this book but with no success. Bennett 1975, 18–19; Hill 1995, 65.

18 *The Character of a Modern Tory*, 1713, 20.

19 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW22*, 15 June 1720.

20 [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 1.

21 *A Free-Thinker at Oxford*, 1719, 61–2.

22 [Shaftesbury], *Miscellaneous Reflections*, 1714, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. III, 334.

religion in general and priesthood in particular. Atterbury welcomed a royal order to bishops 'forbidding the use of any new terms in the explaining of our faith'.²³ This statement and the entire pamphlet was directed against Whiggish bishops and politicians with whom the lower clergy and much of Oxford University were dissatisfied.

The clergy's interventions in party politics contributed to the terminology of religion being widely employed in political discourse. Such interventions are exemplified by the engagement of Benjamin Hoadly, the Bishop of Bangor and a dedicated Whig, and Atterbury, the Dean of Carlisle and a Jacobite Tory, in propaganda during election campaigns.²⁴ Furthermore, the number of religious titles was high throughout the eighteenth century, and there was a considerable overlap between these and political titles. Over half of the output of the press was concerned with spiritual affairs, and many of these titles were equally concerned with both national and individual salvation.²⁵

The most famous instance of the clerical mixture of political and religious issues was the case of Henry Sacheverell. Sacheverell first gained fame in 1702 by publicising in Oxford a sermon full of fear of 'a party' of religious dissent.²⁶ After this sermon, the question of dissent remained a topic of political discourse for the decade to come. In 1709, Sacheverell preached an even more provocative political sermon to an audience consisting of Whiggish London businessmen at the double anniversary of William III's landing (1688) and the Gunpowder Plot (1605). Rejecting claims that 'the pulpit is not a place for politics', warning the audience of 'conspiracy' and 'malicious, and factious designs', and drawing once again a parallel between the divisions of the Church of Corinth and those of the Church of England,²⁷ this High-Church cleric questioned the Revolution of 1688, defended traditionalist royalist doctrines, attacked toleration to what he saw as the descendants of the rebels of the 1640s, and hinted that the Whig ministry formed a danger to the Church. Ideas expressed in the sermon were neither original nor carefully considered. Even Oxford High-Church Anglicans might adopt a critical attitude towards Sacheverell's language and manner of intermixing religious and political issues.²⁸

23 Francis Atterbury, *A Letter to a Convocation-Man*, 1697, 2, 6, 8; At least the terms priestcraft and freethinker had been very recently introduced to the English language; Bennett 1975, 48–50; Gascoigne 1989, 79.

24 Addison to Thomas Wharton, Earl of Wharton staying in Winchendon, [London, 25 August 1710], Joseph Addison, *The Letters of Joseph Addison*, ed. W. Graham, Oxford 1941, 234; Hoadly became a major figure in several politico-religious controversies, and his pamphlets were popular among Whig politicians. Rupp 1986, 88–9; *COPC*: Atterbury, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, 1714.

25 Wilson 1995, 36.

26 Holmes 1975, 11.

27 Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church, and State*, 1709, 3, 5–7.

28 D. Evans to Thomas Hearne, 10 November 1709, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. II, 304–5; On 11 November, Hearne repeated the same in his diary; J. Bennett to Thomas Hearne, *ibid.*, Vol. II, 1 December 1709, 317; Sacheverell's person and his language were unpopular in Oxford, but his views found sympathy at the University. Bennett 1975, 110, and Bennett 1986a, 63, 82–3.

... all congregation were shaken ... at the terror of his inveterate expressions. The Whigs, says he, are conformists in faction, half-conformists in practice, and non-conformists in judgement. Formerly they laboured to bring the Church into the conventicle, but now they bring the conventicle into the Church, which will prove its inevitable ruin.

I could not have imagined if I had not actually heard it myself, that so much heat, passion, violence, and scurrilous language, to say no worse of it, could have come from a Protestant pulpit, much less from one that pretends to be a member of the Church of England ... I am sure such discourses will never convert anyone, but I am afraid will rather give the enemies of our Church great advantage over her; since the best that her true sons can say of it, is that the man is mad; and indeed most people here think him so.

What became decisive was the reaction of the Whig government toward this popular preacher. The Whig ministry saw an opportunity for putting an end to the High-Church campaign by prosecuting Sacheverell for attacking the Revolution which every loyal subject was supposed to venerate. Although the Whig government won the prosecution case in Parliament, it finally lost the contest as the trial was broadened into a national affair by fierce pamphleteering and riots which revealed deep-rooted animosities between High-Church Anglicans and Dissenters. The antipathy towards dissent was turned into a political issue in a debate where a distinction between spiritual and secular spheres was hardly made. Ultimately, the Sacheverell affair, its catchwords 'the Church in danger' being exploited by the Tories, contributed to the downfall of the Whig ministry, the dissolution of Parliament and a landslide victory for Tories in the ensuing general election. For many voters who had been suspicious of the alliance of Whiggism and dissent against the Church, the Sacheverell affair proved that their suspicions had been justified.²⁹ Thomas Hearne, for instance, expressed his horror of what he saw as Whig requirements that the doctrine of the Church was to be subordinated to laymen and wondered why books written by those he regarded as atheists were not censored while a sermon of a defender of the Church of England was. A friend of his insisted that 'the Church and the monarchy will not be run down so easily, as [the Whigs] presume and imagine'.³⁰

Sacheverell's sermon was burned by the sentence of Parliament, and the man himself was condemned to a three-year preaching ban. In 1713, however, Sacheverell was already preaching on the anniversary of the Restoration in front of the now Tory-dominated House of Commons. This honour was a demonstration of the Tory government in favour of Sacheverell. In his sermon,

29 Speck 1970, 42, 90; Richards 1972, 105–6, 123; Holmes 1975, 11, 26, 28; Downie 1979, 116; De Krey 1985, 223, 228; Rupp 1986, 64, 69; Burke 1989, 46–7; Harris 1989, 48; Harris 1993, 153–4, 180–1.

30 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 15 December 1709, Vol. II, 327; Hearne to Dr. T. Smith, *ibid.*, 17 December 1709 and 25 January 1710, Vol. II, 329–30, 338; *Ibid.*, 2 March 1710, Vol. II, 350; Dr Smith to Hearne, *ibid.*, 4 March 1710, Vol. II, 352.

Sacheverell preached what the majority of the MPs wished to hear, emphasising the Christian duty of subjection to civil power.³¹ The Sacheverell affair strengthened rather than weakened the political position of the Anglican Church. At least some Dissenters felt this way. Dudley Ryder claimed that the advantage that the prosecution brought to Sacheverell had encouraged the Anglican clergy to take political stands during the Succession Crisis of 1714-16, as the clergymen believed that no-one would dare to prosecute a divine again, knowing what the consequences could be.³²

In spite of calming down in religious discourse after 1720, application of biblical language to political issues continued. Roger Acherley's *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, published in 1741, still lamented the clergy's far from welcome role as an interpreter of the constitution. Acherley stated that clergymen, when discussing public matters, 'couched their meaning in words of a double entendre'. It was the divines who reasoned on the British constitution cleverly but falsely, advocating ideas not in line with the 'human constitution' and basing their interpretations on Scripture, and thus causing diversities in opinions concerning the constitution.³³ Clerical political commentary on the constitution continued, though it became increasingly supportive of the Hanoverian and Whig order.

Debate on the relationship between religion and politics

Numerous early eighteenth-century texts discussed the relationship between religion and politics and changes in the balance between the two. This subchapter focuses on a few statements about the connection between religion and politics. Many of the available statements are so tendentious that an articulated point is hardly traceable, but at least they reveal the intensity of debate on the limits of religion and politics.

For the traditionalist Tories, religion and government remained inseparable. They called for unity but gradually abandoned attempts to enforce it by violence. Even if many started to recognise toleration as a fact, they continued to resist its consequences, still regarding schism as an evil. The Whigs, in contrast, accepted in principle a distinction between religion and politics but not one between Church and state. Even they were unwilling to distinguish between religion and politics in cases where religious arguments could be used to their political advantage. Some High-Church traditionalists such as Atterbury, however, demanded a complete distinction between the spiritual and temporal powers, which would have meant that civil authorities would have been unable to interfere in ecclesiastical issues. A separation of Church and state was in the interest of the traditionalists provided that the Church was allowed a wide

31 Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government Destructive of Both*, 1713, 1, 12; 29 May, when the sermon was preached, was the anniversary of the Restoration of 1660.

32 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 19 December 1715, 152.

33 Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 7-8.

autonomy, including a right to regulate public discourse. Atterbury's demand started an intensive phase in the High-Church campaign which aimed at restoring the lost harmony of Church and state through uncompromising conformity.³⁴

Certain separation of religion and politics could thus be advocated by both the moderates and traditionalists. A writer criticising Whig pamphleteers claimed in 1711, with reference to the Sacheverell controversy, that matters previously regarded as state-affairs had been presented as religious concerns and matters of conscience,³⁵ evidently to achieve some political goals. Such accusations of 'religionisation' of politics had been routinely posed by Whiggish writers against traditionalists. This writer made a basic distinction between the political and religious spheres now having been disturbed by a reintroduction of religious elements to politics. In 1712, a writer on 'scripture politics' opposed parties and 'worldly politics' and argued that once these evils were removed, 'the Church and state will be no longer confounded together; courtiers will not influence ecclesiastical affairs, . . . [and] the clergy will no longer intermeddle with worldly affairs'.³⁶ The ideal worth aiming at was the separation of religious and political questions and the creation of personnel specialising in either, not both. Mixing religious and political affairs appeared as the cause of the emergence of parties; once the two spheres were separated, the problem would disappear.

In sermons, such separation between the two spheres was rarely heard. Hoadly, the major figure of the Bangorian Controversy (1717), was one of the few divines openly vindicating it. The Controversy was initiated by a sermon of Hoadly which advocated the nature of the Church as a voluntary society in a Lockean sense in opposition to the Church as a universal society as understood by the High Churchmen. Hoadly saw Christianity as being based on reason and Scripture, which meant that no Church was needed for defining doctrine, and hence the Church appeared to him as an administrative institution controlled by the state.³⁷

In a sermon preached at the time of the ensuing controversy, John Laurence defended the status of religion as the major supporter of political government. Laurence saw secular authorities as 'the pillars, that keep the world from falling into anarchy and confusion' whereas clergymen were 'the lights, that God has set up to preserve it from ignorance, atheism, and superstition'. Laurence made a distinction between the two spheres but allowed no independent status to the sphere of politics, declaring in a manner characteristic of an Anglican clergyman and self-evident to a great majority of the audience that, though the way of governing and the governors had been chosen by humans, power was essentially of a divine origin. The unsurprising deduction from this was that both the Church and state were meant to enforce obedience. Like thousands of

34 Stromberg 1954, 127–8, 131, 133, 137; Spurr 1991, 380–1; Claydon 1996, 189.

35 *The Way to Bring the World to Rights*, 1711, 28.

36 [Whiston], *Scripture Politicks*, 1717, 146.

37 Gascoigne 1989, 123; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 46.

38 John Laurence, *Christian Religion the best Friend to Civil Government*, 1717, 6–8.

other sermons, that of Laurence declared that 'the best Christians are always the best subjects'.³⁸ Such a statement was a vindication of the favoured status of the members of the established Church as opposed to adherents of all religious alternatives.

The opposite view ready to reject the divine origin of political power was stated in republican texts. Many Englishmen would probably not have accepted Trenchard's statement that governments can only possess power given by those they govern. Highly controversial must also have been his Lockean statement about the independence of each person's religion and the consequent lack of necessity for political power to intervene in religious issues.³⁹ A contrasting argument appeared in the writing of Henry Stebbing, who advocated the right of the civil authorities to encourage 'true religion' by legal measures. Stebbing, who observed a calming down in the intensity of controversy, considered the year 1724 suitable for an extended contemplation on the relationship between religion and politics. He maintained that religious issues were the responsibility of magistrates as the guardians of the public good. Religion and political interests could 'never in fact be separated the one from the other', as religion necessarily 'affect[ed] the happiness of civil society'. As to political instability, Stebbing maintained that 'no civil disorders are occasioned by differences about religion'. Whenever such disorders emerged, the authorities possessed a power to repress them.⁴⁰ Stebbing also wished to restrict the extent of religious discourse by removing theological controversies from daily papers and by turning them into topics of more academic discourse. The educated participants of this discourse would abstain from appealing to the audience, which would contribute to a further calming down of the debate. By this restriction of religious discourse, the authorities would be able to turn religion into a tranquil affair which would cause little trouble to politics. This analysis may well have corresponded with real transformations in the character of religious discourse starting in the 1720s.

After the 1720s, a distinction between the spheres of religion and politics was drawn by a number of writers. An ideological basis for this separation was provided by a distinction that was drawn between two sources of religious truth, revelation and nature.⁴¹ Bolingbroke, for instance, denied the right of the civil authorities to intervene in religious questions:

Question Has not the magistrate a power to compel thee to be of what religion he thinks fit?

Answer No. Because neither in the state of nature, nor in the state of civil society, has any man an absolute power over another man's mind or conscience; . . . compulsion without conviction making a man an hypocrite, that is a criminal, but can never secure the public peace.

39 [Trenchard], CL60, 6 January 1722.

40 Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, iii-iv, 61-2, 165, 168.

41 Harrison 1990, 19.

This catechistic dialogue repeated natural law arguments denying the right of secular authorities to enforce religion by violence. The result of such enforcement would only have been hypocrisy which was worse than variety in religious opinions. The basic assumption in the background was that the religious and political spheres were fundamentally distinct.

Bolingbroke also drew distinctions between politics and religion in his *Dissertation upon Parties* when he wrote in the same context about 'the political' and 'the religious system' as if the two were separate yet interconnected. The separate character of the two did not prevent him from drawing analogies between them.⁴² His understanding of politics was secular, yet he reinforced traditionalist views of the comparability of religion and politics. He also restated the necessary interconnection between religious and political strife.⁴³

It is a certain truth, that our religious and civil contests have mutually, and almost alternately, raised and fomented each other. Churchmen and Dissenters have sometimes differed, and sometimes thought, or been made to think, that they differed, at least, as much about civil as religious matters.

Bolingbroke saw the Restoration as an exemplary case of religious differences alone having maintained divisions within the nation.⁴⁴ It was easy for most readers to accept such an interpretation of the interdependence of religious and political divisions in English history. People may only have disagreed as to the degree of the seriousness of the divisions.

The conception of a separate yet interconnected character of politics and religion was gaining ground. The leading article of the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March 1735, for instance, advocated a purely secular understanding of political power when stating that the end of political government was not 'to maintain religion, erect it into an establishment'. Anyone who saw the political authorities responsible for religious issues, 'jumbles together what is in the very nature of things separate, and thereby deprives good civil subjects on account of their difference in religious matters . . . what might otherwise justly belong to them as such'.⁴⁵ Other papers cited in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in the 1730s also distinguished between religious and political matters.⁴⁶ Such distinctions had not usually been drawn during the first two decades of the eighteenth century; by the 1730s, however, they already appeared as much more evident, which illustrates a growing secularisation of the sphere of politics.

42 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 7; The expression 'systems of policy and religion' appeared also in *ibid.*, 167; In *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1749, 377, Bolingbroke referred anticlerically to 'an old alliance between ecclesiastical and civil policy' which had contributed to the rise of absolutism.

43 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 25-6.

44 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 32, 37.

45 'Remarks on *The Weekly Miscellany* of Feb. 1', by [A true Friend to Liberty], in *GM*, Vol. V, March 1735, Reel 135.

46 *Old Whig*, 20 May 1736, No. 63, in *GM*, Vol. VI, May 1736, Reel 136.

A final phase in the early eighteenth-century discourse on the relationship between politics and religion was William Warburton's *Alliance between Church and State* (1736), a vindication of the status of the established Church published at a time of dissenting campaigns for extended toleration. Though wishing to draw a distinction between the political and religious spheres, Warburton rejected claims for the independent authority of the Church and insisted on the responsibility of the state to protect the Church. In principle, Warburton saw religious opinions as individual concerns with which the civil authorities had little connection. However, in case of religious diversity, the authorities possessed a right to restrict the political activities of advocates of alternative Christianity in order to protect the established Church and public peace. Warburton's recognition of the inescapable civil utility of religion in a state explains the popularity of the work in later replies to the demands of the Dissenters.⁴⁷

Anticlerical critique of the clergy's involvement in politics

Sermons and clerical writings being a principal channel of both religious and political communication, Whiggish, dissenting and freethinking authors became anxious about the effects of the intolerant message of clerical texts.⁴⁸ The Whigs as a party represented Low-Church views, which meant that they were critical of High-Church intolerance and some of them defended liberty of conscience and religious toleration for all Protestants.⁴⁹ Like constitutionalism, anticlericalism had been a characteristic feature of Whiggish thought ever since the Exclusion Crisis, Locke, for instance, having opposed the political role of the clergy.⁵⁰ Thomas Hobbes and James Harrington provided other models for criticising clerical intrusions in politics. Importantly, Whiggish anticlericalism hardly ever implied a will to abolish all religion. The anticlericals rather wished to remove independent political power from divines whom they considered corrupt. Following classical models, some wished to unite state and religion to create a civil religion for a more harmonious society. Public religion had to be reconciled with politics and the clergy made to propagate the state ideology.⁵¹

A special anticlerical term derived from the anti-Catholic language of the Reformation was taken up by the Whiggish anticlericals. The term priestcraft referred to corruptions in religion, but also to the clergy's maintenance of traditional beliefs that disturbed what the anticlericals saw as a pure religious instinct among people. Also in their willingness to persecute 'heretics', the English clergy represented a case of a universal phenomenon of priestly impostors. The term, introduced by Harrington in the 1650s and often used in the broad sense of 'all that the clergy do to advance their temporal greatness',

47 Sykes 1934, 319, 321; Langford 1989, 43–4; Miller 1994, 299–300, 302.

48 Harrison 1990, 77.

49 Harris 1993, 154–5.

50 Goldie 1993a, 212, 214, 216, 219–220; Phillipson 1993, 214; Ashcraft 1995, 73–4, 82.

51 Champion 1992, 17, 24, 173–4, 178, 195.

became widely used in the 1690s.⁵² Toland, for instance, set out to demonstrate how priests had turned their false constructions of mystery into a theology that suited their own interests. He used the neologism to create associations with continuous Protestant Reformation against priestcraft. He took upon himself a role equivalent to that of the reformers in exposing the mysteries of priestcraft as they appeared in late seventeenth-century England.⁵³

Sacheverell's discourse on *The Political Union* (1702) provided anticlericals with an illustration of the reality of priestcraft. In *The Danger of Priestcraft to Religion and Government*, a republican answer to Sacheverell, priestcraft appeared as a counter-concept of religion. Whereas religion was a uniting social force and a 'support of government', priestcraft was depicted as 'destructive to government', as priests with mischievous designs exploited religion and fomented divisions to advance their own secular interests. Both national divisions and irreligion had emerged as the clergy had 'interfered with government'.⁵⁴ Another piece of Whiggish propaganda suggested that, among the Tories, any religion would do as far as it advanced the Tory interest. Religion was kept as a topic of public discourse only to achieve the favour of the clergy, the most useful of tools for winning the support of the common people. The writer also set the integrity of the Tories as Protestants and supporters of the English constitution in question.⁵⁵

As churchmen were eager to use their influence at elections in favour of Tory candidates, Whig election propaganda answered with highly anticlerical attacks. The Whigs urged readers to disregard political opinions expressed by the clergymen,⁵⁶ who, as 'state divines',⁵⁷ were practising a new type of 'political divinity'.⁵⁸ Political use of religion was condemned in 1708 by asking 'must religion be the stalking-horse to faction'?⁵⁹ The fact that Whigs did their best to counter any charges against Whig ideology as a threat to the established religion, and their suggestions that Tories were harming the Protestant cause, demonstrate the importance of the established religion to that party as well.

Tories were unhappy with the Whiggish use of the concept priestcraft, as the Tories claimed, to denounce all defences of the Church. One pamphleteer suggested that the Whigs wished to see the Church as an institution that had achieved its authority from the state and ultimately from the people. Instead of vindicating a traditional union between the Church and state, however, the writer was content with underlining how the Church concentrated on religion

52 Harrison 1990, 77–8, 82–3; Champion 1992, 173; Goldie 1993c, 33, 35, 38–9, 41; Klein 1994, 160–1.

53 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, 176; Champion 1992, 166.

54 [Dennis], *The Danger of Priestcraft to Religion and Government*, 1702, 4–6, 9, 12; The pamphlet contains references to the pagan religion of the ancient Romans and to the lack of virtue as a cause of factiousness, elements typical of the republican tradition of discourse.

55 *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 38–9.

56 Harris 1993, 104.

57 *Chuse which you Please: Or, Dr. Sacheverell and Mr. Hoadley, Drawn to the Life*, 1710, 3.

58 *An Antidote against Rebellion*, 1704, 26, 29.

59 *A View of the Present Divisions in Great Britain*, 1708, 45; The Tories did endeavour to exploit the question of the security of the Church in the election campaign 1708, hoping that the public would set secular issues aside and vote for Tories as the only defenders of the Church. Richards 1972, 93–4.

whereas the state took care of civil concerns.⁶⁰ Another Tory pamphlet, when discussing accusations of the clergy's excessive involvement in political affairs, denounced theocratic government but vindicated the clerical responsibility to preach Christian political values and thus educate the audience to loyal citizenship:⁶¹

... if by that expression (meddling in politics) be meant presuming to settle the constitution, or to dictate in matters of state; most certainly the clergy would be justly censurable for pretending to it ... But if by that form of speech be meant preaching upon those duties of Christianity, which are of a political nature; we must insist upon it, that this is really their province, ... For are there not virtues and vices of a political nature ... These things are not points of politics, but of divinity.

This view represented moderate Anglican views of the clergy's status in the political system. Though everyday political practice and even the foundations of the political system were increasingly considered independent of the sphere of religion, political values could not be allowed such an independence in a Christian society.

A new wave of Whiggish anticlericalism was experienced after the Sacheverell affair. John Dennis, for instance, wished to see religion and politics as two separate spheres and suggested that the clerics omitted their responsibilities, interfered in politics and politicised parishioners, causing 'convulsions in the state'. The clergy were making religious life political, not so much bringing more religion into politics.⁶² Simon Clement's treatise contains one of the clearest articulations in favour of separation between political and ecclesiastical matters. According to Clement, politics was a sphere with which the clergy should have had nothing to do, and their interference was likely to cause harm to all parties.⁶³ In other anticlerical writings, High-Church clergy were accused of having 'warmed the people with their politic lectures'⁶⁴ and contributing to party struggles.⁶⁵ The entire 'Church in danger' -campaign was seen as an intentional trick by politicians conspiring to demolish the English political system, aimed at bringing popular support to the Tory party.⁶⁶

Writing to persuade his readers to support the reintroduction of less frequent parliamentary elections, Addison complained of the consequences of ecclesiastical and political affairs having been intermixed by Tory clergymen. He pointed out how piety had declined, so that a former 'nation of saints' had turned into a country where religion had less weight than in any nearby realm. This decline was manifest in the clerical enthusiasm in making disciples to

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60 [Charles Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 17, 26, 30.

61 [Trapp], *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 47.

62 John Dennis, *An Essay upon Publick Spirit*, 1711, v, 11.

63 [Simon Clement], *Faults on both Sides: Or, An Essay Upon The Original Cause, Progress, and Mischievous Consequences of the Factions in this Nation*, 1710, 11, 34, 37, 47.

64 *Now, or Never: Or, Seasonable Thoughts for the Present Times*, 1714, 11.

65 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, preface and 3.

66 Samuel Bradford, *Christian Religion the Occasion: not the Cause of Division*, 1716, 22.

Toryism and High-Church ideas. The High-Church defenders of the Church were acting for political motives, regarding themselves⁶⁷

rather as a political, than a religious communion; and are held together rather by state-notions than by articles of faith. This fills the minds of weak men, who fall into the snare, with groundless fears and apprehensions, unspeakable rage towards their fellow subjects, wrong ideas of persons whom they are not acquainted with, and uncharitable interpretations of those actions of which they are not competent judges.

Addison, who supported separation between religion and politics at least as far as the application of ultra-traditionalist doctrines to politics was concerned, was arguing that the Tories and High Church considered politics more important than religion. Turning the Church political had been particularly perilous to plain people and to the unity of the Church.⁶⁸

Among all the critics of political activities of the High-Church clergy, the Dissenter Defoe was the most prominent. In 1714, pointing to the latest legal measures of the Tory government against the Dissenters, he lamented the ruthlessness of cooperation between politicians and priests.⁶⁹ In 1715, he hinted that the ultra-Tory propaganda machinery was to be blamed for the politicisation of parishioners in previous years.⁷⁰

Some of the clergy . . . seem more fond to be thought state-politicians than pious clergymen; as if the politics of government were to be practised by their auditors with more vehemence and ardour than the doctrines of the gospel . . . Politics in the pulpit is like fire amongst flax, it soon blazes, and sets whole kingdoms on a flame . . . a little more divinity and less politics in their sermons, [and they] would better become the ministers of both parties.

An apparent argument in favour of a separation of political and ecclesiastical affairs was also put forward by Defoe. Defoe argued that any Protestant could be a loyal subject. In Defoe's definitions of various spheres, politics and religion on the one hand and morality and religion on the other appeared as independent:⁷¹

. . . politics (strictly considered) have nothing to do with religion; an atheist may be as good, nay a better politician than the greatest devotee. Politics only respect this world and the government thereof. Religion leads us to another, and the enjoyment of eternal life, and a man may manage the affairs of the former, though he has no regard to the latter. A man, though an atheist, may have such a regard for his own interest, for the good of his country, the prosperity of his friends and relations, the future felicity of his posterity, or for the service of his sovereign out of a

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⁶⁷ Addison, F37, 27 April 1716.

⁶⁸ Addison, F37, 27 April 1716.

⁶⁹ [Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 21.

⁷⁰ [Daniel Defoe], *An Attempt Towards a Coalition of English Protestants*, 1715, 14–16, 18.

⁷¹ [Defoe], *An Attempt Towards a Coalition of English Protestants*, 1715, 7–9.

principle of morality, as honour, justice, or the like, though at the same time he has no regard to the growth and being of religion. Politics and religion are two different things, and may subsist distinctly of themselves.

In 1718, Defoe again dedicated a pamphlet to 'the consequences of the clergy's intermeddling with affairs of state'. These 'gown-politicians' appeared as responsible for the rise of factions and parties, as 'the preaching of the gospel was superseded by politics, and the cure of souls was forced to give place to intrigues of state'.⁷²

The early 1720s experienced a further anticlerical blow against priestcraft carried out by Trenchard and Gordon, two suspected deists and advocates of toleration.⁷³ Gordon's *Creed of an Independent Whig* (1720) summarised much of the criticism, exploiting the form of a confession of faith:⁷⁴

I believe that the word Church, an innocent word in its nature, has done more mischief, than ever I fear it will do good; for when artfully mouthed by a priest, it stirs up the people to rebellion, and is made a cloak for murder and treason.

I believe that no ecclesiastic has power to force or bind men's consciences.

I believe that Tory and traitor, begin with a letter, so do priestcraft and perjury. *I believe* I need not pause long to determine, whether they are synonymous terms.

Such an open attack against the spiritual monopoly of the established Church, the clergy and the Tory party would hardly have gone unpunished some ten years earlier. The anticlerical arguments calling for a civil religion that were put forward by these republican authors can be categorised as follows: Firstly, clergymen were poor politicians who confused 'all national, public, and political morality'.⁷⁵ Secondly, lack of secular control on religious institutions led to a situation where the civil government was dominated by clergymen.⁷⁶ Thirdly, most religious institutions were based on secular motives such as 'usurpation, faction, and oppression'.⁷⁷ Fourthly, clergymen should not have been allowed to get involved in party politics. It only caused contempt towards the clergy,⁷⁸ as seen in the preceding two decades when the most 'visible ideologists of both parties had been clergymen. Fifthly, the introduction to

72 [Daniel Defoe], *Miserere Cleri: Or, the Factions of the Church*, 1718, 3–5, 17, 19–21, 24–5.

73 Klein 1994, 137.

74 Thomas Gordon, *The Creed of an Independent Whig*, 1720, 17, 21, 23–4.

75 Dedication for [Trenchard and Gordon], IW, 1721, xvii; IW44, 16 November 1720.

76 Preface to [Trenchard and Gordon], CL, The Third Edition, lii. The writer or the exact date of this preface is not known.

77 [Gordon], CL66, 17 February 1722; This view lends some support to the secularisation thesis advocated by Sommerville (1992), an objective explanation being offered to what was really behind religion. Religious institutions, if not religion itself, were interpreted as secular and even as political phenomena.

78 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW3, 3 February 1720.

public discourse of undefined religious concepts and their manipulation for political purposes should have been hindered.⁷⁹ Finally, a tendency among the clergy to mislead the credulous uneducated common people⁸⁰ was lamented. This concern reveals both the feared status of clergymen as communicators on a local level and also the mistrust of the political integrity of the nation at large.

Later in the 1720s, the *Craftsman* continued on similar anticlerical lines, the formulations being slightly more moderate. When 'a parson in politics' was presented as an unmannerly actor in secular politics, acting cruelly and using grossly abusive language,⁸¹ the distinction drawn between the spiritual and temporal was a sharp one. The *Craftsman* maintained that 'state-matters' were unsuitable topics for preaching. The political periodical itself, however, contained essays in which expressions and modes borrowed from religious discourse were employed for communicating political messages. 'Political duties' might be presented as equally obligatory as the moral or Christian ones. 'Offences of a political nature' were compared with sinning, the observance of political 'articles' called for, and 'a public confession of our guilt' sometimes appealed for.⁸² 'Infidelity in the Church' among clergy was compared with 'infidelity in the state' caused by the conduct of political ministers. Furthermore, the paper underlined the importance of keeping up the people's 'faith in' political rulers who continue to give 'their blessings' to the people.⁸³

It is possible that such language was parody of abuse of religious discourse for political purposes in other circles, calling for a secular political discourse. Alternatives for a secular political discourse, however, remained few. The opposition to Walpole found one in the tradition of classical republicanism, but they could hardly abandon the religious discourse altogether as that had not lost its vitality. Indeed, a considerable proportion of the readers saw no parody in such politico-religious formulations but rather regarded it as one of the most convincing ways in political argumentation to draw analogies between religious and political life. Even the *Craftsman* expressed some sympathy for the clergy as an entity. It was only priestcraft that caused distortions.⁸⁴

Illustrations of a calming down of the politico-religious debate in which the clergy had been involved can be found in literature. Bramston's poem *Art of Politicks* (1729), states how 'not long since parish clerks, with saucy airs, applied King David's Psalms to state-affairs', implying that applications of scriptural texts in politics were in decline.⁸⁵ As both political preaching and concern about clerical political activism declined, texts discussing the clergy's political activities became scarcer. However, a few texts from the 1730s and

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79 IW1, 20 January 1720; This condemnation of the use of religious concepts in political discourse did not prevent radical Whigs themselves from making use of them. In fact, the title *Creed of an Independent Whig* is an example of such manipulation.

80 IW36, 21 September 1720; See also *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 27.

81 C28, 16 March 1727.

82 C78, 30 December 1727.

83 C169, 27 September 1729.

84 C116, 21 September 1728; C119, 12 October 1728.

85 Bramston, *The Art of Politicks*, 1729, 9.

early 1740s still echo anticlerical arguments, demanding that 'unjustifiable excursions into politics' in sermons should have been effectively restrained.⁸⁶

Early eighteenth-century English political discourse was far from secularised, as religious questions formed one of the deepest dividing lines between contending political groupings. Many clergymen were involved in politics and preached traditionalist doctrines of the oneness of politics and religion. Criticism against this involvement is as a sign of a growing willingness among some Whigs and a few Tories to draw a clearer distinction between politics and the established religion. Even when such a distinction was drawn, religious language remained in wide political use. Since the language of religious origin was universally understood, even anticlerical writers employed it in their political pamphlets. The introduction of religious vocabulary to politics could be done for rhetorical purposes but more often it was to express genuine associations due to the lack of an entirely secular terminology of politics. Drawing analogies between religion and politics was a natural and quick way to make oneself understood. Religious terminology was easy to exploit, as religious terms offered usefully compact expressions for broader political concepts. The authors must have assumed that their rhetoric was capable of convincing their audience. After all, the use of religious terminology would not have been effective if the audience had not regarded politics and religion as interrelated.

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⁸⁶ Middleton, *A Vindication of Liberty of Conscience*, 1734, 24; Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 4.

■ Necessity of Uniformity and Possibilities for Diversity

Uniformity and diversity

A transition from uniformity based on the orthodoxy of the established Church to officially recognised heterodoxy has been a long and painful process in most societies. In early modern England as well, the political limits of discourse were such that diversity of values easily led to attempts to solve disputes over basic beliefs and attitudes by arms.¹ Religious diversity was seen to give rise to serious political instability, as conceptions of the common good were based on an idea of community, and the community, in turn, was conceived to be founded on shared religious beliefs. Eighteenth-century governments were still dedicated to the assumption that religious uniformity contributed to political stability and that civil support to the established Church was hence essential.²

Because of the intimate connection and frequent fusion between the religious and political discourses in the early years of the eighteenth century, the transition from orthodox uniformity to recognised heterodoxy is also of utmost importance to the simultaneous and connected transition in attitudes towards political parties. Terms of disbelief were used to defend Anglican orthodoxy against varieties of heterodox behaviour,³ but they were also applied to 'heterodoxies' in politics that were understood in parallel terms. An analysis of conceptualisations of political pluralism thus calls for an understanding of conceptualisations of religious pluralism, another and dominant aspect of the phenomenon of pluralism.

If the plurality of political values (a fact increasingly difficult to dispute) was to be recognised and accepted, the existence of a positive general concept for diversity – the nearest eighteenth-century counterpart of pluralism⁴ – was essential. Occurrences of positive connotations for religious diversity and diversity in other areas of discourse may contribute to an attempt to understand transformations towards an acceptance of diversity in politics as well. In order to reconstruct the alternative meanings of diversity in thought available for an

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1 Schochet 1993, 3–4; Schochet 1995, 128.

2 Miller 1994, 8, 19.

3 Lund 1995, 8.

4 Dictionary definitions of plurality were heavily inclined towards the ecclesiastical sense of the term. The general sense of 'a discrete quantity consisting of two, or a greater number' or 'many things of one sort or kind' is mentioned, but the term also had a specific ecclesiastical reference to the multiplicity of spiritual livings possessed by a clergyman. Fenning differed in this respect, leaving out the ecclesiastical sense and giving instead 'majority' as a synonym. Gordon-Bailey 1730; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741; The term pluralism in a modern political sense was not in use.

early eighteenth-century mind, it is important also to consider the connotations of its much more authoritative counter-concept, uniformity. In the Anglican view, uniformity was a basic value and starting point for discussions on the organisation of religious life. This shared religious ideal was unavoidably reflected in contemporary attitudes towards political diversity.

The ideal of uniformity had achieved an established status during the Restoration. Together with its close synonyms concord and unity, it had become a central concept in English politico-religious discourse from at least the passage of Charles II's Act of Uniformity (1662) onwards. The Act, which insisted on 'a universal agreement in the public worship of Almighty God' in order to guarantee internal peace of the realm, formed a starting point for the reintroduced *Book of Common Prayer*, according to which the Anglican clergy were obliged to organise parish life. The Act was re-enforced by William III's declaration, enclosed in the *Book of Common Prayer*, which required 'all our loving subjects to continue in the uniform profession' and prohibited 'the least difference from the said articles'. The orders and the spirit of the Act of Uniformity became, through Anglican worship, familiar to every Englishman as a matter of course.⁵ Calls for unity as an essential doctrine of Christianity, supporting the political system as well, became a normal feature of Anglican sermons and pamphlets.⁶

Some High-Church clergymen were willing to seek a compromise with those who did not fully comply with such ecclesiastical regulations that could be considered as having minimal doctrinal significance. Drake, for instance, stated in his consequential *Memorial of the Church of England* (1705) that the Church of England did not require an absolute uniformity from her members in questions of 'doubt and speculation, which are not essential to the true faith, nor necessary to the maintenance of order and good discipline'.⁷ Of course, it still remained for the Church and Anglican-dominated Parliament together with Convocation to decide what type of diversity could be allowed among her members. As a pamphleteer wishing for a settlement of religious disputes pointed out in 1718, the legislature continuously possessed the power of 'fixing the terms of uniformity, and enlarging or straitening them'.⁸

Protestant Dissenters were constant critics of excessive uniformity; yet they usually attempted to express their criticism in moderate terms without

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5 *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1681, 1693, 1709; The 1693 edition contained the following prayer, emphasising unity and stability to be pronounced on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot: 'Let truth and justice, brotherly kindness and charity, devotion and piety, concord and unity, with all other virtues so flourish among us, that they may be the stability of our times, and make this Church a praise in the earth'.

6 For calls for unity, see Randolph Ford, *Unity the Greatest Security and Preservation of Religion and Government*, 1715, 6, 8, 15; *The Church of England's Apology*, 1718, 3; [Lover of Truth], *A Sure Way to Orthodoxy*, 1718, 19; John Plaxton, *An Exhortation to Unanimity and Concord*, 1745, 1, 8–9, 11, 13; Matthias Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division with respect both to Religion and Civil Government*, 1746, 24; Wesley, the founder of Methodism, also wrote in his diary, with reference to Count Zinzendorf's religious community in Germany: 'O how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' *The Journal of John Wesley*, 37.

7 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 19.

8 *The Church of England's Apology*, 1718, 28.

provoking the supporters of the established Church. At the same time, a thinker such as Shaftesbury might state ironically that 'uniformity in opinion' was 'a hopeful project'.⁹ Four instances opposing or vindicating uniformity at the turn of the 1740s can illustrate the state of debate on uniformity towards the mid-eighteenth century.

The first of these instances comes from Thomas Story, a dissenting preacher, who, in a conventicle in 1737, ventured to demonstrate that the unity of Christians had never and would never be dependent on 'uniformity of thought or opinion' but rather on what Story defined as 'Christian love'. According to Story, 'the Son of God has not made uniformity of opinions any condition to this duty of social love'.¹⁰

The second instance is an essay published in the *Universal Spectator* which discussed the humorous issue of calls for 'a uniformity of dress in the nation' and pointed out that, the 'natural inconstancy' of the English being taken into consideration, it was as unrealistic to wish for 'uniformity in religion, or politics' to be achieved as to aim at an establishment of a national uniform.¹¹ Though a playful formulation, the passage reflects a mental submission to the fact of irreconcilable plurality of values among the English, both on questions of religion and those of politics. The two spheres were treated here as separate yet interconnected. The message of the passage was that both religious and political diversity were there to stay.

The third instance comes from an anonymous author propagating radical views against uniformity in 1740, insisting in his title that social harmony could be achieved without uniformity being essential. According to this writer, 'uniformity in name' did not always entail 'uniformity in the thing', and, as there was disagreement among those asserting uniformity, there might well have been harmony without uniformity. The author offered illustrations from six fields of life to verify his point, including human anatomy, professional medicine, handicraft, everyday religious life, social structure and what he called 'the laws of virtue'. He built his argument, firstly, on familiar facts of human bodies such as the absence of uniformity from human faces and senses. Secondly, he pointed out that the authorities did not attempt to regulate medical doctors either, so that all patients would be treated in uniformity of practice. Thirdly, the writer turned to products of artisans to illustrate the impossibility of uniformity in human judgments, pointing out that none of the clocks could go exactly alike nor all the pipes of an organ resound the same tune. Fourthly, he argued that the state of the Church of England herself remained far from complete uniformity. Fifthly, he exploited the universally held belief in the necessity of the stability of the divinely established social order to demonstrate the absurdity of the idea of uniformity. According to this reasoning, there was 'no uniformity in the distributions of providence in the moral world, whose

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9 [Shaftesbury], *A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*, 1708, in *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, Vol. I, 18–19.

10 Thomas Story, *Thomas Story's Discourse*, [1737], subtitle, 25.

11 *The Universal Spectator*, No. 257, 9 July 1737, in *GM*, Vol. VII, July 1737, Reel 136.

inhabitants are a compound of rich and poor, high and low', as 'uniformity here would be levelling'. Carrying the analogy between social order and religious uniformity to a favourable conclusion, the writer insisted that uniformity in the Church was 'levelling human capacities'. Following anticlerical trends, he declared that uniformity introduced by force was 'a new invention of a corrupt priesthood hatched in the Roman conventicle'. Finally, he presented religious uniformity as inconsistent with 'the laws of virtue' with which he meant that 'no being but a free agent is capable of virtue, which is a principle that consists in choosing and acting what is right and good'.¹² The effects of classical republican emphasis on virtue are distinctly visible here.

The fourth instance of the use of the term uniformity at the turn of the 1740s represents a statement in favour of a continuous uniformity, and, in this case, not so much in a religious but above all in a political sense. When calling for 'uniformity in the state' to guarantee political stability, Acherley was undoubtedly using for political purposes an analogy derived from the concept of uniformity in religious discourse. What is more, he was applying a model borrowed from the Church to the organisation of state affairs. He started his essay by underlining the strength of the constitution of the Church of England which was built on uniformity and the people's knowledge of it. He then proceeded to the constitution of the state in which he saw – in rather medical terms – 'infirmary' caused by the lack of corresponding uniformity in the people's minds as well as in their knowledge of the constitution. According to Acherley, 'uniformity in the state' analogous to that of uniformity in religion would have solved the constant problem of 'the fluctuating opinions' concerning the relative powers of the monarch and Parliament that had given rise to so many internal conflicts and provoked so many attempted invasions in English history. He insisted that the authorities should – following ancient examples no matter how anachronistically applied – have taken care that opinions concerning the constitution remained uniform and in accordance with *Magna Charta*. They should also have started to legislate with the specific purpose of bringing the parts of the constitution to uniformity, following the example of uniformity created in religious questions. Acherley drew only one distinction between religious and political uniformity: whereas in religion, Protestant Dissenters had been given a special right to abstain from complete uniformity, such exceptions would have remained unacceptable as far as 'uniformity in the state' was concerned.¹³ From political history it is known that no reform of the constitution proposed by Acherley was ever realised. However, the model status which Acherley gave to the religious settlement in search for solutions to political problems illustrates the continuous potential of

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Harmony without Uniformity, 1740, title and v–vi, 6, 8, 13, 17, 22, 25, 29, 32, 34–5, 39, 41–2, 51–2.

13 Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, preface, 2–4, 9, 19, 22–3; A politico-religious analogy was also in question when *The Craftsman* used language of unity in an ironical political context in 1733. With the expression 'political unity', the periodical suggested that Prime Minister Walpole was using methods borrowed from orthodox religion when governing the country. C359, 19 May 1733.

religious analogies in political discourse.

In dictionaries which included an entry for uniformity, the term was usually defined very generally, with few explicit references to the consequences of uniformity in religion or politics. Chambers (1728) was the only dictionary to refer directly to the term being 'particularly used for one and the same form of public prayers, and administration of the sacraments, and other rites, etc. of the Church of England'. Disagreements about the meaning of the term do not seem to have arisen among the lexicographers. To introduce a few instances, Gordon-Bailey (1730) defined uniform as being 'of one form or fashion' and uniformity as 'regularity, a similitude or resemblance'. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) associated uniformity with 'evenness, regularity, orderliness, similitude, agreement'. For Fenning (1741), uniformity was a synonym of 'conformity; agreeing in all parts'. Finally, also for Johnson (1755), uniformity meant 'conformity to one pattern' without diversity.

Diversity, the counter-concept of uniformity, was customarily defined as 'variety, a being diverse or different, unlikeness' but sometimes also 'variety, difference, alteration, change'.¹⁴ A development in the senses of the term becomes visible when later eighteenth-century dictionaries are consulted. In the quotations of Johnson (1755), the connotations of diversity are already interestingly varied. While diversity in religion might lead to unwanted consequences, diversity in social stations appeared as an essentially positive phenomenon. Attempting to define diversity as opposed to variety in 1766, John Trusler wrote about both in highly positive terms with no reservations whatsoever in relation to diversity in religion or politics. According to Trusler, diversity 'supposes a change, which taste is always in search of; in order to discover some novelty that may enliven and delight it'. 'Without some diversity', Trusler continued, 'life would be, altogether, insipid.' At the same time, variety 'supposes a plurality of things, differing from each other in likeness, which cheers imagination, apt to be cloyed with too great a uniformity'. Such comfortable 'infinite variety' could be found, above all, in nature, as 'there is no species in nature, in which, we may not observe great variety'. In this context, Trusler even stated that 'there is no government, but, is subject to variation',¹⁵ thus implicitly suggesting a noteworthy analogy between nature and society. This statement reproving excessive uniformity and replacing the previously dominant concept of religious diversity with natural diversity, dates from the late 1760s and, though not representative of early eighteenth-century attitudes, demonstrates an increasing acceptance of diversity and variety in different areas of life.

If dictionaries are set aside, a discourse on diversity can be reconstructed through previous research and a few contemporary remarks on the issue. Unsurprisingly, ideological diversity was most intensively opposed by the

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14 Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755; Wesley 1764.

15 John Trusler, *The Difference, Between Words, esteemed Synonymous, in the English Language*, Vol. I, 1766, 115.

advocates of monarchy and the Church, whereas religious dissidents and thinkers referring to the impossibility of resolving conflicts of conscience defended pluralism. Modest defences of pluralism gradually turned into claims that people had a right to follow doctrines that differed from established orthodoxies. Such arguments about diversity became part of that diversity itself.¹⁶ Moderate Anglicans and Dissenters might recognise the contribution of religious uniformity to political stability, but refused to accept claims that they formed a threat to the security of the state. Later in the eighteenth century, some of them found, in theories of natural rights, a justification for individual liberty to make choices on questions of religion.¹⁷

The history of discourse on religious pluralism has thus far been most exhaustively discussed by Peter Harrison who has pointed out that, throughout Church history, theorists had been looking for explanations for human diversity in biblical history and sometimes applied their findings to the case of religious pluralism. The existence of different religions thus became linked to the more general problem of human diversity. Still in the seventeenth century, it was usually taken as self-evident that both the God-created universe and human species had been characterised by uniformity. It was the Fall that had started an unfortunate process of change that caused both the universe and human society continuously to degenerate. Human inconstancy and variability, results of the Fall, had led to a deplorable diversity in the world. Change and diversity appeared as an unavoidable human destiny, and both were traditionally equated with sin. Religious diversity had thus appeared as merely one of the results of universal degeneration. A number of thinkers had advocated a broad theory of degeneration which was supported by the classics, the Bible, Reformation literature, advances of astronomy, and the discovery of new civilisations.¹⁸ In these circumstances, political diversity was also likely to appear merely as another result of universal degeneration.

In the seventeenth century, however, conceptions of diversity started to change. In the controversy between the ancients and the moderns, the moderns maintained that the new sciences had achieved knowledge unknown to the ancients. Such an optimistic belief in the new scientific method was difficult to fit together with a pessimistic theory of universal degeneration. Cambridge Platonists started to make attempts to recognise and deal with the problem of global religious pluralism. Some of them saw the limits of human knowledge as a necessary cause of pluralism in beliefs. Furthermore, they saw pluralism as a necessary condition of natural knowledge, which enhanced optimistic views of religious diversity. To some degree at least, Cambridge Platonists saw religious pluralism as an acceptable and even inescapable fact.¹⁹

Though not discussing diversity in any considerable length, John Locke had already referred to diversity in contexts that made the concept appear as positively charged. In his *Two Treatises of Government*, for instance, he

16 Schochet 1993, 4.

17 Miller 1994, 19.

18 Harrison 1990, 41–2, 47, 59, 104.

19 Harrison 1990, 101–2, 104.

referred to 'the variety of opinions, and contrariety of interests' that would 'unavoidably happen in all collections of men'.²⁰ In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* he had made a statement that would rarely command the agreement of the traditionalist commentators of the early eighteenth century but which was certainly welcomed by adherents of more radical directions of contemporary thought. Locke's point of departure was the recognition that diversity of opinions was unavoidable. On the basis of this fundamental assumption, he had recommended that²¹

it would, methinks, become all men to maintain peace, and the common offices of humanity, and friendship, in the diversity of opinions; since we cannot reasonably expect that any one should readily and obsequiously quit his opinion, and embrace ours, with a blind resignation to an authority which the understanding of man acknowledges not.

Locke accepted diversity and conflict of opinions as an unavoidable structural feature of his theory of practical action. Problems emerged when those with different opinions were not tolerated, and hence it was hopeless to reach for religious uniformity through political measures. An acceptance of diversity and conflict was realism and made toleration and freedom of individuals to make rational choices possible.²² Locke was ready to accept denominational diversity on the basis of an inevitable weakness and difference of human understandings. Locke argued for the right of sects to exist even though he did not consider sectarian diversity (the 'guilt of schism') as a value in itself.²³

As seen in other aspects of early eighteenth-century thought, the reception of Locke's thought was characterised by disagreement rather than universal approval. Some popularisers of his thought started to emerge, however, particularly in the early Hanoverian period. In 1718, an anonymous writer characterised Locke as a thinker with the finest reasoning and argued, in the same treatise, that differing opinions in any sort of controversy were not all false nor unreasonable. He also argued that it was a mistake to pretend superiority of judgement only because of differing in opinion.²⁴

Statements in favour of recognition of diversity are not often met in the printed literature of the 1700s and 1710s. One is much more likely to come across lamentations for the English being 'wretchedly divided in opinions' and 'industriously creating in themselves variety of conceits, in religion and politics'. Randolph Ford, for instance, preached in 1714 that difference in opinion was a reproach to God.²⁵ Other writers on religion, however, might own that differences in opinion were unavoidable because of the inherent imperfection of human nature and thus consider it unreasonable that people

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20 John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett, Cambridge 1988 (1690), II, §98.

21 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 4.16.4.

22 Ashcraft 1995, 76-7.

23 Goldie 1993b, 160-1.

24 *A Sure Way to Orthodoxy*, 1718, 3, 10, 16.

25 Ford, *Unity the Greatest Security and Preservation of Religion and Government*, 1715, 5, 8.

hated and criticised one another because of differences in opinion.²⁶

The instances of statements more sympathetic to diversity occurred in the texts of more or less radical or at least dissenting writers. Defoe set out in 1714 to prove that neither diversity of religions nor diversity within one religion was harmful, arguing that men unavoidably had different notions of things because they naturally had different abilities, understandings and opportunities. He maintained that animosity between various sects was not caused by difference of opinions as such but by treating the supporters of other sects badly because of the difference in views. Defending the rights of Protestant Dissenters for free worship, he went so far as to state that 'diversity of religions . . . ought . . . to be counted beneficial, as it creates a noble emulation in manners, learning, industry, and loyalty'. In brief, Defoe argued that 'a variety of opinions is a certain sign of a free government.'²⁷ This recognition of diversity did not, of course, mean an acceptance of political parties, but merely the allowance of several religious groupings in society; yet the idea of diversity brought a positive contribution to development towards political diversity as well.

Gordon's *Creed of an Independent Whig* (1720) already contained a declaration in favour of 'diversity of faith', stating that opinions among humans were as various as their complexions. He urged people not to condemn others because they could not be of the same opinion in all matters, as the condemner could as well be condemned for his opinions. Expressing his message in brief, Gordon argued that there were 'more ways to the wood than one'.²⁸ In the *Independent Whig* and *Cato's Letters*, he followed the same course of argument, referring to the inherently various and contradictory opinions of men,²⁹ stating provocatively that any violent attempt to impose uniformity of thoughts was 'a thing tyrannical and impossible' and claiming that, in a well-governed free state, 'diversity of speculation' promoted rather than disturbed the public good.³⁰

Towards the end of the 1720s and early 1730s, religious writings contained compromising statements about the potential positive effects of diversity in opinion. William Stevenson, for instance, emphasised the view that 'others have the same right to differ from us, that we have to differ from them'. Defending the right of every person to judge on one's own, Stevenson was ready to declare that³¹

. . . to inquire freely into the truth of every thing that is proposed to us, for our belief, or our practice, is the natural and unalienable right of every man. It is the indispensable duty of every Christian. It is the characteristic of a true Protestant. It is the joy and triumph of every true

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26 John Shuttleworth, *A Perswasive to Union; Being An Essay Towards Reconciling all Parties*, 1716, preface.

27 [Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 31, 43.

28 Gordon, *The Creed of an Independent Whig*, 1720, i, v.

29 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW*49, 21 December 1720.

30 *CL*39, 29 July 1721.

31 William Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation reconcil'd*, 1728, 20–1.

Briton . . . liberty of inquiry, and of private judgement . . . is the fundamental principle of our Reformation.

Stevenson concluded that while independent judgements unavoidably led to differing opinions, people should respect each other's opinions.³² Not unlike Stevenson, Thomas Dawson, when commenting on freethinking, recognised a variety of opinions among humans caused by their inherently different constitutions that create different inclinations.³³ Thomas Story, when lecturing on diversity of opinions in religion 'still subsisting and prevailing' to a dissenting congregation in 1737, could recommend no other solution to the consequent hatred towards supporters of competing religious groups than social friendship between Christians across sectarian boundaries. Variety in thinking, which he saw as nothing like a novelty, he explained via different interests, educational backgrounds and degrees of understanding, people being not always capable of choosing freely how to think.³⁴ In a parallel manner, in periodical journalism of the 1730s, writings recognising differences in opinion as unavoidable appeared. In 1733, for instance, an essay published in *London Journal* contained the statement that 'there ever will be different sentiments about religion and politics'.³⁵

In spite of these and other statements sympathetic to diversity,³⁶ authoritative texts warning about the consequences of diversity, particularly in religion, also continued to be published throughout the early eighteenth century. The most influential of all was probably Warburton's *Alliance between Church and State*, reissued several times and regarded by many as an ample representation of establishment attitudes towards the relationship between religion and politics. Warburton, who accepted religious toleration yet defended the established religion and the continued necessity of the Test Act, stated, for instance, that 'diversities of religions in a state' necessarily led to each sect considering itself the representative of the only true religion, thus advancing its interests at the cost of other religious groups, making use of the state machinery for religious purposes whenever possible.³⁷

Acherley's *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, published in 1741 as a supplement to a volume describing the basics of the British constitution, is also worthy of note. With this supplement, Acherley wanted to submit to consideration those 'diversities of opinions' concerning the constitution that weakened the political system, and he wished to argue in favour of uniformity in conceptions concerning the constitution. Indeed, most of these diversities were of a religious nature, related to disagreements about the proper extent of toleration and the organisation of the Church. Religiously motivated controversies provoked by the High Church had increased 'diversities of

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32 Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation reconcil'd*, 1728, 21.

33 Dawson, *Good Advice*, 1731, 32.

34 Story, *Thomas Story's Discourse*, [1737], 3–4.

35 *London Journal*, No. 750, 10 November 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, November 1733, Reel 134.

36 Other statements include *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, Edinburgh (London) 1736, 22.

37 William Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 112, 116.

opinions' in the state, as clerical interpretations of the constitution had departed from the human constitution. Speaking in favour of a secularised constitution, Acherley wanted to prevent religious controversy from causing diversity in interpretations of the constitution. The constitution should rather have been based on the ancient constitution as expressed in *Magna Charta*.³⁸ It should be noted, of course, that Acherley's requirement of uniformity in constitutional issues did not necessarily exclude diversity in less fundamental political questions.

By the 1740s, however, in spite of the rebellion of 1745 that provoked traditionalist reactions, diversity seems to have become an increasingly accepted phenomenon in contemporary writing. For instance, when William Gilpin chose in 1747 to write about 'the bad consequences of dissention', or 'party-rage', he yet pointed out, on the basis of human nature, that a complete unanimity of opinion could not have been the original meaning of God and could not be imposed by man either, human minds appearing in as many shapes as human bodies. He condemned it as 'a mishapen way of thinking' to treat fellow subjects badly only because 'sentiments happen to differ'. According to Gilpin, the thoughts of every person were 'his own property'.³⁹

One of the most interesting early eighteenth-century texts discussing diversity is the anonymous *Harmony Without Uniformity* which set out in 1740 to vindicate 'the right of private judgement'. Following Lockean lines of thought, the writer considered it both absurd and impious to attempt to impose one's views on others by violence, as God had given the ability of free judgement to every human being. Above all, he advocated the view that religion was based on free reasoning and not on coercion. The writer's arguments in favour of diversity were, importantly, based on precedents derived from the new Newtonian physics and Lockean psychology rather than on religious or other traditional justifications:⁴⁰

In the works of nature, there is the greatest variety and greatest harmony. And till the whole world is animated with one soul, there must be a variety of thoughts. But God has given many souls, men therefore should allow of many judgements . . .

Diversity is the glory of the universe. Nature abounds with variety, its glories are displayed in a variegation without variance. This variety presents us with beauties that inspire human minds with transports: Beauties which could never flow from one object, or one species of beings, though exactly the same in their proportions and powers . . .

The sun is one, but useful by variety of influences on the planetic and cometic worlds. The firmament, that vast expanse, is one beautiful arch, but its beauties shine by an infinite variety of stars.

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38 Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 1, 4–5, 7, 9, 19.

39 William Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention and Party-rage Considered*, 1747, 8–9, 21.

40 *Harmony Without Uniformity*, 1740, iii–vi, 1–5, 35, 39.

Let us take a short survey of the terraqueous globe, and we shall soon find how its glories shine in an admirable scheme of varieties; . . . But no such variance observable as in mankind, whose individuals vary as remarkably as if they were beings of a different species . . .

. . . he that takes a survey of the world, will find that the harmony of the universe is founded on the basis of differing sentiments, diversity of constitutions and customs, different laws, different modes of worship in different kingdoms, even where the same religion is professed; . . .

If diversities in nature have such a beautiful aspect, how came they to be disfigurements in the religious world?

How is it that diversity in religious sentiments, and modes of adoration, is accounted to be reputable, when nature in all its forms triumphs in variety?

In addition to this primary justification derived from nature, the writer pointed to variety in traditionally authoritative areas of discourse, including religion and medicine. According to this unconventional interpretation of diversity, divinity was full of 'variety of communications' and 'multiformity of acts', yet it formed 'an agreeable union between many different things'. Likewise, the writer suggested, the human body consisted of many parts which differed in their senses, and the same sense created different ideas in different cases and in different persons. Variety in human faces, and even more in human minds, was overwhelming, and even in each human mind, the variety of conceptions was high.⁴¹ Clearly despising those who remained servile to values propagated by their teachers, parents and the clergy, the author offered a description of an ideal character of people who possessed an⁴²

inquisitive genius, and do not content themselves with hearsay notions received from dealers in ignorance and partiality, but make an impartial scrutiny into the truth of things, and are not afraid of professing their dissent from common opinions, under which falsehood is commonly hatched and entertained instead of truth.

This inquisitive genius concerned religion in the first place, and the treatise contained no explicit reference to political diversity, but it is arguable that the idea could be easily extended by the mid-eighteenth-century mind to include political questions as well. If 'diversity of sects and opinions' was pleasing to God and diversity in all universe natural,⁴³ what would prevent the acceptability of diversity in political opinion or potentially even association in the form of political parties? The author was already defending religious pluralism by the means of newly interpreted Christianity and medicine. It remained for late eighteenth-century authors to advance the same with respect to political matters.

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41 *Harmony Without Uniformity*, 1740, 2, 5–6, 22.

42 *Harmony Without Uniformity*, 1740, 30–1.

43 *Harmony Without Uniformity*, 1740, 48. The text put forward points analogous to freethinking texts discussed in chapter 12.

Conformity, nonconformity and dissent

Conformity and nonconformity were counter-concepts that frequently appeared in early eighteenth-century discourse on religious diversity. If compared with the explicit manner in which many other terms of religious origin were applied in political contexts, these appeared relatively seldom in political texts. Nevertheless, these religious concepts reflecting conceptions of pluralism in religion deserve to be discussed. In some early eighteenth-century texts, the word conformity, which carried fundamentally religious connotations, was also applied to issues of political constitution, the originally religious term being 'secularised' for political purposes. Yet its political sense remained wedded to the original religious notion.

The restored Church of England had aimed at a complete conformity within the nation. The explicit intention of the Act of Uniformity, as passed in the beginning of the reign of Charles II and reprinted in the copies of the *Book of Common Prayer*, had been to bring into the knowledge of every subject 'the rule to which he is to conform in public worship'.⁴⁴ The term Nonconformist had thereafter referred to all those priests and congregations, whatever their sect, who did not accept the *Book of Common Prayer* and were thus excluded from the national Church.⁴⁵ This uncompromising line of religious conformity led to serious political consequences: 'All those, who declined an exact and strict conformity to the whole establishment of the Church . . . were deprived of the protection, nay, exposed to the prosecution of the state'.⁴⁶

Before long, such discrimination of religious alternatives led to opposing reactions. On the other side of late seventeenth-century discourse on conformity we find, among others, Locke, who had stated in his *Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695) that all standards of conformity should have been based on reason or revelation,⁴⁷ and, by implication, not on human laws such as the Act of Uniformity. A typical eighteenth-century Nonconformist supported the idea of separating Church from state and yearned for the same political rights for every subject (except Catholics). Many nonconformists asserted that uniformity was impossible to achieve, that persecution led to no uniformity, hence freedom of religion was essential. It was not religious diversity as such that caused problems but the denial of religious liberty. They also insisted that the established Church should have no civil power, and that no church was entitled to act independently of the state.⁴⁸

In the very beginning of the eighteenth century, the concept conformity was most frequently discussed in connection with the practice of occasional conformity, that is, attendance in the Anglican communion by Dissenters merely in order to qualify for office. This was a practice which Tories and High-Church Anglicans eagerly endeavoured to put to an end. Propositions for

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44 *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1681.

45 Bradley 1990, 49.

46 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 36–7.

47 Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695, 174.

48 Robbins 1959, 228, 239, 241.

banning occasional conformity came up in Parliament thrice in the beginning of the century (1702–3, 1703⁴⁹, 1704), but the bill was finally passed only in 1711. The political aspects of this intended legislation against religious pluralism are visible in Swift's letter when he described 'the highest and warmest reign of party and faction I ever knew or read of, upon the bill against occasional conformity'.⁵⁰ Traditionalist clergymen willingly interpreted toleration towards alternative forms of Protestantism, which the Revolution of 1688 had established, as a temporary solution to a problem that could be finally solved only through the return of all Protestants to conformity to the established Church, to the ideal state of religious life.⁵¹ By contrast, the anticlerical radicals of the *Independent Whig*, for instance, criticised such constant demands for more complete religious conformity in an ironical tone: 'Conformity is the word! It is the mother of all virtues, and the sanctifier of all crimes'.⁵² Criticism of demands for conformity could be later developed into statements such as 'every man . . . has a natural inherent and unalienable right to conform or not conform to religious establishments, just as his own judgement and conscience direct him'.⁵³

Dictionary definitions of the 1730s, 1740s and 1750s for conformity offer little that could be interpreted as a shift in the meaning of the concept. Gordon-Bailey (1730), for instance, defined conformist in a very conventional way as 'one who conforms, especially to the discipline of the established Church of England'.⁵⁴ Bailey (1733), Martin (1749) and *A Pocket Dictionary* (1753) added the expression 'to any establishment', thus presenting the term as more universal, including potential political uses. For each of these, conformity meant 'compliance'. For Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) as well, a conformist was 'one who complies with, or assents to the public establishment of any discipline' and, in England, usually 'denotes a professor and practiser of the faith and discipline of the Church of England'. Hence conformity stood for 'the agreement or relation that is between different things or persons; compliance, yielding, or submitting'. The counter-concept Nonconformist (and nonconformity) referred to 'one who does not conform to the Church of England, with respect to its discipline and ceremonies'. Dyche was more precise in this respect, giving a general sense of 'one that does not consent to, or comply with, his company' and specifying still that Nonconformist was 'particularly one that does not comply with the present established Church of England in her

49 Narcissus Luttrell reported on the readings of this bill in the two Houses of Parliament on 27 November 1703, 363, 30 November 1703, 364, 9 December 1703, 367, and 14 December 1703, 369, all in *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, Farnborough 1969, Vol. V; *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 17–18, discussed the Tory campaign against occasional conformity.

50 Swift to the Rev. William Tisdall, London, 16 December 1703, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 38.

51 See e.g. George Sewall, *Schism, Destructive of the Government, both in Church and State*, 1714, 17, 21.

52 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW26, 13 July 1720.

53 A nonconformist son's lines in a dialogue with his conformist father in *Conscientious Nonconformity*, 1737, 30.

54 The same definition was echoed by Wesley 1764.

discipline and ceremonies'. Furthermore, according to Dyche, the term Nonconformist was applied to 'Protestant Dissenters only, who agree in the general articles of faith', thus excluding Catholics and some radical sects. The same restriction was made by Chambers (1728) who also added some etymology, reminding that the term originated from the religious divisions of the reign of Charles I. Fenning (1741) defined conformity as 'likeness; resemblance; the act of regulating one's actions to some law; consistency; compliance with the worship of the established Church'. Nonconformity yet carried the pejorative undertone of 'the act of refusing compliance; refusal to join in or conform to, the forms used in the established worship'. Finally, in Johnson (1755), conformity meant 'similitude; resemblance; the state of having the same character of manners or form', its applicability thus extending beyond a religious context. Conformist referred more exclusively to 'one that complies with the worship of the Church of England' as opposed to religious Dissenters. The respective counter-concepts nonconformity and Nonconformist Johnson defined in a highly pejorative manner by referring to their refusal to join in the established worship.

Even though dictionaries do not refer to the rise of an explicitly political sense of conformity, signs pointing to that direction can be found in texts from the 1730s. Bolingbroke, an author particularly willing to make use of religious associations for political purposes, wrote how good government was always run 'with a strict conformity to the principles and objects of the constitution', whereas bad government lacked such appropriate constitutional conformity. In order to make his allusion against Walpole's administration perfectly clear, Bolingbroke pointed out that the submission of the people to their governor was wholly dependent on the governor's 'conformity or nonconformity' to the constitution. He further argued that the positive or negative consequences of some phenomenon to British liberty should have been deduced merely from the conformity of the phenomenon to the constitution.⁵⁵

Not unlike Bolingbroke, Acherley used the concept conformity for an unambiguously political purpose. According to Acherley, those who acted against the constitution and against what he called 'the state uniformity', should have been regarded as 'state Dissenters, and Nonconformists'. Acherley, though building his argument on an analogy between religious and political conformity, distinguished between the two: whereas dissent in religion could be allowed as far as the Bible was observed, no-one could be allowed to dissent as to conformity to the constitutional principles of human origin.⁵⁶ These few instances illustrate the applicability of the term conformity in two areas of discourse that were increasingly moving apart from each other. Noteworthy is that the term was used in political contexts by authors who welcomed the separation of the spheres of religion and politics.

Another widely used term of religious pluralism which was occasionally applied with an unambiguously political sense was that of dissent. Religious

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⁵⁵ Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 88–9, 112.

⁵⁶ Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 22–3.

dissent was a major factor affecting political identities and giving rise to political strife in early eighteenth-century England. Therefore, it is important to consider the political implications that the widely applied term could have. The applications of the term being so numerous and diverse in contemporary discourse, this survey will concentrate specifically only on those occurrences of the term in which its political implications were made explicit.

The main lines of discourse on dissent can be summarised as follows: Whereas radical and dissenting writers referred to the often unreasonable inconveniences caused to those dissenting from established religious conceptions,⁵⁷ those advocating Orthodox Anglican views frequently expressed their suspicions towards Dissenters. John Evelyn, for instance, heard a High-Church sermon in which dissent had been depicted as an unnecessary novelty that had emerged in the heat of the seventeenth century and only aimed at advancing the interest of a party. In other and probably more Low-Church sermons which Evelyn reviewed, it had been recommended that 'Dissenters from our opinion' should have been treated kindly while their conversion to the established form of religion was to be prayed for. Thomas Naish, a priest himself, saw Dissenters as capable of causing needless divisions everywhere, even within their own congregations.⁵⁸

In traditionalist texts, and particularly in those published before 1720, dissent was often turned into a plot that concerned not simply the status of the established Church but also the future of the prevailing political system. Conyers Place stated: 'All religious dissention from the established Church . . . [is] naturally and necessarily attended with some disaffection to our civil constitution'. To justify this point, a writer of the 1710s readily turned to metaphors derived from traditional medicine and presented dissent as a disease disturbing the health of the body politic.⁵⁹

Much of this suspicion towards Dissenters survived after 1720 even though it was usually expressed in less exaggerated terms. In particular, the attempts to repeal the Test Act in the mid-1730s gave rise to anti-dissent publications.⁶⁰

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57 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 1.2.25; [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, xxix.

58 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 17 October 1703, Vol. V, 546-7, 17 June 1705, Vol. V, 599, 11 November 1705, Vol. V, 615-16; *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, ed. Doreen Slatter, Devizes 1965, 30 May 1701, 44.

59 Place, *The Arbitration; Or, the Tory and Whig Reconcil'd*, [1710?], 27.

60 The connection between religious schism and 'civil dissensions' was stated in *Robert against Ferguson*, 1704, 4, and [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 5; In Drake's *Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 9, 15, 36, Dissenters were viewed as aiming to destroy both Church and state; In Matthew Tindal's *New Catechism*, 1710, 24, one of the questions concerned the loyalty of the Dissenters and the respective answer referred to their factious caballing to subvert both the established Church and state. Tindal himself, of course, did not hold such High-Church views. He was only re-editing a High-Church catechism; Hysterical propaganda against Dissenters appeared still in the late 1710s, as can be seen in John Dunton's *Conventicle; or, a Narrative of the Dissenters New Plot Against The Present Constitution in Church and State*, 1715, in the pamphlet *A Presbyterian Getting On Horse-Back: Or, The Dissenters Run Mad in Politicks*, 1717, and in *The Church of England Man's Memorial*, 1719, 'Introduction'; Anti-dissenting writing was continued after 1720 by authors such as Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, 214, and Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 3.

Throughout the early eighteenth century, dissent was considered dangerous not only for its religious implications but also for its political consequences. The Dissenters' separated ecclesiastical polity and egalitarian social views formed a radical pluralistic challenge to the socio-political stability. Furthermore, the Dissenters increasingly saw themselves as not only a religious but also a political alternative.⁶¹ For instance, a pamphlet published during attempts to pass a law against occasional conformity in 1703 implied, by using expressions such as 'political Dissenter' and 'state-Dissenter' as opposed to 'religious Dissenter', that much of dissent was political rather than purely religious in character. The Tory assumption about the interconnection between dissent and politics is particularly visible in the universal manner in which their texts used the terms Dissenter and Whig, portraying them as closely united if not synonymous.⁶²

Dissenting writers customarily, though not always very convincingly, denied such connections between religious issues and 'the several factions in the state'. The rejection of political discrimination against Dissenters was what they called for. Such a reform in the political status of Dissenters was defended more openly after the Hanoverian Succession. By the early 1720s, some anticlerical publications did not hesitate to use such highly positive expressions as 'most godly Dissenters'. By 1740, a pamphleteer already extolled the courage of those who were 'not afraid of professing their dissent from common opinions'.⁶³

In some early eighteenth-century dictionaries, the term dissent was given senses that suggest that it was not considered merely a religious term. For instance, Gordon-Bailey (1730), Bailey (1733) and Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) gave the word a very general definition, stating that dissent was simply 'contrariety of opinions', that to dissent was 'to disagree or differ in opinion', and that the term Dissenter stood for 'one of an opinion different or contrary to another; commonly applied to those Nonconformists who dissent from the Church of England'. The concept would seem to have been so wide that anyone holding opposing views could in principle have been called a Dissenter. In practice, of course, the term was reserved for Protestant Dissenters. Fenning (1741) repeated that dissent was 'disagreement, difference of opinion; avowal or declaration of difference of opinion' and Dissenter 'one who disagrees, or

61 Bradley 1990, 418.

62 *A View of the present Controversy about Occasional Conformity, As far as Religion's Engag'd in it*, 1703, 9; *Robert against Ferguson*, 1704, 2; Drake, *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 4; The expression 'politic Dissenters' was also used in [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 4; [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 5; *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 22 December 1709, Vol. II, 330; Dr. T. Smith to Hearne, 18 February 1710, *ibid.*, 346; The expression state-Dissenter was also applied by Acherley in 1741 as an analogy referring to the necessary rejection of those who did not comply to the basic rules of the constitution, whether ecclesiastical or political. Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 22.

63 [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 37; *The Church of England's Apology*, 1718, 28; A collected volume of the anticlerical *Independent Whig*, 1721, was dedicated to the Lower House of Convocation, a stronghold of High-Church clergy, and provocatively spoke about 'godly Dissenters' (p. xli); For later defences of religious dissent, see *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, *passim.*, and *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 30–1.

declares his disagreement with respect to an opinion' and, more particularly, 'one who separates from the communion of the Church of England'. Johnson chose a quotation from the honoured royal martyr Charles I to refer to 'morose and perverse dissentings', a passage from a book titled *Decay of Piety* to illustrate 'the inhumanity of dissenting Christians' and a statement from a sermon questioning the consistency of dissenting doctrines. Quotations from writers that had been more sympathetic to Dissenters such as Addison and Locke were chosen, with a distinct intention, from such contexts that did not disturb Johnson's negative interpretation of the term. The only dictionary limiting the term Dissenters only to religious issues was Chambers (1728) who referred with it to 'certain [tolerated] sects, or parties' who disagreed with the established Church.⁶⁴

Dissent remained a disputed word. But the consulted texts suggest that attacks against dissent were becoming less fierce and defences of dissent more open. The term dissent was occasionally applied to non-religious issues, including politics, but it remained an essentially religious term.

Orthodoxy and heterodoxy

In 1720, one of the characters of Benjamin Griffin's comedy *Whig and Tory* pointed out, with reference to the forty-year-old politico-religious party rivalry:⁶⁵

The old dispute of parties is still kept alive, nor is it long since our very newspapers were so crowded with orthodox and heterodox principles, that religion, at length, was entirely lost in the dispute.

The statement indicates that Griffin considered party division an initially religious phenomenon that had been prosecuted by the use of religious terminology. Orthodoxy and heterodoxy, a pair of counter-concepts, had also been used in the debate in which demands for religious and political orthodoxy became closely linked.⁶⁶

Orthodoxy, or holding 'correct' opinions as to religious – as well as political – principles was an ideal for the majority of Englishmen, so that even a defender of the rights of the Protestant Dissenters could write positively about an 'orthodox union' against 'the gangrene of sects and schisms'.⁶⁷ In England, the term orthodox was not traditionally associated with any specific party within the Church. It had obviously come into use in the 1620s as a denomination for

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64 Definitions containing the same elements as the dictionaries mentioned in the text include Martin 1749, *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753 and Wesley 1764.

65 Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 10.

66 See, for example, Cocker-Hawkins 1704 and Bullokar-Browne 1719; A search with <http://www.jubilee.org/bible/search.html> shows that the terms orthodox and heterodox do not appear in *King James Bible* (1611), the standard English Bible.

67 *Three Questions of Present Importance, Modestly Resolved*, 1702, 28.

all those divines who were not called Puritans.⁶⁸ In the early eighteenth century, defenders of traditionalist Anglicanism eagerly pronounced their conception of the necessary constancy of the established politico-religious order by repeated phrases vindicating 'the most orthodox and best of churches, and the most admirable constitution of all governments in the universe',⁶⁹ in which the two appeared as hardly separable. It was insisted that the Church of England was the Church by law established,⁷⁰ and, in relation to all of its religious alternatives, the Church of England was presented as a 'much more orthodox establishment'.⁷¹ This orthodoxy was not so much connected with theological positions but with cultural practices and ideological assumptions. It was defined in various ways. Writers debated on the relative weight of revealed truth and reason, and of private conscience and the authority of the Church. Some of them wished to increase the range of acceptable beliefs whereas many demanded a narrower definition of orthodox behaviour.⁷²

The discriminating use of the term orthodox had for some time been criticised by authors such as Locke, who had pointed out that everyone 'is orthodox to himself' and further that being 'orthodox' gave no right to crush those who held different opinions.⁷³ Locke was followed by several anticlerical writers who criticised the clergy for abusing the term orthodox to strengthen their own positions. Toland, for instance, stated that it was impossible to please all 'parties' of clergymen, as 'if you be orthodox to those, you are a heretic to these'. He suggested that many of those called orthodox were as unwise, brutal and factious as men who did not carry such a name. Himself he declared to acknowledge no orthodoxy other than what he considered the truth.⁷⁴

Efforts to define orthodoxy continued throughout the century. Francis Hare suggested in 1714 that orthodoxy could not be defined merely on the basis of Scripture but was rather an artificial construct created by the Church which called itself orthodox.⁷⁵ The republicans of the early 1720s also complained: 'If we grow wilful, and break loose our orthodox ignorance, we are pursued with hard names and curses.' They vilified the term by applying it to a text that certainly did not come up to the Anglican interpretation of orthodoxy.⁷⁶ Likewise, a periodical essay discussing the misapplication of religious vocabulary in the mid-1730s argued with reference to the term orthodoxy that 'all [were] claiming it, and, if they have power on their side, condemning all that differ from them, as atheists, or unbelievers'.⁷⁷ The term orthodox remained a term with considerable suggestive power.

68 Nockles 1993, 338.

69 [Ward], *A Fair Shell, but A Rotten Kernel*, 1705, preface; For reference to the Church of England as 'the most orthodox part', see John Giffard, *Family Religion*, 1713, 42.

70 Pocock 1995, 37, 41.

71 [Baron], *An Historical Account of Comprehension, and Toleration*, 1705, title.

72 Lund 1995, 2–3.

73 Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 1689.

74 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, 1–3, 175.

75 Lund 1995, 3.

76 Gordon, *The Creed of an Independent Whig*, 1720, title; [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW*18, 18 May 1720.

77 *The Old Whig*, No. 20, 24 July 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, July 1735, Reel 135; About a year later,

The discriminatingly Anglican sense of the term orthodox, with an underlying implication of political orthodoxy as well, survived though weakened in the course of the early eighteenth century. Gordon-Bailey (1730) and Chambers (1738) defined orthodoxy as 'a soundness of doctrine or opinion, with regard to all the points and articles of faith' and orthodox, with no sign of attempts to objectivity, as something done 'according to the true belief', expecting that all those who consulted the dictionary were aware of what true belief was. In Bailey's own dictionary (1733), too, orthodoxy was simply 'soundness of judgment, true belief' and orthodox something 'that is of a true or right opinion or belief'. Likewise, Martin (1749) remained loyal to the old definition of orthodoxy as 'the true belief'. Fenning (1741) was more restrictive in his definition, circumscribing the term orthodoxy to the religious sphere only; orthodoxy for him was 'soundness of doctrine or opinion in matters of religion'. Once again in Johnson's (1755) traditionalist interpretation, orthodoxy was an opposite to heretical and meant 'soundness in [religious] opinion and doctrine'. Unorthodox was someone 'not holding pure doctrine'. Wesley (1764), as another man of religion, was not ready to compromise but stated simply that orthodox was one 'holding right opinions'. In contrast, *A Pocket Dictionary* (1753) already dared to adopt a more cynical approach to the term orthodoxy, seeing it as 'the true belief, or what is thought so by those who are fond of applying the term to their own opinions'.

In everyday arguments, orthodoxy retained its general applicability into the 1730s. The *Craftsman*, for instance, wrote a few times, rather ironically, about politicians supporting Walpole's government who had turned 'perfectly orthodox' in politics.⁷⁸ Bolingbroke in particular willingly applied the attribute orthodox in his political propaganda, insisting in his political catechism that certain orthodoxy in relation to the fundamentals of the English constitution was essential and suggesting in his essays on parties that 'the civil faith of the Old Whigs' could well be made 'a test of political orthodoxy' for the Country Party.⁷⁹ His adversaries replied to such insinuations by suggesting that Bolingbroke's political 'faith' was accepted by all Whigs even though it was 'not exactly orthodox, according to our constitution'.⁸⁰ An essay of the *Daily Gazetteer* (1740) offers a similar instance of references to political orthodoxy.⁸¹ Statements concerning political orthodoxy were not always supported with detailed production of evidence. References to orthodoxy were easy to apply and probably retained much of their effectiveness without yet turning into entirely ironical expressions. Instances of questioning the justification of the

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the same periodical wrote ironically about medical quacks by applying the expression 'physical orthodoxy'. The point, though remaining rather obscure, may have been that it was as unrealistic to struggle for orthodoxy in medicine as it was in religion or politics, i.e. for 'believing and subscribing, whatever our superiors require, without reluctance or exceptions'. *The Old Whig*, No. 78, 2 September 1736, in *GM*, Vol. VI, September 1736, Reel 136.

78 C272, 18 September 1731; C380, 13 October 1733.

79 Bolingbroke, *The Freeholder's Political Catechism*, 1733, 5; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 27.

80 *London Journal*, No. 735, 28 July 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, July 1733, Reel 134.

terms orthodox and heterodox also occurred in this period.⁸²

Late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century English men and women experienced constant fears of rising disbelief. It was widely feared, for instance, that heterodoxy was gaining ground among the lower orders. The perceived threat, when compared to the actual numbers of the heterodox, turns out to have been a myth. But for those confused by contemporary intellectual upheavals and those fearing the consequences of emerging secularism in religious and rising republicanism in political thought, heterodoxy became an evil affecting all areas of life.⁸³

In dictionaries, definitions offered for heterodoxy might be very general, enabling ambiguous applications in different areas of discourse, including politics. For example, Coles (1701), Kersey (1715, 1731), Cocker-Hawkins (1724) and even *A Pocket Dictionary* of 1753 all defined heterodoxy simply as 'a being of another judgment or opinion than what is generally received'. Phillips-Kersey (1706) made use of the same definition but emphasised the primarily religious sense of the term. *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707), Bailey (1733), Defoe (1737) and Fenning (1741) all defined heterodox in essentially analogous terms as 'differing in sentiments or opinion from the generality of mankind', thus making a wide usage possible. Gordon-Bailey (1730) saw heterodoxy as 'the being different in opinion, from the generality of people, or the established principles', with no explicit reference to religion, yet interpreted heterodox to mean 'contrary to the faith or doctrine established in the true Church', which carried a whole deal of prejudice in favour of the Anglican Church as the representative of the only true faith. The same prejudice is reflected in Martin's (1749) definition of heterodox as being 'of different opinion from the Church'. Dyche-Pardon's (1740/1750) definitions were more detailed, revealing a lot of the contentious nature of the term. Heterodoxy was defined as 'the contradictiousness of a person's or nation's opinions from known, established truths, especially in matters of religion'. Heterodox was termed conventionally 'some opinions contrary to the established and true faith generally received in the Church', but the dictionary also stated the common wisdom among contemporaries that 'this word is very often applied by different parties to different things, each accusing the other of heterodoxy, when perhaps they are both so'. This more objective type of definition had also appeared in Chambers's (1728) remark that the term was mainly applied in polemical theology. However, the common definition was still followed by the authoritative Johnson (1755), who saw heterodox as 'deviating from the established opinion' or, even, as any 'opinion peculiar' and most distinctly by Wesley (1764), whose Methodist background hardly increased his toleration, as can be seen in his definition of heterodox as simply 'holding wrong opinions'. The general character of the definitions refers to the fact that the field of

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81 *The Daily Gazetteer*, No. 1507, 18 April 1740, Burney 351.

82 *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 10–11, 18–19.

83 Lund 1995, 11.

application for the term could still be extended outside of the sphere of religion – to that of politics.

The most vocal critics of the application of the term heterodoxy against those who questioned what they saw as misleading then prevalent doctrines include Toland. According to this anticlerical thinker, accusations of heterodoxy had become general for such trifling reasons that, instead of being a reproach, being called heterodox could be ‘the greatest honour imaginable’.⁸⁴ Such accusations of heterodoxy appear to have taken place on both the ultra-traditionalist and radical sides as, for instance, in connection with the trial of Sacheverell. Tindal reported Sacheverell having stated that ‘heterodoxy in the Church naturally produces, and almost necessarily infers rebellion and high treason in the state’; whereas Tindal himself gave to understand that the High-Church was itself guilty of fostering heterodoxy.⁸⁵

In 1710, Swift still attacked rival Whigs for favouring ‘every heterodox professor either in religion or government’,⁸⁶ that is, for letting Protestant Dissenters or Anglicans sympathetic towards them gain positions in the Church and even state. In the minds of most contemporaries, his expression may have created an association between both heterodoxy in a religious and political sense. On the whole, however, the term heterodox was relatively seldom used in a political context. The instances given here all date from the very beginning of the century, which suggests that the word was losing its applicability in political contexts when religion and politics were becoming increasingly seen as two separate areas of life.

84 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, xii, 175.

85 Tindal, *A New Catechism with Dr. Hickes's Thirty Nine Articles*, 1710, 7.

86 [Jonathan Swift], *The Examiner* (E), E33, 22 March 1711.

■ Heresies, Schisms and Sects in Religion and Politics

Parties in state, heresies in Church

Late seventeenth-century editions of the *Book of Common Prayer* contained the following litany to be pronounced by the congregation in Anglican services three times a week after the morning prayer: 'From all sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion; from all false doctrine, heresy and schism . . . Good Lord, deliver us'.¹ This was how the conforming English prayed, and this was how they had been taught to perceive religious pluralism: as something from which, together with the parallel and connected political rebellion, God was beseeched to protect the nation.

In the reign of Queen Anne, on every anniversary of the Queen's ascent to the throne, the nation was directed to repeat the prayer: 'Let not heresies, and false doctrines disturb the peace of the Church, nor schisms and causeless divisions weaken it; but grant us to be of one heart and one mind in serving thee our God, and obeying her according to thy will'.² In this prayer as well, the vital role of unity in both religion and politics was made crystal clear: on a national anniversary, loyal subjects asked God for uniformity in obeying the teachings of the established Church and, by implication, the political system with which the Church lived in a symbiotic relationship, embodied by the reigning Queen.

Heresy and schism were the strongest expressions within the wide register of derogatory terminology the Christian tradition could offer to eighteenth-century political polemicists searching for authoritative language to convince their readers. Augustine, for instance, had taught that schism tended to produce new schisms and led to heresy, which made it important to extinguish schism as soon as possible.³ In medieval thought, the particular danger of heresy had been seen in the possibility of schism, i.e. the threat which heresy posed to social and ecclesiastical order.⁴ Restoration writers had been particularly conscious of the problem of heresy and schism. Samuel Parker, for instance, had maintained that religious dissent, schism or heresy was equivalent to rebellion. When talking about schism and heresy, he had referred to the need for political order and not to some particular theological doctrines of their sinfulness: religious uniformity

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1 'The Litany' in *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1687 and 1693. A special reference to schism was added between the editions of 1642 and 1687 with the obvious intention of referring to Protestants dissenting from the established Church.

2 'A Form of Prayer for the 8th of March', in *The Book of Common Prayer*, [1702–1714].

3 Goldie 1991, 342.

4 Harrison 1990, 13.

was needed to secure political stability.⁵ Many other Restoration pamphlets and parliamentary speeches had also expressed fears that the 'heresy' and 'schism' of nonconformity encouraged political disobedience, as seen in the Interregnum.⁶ By the early eighteenth century, both terms were frequently used in fierce theological disputes between the Church of England and dissenting churches and also found their way into debates that later generations would interpret as political rather than religious. Given the religious motivation of much of party dispute, such borrowing must have been self-evident at least to the traditionalist majority of the audience. In contrast, for opponents of uniformity, the terms heresy and schism were constant objects of criticism which could be exploited in texts propagating innovative views.

Heresy was initially a biblical word, the pejorative sense of which is aptly condensed by the epistle passage 'a man that is an heretic . . . reject'.⁷ Writers held different views on the nature of heresy. Some saw it as an error of teaching while others considered heresy an error of will. Some wished to admonish heretics, others to teach them. Some took heresy to be the original form of party, not necessarily in a pejorative sense, while others saw it as a 'work of flesh' to be denounced. The proper definition for heresy was an important question to debate as it had direct effects on the justification of discriminatory legislation against deviant Christians and infidels.⁸ An early eighteenth-century dictionary states that heresy had originally signified 'choice' and had been used to denote a sect so that even St Paul himself had once stated that he had been of the heresy. As a result of a long history of disputes between competing Christian denominations, however, early eighteenth-century English thinkers took the word 'in an ill sense' as 'a fundamental error against religion'. A dictionary editor saw it as reasonable to warn against too general a use of the term, pointing out that 'no man is called heretic unless he is obstinate in his opinion'.⁹ This type of purely religious definition of the concept includes Defoe's 'heresy I take to consist, either in the denying of what is essentially necessary for salvation, to be believed, or in the believing of somewhat which is essentially inconsistent with the revealed terms of salvation'.¹⁰ A primarily religious approach also represented the definition of heresy as 'any doctrine that overthrows the faith, and destroys the foundation of religion, and the hope of salvation by Jesus Christ; especially if it is openly espoused, industriously

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5 Schochet 1995, 133, 135.

6 Schochet 1992, 131, 135; See also Goldie 1991, 332.

7 *Titus* 3:10; *King James Bible* contains four other references to heresy (*Acts* 24:14, 1 *Corinthians* 11:19, *Galatians* 5:20, 2 *Peter* 2:1), stating that 'there must be also heresies among you' and 'there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies'. The list 'strife, sedition, heresies' was also employed by the early 18th-century English. See <http://www.jubilee.org/bible/search.html>. According to the *OED*, the terms heresy, sect, party and faction had been used interchangeably in various English versions of the Bible.

8 Redwood 1976, 23–4.

9 Moréri-Collier 1701; St Paul's statements about heresy could be used both to attack heresy and to present it as an originally neutral term.

10 [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories* (1713), 10.

propagated, and obstinately persisted in'.¹¹ In practice, however, such a purely religious way of understanding heresy was accompanied by a much more generalised use.

The possibilities for a general use of the term heresy are reflected in several eighteenth-century dictionaries. Cocker-Hawkins (1704, 1724), Phillips-Kersey (1706), Kersey (1715) and Defoe (1737) all gave a general definition for heresy, presenting it as 'an opinion contrary to the fundamental points of religion'. In Cocker's 1704 edition, a heretic was anyone that maintained 'an opinion of his own, contrary to the Scriptures and doctrines of the Church'; the Church of England being by implication the one and only Church. Furthermore, this definition suggests that opposing Anglican doctrines of potential political relevance could be interpreted as heresy. According to the renewed edition of 1724, a heretic had opinions contrary to 'that which is called orthodox' - still a very vague definition. Particularly applicable for generalisations was the definition in the ancient Bullokar-Browne (1719), which was ready to label heretical any one or doctrine 'differing in chief points of religion from the common received opinion'. In 1764 Wesley still maintained that heresy was 'a sect or party; a dangerous opinion'. In principle, a party could still have been called a heresy. As Chambers (1728) pointed out, heresy was 'sometimes also used, by extension, for a proposition that is notoriously false in some other science besides theology'.

Later dictionary editors did not change much of their definition when compared to those of the earlier part of the century. Chambers (1728), Gordon-Bailey (1730) and *A Pocket Dictionary* (1753), for instance, repeated the definition of heresy as 'an error in some fundamental point of Christian faith; and an obstinacy in defending it'. According to Chambers, heresy might also rise out of 'a spirit of . . . faction'. Bailey's analogous definition for heresy from 1733 illustrates the continuous synonymy of 'Christian faith' and 'religion', the two being interchangeable. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) offered readers the most detailed account of the 'proper' application of the term, pointing out that heresy 'properly signifies only choice or liberty, and was formerly used to denote a particular sect; but now, and for many ages past, it has been, and still is taken in a bad sense, and means some fundamental error against religion, followed with obstinacy, and a resolute refusal of conviction'.¹² The definition for heretical reveals an assumed uniformity of belief in society, heretical being 'any thing that is false or contradictory to common or known truths'. A heretic was 'one who holds, maintains, invents, or propagates known falsities or heretical opinions in the Christian religion pertinaciously, obstinately, and wilfully, against all possible methods of conviction'.¹³ Fenning's definitions from the early 1740s were much the same, heresy, if 'used in a good sense, it implies a sect or collection of persons holding the same opinion' whereas 'in a bad sense, it implies a sect or number of persons separating from, and opposing

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¹¹ *A Brief Discourse of Schism*, 1714, 16.

¹² A parallel definition appeared in Martin 1749.

¹³ Repeated also in *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

the opinion of the Catholic Church, and as such culpable'. A heretic was anyone 'who propagates his private opinion, in opposition to that of the Church'. Such a definition left the word continuously usable in political discourse, as any disagreement with the Anglican Church could be interpreted as heretical thought and as such potentially dangerous to the English political constitution.

Another line of thought wished to restrict the use of the term heresy to religious discourse only. The definitions of the *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707), for instance, followed the ones used by Locke in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, stating that heresy was 'a separation made in ecclesiastical communion between men of the same religion for some opinions, which those that make the separation know are no way contained in the rule of their religion'. Consequently, a heretic was either 'a person knowingly maintaining false opinions against the Scriptures and the doctrines of the Church', or, according to Locke, one 'who divides the Church into parts, introduces names and marks of distinction, and voluntarily makes a separation because of such opinions'.¹⁴ Most of the writers of this line of thought did not regard the persecution of those known as heretics as necessary. On the basis of the history of the early Christian Church, they could claim that 'all the heresies that arose from Christ to Constantine, found no persecution of one Christian by another, any further than words'.¹⁵ Another author could 'by no means, approve the exaggeration of those men, who call all kinds of error, by the name of heresies'. He pointed out that his contemporaries, particularly the High-Church clergy, made use of religious words 'to hide the craft'.¹⁶ According to Francis Hare (1714), the term heretic contained 'a strange magic' though it had 'no determinate meaning' when used by the public. Originally, it carried no 'ill meaning' but was generally supposed to include everything that was bad. After being condemned for heretical opinions – whether being called a heretic, sceptic or an atheist – there was little one could do to restore one's reputation, as those who had given the label intensively looked for evidence for their claims.¹⁷

Criticism of the traditionalist way of using the term heresy can be particularly frequently found in anticlerical and republican texts of the period. Republican Whigs did not hesitate in attacking the use of the term in creating associations between the increasing plurality of values in religion and those in politics. Toland, one of the most radical of Presbyterian Whigs, started an unrelenting attack against what he regarded as false accusations of heresy with his *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696). According to Toland, violating in any way the interests of the established clerical hierarchy led to imputations of heresy. Likewise, argued Toland, party distinctions of all kinds were presented as 'so many sorts of heretics, or schismatics, or worse' by those favouring calling names in religious disputes. When doing so, Toland insisted, they were

14 The very same definitions had been used by Locke in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, 1689. See <http://english-server.hss.cmu.edu/18th/toleration.txt>.

15 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 47.

16 *Le Parterre de Fleurs*, 1710, 116-17.

17 Lund 1995, 5.

breaking against the principles of Christianity. Furthermore, attempts to live in an orthodox way as perceived by some divines only led to one being declared heretics by others. Referring to the apostle on whose teachings most condemnations of heresy were based, Toland stated provocatively: 'God knows, I no more value this cheap and ridiculous nickname of a heretic than Paul did before me.'¹⁸ To refute imputations of heresy, Toland chose a Bible passage in which heretic appeared as a neutral term, whereas most users of the term based their arguments on those parts of Scripture in which heresy appeared as an unambiguously derogatory one.

Toland's book, together with other publications provoking concern among traditionalist Anglicans, was replied to by Atterbury with a long list of new accusations of heresy. Atterbury, uneasy at the consequences of the Act of Toleration (1689) and the uncontrolled press (1695), saw 'heresies of all kinds' and 'heresies and innovations' rising in the country, and he called for strict measures to halt their progress.¹⁹ The constant heresy scare also remained a central feature of traditionalist thought in the early eighteenth century, Hearne and Sacheverell providing the best examples. For them, the heresies that had come into the open as a result of the Civil War provided a warning of what could happen if the established order in religion and politics collapsed.²⁰ Politico-religious charges making use of the term heresy also appeared, one of the most illustrative being Swift's suggestions that Whigs favoured 'heresies in the Church', and not only that, as 'all the heresies in politics' had also been encouraged by the Whig administration of the late 1700s.²¹ With 'heresies in the Church', Swift referred to the toleration of various forms of religious dissent. With 'heresies in politics', he probably meant the political line of the Whigs, but more particularly their measures against the High-Church campaign for cutting the extent of religious toleration. The association created by these expressions in contemporary minds was that religious and political heresy went hand in hand.

The mixing of heresy and politics flourished on the radical side as well. In 1717, Toland drew a controversial analogy between plurality in political and religious values, recognising both as potentially positive phenomena in Machiavellian terms:²²

Every division however, is not simply pernicious: since parties in the state, are just of the like nature with heresies in the Church: sometimes

18 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysteriorious*, 1696, vi, xxviii-ix, 2, 175.

19 Atterbury, *A Letter to a Convocation-Man*, 1697, 2, 26.

20 See e.g. Hearne's remarks on a sermon 'against heresies and new opinions' and his declaring Mr Whiston a heretic. *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 22 April 1707, Vol. II, 7, and 10 September 1709, Vol. II, 266. Sacheverell preached against the danger which heresies of freethinking caused to the nation as a whole in 1713 in Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government Destructive of Both*, 1713, 7. In his *Family Religion*, 1713, 42, Giffard lamented the number of heresies in England. See also Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division with respect both to Religion and Civil Government*, 1746, 3, which is a sermon preached to the House of Lords on the anniversary of the execution of Charles I.

21 Swift, E33, 22 March 1711, E40, 10 May 1711.

22 [John Toland], *State-Anatomy of Great-Britain*, [1717], preface.

they make it better, and sometimes they make it worse; but held within due bounds, they always keep it from stagnation.

Even though Toland's statement should not be interpreted as particularly revolutionary – parallel statements had appeared before, and many may also have considered it an ephemeral opinion – it provides one of the best illustrations of development towards the recognition of pluralism both in religion and in politics. The comparison between politico-religious party and religious heresy was nothing really innovative in contemporary discourse.²³

Religious minorities had intensively defended their right to existence though they had rarely dared to underscore the potential positive effects of religious pluralism. However, even the Bible, if it was so wished, could have been used for arguments about the inevitability of religious diversity.²⁴ In Toland's statement, this *limited* toleration of religious sectarianism was extended to concern politico-religious parties as well. Among the leading politicians, the reality of political parties remained something impossible to approve openly, particularly after the establishment of a near one-party rule after the Hanoverian Succession. Among the opposition Whigs, however, the defence of the continuous existence of several political voices was seen as essential. After a centuries-old religious strife seemed to have been brought into a conclusion by an increasingly widespread agreement of not silencing harmless heresies, it was the time, thought Toland, to find an analogous solution to political conflicts by allowing harmless party divisions. Toland's reference to the avoidance of political and religious stagnation through the tolerance of parties and heresies should not, however, be interpreted as a belief in progress aided by a modern party system that should have been introduced. Toland's work as a whole would rather suggest that his way of viewing society was more past than future oriented. Toland found his models in ancient Rome rather than was campaigning for the development of society through reforms. Considering the reference to the negative effects of stagnation in state and Church a sign of a breakthrough to modernity runs the risk of anachronism.

Other radical Whiggish writers criticised the way the term heresy was applied in reproaching religious and political rivals.²⁵ In the early 1720s, the writers of the *Independent Whig* censured the supporters of the High Church for 'an unintelligible jargon of undefined words', which contained the term heresy. They themselves applied the term to politics and ironically called independency at court 'a heresy in politics, never pardoned, much less countenanced there' and declared that their ideal Whig, as opposed to a Court Whig, 'scorns all

23 For example, in his *Civil Polity*, 1703, 614–15, Paxton had written about the essential link in world history, and also on the basis of reason, between 'state factions' and 'church schisms, or abominable heresies'.

24 The inevitability of heresies comes up in 1 Corinthians 11:19: 'There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you'. Quoted and explained in Bradford, *Christian Religion the Occasion*, 1716, 16.

25 These include [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 1, and *The Character of a Modern Tory*, 1713, 20. See also *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 15, and *The Daily Gazetteer*, No. 1501, 18 April 1740.

implicit faith in the state, as well as the Church'. The ironical phrase 'heresy in politics' was repeated in another periodical written by the same writers.²⁶ In both cases, the phrase was intended to indicate that the writers did not hesitate to propagate ideas that might be termed 'heresies in politics' by those in power. Indeed, they were defending the right of being a political heretic. In other words, they were defending the right to plurality of political values. This politico-religious analogy shows that these anticlerical writers spoke for secular politics and attacked traditionalists who, according to them, drew no proper distinction between political loyalty and religious conformity. Simultaneously, they were using a metaphor borrowed from religious language to attack the establishment Whigs who were unwilling to share power with opposition Whigs.

In Bolingbroke's political polemic in the 1730s, the vocabulary of heresy was useful in another way, not as clearly in connection with political pluralism but rather concerning the origins of government. In his political catechism, Bolingbroke viewed divine right theories of kingship as 'heretical doctrines' to be avoided by proper Englishmen. He built this argument about 'false doctrines' on a daring interpretation of Scripture that supported his own republican position. According to Bolingbroke, divine right theories were not based on the Bible but were actually in conflict with it: the Bible gave no description of the formation of the first political societies, the first government of Israel had been republican rather than monarchical, and Scripture provided several instances of bad absolute monarchs whereas many of its passages were in favour of the sovereignty of the people. As a result of such an unconventional interpretation, constitutional theories questioning republicanism appeared as 'heretical'.²⁷ Bolingbroke's manner of verifying his point illustrates how thinkers putting forward innovative political arguments considered it essential to legitimate their points through the use of religious language.

The rather few references to heresy that can be found in political texts published after 1720 indicate, with other parallel decreases in frequencies, that the role of religious terminology in political discourse was declining. Like other terms of religious origin, the language of heresy experienced a brief revival in the 1730s when the rights of the Dissenters were again eagerly debated. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, for instance, participated in a politico-religious debate in which the proper definition of the concept heresy was at stake. Whereas one writer had complained that the concept heresy had been used in a way that made no distinction between a heretic and a true Christian, the writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* called for an exact definition of the concept before it was applied as an object of fear even to people who were sincere in their beliefs.²⁸ In 1736, the *Gentleman's Magazine* quoted an essay in which it was ironically suggested that the only solution to heresy would be 'that the exercise

26 Gordon, *The Character of an Independent Whig*, 1719, 3; IW18, 18 May 1720; CL37, 15 July 1721.

27 Bolingbroke, *The Freeholder's Political Catechism*, 1733, 6–8.

28 GM, Vol. V, March 1735, Reel 135.

of thinking and reasoning be entirely demolished'.²⁹ By the late 1730s, such a remedy to variety in opinions must have appeared as unacceptable to a considerable proportion of the governing elite. The term heresy had lost much of its previous applicability as far as political contexts were concerned.

Schisms in politics

Many early eighteenth-century Englishmen had learned that schism was a sinful state that deserved to be put to scorn. In particular, the authorised version of the Bible stated that 'there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another'.³⁰ In their *Book of Common Prayer*, Anglican ministers could read about the severe consequences of schisms to the established Church during the Interregnum. Clarendon's history of the Civil War affirmed this tradition and added descriptions of the actions of the 'schismatical party' against the Church and state during those traumatic times. Neither did propaganda fail to remind readers about the deeds of 'schismatical and rebellious saints' during the Interregnum. Having inherited such attitudes towards schism, it is no wonder that the parishioners asked in their weekly prayers and especially in connection with national anniversaries – in accordance with the *Book of Common Prayer* but with conviction – for God to forgive them their schisms and deliver them from future ones.³¹

Few dictionary editors cared to discuss the etymology of the term schism. Those who cared might simply suggest that the word originated from divisions within the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages.³² As to the definition of schism itself, the editors were agreed. They defined schism uniformly as 'a separation/rent or division (in/from the Church)', sometimes leaving out the specification 'in the matters of religion' or adding the explanation that the strife was 'caused by diversity of opinions'. Likewise, a schismatic(al) was defined as one 'guilty of' or 'inclining to' separation from 'the true Church, and setting up new doctrines or discipline'. In other words, he/she was a separatist and one 'that is erroneous and gone astray'.³³ Importantly, however, not every separation from

29 *The Old Whig*, No. 63, 20 May 1736, in *GM*, Vol. VI, May 1736, Reel 136.

30 1 *Corinthians* 12:25 at <http://www.jubilee.org/bible/search.html>; Schisms in the Church of Corinth were deplored by Plaxton in *An Exhortation to Unanimity and Concord*, 1745, 1-2, for instance.

31 'The Litany', *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1681; 'A Form of Prayer for the 8th of March', *The Book of Common Prayer*, [1702-14]; Plaxton preached on the necessity of deserving God's forgiveness from schism in *An Exhortation to Unanimity and Concord*, 1745, 11; Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the Year 1641*, ed. W. Dunn Macray, Oxford 1969, 1702, Vol. II, 70, 417; *The Modern Champions*, 1710, no pagination.

32 Moréri-Collier 1701 mentioned two major schisms, the one between the Greek and Roman Church and the Great Schism of the Late Middle Ages.

33 Coles 1701; Cocker-Hawkins 1704; Phillips-Kersey 1706; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; *The Secretary's Guide*, 1721, 152; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Wesley 1764; Separatist appears to have been the most common synonym for schismatic. *Rectius Declinandum*, 1709, 10-11; The general definition for schism was followed in *Conscientious Nonconformity*, 1737, 5.

the established Church was necessarily defined as a schism, if Defoe (1737) and Bailey (1733) are to be believed: a division from the Christian Church was a schism only if it took place 'without just cause'. Noteworthy is also the way Chambers (1728) and Gordon-Bailey (1730) referred to the potential wider applicability of the term for referring to diversity of views when defining schism as a term that 'is chiefly used of a separation, happening through diversity of opinions, among people of the same religion and faith'. Their dictionary also gave the forms schismatic as 'a separatist, or one who separates from the Christian Church' and the related verb to schismatize. Dyche and Pardon, whose dictionary first came out in the 1730s, were careful in defining terms such as schism in their own words without repeating definitions already printed elsewhere. According to them, schism was, in its general sense, 'a wilful and resolute breaking off or going from any person or persuasion' but more particularly it meant 'persons of the same general religion or faith' who separated 'upon account of some particulars of lesser moment'. Schismatical, argued Dyche-Pardon, was 'inclining, yielding, encouraging, or being guilty of schism' and a schismatic 'a separatist, a leaver or forsaker of the public worship for the sake of some particular humour, fancy, or unjustifiable opinion'. The continuously uncompromising line among the editors of dictionaries is illustrated in Fenning's definition of schism as late as 1741 as 'a criminal separation or division in religion'.

According to some Dissenters and their defenders, schism and heresy stood for two different forms of religious diversity. By contrast, in traditionalist texts, the terms often appeared in the same contexts with no difference in meaning being made. According to John Sage, who was a traditionalist writer himself, those sympathetic towards dissent might argue that schism should be contrasted and distinguished from heresy as 'a breach . . . among Christians consenting together in the same faith'. Such a breach could take place either within the Church or from it, and it might be from worship or purely from Church government. In contrast, Sage himself, following traditionalist organic analogies, defended the unity of the Church and condemned 'the dreadful leprosy of schism' as 'an infection' within the Church which he considered the one body of Christ. For Sage, schism and heresy were self-evidently synonymous:³⁴

It is certain the word heretic, naturally signifies the same thing which we mean by the word schismatic. It is certain that in the apostolic age, and many after ages, heresy and schism were words indiscriminately used to signify any communion opposite to the one catholic communion . . . Heretic . . . signifies schismatic or separatist . . . He is to be rejected . . . He is turned out of the true way . . .

Such an uncompromising understanding of schism can be contrasted with that of Defoe who, as a defender of Protestant 'schismatics', drew a clear distinction

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34 Sage, *The Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705, 46, 68–9, 75–6, 81.

between heresy and schism, defining schismatic as 'one who though true in his *credendas*, believing all things necessary to be believed, yet for some unjustifiable cause, refuses to communicate with the Church, whom he believes to hold all things necessary to salvation, and to believe nothing inconsistent with it'.³⁵

Schism was a favourite term for traditionalist polemicists among whom it was used with a conviction of the necessity to end what traditionalists saw as a state in which 'each schismatic tribe a church became, much differing, yet all Protestant by name',³⁶ i.e. the constant existence of Protestant dissent side by side with the Protestant Church of England. 'Conforming to the Church of England occasionally, and yet keeping up a schism against her',³⁷ that is, occasional conformity among the Dissenters for securing a position, was presented as a particularly disturbing phenomenon. The concept of schism was central to public debate in 1713-14 in the days of the passage of the Schism Act with which the Tory traditionalists intended to destroy religious dissent by interdicting dissenting teaching.³⁸

What were, then, according to this traditionalist line of thought, the religious, social and political consequences of schism? The potential societal implications of schism are visible in the Jacobite Mathias Earbery's restrictive definitions of Church as 'a society of men united for the preservation of the Christian faith, and to promote the eternal happiness of mankind', and the counter-concept schism as 'an internal obstruction of those methods, by which this society works to obtain its ends'.³⁹ Another way to express doubts as to the social consequences of schism was to lament how 'some . . . out of pride and self-conceit, or interest, and enthusiasm, will set themselves up against the rest, and create schisms and divisions in the community, to the disturbance of all about them'.⁴⁰

Among traditionalist documents filled with the scare of schism, Hearne's diary is one of the most illustrative. The diary contains statements by an Oxford librarian, his fellow academics and leading adherents of the High Church in favour of measures for 'healing the schism'. Hearne attended High-Church sermons, supported their proposals for prohibiting occasional conformity, and inveighed in his diary against 'those schisms and confusions which now disturb the whole kingdom'. 'the prevailing of faction and schism in the nation' and 'Presbyterians, and other schismatics, who had already once ruined the Church and government'.⁴¹ The High-Church divines, whom Hearne listened to with approval, preached against Protestant Dissenters by using expressions such as

35 [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 10.

36 Ward, *A Fair Shell, but a rotten Kernel*, 1705, 52; For other instances of a fear of expanding schisms, see Evelyn's comments on Mr Wye's and an anonymous doctor's sermons in *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 4 February 1700, Vol. V, 378, and 8 November 1702, Vol. V, 520.

37 [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 71.

38 Hill 1976, 144.

39 M[athias] E[arbery], *Elements of Policy Civil and Ecclesiastical, In a Mathematical Method*, 1716.

40 *A Free-Thinker at Oxford*, 1719.

41 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. I, 17 November 1705, 79, 16 December 1705, 130, 28 April 1706, 237, 6 September 1706, 287, 9 October 1706, 293.

'a formal schism', 'the dangerous infection of a then growing schism' and 'factious and schismatical impostors'. In Sacheverell's famous sermon of 1709, in particular, schism was presented in both religious and medical terms as one of the worst possible phenomena.⁴²

Swift, a more moderate Tory, claimed that these traditionalist Anglicans used the term schismatic in a parallel way with those Whigs who frequently talked about the High Church as a faction; both sides did this in order to condemn the majority of people. No matter how plausible this observation about the use of the term schism was, Swift himself drew analogies between religious schisms and political parties by referring to Whigs and Tories as 'civil schisms'⁴³ and as a 'schism in politics'.⁴⁴ These two formulations referring to political party rivalry by using terminology borrowed from the discourse on religious diversity demonstrate the ease with which the two interconnected discourses were conflated. Such conceptualisations of political pluralism were completely plausible to most contemporaries and did not necessarily appear as metaphorical or even ironical.

Indeed, the two phenomena were seen as universally interconnected by many, as Paxton's *Civil Polity* (1703) shows when referring to the inevitable links between 'civil factions' and 'church schisms' in history.⁴⁵ Presbyterian preachers had also connected these two types of schisms in their sermons during the Civil War; this was at least the point of those traditionalists who reprinted old Presbyterian sermons attacking schism in order to use their arguments against Whigs and Dissenters in 1710. Matthew Newcomen's statement in front of Parliament in 1644, for instance, fully fitted the interests of opponents of Dissenters in 1710. Newcomen had stated that 'a schism in the state' without delay gave rise to 'a schism in the Church' and, conversely, 'a schism in the Church' necessarily caused 'a schism in the state'. What was more, a schism in the state stood not for some harmless disagreement in opinions but for civil war.⁴⁶ J. A. W. Gunn has referred to an early Hanoverian author who discussed the misuse of sectarian terms of abuse and the assumption that people should have held orthodox views in politics as well as in religion. According to that writer, schism meant in religious affairs the same as faction in politics, and both conveyed the assumption of being somehow detrimental to the public good.⁴⁷

42 Rennell, *The Nature, Causes, and Consequences of Divisions*, 1705, 7; Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church and State*, 1709, 7, 23. Sacheverell repeated his criticism against schisms in *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government Destructive of Both*, 1713, 7, 19; Needham, *Considerations concerning the Origine and Cure of our Church-Divisions*, 1710, 4.

43 Swift, E31, 3 March 1711, E33, 22 March 1711.

44 Swift to the Earl of Peterborough, [19] February 1711, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 211; Swift congratulated Peterborough who stayed abroad for having 'left off breathing party-air' and claimed that he was 'apt to think this schism in politics has cloven our understandings, and left us but just half the good sense that blazed in our actions'.

45 Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 614–15; For the connection between 'schisms in the Church' and 'parties in the state' in English history, see also *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 5.

46 *Bodkins and Thimbles: or, 1645 against 1710*, 1710, 27, quoting Mr Matthew Newcomen's sermon before the Parliament, 12 September 1644.

47 Gunn 1972, 17.

Without a doubt, when Swift introduced the phrases 'civil schism' and 'schism in politics', it was in the Tory interest to induce his readers to perceive political pluralism in the same terms as they perceived religious diversity. Tories wished to present party conflict as primarily religious, and what better way of doing so than writing, instead of parties, directly about schisms. As far as schisms were concerned, Tories, as defenders of the established Church, always felt themselves representing the most powerful and the only acceptable grouping of all. Indeed, every Tory reader believed that the Church of England could not be justifiably called a schism and her defenders the Tories schismatics. 'Civil schisms' and 'schisms in politics' were as evil as schisms in religion, and Whigs and Dissenters together were guilty of both.

Whig responses to Tory polemic making use of the term schism were highly conscious of the polemical power of religious terms in political discourse. Republican Whigs shared Locke's view that 'he that denies not anything that the Holy Scriptures teach in express words . . . cannot be either a heretic or schismatic'.⁴⁸ Accordingly, they could argue that⁴⁹

. . . the term schism, which is of the offensive kind, and very furiously dealt about amongst all such as do not exactly come up to the political model of the national Church; . . . By the loose and random use of this term, it is manifest, that very few affix any determinate meaning thereunto; and those who are most eager in the charge, seem quite unacquainted with the controversies from whence it arises; and therefore they throw it about amongst all they do not like, for no other reason, but as it appears to carry in it something of reproach; so that wheresoever we find it, it seldom goes for any other than a mark of ill nature and malice, and is entirely destitute of any other signification, but a dislike of the person upon which it is charged. Those who at all concern themselves in meanings, understand by it, a groundless rent, a separation from some religious society, of which the separatists were once members.

A parallel attitude towards the use of the term schism can be found in a fictitious dialogue between an Anglican divine and his son who had converted to nonconformism, published in 1737. According to the son, 'real schism' was indeed 'a great sin', but the term schism was commonly used merely as 'a term of reproach, and a religious scarecrow to make some appear odious, and to [frighten] others from them'. Denying the schismatical character of the Nonconformists on the basis that their separation from the Church was unavoidable, the son argued that real schism would have been the same in the Church as rebellion in the state.⁵⁰ At its most scornful towards the application of the term schism as a reproach, radical polemic sympathetic to dissent might take the form of describing how, in the human body, various senses could act separately from each other without the least danger of schism.⁵¹ In an analogous

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⁴⁸ Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 1689.

⁴⁹ *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 17–18; Earlier references to the same include [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, xxviii.

⁵⁰ *Conscientious Nonconformity*, 1737, 6, 25.

⁵¹ *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 7–9, 27.

manner, it was argued, separation in religious (and consequently political) opinions did not lead to schisms and so did not deserve that derogatory name. In the *Independent Whig*, the radicals summed up what they saw as an essential connection between the religious and political plurality of values: 'Civil and religious liberty are certain signs of each other, and live and die together; but, I believe I may lay down for a maxim, that in any country where there is never a separatist from the Church, there is never a freeman in the state'.⁵²

Whereas, in the early years of the century, the term schism could occasionally be applied to conceptualisations of political parties, such conceptualisations were disappearing in the course of time, as an increasing proportion of the political elite became willing to distinguish between religious and political organisations at the conceptual level. However, all sections of the political elite conceived pluralism in religion and in politics as interconnected.

Sect in religion and other areas of discourse

The term sect had belonged to English public discourse since the Middle Ages, denoting a body of persons united in holding views that differed from those of others who were of the same religion. Accordingly, in many early eighteenth-century sources, sect was listed together with such authoritative terms as Church and religion, though not as an equal but as a derogatory alternative for the two positive expressions. Eighteenth-century Englishmen willingly applied positive expressions such as 'right religion' for describing themselves and 'sect' to describe others. The history of the 1640s and 1650s, in particular, was customarily discussed in terms of sectarianism. These decades of Civil War and Republic gave continuous ballast to the terminology of sectarianism, as the Dissenters and their opponents held contradictory historical memories of the republican period. Whereas some Dissenters continued to use political language inherited from the Commonwealth, their opponents reminded the public of the role of sectaries in the regicide of 1649. In addition to religious disputes, the meanings of sect were broadened outside a purely religious sense so that the word sometimes signified also a school of opinion in philosophy or politics.⁵³

Abundant published and private sources demonstrate that, in early eighteenth-century discourse, the terms sect and party frequently occurred in

52 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW36, 21 September 1720.

53 OED: sect; In *King James Bible*, the term appears five times in the *Acts*, each time in a pejorative sense. See <http://www.jubilee.org/bible/search.html>; Evelyn had heard a sermon recommending charity to everyone independently of one's 'sect or religion'. *The Diary of John Evelyn*, Vol. V, 17 June 1705, 599; In the preface to his treatise on political systems, Paxton promised not to spare any 'church, sect, or party' from criticism concerning their appearing, without exceptions, vicious when in power. Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, preface; For sect as something inferior to church, see [Charles Leslie], *The Second Part of the Wolf Stript of His Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 3, and *The Church of England the Sole Encourager of Free-Thinking*, Nottingham 1717, title; The author of *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 47, wrote about 'different religions and sects' in Japan which all were allowed a religious freedom; For a discussion of the sects of the 1640s and 1650s, see Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 33; Webb 1992, 159; Albers 1993, 318.

close connection. Indeed, the terms sect, party and faction were employed in such synonymous ways, particularly in religious issues,⁵⁴ that it remains doubtful whether the three were generally distinguished from each other at all. The synonymy of the terms sect, faction and party is particularly noticeable in the definition of sectary as 'separating, or setting apart from others, one that adheres to any sect, i.e. faction or party'.⁵⁵ This synonymy was also expressed in French in a description of English parties: '... il n'y a que deux partis parmi nous, ... qui sont les Whigs et les Torys, sous lesquels sont comprises toutes les autres sectes et factions'.⁵⁶ Sect, party, and even faction, signified essentially the same in religious issues, and even though no one used an expression such as 'political sect', the associations between religious sects and political parties remained unavoidable for as long as in common conscience politics did not form a sphere clearly independent of religion. These associations were exploited by early eighteenth-century party writers, both those advocating the union between religion and politics and those fighting against it.

In spite of these associations between religious sect and political party, some dictionaries presented sect as an essentially religious term. Sect was defined as 'a party (divided from the Church)',⁵⁷ 'party, or singular opinion, one that cuts himself off from the public faith, or Church'⁵⁸ or 'a party professing the same opinion in divinity or philosophy'.⁵⁹ In the mid-eighteenth century, the specific character of sect as opposed to political parties, for instance, became visible in definitions such as 'a religious party' and 'a particular party in religion'.⁶⁰

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- 54 The synonymy of sect and party (sometimes faction) is visible, for instance, in Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 2.33.18; Matthew Hole, *The Danger of Division*, 1702, 24; Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 77; Anthony Collins to John Locke, 27 May 1704, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VIII, 305. In order to be precise, Collins used the expression 'religious sect'; Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren*, both in *Church and State*, 1709, 9; *The Humble Confession and Petition of a Whig with his Eyes Open*, 1712, 9; [Steele and Isaac Watts], S461, 19 August 1712; *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 11 August 1715, 74; *The Country Hobb upon the Town Mobb: Or, the Party Scuffle*, 1715, 1, 6, 8; *A Tory Pill, to Purge Whig Melancholy: Or, a Collection of above One Hundred New Loyal Ballads, Poems, etc. Written In Defence of Church and State*, 1715, 42; *The Church of England the Sole Encourager of Free-Thinking*, 1717, 5; *A Sure Way to Orthodoxy*, 1718, 19, 29. In this source, the expressions 'sects of religion' and 'parties of men' obviously both refer to religious divisions; [Trenchard and Gordon], IW12, 6 April 1720; IW19, 25 May 1720; [Trenchard], CL124, 13 April 1723; Edward Synge, *The Case of Toleration consider'd with Respect both to Religious and Civil Government*, Dublin 1726, 25; [Benjamin Grosvenor], *An Essay on the Christian Name. Its Origin, Import, Obligation, and Preference to all Party-Denominations*, 1728, 51, 53; *A Guide Into the Knowledge of Publick Affairs, both Foreign and Domestick*, 1728; *Fog's Journal*, No. 237, 19 May 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, May 1733, Reel 134; *London Journal*, No. 750, 10 November 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, November 1733, Reel 134; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 26; Bayle, *The Dictionary*, Vol. IV, 711; [Zachary Grey], *A Caveat Against the Dissenters*, 1736, 1; Story, *Thomas Story's Discourse*, 1737?, 26; *Conscientious Nonconformity*, 1737, 26, 85.
- 55 *Glossographia* 1707: According to Kersey 1715 and Defoe 1737, faction was 'a party, or sect' and sectary 'a follower of a particular sect or party'; This kind of usage is illustrated by [Robert Ferguson], *Who Plot Best; The Whigs or the Tories*, 1712, 2.
- 56 *Le Chevalier de St. George, Réhabilité dans sa Qualité de Jacques III*, Whitehall? 1713, 60.
- 57 Coles 1701; Cocker-Hawkins 1724.
- 58 Cocker-Hawkins 1704.
- 59 Phillips-Kersey 1706; Kersey 1715 and 1731 and Defoe 1737 gave the same definition but left 'in divinity or philosophy' out; For sects in philosophy, see e.g. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 2.3.8. and sects of philosophy and religion, 2.33.18.
- 60 Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

Likewise, some of the editors defined sectary restrictively as 'one that follows private opinions in religion'⁶¹ or 'one that follows a particular sect, separated from the established Church'.⁶² In contrast with such religiously oriented definitions, however, the most imprecise explanation offered for sect was simply 'a particular opinion of some few', 'a number of people, professing the same principles', or 'such as follow the doctrines or opinions of some famous divine or philosopher, etc'.⁶³ This general sense of the term appeared also in everyday use as seen, for instance, in Locke's reference to 'the sect of the literati, or learned' in ancient China and by Cheyne's way of writing about 'sects of physic'.⁶⁴

No major alterations in dictionary definitions for sect can be discovered as far as the early eighteenth century is concerned. The dictionaries of the 1730s and 1740s are rather unsurprising in their definitions of sect as 'a party professing the same opinion' and in the derived terms sectarian and sectary.⁶⁵ Dyche-Pardon (1740), instead of merely repeating the conventional definition of sect as 'a number of persons professing the same opinions', excluded potential use in political discourse by adding that a sect 'is commonly supposed to be in opposition to the received opinions either of religion or philosophy'. Sectarious, sectaries and sectarists were those who follow 'the opinion of a sect or party', and, in the English context, the terms usually referred to 'a Dissenter from the established religion'.⁶⁶ Fenning (1741) gave a very general definition for sect, implying no attempt to restrict its applicability only to the sphere of religion. For him, sect was 'a body of men following some particular master, or adopting some peculiar tenet' and sectary 'one who refuses to comply with the public establishment, and joins with others of an opinion contrary to it'.⁶⁷ On the basis of Fenning's dictionary, any group of dissidents might be defined as a sect. Unlike some previous dictionary editors, however, Fenning refrained from criticising sects on religious grounds.

When participations in public discourse are analysed, it becomes clear that the term sect carried essentially pejorative connotations and that it was commonly applied, and not only in strictly religious contexts. Sects were very much a 'political' concern as well. High-Church writers in particular did not hesitate to employ the word in a variety of contexts, expressing their certainty that the Church (and consequently the connected political constitution) was in danger of 'the invasion of sectaries' who had grown so numerous and who had already in 'forty-one' (1641) and in the subsequent Civil War 'violently overturned the Church and state'. In connection with their campaign for forbidding occasional conformity, they regretted the way 'so many sects are

61 Bullokar-Browne 1719.

62 Kersey 1731.

63 Bullokar-Browne 1719; John Sage, *The Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705, 51; Chambers 1728.

64 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 1.3.8; George Cheyne, *The English Malady: Or, a Treatise of Nervous Diseases of all Kinds*, 1733, 152.

65 Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; Wesley 1764.

66 Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750.

67 Fenning 1741.

countenanced' and 'sectaries of all sorts are openly tolerated'. It was also feared that 'the admission of sectaries into the state', that is, extending their political rights, would speedily lead into a downfall of the established Church.⁶⁸

After a calmer phase in politico-religious discourse in the 1720s, sects became once again criticised for causing political instability from the mid-1730s onwards. Warburton wrote in his influential *Alliance between Church and State* (1736), which opposed the proposed abolition of the Test Act, that the allowance of 'many and discordant sects' into political power would have led to violent political disturbances to 'the original union' between the Church and state.⁶⁹ An even more straightforward statement against sectarianism as a cause of political pluralism of an undesired type was contained in an attack against Methodism which was published in the *Common Sense* in 1739. Writing about the effects of sectarianism – Methodism in particular – on civil society, the author stated:⁷⁰

I think it must be owned by all, that a multitude of sects in religion must be very disadvantageous to any community. Differences of opinion in religious matters not only breed dissensions and animosities among the people, but generally carry along with them a diversity of sentiments with regard to government.

This statement was far from original. Rather the reappearance of such a traditionalist statement as a reaction to the rise of the new sect of Methodism demonstrates the continuity of the widely shared inherited idea of a unitary society. Reflecting the unchanged attitudes of the Anglican majority, the writer presented religious pluralism as necessarily harmful and connected it, without the least reservation, with political pluralism.

Numerous ways were available for expressing the writer's negative attitude towards sectarianism. Evelyn, for instance, seems to have agreed with a preacher who saw the seventeenth-century Church of England having been threatened by 'so many dangerous sects'. Furthermore, when lamenting the degeneration of his age, he listed sectaries together with atheists and deists, all being in need of reformation.⁷¹ These 'sectarists against the Church', as viewed by traditionalist writers, might include 'the whole sect of Socinian Whigs, and Republican Deists' as well as Presbyterians, former Puritans, and from the 1730s onwards, also 'the new sect of Methodists'.⁷² The answer of the

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68 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 30; [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 3, 5; *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. I, 3 November 1705, 65; *Rectius Declinandum*, 1709, 15; For the dangers of spreading sectarianism, see also Giffard, *Family Religion*, 1713, 42; For the bitter memories of sectarianism during the Civil Wars, see Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government Destructive of Both*, 1713, 19; *The Church of England Man's Memorial*, 1718, title.

69 Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 3.

70 *The Common Sense*, 19 April 1739, in *GM*, Vol. IX, May 1739, Reel 137.

71 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, May 1700, Vol. V, 408, and 17 October 1703, Vol. V, 546.

72 *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented*, 1702, 2; [Leslie], *The Second Part of The Wolf Stript of His Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, title; Socinians were followers of Faustus Socinus (1539–1604), who had denied the divinity of Christ and represented Him instead as a moral exemplar. Clark 1985, 281; Place, *The Arbitration: Or, the Tory and Whig*

Presbyterians to attacks against them as a sect often took the form of criticism of the High Church and counter-arguments that 'the people that were called Puritans, and now Presbyterians, have no fellowship with politicians and sectaries'. The 'sectarian party', with which no-one wished to be associated, was charged with 'wild extravagances',⁷³ and the sectarian character of the Presbyterians strictly negated.

Neutral, not to say positive, statements on sects in early eighteenth-century sources are much more difficult to find. *Harmony without Uniformity* (1740) is one of the very few pamphlets which dared to suggest that the existence of a great number of various sects was indeed pleasing to God.⁷⁴

In political periodicals, sectarianism was often used as a means of political allusion. During the heated election campaign of the autumn of 1710, stimulated by the politico-religious mixture of the Sacheverell affair, the organ of the Tory party compared Whigs with young Rosicrucians who 'must be exercised in a certain jargon of unintelligible words, before they can be received among the adepts'.⁷⁵ Somewhat later, Swift, the new editor of the *Examiner*, being well aware of the realities of political strife, polemically insinuated that the Whig party, then in opposition, was a sect which had once been ready to 'raise a rebellion, murder their king, destroy monarchy and the Church'.⁷⁶ Such accusations were aimed at making the readers associate Whiggism with the radical sectarians of the Interregnum who had then overturned both the Church and state. Indeed, neither did Whiggish writers miss an opportunity for parallel allusions concerning Tory assumptions of the character of political groupings. Addison, a Whiggish moderate Anglican, once called Whigs and Tories 'two religious orders'⁷⁷ with the obvious purpose of ridiculing the traditionalist Anglican Tories for mixing religious and political issues. This insinuation was, of course, intended to be ironic and understood as such with a great deal of certainty; yet its humorous character was based on widely shared assumptions about similarities between religious sects and political parties. Such analogies were not merely metaphorical: religious sects and political parties had several common features and were interpreted in similar terms. Analogies between religious sects and political parties were favourites for writers with republican inclinations. These analogies may have been so self-evident to many other contemporaries, who called religious sects 'parties' and did not consider it necessary to distinguish between 'political' and other sects, that they had no

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Reconcil'd, 1711, 23; Peter Annet, *Judging for Ourselves*, 1739, title; On 3 May 1749 (Strawberry Hill), Horace Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann, with reference to Methodism: 'If you ever think of returning to England, . . . you must prepare yourself with Methodism . . . this sect increases as fast as almost ever any religious nonsense did'. Horace Walpole, *Selected Letters*, ed. William Hadley, 1967, 506.

73 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, iv, 21, 57.

74 *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 48.

75 [William King, ed.], E8, 21 September 1710; The Rosicrucians were devoted to the study of metaphysical and mystical lore. This magical and cabalistic group probably never existed as an organisation, but the term was applied to a number of societies that appeared as somehow secret and thus suspicious. Jacob 1976, 217-18.

76 Swift, E36, 12 April 1711.

77 [Addison], T129, 4 February 1710.

need to write them down. Radical authors, who dared to question the conventional intermixing of political and religious issues, recorded these analogies with ironical undertones. They opposed sectarian enthusiasm but they opposed party politics as well. These two negative phenomena could be easily lumped together and both rejected. Gordon, for instance, compared political parties to sects when writing about their unwillingness to allow restrictions on their power, parties being 'like sects in religion, who all abhor persecution, and disclaim its spirit while it is over them, but fall almost all into it when they are uppermost'.⁷⁸

Even though the few cases in which a conceptual distinction between party and sect is drawn may not be sufficient for concluding that such a distinction had emerged and had also been universally adopted, they reflect a gradual development towards separate terminologies for discussing pluralism in religion and politics. Sects in religion and parties in politics were not infrequently presented as simultaneous historical phenomena,⁷⁹ and in such texts they were usually seen as two separate organisations that had been deliberately brought into interconnection. Paxton, for instance, took the anarchical circumstances of the Interregnum as an explanation why 'the people [had] spawned into differing religious sects, and of course into different political factions'. He then distinguished between sects (Presbyterians, Independents and Anabaptists) and parties (the Commonwealth Party, the Levellers and the Fifth-Monarchy-Men), which all, in spite of the conceptual difference, functioned very much in parallel ways, all persecuting others when in power.⁸⁰ The connection between religious sects and political parties appeared as unavoidable also to an obviously dissenting writer who would have allowed the co-existence of several religious sects but would have abolished political parties as disturbers of peace:⁸¹

... state factions will naturally unite with religious sects, where a people are divided into different ones; And it is certain, that different sects of religion, may peaceably and quietly subsist under the same civil government, and will be promiscuously admitted into the magistracy where state factions do not interpose for them.

More instances of slight conceptual distinctions being drawn between parties and 'sects and persuasions in religion' can be found in texts dating from the late 1730s and 1740s. In an anonymous pamphlet, for instance, both parties in politics and sects in religion were lamented and discussed as separate phenomena, yet as phenomena that became frequently intermixed.⁸² Warburton, who was defending the existence of an established religion in 1736, argued that, in the case of allowing several sects or Churches within a state, each

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78 [Gordon], CL96, 29 September 1722.

79 An instance of this can be found in [A True Britain], *A View of the Present Divisions in Great Britain*, 1708, 4.

80 Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 573.

81 *Occasional Thoughts Concerning Our Present Divisions, And Their Remedies*, 1704, 18.

82 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 3, 12, 15.

of them would have considered itself the only true, or at least the most perfect, and advance its interests at the cost of others. For the purpose of securing a monopoly in religious life, each sect naturally tended to turn to political power for assistance 'by introducing a party into the public administration' and by endeavouring to convince the state that its interests were very much concerned in religious disagreements. This abuse of political power for religious purposes was, according to Warburton, the way in which politico-religious strife was augmented.⁸³ Warburton's text leaves the impression that party was seen as a secular extension for a religious sect. Warburton saw the two as interconnected; yet he made a slight conceptual distinction between them. Such a conceptual distinction between political parties and religious sects is obvious also in Mawson's text, published a decade later, in which he described how, in the seventeenth century, 'all the several sects of religion' had united with 'the discontented parties in the state' with serious consequences to both the ecclesiastical and political constitutions. Mawson pointed out, like Warburton, that each sect had then attempted to establish its own forms of worship and doctrine as the only true ones. Having been previously persecuted, they, once in power, began to persecute others.⁸⁴

Even though dictionaries continued to define sect in general terms, political writers were becoming increasingly conscious of a distinction between religious sect and political party, which was a significant step in the transformation of attitudes toward political pluralism. The continuously pejorative associations of sectarianism no longer hindered an adoption of more sympathetic attitudes towards political parties, which was increasingly done towards the end of the eighteenth century.

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83 Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 63, 116.

84 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 7–8.

■ Party, or Rather Faction¹: Parties and Factions in Religion and Politics

Attitudes towards parties: state of research

'Party' was one of the most frequently used expressions in early eighteenth-century public discourse. Contemporary parties, Whigs and Tories, were organisations seeking to gain political power, and the extent of organisational and ideological coherence that existed within them should not be underestimated even when compared with many coalition parties in present-day western societies.² Twentieth-century preconceptions of political parties as inescapable and highly organised secular institutions in any democratic government, however, cannot be transferred to the eighteenth century without risk of undue anachronism.³ At the dawn of the eighteenth century, attitudes towards parties were still based on considerations that cannot be interpreted as purely 'political'.

The history of early eighteenth-century political parties as political institutions is well established in studies on political history. It has been demonstrated, for instance, that the structure and content of politics under Queen Anne differed from the rather more connection-based politics of the mid-eighteenth century, that party ideologies mattered throughout the century, that party conflict divided society at all levels, and that the contemporary electorate often had a crucial role in elections.⁴ For historians of ideas as well, parties have been a rather conventional topic of study. Yet historians studying conceptions of political parties have customarily concentrated on searching for progressive views that demonstrate how some later party system came into being. Their work has built on famous thinkers such as the Marquess of Halifax, Viscount Bolingbroke, David Hume and Edmund Burke whose texts appear to have brought essentially new elements to party theories. In recent years, even this type of study has received relatively little attention, probably because it is felt that the field has already been adequately explored. This chapter suggests, however, that our present understanding of early eighteenth-century conceptions of political parties is far from complete and might benefit from a conceptual approach to the issue.

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1 An expression used e.g. in [Swift], E31, 8 March 1711, and C306, 13 May 1732.

2 For defining the concept of political party, see Harris 1993, viii, 5.

3 See Jones 1961, 2.

4 Speck 1970, 22; Holmes 1987, xiii, xv-xvi; Reviews of these and other studies can be found in Dickinson 1976, in Thomas 1987, and in Black 1989.

In the history of ideas, a major transformation in attitudes toward parties has been traced in the late eighteenth century. Caroline Robbins, for instance, dated an increasing recognition of political parties as an inevitable, necessary and even respectable part of popular government in the reign of George III (1760–1820). Already for two centuries before that, she argued, some Englishmen had realised the existence of political parties, accepted their role in a free state, and developed party theories. Robbins admitted that the overwhelming majority of Englishmen continued to condemn parties and factions, promoted uniformity of opinion, and preferred nonpartisan public service, believing that good men should find it easy to agree on measures to ensure the well-being of their country. Heresies in religion were felt to be leading to anarchy, factions among politicians facilitating the rise of tyranny, management by ministers resulting in a decline in public spirit, and associations among citizens promoting conspiracy and strife. Everyone denied their own status as party men and accused opponents of being guilty of partisanship. Robbins, however, doubted the significance and frankness of these condemnations of party, pointing out that the English were well aware of variety in both religious and political ideas and of the importance of political organisation. The experiences of the Civil War, the Exclusion Crisis and the non-party Revolution of 1688 may have caused criticism of the concept of party, but this criticism was increasingly accompanied by arguments for the value of dissidence in politics, the criminality of being neutral in significant disputes, the importance of securing the balance of the constitution, and the fact that party was the effect and, possibly also, the support of liberty.⁵ Though basically trustworthy, Robbins's account, aimed at providing background for more advanced party theories, suffers from a one-sided concentration on positive views on parties, and has not produced a balanced account of early eighteenth-century conceptualisations.⁶

Other searches for the roots of a positive Anglo-American understanding of party include those by Harvey C. Mansfield and Richard Hofstadter. Mansfield found in the traditional negative understanding of parties an element that contributed to a more positive understanding of party government, namely the assumption of the acceptability of an occasional use of party by good men to suppress bad parties endangering the public good.⁷ Hofstadter's interpretation did more justice to contemporary conceptions, arguing that many in early eighteenth-century England were looking for an answer to the question of whether parties were to be accepted as indispensable evils in a free polity or whether it was possible to suppress them in the interests of political harmony.

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5 Robbins 1958, 505–7, 513–521.

6 Robbins's article has been criticised by Schonhorn 1986, 187–9, 191–4, who has demonstrated that Defoe, for instance, held much more conventional views of political parties than Robbins has maintained. Defoe's texts contain no reference to the virtue of opposition or to the vitality of diversity. Defoe was not a citizen of the modern world nor antithetical to his more traditionalist contemporaries.

7 Mansfield 1965, 13–15; This type of reasoning can be found in C69, 28 October 1727. If some found divisions advantageous and adopted 'a spirit of faction', *The Craftsman* was ready to declare: 'I hope we shall never want another party, able to balance their power and defeat their designs, which, at present, I have the satisfaction to observe, does not seem to be an expiring party'.

The ideal of anti-party writers was the elimination of conflicts and the achievement of national unity through non-partisan government. Party was associated with seventeenth-century conflicts, religious intolerance and animosities, with treason and a threat of foreign invasion, with political instability and dangers to freedom. Any political party was believed to be capable of becoming a tool with which some group could advance its – possibly tyrannical – interests at the cost of the whole. Political parties were also regarded as a threat to the much emphasised civic virtue, as they tended to cause hostilities and make adherents loyal to restricted interest only and not to public welfare as a whole.⁸

Positive conceptions of party expressed by canonical figures have achieved a dominant status also in anthologies edited by Alan Beattie and J.A.W. Gunn. Beattie has placed party strife in a constitutional context of disagreements on the role of the Parliament, paying some attention to alternative senses of party terminology.⁹ Gunn has looked for secular political explanations for the inability of contemporaries to accept parties and has emphasised any signs of an emerging acceptance. He has pointed out that, in traditional literature, the primary importance of national unity had been underlined and party presented as one of the techniques employed by absolutist regimes and party-men with questionable motives. Furthermore, the idea of party was difficult to fit together with what Gunn has called prevailing conceptions of individualism: the adherents of a party were believed to reject their own reason for the benefit of party leaders who were imposing their self-interest on others. Eighteenth-century Englishmen also tended to view political parties through ancient ideals of a balanced constitution which excluded such organisations. Though mentioning religious issues as a factor involved in the strife between the Whigs and Tories,¹⁰ Gunn has not considered religion a phenomenon with particular importance in conceptualisations of parties.

A notable conceptual approach to the history of party is that of Klaus von Beyme who has paid particular attention to the strong status of the ancient doctrine of *concordia* in early modern Europe. Models of order and balance, theories of mixed government, and an inherited imagery of an organic state all served to restrict possibilities for an acceptance of political pluralism. Nuances of party words experienced little change, party being seen, almost without exception, as a highly mischievous phenomenon. Noteworthy is that the Latin term *partes* had often been used for religious schismatics and that the Italian Guelfs and Ghibellines¹¹, for instance, had been both political and religious parties. The first instances of more positive attitudes towards parties can be discovered in Renaissance Italy, Machiavelli having drawn a distinction between harmful parties (aimed at gaining benefits by abusing patronage, economic dependency and the perversion of justice) and parties that simply

8 Hofstadter 1969, 10, 12–13, 18.

9 Beattie 1970, 1–9.

10 Gunn 1972, 7, 9–10, 12–13, 16–17.

11 Guelfs had originally been supporters of the Pope while Ghibellines had defended the status of the emperor.

competed for public positions. Nevertheless, the concept of party and its synonym, faction, retained their religious associations, being widely employed in a pejorative sense for schismatics in religious strifes such as nonconformist sects in seventeenth-century England. In the course of time, however, a differentiation in the nuances conveyed by the highly discriminatory words faction and party became manifest. In England, the term party became common as a result of the rise of the Whigs and Tories. Isolated instances of the word party being used to describe one's own group started to appear. In polemical texts, the use of the words party and faction tended to vary according to the position of the writer, it being a standard rhetorical device to attack the rival party by calling it a faction.¹²

Another conceptual analysis of the history of party has been provided by Terence Ball who has argued that political parties emerged from a long pre-history in which political vocabulary was gradually transformed enabling shifts in perceptions. According to Ball, no vocabulary or images for a modern notion of party existed before the late seventeenth century. Ball's hypothesis has been that this transformation was facilitated by a shift from organic imagery to contractual notions of the polity. Other major shifts in perceptions were the emergence of the idea of an irreducible plurality of political interests and that of a legitimate and loyal standing opposition. In classical political theory, *polis* had been understood as a unified political body greater than the sum of its several parts, and any faction aiming at its own good had been conceived detrimental to the public interest. Most early modern theorists had repeated these warnings of the evils of faction. Only Machiavelli had suggested that a controlled conflict might prevent corruption and promote freedom.

What was important in the thought of Hobbes, continues Ball's argument, was his idea of the body politic as an artificial body based on a contract between parties rather than as a natural body. Ball may have overestimated the profoundness of this Hobbesian idea and the effects of the Revolution of 1688 when he connected the rise of English parties with a novel contractarian view of the monarchs as parties in a constitutional agreement. Still, it is evident that the English political nation experienced a gradual change in political self-understanding in relation to party, which included an emerging linguistic distinction between the terms faction and party. Ball has suggested that the early eighteenth century already saw the emergence of the idea that some political divisions were based on principles, that such division might be unavoidable in a free constitution, and that honest and honourable men could disagree about the common interest and the best way to serve it. Partisan contention even came to be considered by some as an identifying feature of the English national character. Parties might be viewed as novel, acceptable and even valuable English political institutions, while opponents to parties attempted to show that parties were but an old phenomenon of factions under a new name.¹³

12 von Beyme 1978, 677, 680, 682, 684–5, 687–8, 732; von Beyme 1989, 134–5.

13 Ball 1989, 155–74; See also Ball 1988, 19, 22–46.

Unfortunately, Ball has not proceeded to demonstrate these points by an analysis of a sufficiently large sample of contemporary sources.

Most historians have been cautious not to exaggerate the speed and ease of the acceptance of political parties in England. Some have suggested, however, that the shift happened rather suddenly in the late seventeenth century. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker, for instance, have described the early seventeenth century as a period when a unified world of values had still been an ideal, fragmentation in politics had been widely denied, and parties had been disclaimed as factional interests. 'Party' had been considered a synonym for 'part' and hence inconceivable outside the whole. According to Sharpe and Zwicker, however, the Civil War had already made many realise that the acknowledgement of diversity and acceptance of differences was essential to a stable political system. 'Party' became associated with taking sides in political contests and, by the end of the seventeenth century, Sharpe and Zwicker have argued, it became the starting point for any discussion of politics so that 'dispute and fragmentation, once anathematized as the roots of dislocation, have now become the norms of political and social life'.¹⁴ Such an interpretation, when compared with early eighteenth-century discourse on political parties, appears to be a crude generalisation. Dispute and fragmentation can hardly be called 'norms' in early eighteenth-century politics. Mental obstacles for such a rapid transformation were considerable, and historical evidence provides a much more varied picture of conceptualisations of political parties in early eighteenth-century England.

Party in preceding centuries

The definition for party in the *OED* contains no detailed conceptual analysis but gives a summary of alternative senses of the term in early modern English language. The *OED* suggests that the word party could refer either to (i) part, portion or side; (ii) a company or body of persons; or (iii) a single person considered in relationship to another. In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts, the word appeared in senses such as 'a division of a whole', 'a part or member of the body', and 'a conspiracy, plot',¹⁵ all of which may have been familiar to early eighteenth-century writers through their acquaintance with past texts. Seventeenth-century examples demonstrate that the term was increasingly used in a political sense to denote persons united in maintaining a cause, policy or opinion in opposition to others who maintained a different attitude. Naturally, such growing use alone cannot be taken as evidence of a general acceptance of political parties. One of the quotations, originating from Alexander Pope in 1714, illustrates how party remained for long a cursed expression: 'A curse on the word party, which I have been forced to use so often in this period!'¹⁶

14 Sharpe and Zwicker 1987, 6–7.

15 *OED*: party.

16 *OED*: party.

Historians disagree slightly as to when it is legitimate to speak about political parties in English history. Some have discovered the first signs of party strife from the time of the Civil War; most take the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–1681 as an evident starting point; and others regard the Glorious Revolution of 1688 as the event after which parties began to dominate English politics.¹⁷ These parties spread fast to the constituency level. Their organisations remained weak, but the ideologies formulated during the Exclusion Crisis were to provide the basis for party identities long thereafter.¹⁸ Whereas the members of the parliaments of the 1660s still mostly acted as individuals and only used the expressions sides and parties in connection with religious issues, by the early 1680s, the Commons already appeared as distinctly divided according to party lines.¹⁹ Despite the growing use of the term in political contexts, its religious associations were unlikely to disappear overnight. Evelyn, for instance, wrote on the days of the Revolution of 1688 about ‘several parties’ such as ‘a Tory part’, ‘Republicans’, ‘the Romanists’, the ‘popish party’, ‘the Protestants’ and ‘K[ing] James party’ without making the least separation between parties religious and political.²⁰ Official propaganda of the 1690s was strict in its rejection of all parties – often on religious grounds. William III’s propaganda machine denounced parties by associating political division with the vice of sensuality, both being consequences of a sin calling for an immediate cure. Williamite Churchmen authoritatively took up party division as a question of morality and insisted that the political elite should abandon their sin of division.²¹

Without proceeding more deeply into late seventeenth-century discourse on political parties, contemplations on the subject of party by two eminent writers with potential influence on early eighteenth-century attitudes, namely Locke and Halifax, can be briefly introduced. Reading Locke – as far as that was done by his rather suspicious contemporaries – did not provide members of the early eighteenth-century political elite with decisive models for the use of the term party. In Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government*, praised in much of twentieth-century historiography as an embodiment of late seventeenth-century liberal political thought, parties and partisans appear rarely and even then mostly in connection with the state of war.²² In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke took up the issue of party only in very general senses with little direct political implication. He wrote about how people generally wished to see their party persuasion universally adopted and all alternative views rejected. As seen in connection with contemporary theories of language,

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17 Harris 1993, 3; see also Jones 1991, 198, and Hill 1976, 15.

18 Holmes 1993, 133, 136, 141.

19 Miller 1983, 7.

20 *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (HCET)*, 2nd edition, ed. Merja Kytö, University of Helsinki, 1993; John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 1689–1690.

21 Claydon 1996, 153–5.

22 Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690, I, §131, II, §235; A word listing created by the *Oxford Concordance Programme* shows that Locke’s *Second Essay on Civil Government* contains five occurrences of the term party. In *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, party appears only three and in *Letter Concerning Toleration* four times.

Locke also pointed out that constant repetition of separate ideas by a 'party' (or sect in philosophy or religion) led to their distorted association into one idea and above all antipathy towards other groups in the minds of party adherents. This misleading association of ideas by party adherents, wrote Locke, 'gives sense to jargon, demonstration to absurdities, and consistency to nonsense, and is the foundation of the greatest, and I had almost said of all the errors in the world'.²³ This was not a very promising start for defences of party! Locke did not proceed so far as to refer to constant associations created between secular and spiritual issues in contemporary public discourse, but that may well have been a point of criticism in his mind. All in all, Locke's role in early eighteenth-century discourse on parties seems to have been marginal.

The state of the concept of party in the end of the seventeenth century can also be illustrated by the study of Halifax, a thinker who has been said to have outlined a party theory for the first time since the Italian Renaissance. Von Beyme, for instance, has argued that, in his writings of the 1680s, Halifax did not deny the utility of parties but urged his contemporaries not to join them. With a close reading of Halifax's writings, statements such as 'there must in every body be a leaning to that sort of men who profess some principles, more than to others who go upon a different foundation'²⁴ can be found. Rather than being taken as an advanced theorist on party who introduced ideas to be adopted by those who came after him, however, Halifax should perhaps be seen as a political opportunist typical of his age. Though some of his writings were published in the early eighteenth century, his influence on later thought remains unexplored. Whatever his actual reception, Halifax probably sounded agreeable to his contemporaries when he declared, pointing to the Civil War, that 'a party, even in times of peace . . . sets up and continues the exercise of martial law', and, 'the best party is but a kind of a conspiracy against the rest of the nation'.²⁵ His characterisation of party as 'little less than an inquisition, where men are under such a discipline in carrying on the common cause as leaves no liberty of private opinion'²⁶ must also have been agreeable. In fact, Halifax's texts exemplify the conflicting situations which many a member of the political elite experienced: on the one hand an awareness of the insuperable difficulty of ignoring parties altogether, on the other, an awareness of the grave problems involved in attempts to reconcile party adherence with classical political theory, not to say early modern belief in the necessity of unity.²⁷

23 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 1.2.20, 1.2.25, 1.33.18.

24 Halifax, 'The Character of a Trimmer', 1685, cited by von Beyme 1978, 689.

25 Halifax, 'Cautions for Choice of Parliament Men' and 'Political Thoughts and Reflections', cited by von Beyme 1978, 689; Halifax did not make any noticeable distinction between the terms party and faction. In the early 1690s, he wrote in his *Maxims*: 'Faction is the mother of eloquence, which shows that a hard favoured mother may have a very handsome daughter. A prevailing party has always ingenious excuses for doing the same things, they had a little before complained of'. Halifax, 'Maxims: Miscellanys', c. 1692, in *The Works of George Savile Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, New York 1989, Vol. III, 403.

26 Quoted in Hill 1996, 11.

27 Halifax, 'Political Thoughts and Reflections', cited by von Beyme 1978, 689.

If there are two parties, a man ought to adhere to that which he dislikes least, though in the whole he does not approve it: For whilst he does not list himself in one or the other party, he is looked upon as such a straggler that he is fallen upon by both . . . Ignorance makes most men go into a party, and shame keeps them from getting out of it.

The statement demonstrates what many of Halifax's contemporaries were thinking: they denounced parties as something to be avoided as far as principles were concerned but had to admit that party adherence could be useful in everyday political life.

Even though party in a nationwide sense was undoubtedly a new development in early eighteenth-century England, contemporaries willingly looked to the past to find parallel instance of parties, and they were able to find many. Party was frequently, and often in an anachronistic manner, used with reference to confrontations preceding the Civil War by centuries. Twelfth-century history, for instance, could be viewed through the terms 'English and Norman part[ies]'. Thirteenth-century Englishmen were seen as having been divided into parties over the Magna Charta in a way that they could 'be ranked under the modern denominations Whigs and Tories'. Later medieval court intrigues were described via the terminology of party and faction, and the sides in the Wars of Roses were likewise called parties. In connection with the Reformation, Roman Catholics were seen to have constituted a party. Catholics and Huguenots in the French Wars of Religion were too discussed as parties. Queen Elizabeth was praised for her ability not to favour any of the Protestant religious parties, and James I criticised for his failure to do the same and for his attempt to form 'a third or neutral party in religion' between Catholicism and Protestantism. James I's desire of 'governing by parties' was seen as the starting point of continuous party strife and all its negative consequences, including the rise of 'anti-parties to the establishment'. Cavaliers and Roundheads, or 'the Royal party' and 'the Republican party' were discussed as parties, and so was the 'Independent party', a faction within the Parliamentarians. After the Civil War emerged the 'popular or dissenting party' and the 'Church-party', and these developed later into the Whig and Tory parties. Some were prepared to call the Royalist side 'the Church-party' referring to the pre-Civil War period, thus underlining the questionable history of the Tory party in defending the rights of monarchs aiming at what was seen as absolute power.²⁸ All in all, parties were presented as an ancient phenomenon that was as much if not more connected with religion than with politics.

In Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the Year 1641*, published at the very beginning of the eighteenth century, party

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28 Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 395, 552–3, 558, 580, 588; *A Vindication of the Constitution of the English Monarchy*, 1703, 3; [William Baron], *An Historical Account of Comprehension, and Toleration*, 1705, preface; C17, 30 January 1727; Bevil Higgons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 65, 67, 101, 138, 179, 202, 234–5, 275, 282, 319, 325–6; *The Fog's Journal*, No. 237, 19 May 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, May 1733, Reel 134; *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 5; Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 19.

is a term that constantly appears in descriptions of the traumatic events of the 1640s. The publication of this thorough and, without a doubt, widely perused narration may have strengthened the already fearful feelings of a possible return of civil strife. The work may also have contributed to the continuity and even revival of political language generally used during the Civil War period. In his monumental history, Clarendon told how the monarch and Parliament had both referred to each other with the term 'malignant party' during the rise of their disputes in the early 1640s. 'The king's party' and 'the loyal party' had been opposed by 'the parliament party'. Religious questions had been unavoidably mixed in this confrontation, 'the factious and schismatical party' or 'the Puritan party' having opposed not only the monarch, but also called for a more far-reaching reformation. In Clarendon's history of the Civil War, both parties were, first and foremost, parties in a war. At a later stage, and particularly during the Interregnum, the term party had also signified groupings for and against Cromwell within the troops of Parliament: 'the Independent party' opposing 'the Presbyterian party' and the division being mainly about religious matters.²⁹

Developments in senses of party vocabulary

Party terminology became only gradually incorporated into English dictionaries. Several dictionaries printed in the early eighteenth century could, despite the universal use of the term party in several areas of discourse ever since the sixteenth century, completely omit the word. Even though party was one of the dominant concerns for members of the elite and many commoners as well, some dictionaries on sale were capable of excluding the entire entry for a surprisingly long period. Glossaries ignoring the rise of parties to the status of a political institution and the connected rise of party vocabulary in political discourse include Coles's *English Dictionary* of 1701, originally published in 1676 and thus predating the Exclusion Crisis, but also its 'revised' edition of 1732. Likewise, the posthumous edition of the seventeenth-century Cocker-Hawkins (1704) and a reprint of Bullokar's *English Expositor* (1719) made no additions as to party vocabulary. Furthermore, those dictionaries that included an entry for party might refer merely to its legal or military senses and omit political and religious ones, as was the case with *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707) and Cocker's new edition for 1724.

This habitual negligence of the term party from dictionaries calls for an explanation. These omissions could, of course, follow from the policy of printing houses to reprint seventeenth-century wordbooks in a world that was experienced as stable. They could also follow from the belief that parties were a temporary phenomenon of minor relevance, from an assumption that everyone knew what party was even without a definition, from a conscious refutation of

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²⁹ Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, 1702, Vol. II, 45, 53, 57, 70, 245, 310, 314, 415, 461; Vol. III, 453, 506; Vol. V, 129, 274.

the existence of such a phenomenon, or from a combination of all these factors. Undoubtedly, inertia in dictionary publishing was considerable. Printers saw no reason for extensive (and expensive) re-editing of their publications which anyway sold as they were. The obvious severity of party strife ever since the early 1680s being documented from diverse sources, considering party an ephemeral phenomenon had become increasingly difficult. Nevertheless, that was the view to which many contemporaries remained attached. Furthermore, at the very dawn of the eighteenth century, party conflict had not yet reached the levels of the early 1710s. By 1719 and 1732, in turn, party strife probably seemed to have decisively weakened, justifying a continuous negligence of a term that was thought useless. As to the notion that everyone knew what party was without definition, it is unlikely to have led to such omissions, as dictionaries routinely clarified everyday expressions. In fact, party would rather, because of its differing senses in many areas of life, have demanded exceptional attention in any dictionary aiming to be helpful to its users.

The major explanation for the absence of definitions for party vocabulary in early eighteenth-century dictionaries is actually found in a continuous denial among contemporaries of the reality of parties and their unwillingness to accept the phenomenon. In the long run, omissions are difficult to explain with reasons other than negative perceptions of parties, and the fore-mentioned technical delay in updating dictionaries. In addition to an unwillingness to revise, failure to include a definition may have been caused by a conscious demonstration of the printer's or editor's negative attitude towards all parties and his determination not to create partisan associations in the minds of readers. Party was, in a sense, an inconvenient 'four-letter word' to be excluded as an annoying expression that might upset some readers. Defining party vocabulary also entailed the risk of provoking supporters of some party by the use of excessively partisan language. This contemporary denial of party words is particularly visible in a text from 1739 which demanded: 'Let us banish [party-names] our language, and expunge them from our dictionaries, and for ever forget all the injurious thoughts of one another, that have accompanied them'.³⁰ This is an outspoken illustration of the reasons for party terminology being omitted from dictionaries. It was believed by some printers and editors that a refusal to recognise the existing party vocabulary would contribute to extinguishing the phenomenon of party.

Not every dictionary steadfastly denied the reality of parties, however. The non-political senses of the term were first to see daylight in dictionaries, but political senses also started to appear. The English having experienced the heated party strife of Queen Anne's reign, Phillips-Kersey (1706) and Kersey (1715) included not only the legal but also the political and military senses, party being 'a person (one that is at law with another); also association, faction or side; in the art of war, a small body of men (of horse or foot) sent out to discover, or upon any military execution'. Kersey's dictionary of 1731

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30 *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 39.

mentioned the senses of 'a person, a faction, or side; a body of soldiers sent out upon some service', omitting for some unknown reason the legal sense. Bailey (1733) already distinguished clearly between the socio-political and military senses of party, giving each a separate entry. Party was thus either (i) a person; also association, side, or faction, or (ii) in military affairs 'a body of men sent out upon some expedition'. Likewise, Gordon-Bailey (1730) published a separate entry for the various senses of party, thus emphasising the distinctive character of the socio-political, military and legal senses of the term. According to Gordon-Bailey, party was (i) 'a person; also a faction or side', (ii) 'a body of soldiery horse or foot sent out upon some expedition', and (iii) 'those persons who are named in a deed or fine as parties to it'.

Dyche-Pardon's definition for party from 1740 introduced the same three senses and seems to have already been realistic in its recognition of the existence of parties. For Dyche-Pardon, party as a legal and also increasingly commercial term was 'one concerned in a business, or that has interest therein'. Its political sense and its analogous character with religious groupings were also made explicit, probably for the first time in the history of English lexicography, when Dyche-Pardon stated that 'sometimes it signifies a great collection or number of people siding with, or espousing particular opinions in religion, government, etc.'. Neither did Dyche-Pardon omit the military sense of party as 'a small body of horse or foot'. Fenning's definition of party from 1741, however, came closest to the emerging new understanding of party, mentioning first the sense of party as 'a number of persons united in one common design'. Of course, party could still stand for 'one of two adversaries' or 'an accomplice or one concerned in an affair' or 'a particular person' or 'a detachment of soldiers'. Later in the eighteenth century, the political sense of party was to develop into something more substantial, into party in a Burkean sense as an honest association for advancing common goals.

At the time of Johnson's project for a new English dictionary in the mid-century, the meanings of the word party remained highly diverse, but Johnson did not hesitate to list the political sense first. For him, like most dictionary editors, party was still essentially a faction and thus a self-evidently negative phenomenon, but the definition itself came surprisingly close to the emerging conception of political party as 'a number of persons confederated by similarity of designs or opinions in opposition to others'. Choosing the second sense for party as someone engaged in a lawsuit must also have been a self-evident choice. The following four senses were generalised from this legal sense, party referring to someone concerned in any affair, some particular person, persons opposed to each other, or cause or side in general. A social sense was also there as a selected group of people gathered for some social occasion. Likewise, the military sense was included though only at the end of the list of the eight senses which Johnson was able to distinguish.

A distinct entrance of political party vocabulary to dictionaries is thus traceable. At the same time, however, the traditional religious senses of party remained vital. When the word occurred in dictionary entries for terms regarded

as synonymous, the context was conventionally religious. When defining the term schism, for instance, Moréri-Collier (1701) referred to Pope 'Urban's party' and Pope 'Clement's party', the strife between which had led to a break within the Catholic Church in the late Middle Ages. For Phillips-Kersey (1706) and *Glossographia* (1707), a zealot was a 'party-man, chiefly in matters of religion', for Kersey (1715) simply a 'party-man'. Whereas Kersey (1715) regarded cabal and sect as synonyms of party, Cocker-Hawkins (1724) considered sect a party.

The very ambiguity of the concept party in the English language facilitated its political use in a way that allowed senses from other areas of discourse to be attached to the word. As definitions in dictionaries reveal, the term continued to have several non-political senses, an analysis of which may be helpful when shifts in its political meanings are traced. Party had military, legal, social and religious senses, and changes in the relative importance of each may be revealing as to changes in prevailing attitudes towards political parties. Some early eighteenth-century trends of conceptual change are indeed discernible, including the continuous existence, though decreasing centrality, of the military sense, widespread but essentially juridical use of legal senses, and the emergence of a distinctly social sense. Above all, religious associations of the concept were very slowly withering away though retaining their status in some texts throughout the period 1700–1750. Particularly interesting is, of course, the gradual rise of an increasingly secular political sense of the concept.

In early eighteenth-century English, party was, among other things, a military term which referred to a body of troops selected for a particular service or duty, 'a small party of foot or horse sent out to discover, or upon any military execution'.³¹ Throughout the period, it might also refer to one of the sides in a military conflict.³² Chambers (1728) did not separate between party, faction, interest or power in one of his several entries for parties but wrote in practically analogous terms about France and Spain as parties in a military conflict, and the two parties in the English domestic political division. As late as in 1749, Martin defined party, among other things, as 'a side in faction or war', warfare and political parties thus appearing as nearly parallel. It has been suggested that the military associations of party disappeared by the end of the seventeenth century and parties as political labels thus lost their associations with military violence. Undoubtedly, political behaviour was becoming more 'civilised' after the conflicts of the mid-seventeenth century so that physical violence was substituted by verbal strife,³³ but the extent and completeness of this change in meaning should not be overestimated. Even if English thinkers increasingly disowned military force as a way of solving internal political problems, fear of the military remained part of parliamentary rhetoric as well as national consciousness.³⁴ The consciousness of a threat of a repeated martial conflict

31 OED: party; Cocker 1704 and 1724; Chambers 1728; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

32 See e.g. *The Daily Courant*, 9 October 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, October 1734, Reel 134.

33 Sharpe and Zwicker 1987, 7.

34 Hill 1996, 2–3.

may also explain some of the continuous relevance of militaristic party vocabulary in the early eighteenth century.

The entrance of some new military party terms into English and their quick application to political rhetoric suggests that the military associations of party terminology retained a strong status. For instance, the word party-man was borrowed from French as a novel military term in the late seventeenth century. By the early eighteenth century, it was already used for someone devoted to a religious or political party. Party-men were, in contrast with patriots, 'those who advance doctrines any way destructive of the public good . . . , drive on a private interest, and only assume a zeal for the Church, or the laws, which they have not, to strengthen their party, by imposing on the honest and well-meaning of both sides'. Furthermore, party-men were seen as blindly deferential to their leaders,³⁵ inclined to turn dangerous for both religion and political liberties,³⁶ certainly of 'designing and perverted minds',³⁷ and 'absolute[ly] determined at all events against the Court and ministry'.³⁸ Fenning (1741) was probably the first editor to include an entry for party-man in his dictionary as 'a factious person, or one joined in a faction'. For Johnson (1755), party-man was self-evidently 'a factious person' and 'an abettor of party' with no explicit military senses mentioned. Notably, however, not all uses of the term were derogatory. One commentator believed that most party-men were simply misled: 'Party-men will always be (for the greatest part) insignificant, and often honestly intentioned, while the party they support, will always be dangerous'. Another did not hesitate to declare that ' . . . when the honour, interest and security of the government are in question, I desire to be esteemed in such cases a man of warmth and a party-man'. A third commentator, a preacher, applied similar conditions, stating that 'to be a party-man on the side of truth, and justice, and honesty, is a glorious distinction. In the cause of virtue and religion, of liberty and public good, every honest man ought to endeavour with all his might to form a party against a world of knaves'.³⁹

Partisan, a devoted follower of a party, was an even more sinister word of military origin used in connection with party conflict. It had the sense of blind, prejudiced, unreasoning or fanatical adherence. According to Coles (1701), partisan had two major meanings, either referring more generally to 'a partaker' or, more specifically, to 'a (lieutenant's) leading staff'. Cocker-Hawkins (1704) defined partisan in predominantly military terms, referring to 'a leading staff in war' and 'a party man that goes with a select party upon adventurers, a partaker'. Partisan was 'a soldier well skilled in commanding a party who knows that country, and how to surprize the enemy and avoid ambushes'. The

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35 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 26.

36 [Whiston], *The Supposal, or A New Scheme of Government*, 1712, 143.

37 Bernard Mandeville, 'A Vindication of the Book', 1724, in *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. Phillip Harth, 1989, 396.

38 *The London Journal*, No. 760, 19 January 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, January 1734, Reel 134.

39 [John Oldmixon], *The False Steps of the Ministry after the Revolution*, 1714, 18; *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit*, 1736, 8; Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention and Party-rage considered*, 1747, 11.

same definition was repeated as an alternative sense by Phillips-Kersey (1706) and by Cocker-Hawkins as the sole sense as late as 1724. Though Phillips-Kersey (1706) and *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707) gave first a more general sense to partisan as 'a favourer or abetter of a party, a stickler', the military undertone of the word was further strengthened by the identical outward appearance of partisan, 'a weapon like a halbard' and reference to 'one that commands a party' in war. The same two military senses were yet echoed in Bullokar-Browne (1719) which omitted the expression party for good. In Kersey (1731), partisan was still associated within the same dictionary entry with favouring a party, for military command and weaponry.

Bailey (1733), Martin (1749) and *A Pocket Dictionary* (1753) already drew a clearer distinction between the various senses of partisan by writing separate entries for religious or political activism, for organisation and for weaponry. First was mentioned partisan as 'a favourer or abetter of a party', then partisan as 'a commander of a party' and finally partisan as 'a halberd'. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) drew a further distinction by separating the weapon from the other senses with a new way of writing 'partuisan'. He also distinguished between the politico-religious and military senses of partisan which could refer to 'one that espouses the interest, party, or concern of another with great vigour and application' or 'an old expert soldier'. Chambers's new edition of 1753 developed the distinction further by speaking, with reference to the military art, about 'partisan-party' led by a partisan. In Defoe (1737) and Wesley (1764), the military senses of the word could be rejected while the general sense of the word remained. Yet the relationship between the two senses was close and associations between military leadership and political or religious manoeuvring remained unavoidable. Fenning (1741) still suggested that 'halberd' and 'one who adheres or belongs to a faction' were just two senses of the same expression partisan. In his diary, lieutenant-general Adam Williamson, for instance, consistently used partisan as a name of a weapon.⁴⁰ All the military senses of party and partisan were also repeated by Johnson (1755). Following early eighteenth-century authors, he gave partisan the distinctly political definition of 'an adherent to a faction'.

In contemporary usages of the term party, some noteworthy instances demonstrating the continuous presence of its military associations can be found. Luttrell, who observantly reported what he had read and heard about the events of the day in the early years of the century, frequently used the term party with reference not only to parliamentary politics of London but also to manoeuvres in the Great Northern War and the Spanish War of Succession.⁴¹ When early

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40 *The Official Diary of Lieutenant-General Adam Williamson, Deputy-Lieutenant of the Tower of London 1722-1747*, ed. John Charles Fox, 1912, 28 March 1731, 71, 15 April 1741, 112, 24 July 1746, 124; The editor of the Diary has been confused on this usage, as authorities such as the *OED* suggested to him that partisan should have been an obsolete expression for a weapon ever since 1700, whereas it clearly was not.

41 See e.g. Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, 17 July 1701, Vol. V, 72; 16 August 1701, Vol. V, 81; 23 September 1701, Vol. V, 92-3; 2 October 1701, Vol. V, 96; 30 October 1701, Vol. V, 105; 4 November 1703, Vol. V, 355; 2 March 1704, Vol. V, 397; 6 May 1704, Vol. V, 421; 23 May 1704, Vol. V, 427; 18 July 1704, Vol. V, 446.

eighteenth-century authors wrote about the period of the Civil War and the Interregnum, they described the Republicans as a 'veteran party' in which 'the army and party combined'. Clarendon's account of the Civil War, very naturally, made little distinction between military and political parties.⁴² The distinction between military and political parties remained blurred for long. Ryder the Whig and Presbyterian, for instance, described party activities opposing Tories in terms of almost a military conflict in 1716, considering singing party-songs in which the opposing party was humiliated 'something like the drums and trumpets in an army, to raise the courage and spirits of the soldiers'.⁴³ The military associations of political parties in connection with the Succession Crisis are also visible in Defoe's fear that 'the present cessation of party arms will not hold long'.⁴⁴

Later in the century, partisan appeared every now and then in political contexts particularly in the *Craftsman* in the form of 'a zealous partisan in the Whig cause'. Instead of being clearly martial, however, its connotations were increasingly linked to ridicule, 'old doting partisans' being associated with 'state-bigots' and 'superannuated lovers'.⁴⁵ Still in the 1730s, however, a pamphlet vindicating public spirit as opposed to party described parties through highly militaristic naval metaphors. According to this author, party adherents 'still range themselves as in battle, and each aim chiefly at sinking the other, when these differences must end in their common destruction'.⁴⁶ These instances of party vocabulary connected to warfare suggest that, throughout the early eighteenth century, the word party inevitably still conveyed some associations with a military conflict, particularly if military affairs and political groupings were discussed in the same text. Such associations could at any time be revived for rhetorical purposes. It was only gradually that a distinction between a military and political party emerged.

The second group of alternative senses of party that may have had an effect on its political senses is constituted by party as a legal term. In previous research on the concept of party, it has been argued that the old usage of the word in legal contexts affected its senses in political contexts. Already in ancient Roman judicature, party had stood for persons that constituted the two sides in a legal proceeding such as entering into a contract. The expression *partes* had thus originally invoked legal associations unlike the rather more pejorative expression *factiones*, and this basic difference of valuative nuances had passed into the major European languages.⁴⁷ In early modern England, party might refer either to one side in a dispute or to a particular body of men who might or might not have common opinions as the basis of association. The first meaning

42 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 2; Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, 1702, Vol. II, 286, 323, 464.

43 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 20 July 1716, 279–80; Anti-Presbyterian feelings were expressed widely after the accession of George I. Albers 1993, 328.

44 OED: party; COPC: Daniel Defoe, *An Appeal to Honour and Justice*, 1715.

45 See e.g. C17, 30 January 1727; C40, 24 April 1727; C327, 7 October 1732.

46 *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 4.

47 OED: party; The wide judicial usage of the word party is well illustrated by statutes dating from the late 1690s and contained in the *HCET*; von Beyme 1978, 678.

is related to that of the legal sense of a party to a dispute, while the second could refer to various kinds of groupings.⁴⁸ Ball has suggested that, in the course of the eighteenth century, a breakthrough of contractual notions of polity furthered an acceptance of political parties as a natural phenomenon in society.⁴⁹ This hypothesis is difficult to either prove or invalidate. The early eighteenth-century material consulted for this study provides hardly any evidence of political parties being presented as participants in a contract. The continuous strength of traditionalist thought, above all the widespread use of organic analogies, suggests that contractual notions of society were not universally accepted. Of course, this lack of evidence from the early part of the century does not rule out a possibility of Ball's suggested change in the later eighteenth century.

In any case, the term party had a considerable legal range in the period under study. The only sense of the expression parties which *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707; originally by Blount 1656) offered originated from law, parties being 'those which are named in a deed, or fine as parties to it'.⁵⁰ More up-to-date dictionaries also introduced this legal sense of the term. Chambers (1728) and Martin (1749) both placed it second in their lists of senses. Throughout the early eighteenth century, some dictionaries also called party a side or association, which comes close to its legal senses. In everyday judicial matters, the term was very generally applied. The diaries of Bishop William Nicolson and of Dudley Ryder, a law student, provide several instances of the use of party as a participant in some court cases.⁵¹ Given the long English tradition of discussing politics in legal terms and the central role which lawyers played in the political system, it is plausible that the legal sense of party had some, even if unspecific, influence on the homonymous political term.

The third alternative sense of the term party was a social one, referring to a group of people gathered together for social pleasure.⁵² It has been suggested that this sense entered the English language at the end of the seventeenth century, evoked the sociability of the term, and thus facilitated an acceptance of political groupings.⁵³ Previous scholarship has shown that local party activities could resemble social party. For instance, the London organisation of the Tory party initially consisted of drinking and dining clubs which started to meet weekly at a settled time and place, usually at a coffee house.⁵⁴ However, there are few examples of the use of the term party in a social sense in early eighteenth-century texts. Before Martin (1749) and Johnson (1755), dictionaries did not include such a distinct sense. Among the few instances of 'social parties' in consulted source material can be mentioned a letter from

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48 Beattie 1970, 6.

49 Ball 1989, 156.

50 *Glossographia* 1707.

51 *The London Diaries of William Nicolson Bishop of Carlisle 1702-1718*, e.g. 22 January 1703, 185, 27 November 1704, 236-7, 8 February 1706, 373, and 22 March 1709, 488; *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 26 September 1715, 107.

52 *OED*: party.

53 Sharpe and Zwicker 1987, 7.

54 Colley 1977, 80, 82, 86, 88.

Martha Lockhart to John Locke offering herself to be 'of the party' and thus referring to a group of people attending some event together.⁵⁵ Swift once gave a critical description of how faction was involved in 'balls, assemblies, and other parties of pleasure'.⁵⁶ Ryder, though frequenting various events of London high society, did not use the word party with such a social meaning in his diary.⁵⁷ In descriptions of English history in the *Craftsman*, former kings and statesmen were sometimes said to have attended 'a party of pleasure',⁵⁸ and, by 1750, a wealthy citizen could also relate how he had had 'a party of pleasure' expressing his attendance at an event,⁵⁹ which demonstrate the existence of such an expression yet leaves the question of a conceptual linkage between a social gathering and political party open. For lack of further conceptual evidence of political parties being considered respectable social associations, it cannot be demonstrated that political parties gained acceptance due to the rise of the social sense of the word. However, the social character of many local party associations most probably contributed to a positive understanding of party.

Party as a religious term forms the fourth group of senses out of which illustrative quotations are easily found and connections with political senses of the term easy to draw. Eighteenth-century religious debates were often opened with continuous criticism of books published in the 1690s, that is to say in the aftermath of the lapse of pre-publication censorship. Toland's *Christianity not Mysteriorious*, which summarised much of previous critical study of the Bible, was one of the books which provoked critical comment, and though nothing like revolutionary in its use of the term party, exemplifies what party could mean to a manifestly radical thinker. In Toland's book, party was clearly a polemical religious concept, the writer lamenting the great number of 'partisans of error' and 'partisans of mystery' (i.e. High Church supporters)⁶⁰ and limitations on free theological debate set by various parties in religion. According to Toland, siding with a party in religious matters meant that one was severely condemned by the rest, and denouncing all parties caused the most violent of attacks. Yet each party was willing to put Scripture to the service of its own interest.⁶¹ In contrast, the traditionalist side of the debate as represented by Atterbury might despise Toland's writings as statements of 'a levelling party' who wished to see religious and political issues as separate and to remove the union between the Anglican Church and English political system.⁶²

In the early years of the eighteenth century, party was generally used as a

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55 Martha Lockhart to John Locke, 16 December 1701, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VII, 316.

56 [Swift], E31, 8 March 1711.

57 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, passim.

58 C8, 30 December 1726; Higsons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 139; C238, 23 January 1731.

59 Horace Walpole to George Montagu, 23 June 1750, *Selected Letters*, 80.

60 By contrast, another radical thinker Anthony Collins pointed out in his letter to Locke on 16 February 1704 that there were indeed 'too few partisans of truth', that is, too few radical republicans, in early eighteenth-century England. *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VIII, 197.

61 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysteriorious*, 1696, iv, 2, 150, 173.

62 Atterbury, *A Letter to a Convocation-Man*, 1697, 23.

religiously charged term, Convocation then forming a center of public debate and the hotly debated issue being whether occasional conformity could be allowed. Locke's correspondence provides several instances of such religious usage, his correspondents greeting those who were able to be 'Christians without being of a party', reporting how Convocation was divided into 'Atterbury's party' and 'the other party', requesting Locke to convince London society that 'partiality to parties' was madness, and wishing that Scripture was interpreted by those 'least bigotted to a party', the interpretations of 'all parties' being presented by someone appreciated by 'every party' (i.e. Locke) so that people could better decide which one was true.⁶³ Locke himself seems to have been highly sceptical as to the benefits of the religiously motivated parties of the early eighteenth century. In a letter to Anthony Collins, one of the most radical correspondents one could find, Locke wrote: 'I think it is so that the parties are more for doing one another harm than for doing any body good'.⁶⁴ Party as a religious grouping was used in a parallel manner by churchmen such as Jonathan Swift and Thomas Naish. In his letter dated December 1703, during the second attempt to pass a bill banning occasional conformity, Swift described the universal debate on the issue as 'the highest and warmest reign of party and faction that I ever knew or read of'.⁶⁵ The diary of Naish shows in turn how the Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Tenison regarded High-Church clergymen party-men and how ecclesiastical nominations depended on the parson's stand in the religious party divide.⁶⁶

Many writers considered the fundamental issue dividing people into parties to consist simply of disagreements between the Church of England and Protestant Dissenters.⁶⁷ In pamphlets published at the dawn of the century, the expressions 'Presbyterian Party' and 'Episcopal Party' were used as the 'grand parties' of Protestants.⁶⁸ An alternative partisan way to express this religious division was to call them 'the moderate party' and 'that violent party, which calls itself the Church of England'.⁶⁹ Even some traditionalists did not hesitate to use the expression 'Church-Party', the opponent of which was, of course, the Whig party,⁷⁰ or the 'Commonwealth Party', or customarily merely 'the party', which was not infrequently portrayed as a heir of 'the Puritan party'. Most of

63 Richard King to Locke, 13 January [1701], *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VII, 222; Awnsham Churchill to Locke, 1 March 1701, *ibid.*, Vol. VII, 259; Mrs Elizabeth Burnet to Locke, 6 July [1701], *ibid.*, Vol. VII, 360; Richard King to Locke, 9 October [1703], *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 76–7.

64 Locke to Anthony Collins, 29 May 1704, *The Correspondence of Locke*, Vol. VIII, 306.

65 Swift to the Rev. William Tisdall, London, 16 December 1703, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 38.

66 *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 24 November 1707, 59, and 10 December 1707, 62.

67 [Defoe], *A New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty*, Dublin, 1702, 3.

68 *Three Questions Of Present Importance*, 1702, 5–6, 53.

69 [Dennis], *The Danger of Priestcraft*, 1702, 7.

70 [Charles Leslie], *The New Association*, 1702, 19; [Tufton], *The History of Faction*, 94, 118, 144; *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 6; [Jonathan Swift], *The Conduct of the Allies*, 1711, in Swift, *Political Tracts, 1711–1713*, ed. Herbert Davis, Oxford 1951, 11; [Swift], *Some Advice Humbly Offer'd to the Members of the October Club*, 1712, *ibid.*, 73.

them, however, eagerly disputed the party character of the Churchmen and condemned all religious alternatives as parties:⁷¹

... the Church of England Party, as by law now established, ... though they call a party, is no party, and no part, but the whole of our legal established constitution, ...

The rest are parties I grant ... , and the law distinguishes them as parties: It makes them a dissenting party, a recusant party, a criminal party.

Can they mistake the body of the nation [i.e. the Churchmen], and call that a party? There is, indeed, a party of Dissenters ... ; but these all together do not make a tenth of the nation ...

The underlying assumption among Tories was that the established Church was or at least should have been naturally identical with the nation and thus could not possibly be merely a part or party of it. In the early 1710s, Tory propaganda appealed to the monarch when defending the position of the Church party as the only acceptable:⁷²

Your majesty recommends, with the utmost earnestness, a union of affections among your subjects ... We ... are continually doing what we can to persuade all our fellow subjects into one well-compacted body, that is the Church of England, which is nevertheless a Church for being called a party.

During the Tory domination of Parliament in the early 1710s, Swift insisted that 'the majority of the two Houses, and the present ministry (if those be a party) seem to me, in all their proceedings, to pursue the real interest of Church and state'.⁷³ The period of Tory power was a brief one, but also in the early Hanoverian period, sectarian divisions among English Protestants were generally interpreted as party distinctions advanced by the use of party-names, Dissenters being not infrequently considered 'a party against the Church'.⁷⁴

The diary of the Oxford librarian Thomas Hearne provides helpful illustrations of the use of party as a primarily religious term of division by a traditionalist. Whereas Hearne mentioned 'that party called Tories' only when feeling disappointment towards the policy of the party, he did not have anything against the use of the expressions 'High-Church Party', 'Church-party' or 'honest party' for the party towards which he himself felt sympathy. The

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71 [King], E4, 24 August 1710; [Davenant], *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented*, 1702, 4.

72 *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 5–6.

73 [Swift], E39, 3 May 1711.

74 See e.g. Shuttleworth, *A Perswasive to Union*, 1716, preface; Laurence, *Christian Religion the Best Friend to Civil Government*, 1717, 31; *The Church of England the Sole Encourager of Free-Thinking*, 1717, 5, 13; *A Sure Way to Orthodoxy*, 1718, 29; [Trenchard and Gordon], IW12, 6 April 1720; IW19, 25 May 1720; Gordon, *The Humourist*, 1720, 196; Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, 214; Synge, *The Case of Toleration*, 1726, 25; *A Cursory View of the History of Lilliput*, 1727, 12; *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 8; Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 2; Grey, *A Caveat Against the Dissenters*, 1736, title; Story, *Thomas Story's Discourse*, [1737], 26; Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 4.

opponents of this positive party he called 'the Whig party' or rather 'the Whiggish party', 'the fanatic party', 'the Low-Church party', or, increasingly in the course of time, simply 'the party'. Party seems to have been a wider concept for Hearne than the parliamentary Whigs or Tories, including on the one hand Dissenters of all kinds, and on the other all defenders of the Church of England. One of his correspondents also used the expression 'wicked party' in the same purpose. Summing up his conception of the opponent as an essentially religious threat analogous to that of the 1640s, Hearne wrote about 'this time of danger, when these crop-eared whelps [Roundheads] make it their business to undermine the Church, and once more ruin it'.

In the 1700s, national politico-religious anniversaries and professional appointments at the university were typical occasions for party commentary in Hearne's diary. On the day of thanksgiving for English victories in the Spanish War of Succession, Hearne complained about a sermon he had heard which contained politico-religious viewpoints favourable to 'the Whiggish party'. He wrote how the rival parties disagreed on what would have been proper to preach on January 30th, the anniversary of the execution of Charles I – attitudes towards King Charles's beheading reflecting, in Hearne's view, the attitudes of each party towards the institutions of the monarchy and the Church of England. On November 5th, when the Gunpowder Plot and William III's landing were commemorated, he was pleasantly surprised for a known Whig not to be preaching in favour of his own party. In appointments to university chairs and commentaries on colleagues, party sympathies of the candidates also seem to have frequently played a role, at least when viewed by the party-conscious Hearne. In a letter to a colleague, he went as far as to state that 'amongst [the Whig party] there are not many competent judges of true learning',⁷⁵ thus connecting politico-religious views and academic competence.

Neither was the application of party in a religious sense unfamiliar to the Whigs of the 1700s and 1710s. Steele's description, which dates from the days of the Sacheverell affair, illustrates a semantic relationship between the terms party-dispute and religion, the former appearing as an obvious antonym to the latter. A right type of religion – missing from traditionalist Tories as Steele was implicitly suggesting – appeared as the most positive of things, whereas party-dispute was the most negative of all:⁷⁶

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75 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 4 July 1705, Vol. I, 1; 11 August 1705, Vol. I, 28; 13 August 1705, Vol. I, 28; 23 August 1705, Vol. I, 33; 23 September 1705, Vol. I, 48; 29 September 1705, Vol. I, 50; 1 October 1705, Vol. I, 51; 5 October 1705, Vol. I, 52; 7 October 1705, Vol. I, 53; 3 November 1705, Vol. I, 64; 5 November 1705, Vol. I, 66; 12 November 1705, Vol. I, 70; 20 December 1705, Vol. I, 134; 20 January 1706, Vol. I, 166; 26 January 1706, Vol. I, 169; 3 April 1706, Vol. I, 216; 3 April 1706, Vol. I, 217; 4 April 1706, Vol. I, 219; 20 April 1706, Vol. I, 229; 8 May 1706, Vol. I, 242; 27 February 1707, Vol. I, 336; 10 January 1708, Vol. II, 88; Dodwell to Hearne, 23 November 1708, Vol. II, 152; 13 August 1709, Vol. II, 234; 10 September 1709, Vol. II, 254; 10 December 1709, Vol. II, 324; 17 December 1709, Vol. II, 329; 2 March 1710, Vol. II, 350; On 6 March 1710, Vol. II, 355, Hearne wrote about 'the Whigs and all the party', suggesting that 'the party' was more than merely the Whigs; 16 March 1710, Vol. II, 360; 25 September 1714, Vol. IV, 408.

76 Steele, T114, 31 December 1709.

... as he abounds with that sort of virtue and knowledge which makes religion beautiful, and never leads the conversation into the violence and rage of party-disputes, I listened to him with great pleasure.

In the mid-1710s, Ryder reported having heard how the rival Tory party, in its stronghold at Oxford University, was 'busy about Church and politics' and believing that 'religion and good sense is to be found nowhere but among their own party or sect'.⁷⁷ Ryder saw no reason to distinguish between the Tories as a party and Tories as a sect. For the Tories at least, party seemed to concern religion.

The use of the term party in a religious sense was very much a phenomenon of the 1700s and early 1710s. After 1720, references to religious parties become much rarer and less explicit. Of course, even political periodicals of the late 1720s and 1730s, though making less use of religious terminology in discussing political matters than their predecessors of the 1710s, occasionally applied terms that were designed to provoke religious associations in the reader. But the aim of this usage was often clearly to ridicule the governing Whig party and its adherents. The anti-party *Craftsman*, in particular, readily wrote about 'a new convert' and 'proselyte' from a party who remained 'a little heretical ... in his Church tenets' yet had become 'perfectly orthodox in state matters'.⁷⁸ During the heated debate over the Excise Crisis, the editors offered a description of 'the credenda of [the Whig party]' which was said to have received 'several new articles',⁷⁹ in other words, a reversal of policy. A further instance of the use of the term party in a religious sense can be found in discussions on freethinkers who might be depicted as a party as well as a sect or a 'sceptical society'.⁸⁰ The religious sense of party was in obvious decline from around 1720, but the possibility of exploiting it in political rhetoric remained, as the contemporaries were well aware of the sense and seldom drew clear distinctions between parties in a religious and those in a political sense.

While religious associations of party were increasingly set aside, instances of the use of party as a distinctly political term started to appear. A considerable proportion of sources, particularly those dating from the first two decades of the eighteenth century, associate party with religious issues. Of course, party was also used in political contexts, the two spheres being intermingled, but unambiguously political senses of party as opposed to its religious sense are few. In the course of time, differences between religious and political parties started to be more outspokenly recognised. Defoe drew such a distinction in a pamphlet expressing disappointment among Protestant Dissenters at the limited extent to which the Whigs were willing to vindicate their rights. In his pamphlet, Defoe contrasted the Dissenters as 'a religious party' and as a 'political party', thus clearly distinguishing between the two and providing one of the very few early eighteenth-century instances of the use of the expression

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77 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 11 August 1715, 74.

78 C272, 18 September 1731.

79 C366, 7 July 1733.

80 *The Weekly Miscellany*, No. 36, 18 August 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, August 1733, Reel 134.

'political party'.⁸¹ Also in a translation of Jean Le Clerc's text from French (1715), a 'distinction of a party in the state' was contrasted with 'a sect in the Church'.⁸² In 1722, Trenchard claimed in *Cato's Letters*, that 'the two parties in England do not differ so much as they think in principles of politics',⁸³ thus suggesting that it was pretended differences in political principles that really mattered. As to religious distinctions, he first referred to how well the Church of England was adapted to the political system of the country and then argued that those were 'kept up more by party animosities than any essential difference of opinion'.⁸⁴ The impression one gets is that party was essentially political and not so much religious, and, in both respects, parties were artificial rather than unavoidable. Discussing the restricted possibilities for toleration in 1726, Edward Syngé expressed the commonly held linkage between religious and political parties yet implicitly suggested that there were differences between the two.⁸⁵

Parties in religion, they say, soon become parties in the state. They then enter into contests for power, thwart and oppose one another, clog the wheels of government, divide the force of the community, and suffer it not to exert itself with full vigour for the public good.

In 1733, the *Craftsman*, though using religiously coloured language, already drew what seems to be an implicit distinction between religious and political reasons for diversity of groupings. The authors of the periodical insisted that all Englishmen should unite to defend liberty and property – secular values – 'without distinction of party, or religion'. In this context, party, contrasted with religion, would seem to have been an overwhelmingly secular political concept. The separation between religious and political parties was made clearer than ever in another essay referring incidentally to 'parties both religious and political'.⁸⁶ This statement reveals that the opposition to Walpole would have been prepared to use the expression 'political party', though probably not as its own denomination. The government side of political polemic quickly seized the *Craftsman's* idea of the existence of different types of 'parties, ecclesiastical and civil'. The point of various parties was not denied as such. On the contrary, the author of the *London Journal* himself before long wrote about 'political' and 'religious parties' that continued to advocate their old principles. The author of the *London Journal* also disputed the *Craftsman's* suggestion that the two parties Whigs and Tories 'rose politically', i.e. that the parties had been formed because they 'hated one another from views of interest and power'. The alternative explanation for the rise of parties which the *London Journal* put forward may have been gaining ground among the public at large. According to this view, which increasingly considered variety in religious and political

81 [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 40.

82 Le Clerc, *Mr Addison's Travels Through Italy, Epitomiz'd*, 1715, 51.

83 [Trenchard], CL80, 9 June 1722.

84 [Trenchard], CL81, 16 June 1722.

85 Syngé, *The Case of Toleration*, 1726, 25.

86 C366, 7 July 1733; C379, 6 October 1733.

thought as unavoidable, parties were the result of diversity in things such as nature and education.⁸⁷

The status of party as a more general concept and religious division increasingly as a subconcept to this general concept is visible in a pamphlet from 1736 in which a pseudonymous author stated: 'A greater misfortune can hardly attend any nation, than a division of its members into parties, but especially into many different and opposite sects and persuasions in religion'. In another connection, the author stated that the arbitrary actions of James II had created among the English sharing the memories of the Civil War 'a glorious coalition not only of all parties, but of all religions too'. In the end of the text, he yet distinguished between party, faction and religious animosities, though presenting all as related.⁸⁸ These may at first appear as merely trivial details, yet it is arguable that they reveal how religion was no more the undeniably dominating discourse as far as party was concerned; religious parties were simply one type of party and there could be other types, including political parties. Furthermore, parties and religions were increasingly being seen as two distinctly separate matters. According to this author, religion could rather be mixed with parties that already existed, bringing with itself extra stimulus and symbolism to party politics and making party confrontations permanent.⁸⁹ In the late 1730s, party was no more automatically synonymous with religious inclination. A further instance of the increasingly diverging meanings of religious sect and political party comes from 1746, when a pamphlet, though applying religious criteria for political divisions as well, yet distinguished between 'all the several sects of religion' which had united with 'the discontented parties in the state' during the seventeenth century.⁹⁰ In his *Idea of a Patriot King*, Bolingbroke drew a parallel distinction between matters political and religious yet treated them as analogous when he stated that, in the case of governing unconstitutionally by party, 'the interest of the state is supposed to be that of the party, as the interest of religion is supposed to be that of a church', the interest of the state becoming, like the interest of religion, a matter of less importance.⁹¹ In this approach, party belonged to matters of state, whereas the corresponding religious term for undesired division was church rather than party. Of course, Bolingbroke continued the established tradition of presenting the two as analogous. At the dictionary level, the same transition from the traditional religion-dominated concept of party to a more general concept can be seen in mid-eighteenth-century definitions of sect as a 'religious party'.⁹²

87 *The London Journal*, No. 750, 10 November 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, November 1733, Reel 134; *The London Journal*, No. 762, 2 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134.

88 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animisities*, 1736, 3, 15, 35.

89 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animisities*, 1736, 3, 15, 35.

90 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 7.

91 Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 402.

92 Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

Party in word combinations

Party was a concept carrying a multitude of alternative meanings. Party was a term with which new expressions, needed to describe pluralism in religion and politics, could be easily formed. One way to trace early eighteenth-century understanding of the concept of party and ways in which the meanings of the concept were changing is to focus on word combinations containing the term. Particularly interesting are, of course, new combinations based on the use of the term party.

Such an analysis was in this study realised through a systematic collection of instances occurring in various sources. Contexts were used to deduce the sense of the expression and its evaluative connotation; yet because of the high number of instances, the entire quotations cannot be listed. In Appendix B, 109 word combinations are listed with instances of their users and time of use. Here will follow a suggestion on how the combinations could be categorised into semantic subfields and what these subfields tell us about the direction of the development in senses of the concept party. Many more word combinations could be found by extending the source material. As far as the variety of genres and number of consulted sources are concerned, however, the sample can be considered fairly representative.

Appendix B prompts some suggestions on the direction of development in the meanings of the concept political party in the period 1700–1750. One unavoidable conclusion is that all the combinations, including obvious linguistic innovations, remained pejorative in their connotations throughout. This conclusion also concerns the expression party-man, which originated from military language and occasionally appeared as a positive term – only because of its restricted definition in some particular texts. When analysed in more numerous instances, party-man also appears to have been a pejorative expression widely used by a variety of writers. The connotations of all word combinations containing the term party being so pejorative, the concept political party itself was likely to convey overwhelmingly negative associations during the first half of the eighteenth century.

The occasional conformity controversies of the very beginning of the century do not seem to have caused considerable innovation in party word combinations, whereas the years of the Sacheverell affair (1709–10), the anti-dissenting policies of the ensuing Tory administration, and the Succession Crisis (1714–16) gave rise both to much political polemic and to several new word combinations. Appearances of party combinations are more numerous in the first two decades of the century than in the 1720s, 1730s and 1740s. This weight on the early part of the century reflects the gradual calming down of party political debates from the 1720s onwards. It is, however, partly explained also by the fact that sources discussing pluralism are more abundant from the first two decades of the century, and thus form a relatively high proportion of the consulted material. Opposition to Walpole did not very intensively discuss questions related to political pluralism, whereas the government exaggerated

the consequences of party to blacken the Tories and to discourage the opposition Whigs from supporting them. In contrast, the late eighteenth-century opposition underscored the positive aspects of party as opposed to 'corruption' within the government. A more extensive study of later eighteenth-century material would undoubtedly create a more detailed picture on developments in party vocabulary after the pacification of the party strife of the early part of the century.

For a closer analysis of party vocabulary, the listed word combinations can be categorised into loose semantic groups that reflect various aspects of the phenomenon of party. These groups can be named: (i) terms of a concrete party conflict referring to a possibility of open violence; (ii) terms of a more abstract party conflict with minimal risk of open violence; (iii) terms of political writing, a major form of party activity; (iv) terms connected with preliminary forms of party organisation; (v) expressions referring to an emergence of party-related terminology in political discourse; (vi) ideological terms that refer to the role of party principles; (vii) party-political terms that indicate that the party was, in one way or another, engaged in an acute political issue; (viii) terms of party adherence with obvious spiritual connotation; (ix) terms of party adherence with potential links to prevalent medical beliefs; and (x) other party expressions – including metaphorical expressions – describing a party adherent's state of mind and his/her behaviour.

(i) Terms of concrete party conflict

Party-quarrel, 1705, 1720
Party-struggle, 1709
Party-feud, 1709
Party-arms, 1715
Party-strife, 1715, 1727
Party-hostility, 1720
Party-scuffle, 1723

Terms of concrete party conflict occurred in crisis years such as 1709 and 1715 as well as in texts that later recalled those years of intensive party conflict which had been feared would lead to another civil war. Polemicists such as Defoe, Gordon, Trenchard and Mandeville willingly used these martial metaphors, but others applied them as well. In these expressions of mostly military origin, the relationship between parties was associated with quarrels, struggles, feuds, strife, hostilities and scuffles, parties being seen to make use of party-arms, for instance. Party was used in a sense of a party of war. The metaphors were those of direct warfare, making use of the bitter memories of the Civil War and the on-going foreign battles in which the nation was engaged. Importantly, these expressions of concrete party conflict seem to have been dying out after the 1720s, only the somewhat weaker expression 'quarrel' being occasionally used in later decades. When the coexistence of the two parties was gradually moving towards forms in which outbreaks of open violence between the parties was

becoming less likely to occur, metaphors describing the system also began to reflect this shift, terms of war being replaced by terms of more abstract party rivalry.

(ii) Terms of abstract party conflict

Party-distinction, 1696, c. 1710, 1715, 1716, 1727, 1733, 1736,
1736, 1741, 1744, 1747
Party-dispute, 1709, 1718, 1727
Party-animosity, 1711, 1722, 1736
Party-difference, 1714, 1714, 1745
Party-division, 1715, 1718, 1735
Party-dislike, 1737
Party-debate, 1740

Terms of more abstract party conflict containing no explicit hint of a possibility of open violence were available and increasingly applied in descriptions of reality of party conflict. A rough estimate of the relative frequency of these two types of terms for party conflict can also be made: whereas the consulted sources contained ten instances that can be listed under the category of a concrete party conflict, twenty-five occurrences of a more abstract party conflict building on less derogatory terms such as distinction, animosity, dispute, difference and division were traced. Expressions of an abstract party conflict occurred throughout the early eighteenth century, even though occurrences from later years rather than the very beginning of the century tend to be more numerous. Towards the end of the period, combinations based on the words dislike and debate also appeared, the latter in particular, though continuously pejorative, referring to a rather 'civilised' form of party system. No particular group of political writers seems to have specialised in the use of these more peaceful expressions of party conflict; the shift towards their use may have been rather universal and demonstrates a decline in the fierceness of the politico-religious discourse on parties. An abstract party conflict was more secular and less violent. Violence between parties was giving way to debate.

(iii) Terms for political writing

Party-pamphleteer, 1703
Party-author, 1707, 1712
Party pocketbook, c. 1710
Party-writer, 1710, 1714
Party-story, 1712
Party-relation, 1712
Party-scribbler, 1714
Party-agitation, 1715
Party-account, 1716, 1735
Party-writing, 1720
Party-song, 1729
Party-play, 1729
Party-guide, 1736
Party-paper, 1739

No equally apparent conclusion can be drawn for terms referring to those elementary forms of party organisation that existed. Unsurprisingly, in printed source material, the dominance of writing as party activity is evident. A clear majority of terms referring to party activities were words related to publishing, which is to some extent an illusion caused by sources through which conceptual developments can be studied: all are written sources and as such are often themselves manifestations of party activism. Many of the terms of literary party strife were used by leading party polemicists such as Addison and Swift. Authors, writers, pamphleteers and scribblers had a central role in verbalizing the line of each of the parties by producing writings such as papers, accounts, relations, stories, pocketbooks, guides, plays and songs, particularly in the early part of the century. If this was not called propaganda, it could yet be called agitation. Evidently, no dramatic changes in the frequency of the terms for party writing occurred, the 1710s being the time of most intense party journalism and party strife in general. Even after that, the number of terms related to party propaganda was steadily increasing as political journalism consolidated its position in the political system.

(iv) Terms of party organisation

Party-broker, 1701
 Party-making, 1702, 1709
 Party-man, 1702, 1705, 1707, 1707, c. 1710, 1712, 1714,
 1715, 1715, 1724, 1734, 1736, 1740, 1747
 Party-agent, 1710, c. 1710
 Party-woman, 1711
 Party-offender, 1712
 Party-leader, 1712, 1715, 1718, 1721
 Party-deserter, 1718
 Party-taking, 1719
 Party-champion, 1720
 Party-badge, 1728

Ever since the Exclusion Crisis, the party organisations of both Whigs and Tories had been in the process of formation. The organisations never reached the level of twentieth-century mass parties, but still there were activists particularly dedicated to their party known as party-men. Even if party officials were not chosen in this period, the writings of the political opponents easily found leaders, brokers, agents and champions within the rival party. Many of these activists certainly carried party-badges. Much of this organisational vocabulary of party dates from the early 1710s, a period when the intensity of the party struggle necessitated the existence of a party organisation. The existence of parties, or party-making, entailed party-taking within some of the politically active public but also gave naturally rise to the emergence of party-offenders and party-deserters. One more observation on 'organisational' terminology can be added. Even though male dominance in parties was self-evident, an occasional occurrence of the term party-woman illustrates that

women might also be seen to have a role in the day's party politics. In a society where the areas of life proper for each gender were strictly defined, this term necessarily carried a belittling connotation: a party-woman had rejected her natural responsibilities and interfered in politico-religious disagreements that belonged to the male sphere.

(v) *Terms for party terminology in political discourse*

Party-name, 1710, c. 1710, 1713, 1717, 1728, 1729, 1733, 1739
 Party-nickname, c. 1710
 Party-term, 1713
 Party-word, 1713, 1717
 Party-combination, 1721
 Party-watchword, 1722
 Party-denomination, 1728

The rise of the first political parties was such a change in the structure of politics that it unavoidably remoulded some of the language of politics as well. This refashioning did not go unnoticed. For instance, the expression party-name seems to have come into common use from the crisis year 1710 at the latest, and it was supplemented in some discussions of parties with terms such as nickname, term, word, combination, watchword and denomination. The adoption of these terms reflects contemporary awareness of the emergence of specific forms of language for discussing parties. The very existence of party-names was commonly cursed, their use even being declared a sin,⁹³ or at least their being considered 'meaningless'⁹⁴ and adherence to them 'ridiculous', as the disputes of the mid-1730s, for instance, were claimed to have little in common with the original party divisions.⁹⁵

(vi) *Terms of party ideology*

Party-notion, 1711, 1727
 Party-principle, 1716, 1739
 Party-disposition, 1718
 Party-kindness, 1719
 Party-puncto, 1722
 Party-regard, 1722
 Party-consideration, 1733
 Party-dream, 1733
 Party-view, 1735, 1736
 Party-opinion, 1747

Historians might easily interpret early eighteenth-century party conflict as mere struggle for power. However, ideology, often religiously motivated, evidently

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93 [Grosvenor], *An Essay on the Christian Name*, 1728, 50.

94 C172, 18 October 1729.

95 C348, 3 March 1733.

played a major role in party adherence. The importance of ideology is illustrated by Swift's reference to 'ideas fastened to parties' which did not describe the parties simply as groups of interest but saw that diverging values directed the way people took sides, the way the parties acted and the way the adherents of a party were distinguished from others. As Swift pointed out, 'principles . . . served to denote a man of one or the other party'.⁹⁶ An anonymous pamphleteer also agreed that 'there is a real and visible distinction in men's principles and practices' independently of the party-names used.⁹⁷

An ideological vocabulary of party – once again used by opponents of the party and not by its adherents themselves – seems to have developed increasingly from the 1710s onwards, alternative terms emerging first for party-principles and party-notions and later also for party-views and party-opinions. Major party propagandists such as Addison and Bolingbroke distinguished themselves as some of the first users of expressions such as party-notions and party-views⁹⁸. This rise of ideological vocabulary does not need to mean that ideological questions had not been important before; quite the contrary, the 1700s, for instance, had experienced debates in which ideologies derived from religious sources had played a considerable role; whereas the ideologies of the parties became rather more mixed later in the century. Did the writers then use the vocabulary of ideology to hide the fact that party politics concerned practical issues of power rather than some distinctly defined ideology? This is unlikely, as the terms of ideology, not unlike other party terms, were pejorative in their connotations and used against opponents. It may simply be that political writers gradually became accustomed to writing in ideological terms rather than in terms of concrete conflict. In the mid-eighteenth century, many members of the political elite still manifested party-kindness, expressed their party-dispositions and dreamed party-dreams. The basic principles of one's own party were taken into party-consideration and party-regard.

(vii) *Party-political terms*

Party-cause, 1705, 1708, 1735
 Party-question, 1708
 Party-project, 1709
 Party-design, 1710
 Party-end, 1711
 Party-measure, 1712, 1730
 Party-concern, 1713
 Party-matter, 1713, 1722
 Party-business, 1714, 1715
 Party-interest, 1717, 1721
 Party-administration, 1735
 Party-king, 1735
 Party-system, 1735
 Party-reign, 1740

96 [Swift], E43, 31 May 1711.

97 [Trapp], *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 21.

98 Party-view also appeared in *The Dictionary . . . of Mr Peter Bayle*, 1734-38, Vol. IV, 711.

Despite the importance of ideology in motivating party conflict, less idealistic interests also moulded much of the strife. Terms of more practical party politics usually originate from contexts where some acute political issue was claimed to have been made a party-matter or party-question, in other words, the advocates of some party had adopted a common stand in the matter and acted as a group rather than as individuals, a feature despised by many contemporaries who admired, at least at the level of rhetoric, an impartial formation of one's own views. It was a commonplace to complain that some policy was being advocated as a party-cause, party-project or party-business with party-designs, party-ends, party-concerns and party-interests in the background and put into effect with party-measures. Alternatively, it was happily noted that some other issue had escaped from becoming a concern of party. Defoe used several of these expressions of practical party politics in his polemic. Worth a separate mention are Bolingbroke's terms party-system, party-administration and party-king, as well as the term party-reign, which do not appear in the texts of other writers. These terms should not be interpreted as excessively modern, however, the first standing for nothing like a twentieth-century party system, the second and third accusing some particular administration or monarch of favouring one of the two parties, and the last referring to 'an anarchy, when the government was modelled to the prevalent faction in every session'.⁹⁹ Party-interest appears to have been a term favoured by Bolingbroke and Gordon, advocates of classical republicanism, but rarely used by other writers.

(viii) Spiritual terms of party adherence

Party-spirit, 1711, 1727, 1728, 1735, 1736, 1747

Party-zeal, 1711, 1722, 1736, 1739

Party-bigot, 1712

Party-bigotry, 1715

Party-zealot, 1718, 1722

Several of the above-mentioned party combinations were used in contexts where no strict separation between political and religious parties was in force. An average party-man or party-woman was much more likely to be motivated in his or her actions by Sacheverell's or Hoadly's politico-religious arguments than by some secular party ideology. Given this religious background of much of party adherence, it is not surprising that some of the terminology applied by political rivals to each other was a direct loan from the sphere of religion. For as long as society was conceived to be based on a religious and organic foundation, terms could easily be derived from the traditionally authoritative discourses of Christian religion and ancient medicine. Independently of their own conviction as Christians, the introducers of these terms could rely on commonly shared associations of terms such as spirit, zeal and bigot and the

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⁹⁹ C713, 1 March 1740, BL Burney Vol. 349B.

traditional discourse of Protestant religion, which was familiar to all readers. For instance, in the aftermath of the Sacheverell affair, which had reinforced the habit of viewing religious and political issues as intermixable, the Whig Addison introduced the terms party-spirit¹⁰⁰ and party-zeal in his essays, making use of conventional associations between enthusiasm for religious and political reasons. For an overwhelming majority of Englishmen, yet unrecovered from the trauma of the 1640s, all enthusiasm in the form of party-spirit or party-zeal was necessarily something to be utterly rejected. This underlying mentality may explain why party combinations building on religiously charged words became rather frequently used in early eighteenth-century texts discussing parties.

Party-spirit, in particular, was a term in which political, religious and even medical discourses united. As late as in 1727, John Balguy, a Low Churchman, dedicated a sermon to the 'ill effects of a party-spirit', urging the audience to 'carefully guard our minds against that spirit of party which usually prevails so much among us, and to which we seem so unaccountably addicted'. Fortunately, commented Balguy, party-spirit had become less intense – an assertion shared by most contemporaries – and the English now had a rare opportunity for 'expelling it quite from among us, since our distemper has remitted, it may now be more easily dealt with, we should therefore use our utmost endeavours to perfect a cure, and prevent a relapse'.¹⁰¹ Balguy's sermon was obviously aimed at traditionalist Anglican circles and attempted to accommodate them to the Whiggish and Low-Church rule. Whereas Balguy's status as an Anglican divine made the raging spirit of party appear as a spiritual affair requiring improvement, his conscious metaphorical language could also be interpreted from the point of view of traditional medicine. As to spirituality, Balguy wrote that party-spirit 'roots up our kind affections, and good dispositions, and instead of them fills our hearts with rage and rancour'. As to medical metaphors, he pictured how 'party-spirit eats into our breasts like a cancer, corrupts and poisons our best humours'.¹⁰² Religious and medical teachings became inseparably intermixed, and, in the minds of both the preacher and most of his listeners, all this discussion of party-spirit concerned political party strife as well. Associations between religious, medical and political disagreements were only strengthened by Balguy's statements such as 'intestine strife . . . preys upon our vitals, and cuts the very sinews of government'.¹⁰³

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100 Bayle had written in his *Dictionary*, in a religious sense, that 'the spirit of party is a strange fury: some readers are so warm that they tear to pieces, or take out all the pages where they find certain ignominious things charged upon their sect'. *The Dictionary . . . of Mr Peter Bayle*, 1734-38, Vol. IV, 711.

101 John Balguy, *The Duty of Benevolence and Brotherly Love, and the Effects of a Party Spirit*, 1727, 16-17; C213, 1 August 1730, offered the same view about the decline of 'this mischievous spirit of division'. In C218, 5 September 1730, 'the spirit of party' was described as 'blind and furious' as opposed to the spirit advanced by *The Craftsman* which was presented as originating from 'information and conviction'.

102 Balguy, *The Duty of Benevolence*, 1727, 18.

103 Balguy, *The Duty of Benevolence*, 1727, 19.

The unambiguously negative connotations of party-spirit can be seen in several contemporary sermons and other writings. Another version of the expression was 'partisan spirit', which Saint Paul had attempted to heal among the quarrelsome Corinthians, so often presented as a warning example of party conflict. One author maintained that it was necessary for the godly 'to separate themselves from such party-spirits, unless they will deny Christ',¹⁰⁴ for Christ and Church were one, not many. Another claimed that 'a spirit of party' could 'sum up all the wickedness and weakness, which human nature can contrive or connive at, in one word'. In his view, party-spirit was 'a spirit of interest and dependency, a spirit of ambition and revenge', and, furthermore, it raged nowhere else in the way it raged in England.¹⁰⁵ In yet another pamphlet, party-spirit was said to be suppressed only by 'charity, justice, and moderation'.¹⁰⁶ Neither did discussion on party-spirit die out with a gradual calming down of religious disputes. The *Craftsman* of the 1730s and early 1740s still saw 'the spirit of party' as something that 'has so often destroyed our inward peace',¹⁰⁷ and a preacher from the late-1740s complained how 'the spirit of party' appeared in abundance in England, 'working up the passions of thousands into violence and rage'. According to this view, party-spirit, which could never be brought to conformity with the Christian religion, led to mismanagement of various kinds of public affairs and to disturbances in social life.¹⁰⁸ To put it briefly, Englishmen remained suspicious towards party-spirit all through the early eighteenth century.

A nearly synonymous and hardly less derogatory expression was that of party-zeal. In the mid-1730s, for instance, party-zeal was employed as a politico-religious concept in a pamphlet which saw religion as a force introduced into party politics with the purpose of strengthening hatred among the parties. The pamphleteer openly pronounced his conception of the connection between politics and religion in this respect: 'Party-zeal, which ever forgets the public good, to mind only its own imaginary phantom, grows formidable and terrible indeed, to the true national interest, because zeal for religion is, in this case, mixed with it'.¹⁰⁹ Religious and political zeal were frequently intermixed, party-zeal often containing both, and contemporaries were highly conscious of this fact when using concepts such as party-zeal. The author saw the Civil War having been carried out with party-zeal, and the party-zeal of the mid-1730s having led to conditions as dangerous to the constitution of the country as the situation before the Civil War had been.¹¹⁰ In another pamphlet from the late 1730s, party-zeal was presented as one of the negative forces that made people disregard other men's rights, led to distrust and sometimes to 'convulsions and revolutions of state'.¹¹¹ Likewise, William Keith

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104 Grosvenor, *An Essay on the Christian Name*, 1728, 30, 50–1.

105 *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 4.

106 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 18.

107 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 25; C723, 10 May 1740.

108 Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 8, 15–16, 19–20.

109 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 3.

110 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 9.

111 *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 6.

complained in his writings published at the end of the 1740s that, because of party-zeal, impartial reasoning had become unfashionable.¹¹²

At least two more terms can be added to the spiritual terminology of party adherence. Possibly as a reaction to an intensive propagation of High-Church ideas in the early 1710s, terms such as party-bigot and party-bigotry were occasionally used in contemporary texts to refer to obstinate and intolerant religious and/or political belief. In a parallel manner, the rising feelings of anticlericalism in the late 1710s and early 1720s may explain the occurrences of the term party-zealot.¹¹³

The terms for party adherence with an unambiguously spiritual origin are not numerous. When the religious associations of the term party itself and its continuous application in politico-religious contexts are taken into consideration, however, religious discourse unquestionably seems to have played a role in the discourse on political pluralism. Interestingly, the users of party terms with a spiritual content were not so often traditionalist Anglicans but rather seem to have consisted of moderates opposing both religious and political enthusiasm. The use of spiritual party vocabulary was a means through which they endeavoured to mould the attitudes of the public. However, it would be an oversimplification to suggest that they were merely abusing religious language for that purpose, as many of them honestly believed in the analogous character of parties political and religious.

(ix) Medical terms of party adherence

Party-heat, 1710, c. 1710, 1715
Party-air, 1711
Party-rage, 1711, 1715, 1745, 1747
Party-spleen, 1712, 1733
Party-mad, 1712
Party-passion, 1718
Party-fury, 1718, 1735
Party-madness, 1729

Prevalent medical conceptions formed another tradition of discourse familiar to most readers. Organic conceptions of society remaining deep-rooted among the audience, medical discourse provided those discussing the phenomenon of parties with effective metaphors. The claim that medical discourse had relevance to discourse on political pluralism may at first appear surprising, and it might indeed be unhelpful to discuss medical theories in any greater length here, but even a concise analysis shows that some party terms derived a considerable proportion of their rhetorical strength from a continuously widespread belief in ancient theories of humoral pathology.

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¹¹² Keith, *A Collection of Papers and Other Tracts*, 1749, xxiii.

¹¹³ The pseudonymous 'Author of, *The Harmony of Reason and Christianity*' also used the expression 'the zealots of the party', *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 12.

For members of the political elite, medical terms of party adherence – though sometimes certainly used also in a jocular sense – were expressions describing party conflict that were to be taken much more seriously than a twentieth-century observer may at first be prepared to recognise. Addison's and the *Craftsman*'s party-spleen¹¹⁴, used with reference to an illness, was clearly a way of describing political activism in medical terms. The same concerns terms such as party-heat, party-air, party-fury, and the widely employed party-rage. Party-heats, for instance, could be described as 'symptoms that threaten their being hectic in the constitution and incurable'.¹¹⁵ The political body as more than an artificial one was still present in many a writer's and reader's conscience.

The term party-rage was used in the early 1710s and again in the late 1740s, after the Jacobite rising. Elisha Smith's sermon from 1715 provides an illustration of this practice of political 'medicine' in relation to both religious and political parties. Healing excessive pluralism might even demand violent measures within the body politic:¹¹⁶

Party-rage is very justly observed to be in the body politic, as ill humours and diseases in its blood; which must necessarily be purged out, before the soundness of health and firmness of strength can return. But there is little hopes of the fever abating, as long as the pulse beats so high.

For the republicans of the early 1720s, party-rage was not quite as medical a phenomenon, but they still used it to refer to 'an implacable and furious hatred, and the denunciation of woe and mortal war against all, who do not believe just the same with us, and cut their corns as we do'.¹¹⁷ When party-rage as a negative term against mistaken plurality of political values reoccurred in sermons published in the mid- and late-1740s, it was claimed that various forms of irreligion had increased party-rage. William Gilpin, for instance, when preaching after an election in 1747, provided a lengthy description of party-rage, listing its various features and leaving spiritual and humoral pathological associations looming in the background. Yet the sermon leaves the impression that not all differences in values were deplorable:¹¹⁸

What then are the marks, by which this character of party-rage is distinguishable? A mean view to self-interest, a thirst after opposition, and an embittered spirit, . . . When our differences are guided by some base, selfish, unworthy motive, when we oppose in mere trifles, rather as it would seem for opposition's sake, than for the hope of any general good resulting from it; or when our differing sentiments, upon whatever principle they may be founded, grow to such an height as to raise

114 Concanen suggested in 1727 that some supported the Pretender's party out of spleen. [Concanen], *The Speculatist*, 29 July 1727.

115 Place, *The Arbitration*, c. 1710, 3.

116 Elisha Smith, *The Olive Branch: or, The sure Way to peace, and Abolition of Parties*, 1715, 8.

117 [Trenchard and Gordon], 1W22, 15 June 1720.

118 Warren, *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 8; Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 11–12.

passions, instill malice, and create prejudices; in these cases, difference of sentiments, as it is robbed of honesty, truth and humanity becomes nothing but the spirit of party-rage . . . indulging in ourselves this violent and contentious spirit, is the most effectual method we can take to sour our humours, to make ill-nature and contradiction habitual to us, and to turn us into wretches, distressed in ourselves, and troublesome to all persons around us. The power of custom every one is acquainted with; it acts with the force of nature in all constitutions.

At the end of his sermon, Gilpin made the medical undertone of his discussion on adherence to political party explicit, claiming that party-rage was comparable to 'the healthful body of this happy community [being] thrown into a violent disorder' so that 'the fiery blood runs through every part of it, and not only deprives it of ease, but throws it into the most tormenting agonies'.¹¹⁹

Such medicalisation of party activity could be both physical and mental, the old humoral theory conceiving the two as interconnected. It was widely agreed in the eighteenth century that excessive passions, and party-passion¹²⁰ as well, were capable of causing madness, party-madness¹²¹ amongst other forms. Such medical terms describing a party-adherent's state of mind appear to have been the common property of both traditionalist and moderate writers, whereas the most radical of writers did not make much use of them. It may well be that the radicals could already find more convincing metaphors from the new natural sciences for describing diversity in a neutral or even positive sense. Humoral pathological metaphors, which presupposed an organic unity of society, could provide arguments against diversity, not ones sympathetic to change.¹²²

(x) *Other terms of party adherence*

Party-virtue, 1705
 Party-pique, 1709, 1710, 1715
 Party-judgement, c. 1710
 Party-scale, c. 1710
 Party-shelter, c. 1710
 Party-driving, 1710
 Party-coloured, 1710, 1712
 Party-humour, 1711

119 Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 17.

120 Dr. Robert Pitt, writing to Locke around 22 January 1704, forecast that his forthcoming pamphlet would exasperate 'the passions of the parties'. *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VIII, 167; Gilpin preached that one negative consequence of engaging ardently in a party was that 'passion, not reason becomes our test of truth'. Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 13.

121 Party-madness was mentioned in one way or another by many writers. For instance, John Hardy, a son of an Anglican clergyman but later Presbyterian, wrote to John Locke on 17 September 1700 that 'all men are mad after parties' in theological issues. *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VII, 142; Defoe wrote in 1705 that 'all people seem mad to be in one party or other'. [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, preface; Addison's influence in the discourse on parties long after his death is visible in a poetical statement from 1729: 'To screen good ministers from public rage, and how with party-madness to engage, we learn from Addison's immortal page'. Bramston, *Art of Politicks*, 1729, 9.

122 Ihalaenen 1997b.

Party-lie, 1712
 Party-lying, 1712
 Party-merit, 1715, 1735
 Party-bias, 1715
 Party-justice, 1717, 1735
 Party-depravation [sic], 1718
 Party-prejudice, 1718, 1722, 1733, 1739
 Party-opposition, 1718, 1722
 Party-breach, 1718
 Party-slavery, 1727
 Party-resentment, 1728
 Party-darkness, 1735
 Party-cunning, 1735
 Party-conduct, 1735

The rest of the party terms describing an adherent's state of mind cannot, because of their very variety, be easily categorised. Some groups of party words can be distinguished, however. For instance, in a period constantly emphasising the importance of virtue, supporters of parties were claimed to have party-virtues and party-merits which diverged from the common standards. These special rules justified party-pique, party-judgements, party-lying, party-bias, party-justice, party-prejudices, party-breaches, party-resentments, and so on. Party-conduct typical of the adherents of the rival party would lead to party-depravation [sic], party-opposition, party-darkness and even party-slavery. Adherents dominated by this kind of party-humour used a party-scale in their judgements and gave party-coloured accounts of public affairs. If attacked by opponents, they could always trust in the existence of a party-shelter.

Terms describing the adherents' state of mind were used throughout the period though not in particularly high frequencies; party-prejudice was the term appearing most often. Many of these terms (lies, lying) were a speciality of writers such as Addison, who eagerly vindicated morality and politeness in public life and thus wanted to reveal the dark sides of the politics of the rival party. Many of them (justice, darkness, cunning, conduct) also occurred in texts of Bolingbroke, who had a career as a party politician and became a major theorist on parties. Many of Bolingbroke's novel word combinations appeared in his *Dissertation on Parties*, first published as periodical essays in the leading opposition journal.

The party combinations analysed above, demonstrate that political parties were still far from an acceptable phenomenon in the early eighteenth century. Yet they support the hypothesis of a transformation in prevailing conceptions of political parties in this period. The direction of this transformation was from conceptions of concrete party conflict towards more organised parties in which party adherence was mental rather than physical. Writing formed a primary area of party activity, at least as far as printed sources are concerned, and many contemporaries were aware of the emergence of a new terminology in political language for describing parties. In discussions on parties, members of the

political elite used both ideological and practical terminology. When describing party adherence with metaphors, they had the old sources of religion and medicine but also demonstrated an ability to coin new word combinations for that purpose.

Distinguishing between party and faction

Even if the term party could occasionally be used in only slightly negative senses, the term faction, which occurred almost equally often as an expression for the concept of political party, was, without an exception, a highly derogatory term. Faction carried negative connotations directed against political opponents, its purpose being to question the legitimacy of their political motives. When used in political contexts, the term tended to convey an opprobrious sense that included imputations of selfish or mischievous ends and turbulent or unscrupulous methods. Faction thus referred to a miserable state of political discord. According to a prevalent assumption, factional behaviour placed private interests ahead of the interests of others, ahead of the public good, and even ahead of justice. Faction was seen as 'the driving on a design, between several persons, by illegal practices, to the destroying, or opposing of what is legally established'.¹²³ Alternatively, it was considered 'the qualifying of private passions by public means'.¹²⁴ Who wished to be thought to belong to such a criminal league or confess membership of a group advancing merely private interests? Even if some persons could indirectly admit their links to parties, no one in Tudor, Stuart or Hanoverian England would have described himself as factious or as a member of a faction.¹²⁵

It has been argued in previous studies on the history of political parties that, in the course of the eighteenth century, a clearer distinction between the terms party and faction emerged. Parties became gradually distinguished from factions by the fact that their unity was based on professed principles rather than simply on the advancement of one's own political interests.¹²⁶ A question of interest from the point of view of the long-term history of political parties is to what extent these distinctions were already drawn in early eighteenth-century texts. Many available sources would seem to indicate that no such distinctions were yet generally drawn, but that is not the whole picture. A thinker like Bolingbroke could already make the distinction ostentatiously evident.

In studies on historical semantics, the word faction is generally seen as having originated from the religious struggles of the Reformation. Some early

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123 [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 5.

124 [Gordon], CL39, 29 July 1721.

125 OED: faction; Shephard 1992, 739; For further instances of faction as the promoter of private interests, see [Dennis], *The Danger of Priestcraft*, 1702, 9; *The States-Men of Abingdon*, 1702, 2; [Defoe], *Whigs and Tories United*, 1714, 4; Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 10.

126 Harris 1993, 5; For an emerging distinction between the terms party and faction, see also von Beyme 1978, Ball 1988 and Ball 1989, cited above in section 8.1.

eighteenth-century texts also point that way,¹²⁷ and it is important to keep this Reformation background and contemporary consciousness of it in mind when uses of faction are analysed. Faction had entered the English language later than party but seems to have been adopted rather quickly into general use by the end of the sixteenth century. It could be used to denote a great variety of different groupings in English and foreign history, most of which were predominately religious rather than purely political.¹²⁸

In early eighteenth-century discussions on contemporary affairs, faction was a term universally used for both the matters of state and those of the Church.¹²⁹ When faction was in question, the two spheres were often deeply intermixed. As Paxton wrote in 1703, faction could be seen as 'the natural offsprings of a distempered government' that also caused 'differences and disputes in religion'. Religious disagreements followed because 'civil factions will not enough interest people, without religious pretences, to keep up divisions'. Evidence for this conclusion could be found in ancient Rome where 'church schisms, or abominable heresies, continually multiplied or revived' at times of political crises.¹³⁰ Paxton's statements are interesting in that they suggest the predominance of political over religious faction. Yet the close links of the term faction to purely ecclesiastical disputes are also evident, as demonstrated by Bishop Burnet's writings from 1682 and 1703. According to Burnet, 'an equality among pastors, cannot hold long without faction' and 'the Jesuits cherished the faction in Scotland'.¹³¹ Another illustration of the sinister religious sense of the word faction can be found in Bishop Tillotson's sermon dating from the 1670s and warning against 'pride and self-conceit, of division and faction' in the Church.¹³² Bishop Nicolson wrote in his diary at the dawn of the eighteenth century about how his friends and relatives disagreed on 'the Atterburian faction' in Convocation,¹³³ and Whig propaganda warned about a

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127 An instance of this is provided by Moréri-Collier, *The Great Historical . . . Dictionary*, 1701, which defined 'the Politicks' as a faction (or party) during the French Wars of Religion. See also *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 17, for 'three factions in religion' in Reformation England.

128 *OED*: faction: In early eighteenth-century histories, medieval and early modern England appeared as having been full of various factions. Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 392, 395–6, and Higgons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 108, 216, 224, 249, 251, 275, 286, 300, 304, 318–9, 322, 327; Religious senses occur in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, for instance, Vol. V, 274, on 'the license that was practised in religion by the several factions' during the Interregnum, in Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, passim., and *Conscientious Nonconformity*, 1737, 26; Bolingbroke referred to 'the republican, presbyterian, and independent factions' during the Interregnum in *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 131; Ancient Corinth, the favourite example for preachers of party and faction is illustrated by Plaxton, *An Exhortation to Unanimity and Concord*, 1745, 2; Mawson called an ancient Jewish sect a faction in *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 12.

129 For an instance of factions both in Church and state, see *Le Chevalier de St. George*, 1713, 60, a translation of *The Dictionary . . . of Mr Peter Bayle*, 1734–1738, Vol. III, 172, and Vol. IV, 711, and *The Daily Gazetteer*, No. 1501, 18 April 1740, BL Burney, Vol. 351; Defoe separated religious concerns from 'factions in the state' in *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 37. Mawson also spoke distinctly about 'state-factions' in *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 14, 24.

130 Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 614–15.

131 *OED*: faction; *HCET*: Gilbert Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, 1703.

132 *HCET*: John Tillotson, Sermon on 'The Folly of Scoffing at Religion', 1671.

133 *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 16 December 1702, 145.

'Sacheverellite faction' around 1710.¹³⁴

Better exemplified than by individual ecclesiastical writings, however, the continuously strong status of faction as a religious term is by its occurrences in the *Book of Common Prayer*. This summary of the doctrine of the Church of England comprised the Act of Uniformity (1662) which began with words lamenting the way 'many people have been led into factions and schisms [during the Interregnum], to the great decay and scandal of the reformed religion of the Church of England, and to the hazard of many souls'. In the Restoration period, on every national anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, English congregations were expected to pray in favour of the authorities 'to cut off all such workers of iniquity, as turn religion into rebellion, and faith into faction, that they may never prevail against us, or triumph in the ruin of (the monarchy and) thy Church among us'. The editions of the 1690s of the *Book of Common Prayer* also contained a declaration by William III in which the monarch promised 'not to suffer unnecessary disputations, altercations, or questions, to be raised [within the Church], which may nourish faction both in the Church and commonwealth'.¹³⁵ Faction as a despised politico-religious phenomenon was thus condemned not only in parliamentary legislation and royal declarations concerning the state Church but also in prayers supposed to be joined in annually by every loyal subject of the monarch. This official doctrine on the despicable nature of faction was to be repeated both in Anglican sermons and political texts discussing the various aspects of the phenomenon.

The term faction was familiar to the early eighteenth-century English from texts belonging more distinctly to the sphere of politics as well. Members of the political elite would come across negative references to factions if they happened to consult seventeenth-century political theorists. In his *Leviathan*, Hobbes, for instance, had written about faction as an unlawful conspiracy in which a part of a sovereign assembly 'consult a part, to contrive the guidance of the rest', aiming to abuse the assembly and advance some private interest. He had added that 'factions for government of religion' were likewise unjust because of their violating the peace and safety of the people, and taking the 'sword out of the hand of the sovereign'.¹³⁶ Hobbes thus seems to have distinguished between factions religious and political, something that many early eighteenth-century English did not always care to do. Locke, unlike Hobbes, offered nothing much to the debaters on faction, yet he also observed factions as 'fatal to states'.¹³⁷

The same antifactionous attitude was readable in almost any late seventeenth-century literary genre. The unsuitability of factions to the traditional medically inclined notion of the body politic is exemplified by William Temple's text dating from the days of the Exclusion Crisis and describing faction in a body politic as 'a great blow, or a great disease, [that] may either change or destroy

134 *Chuse which you Please*, 1710, 7.

135 *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1681, 1687 and 1693; A specific reference to monarchy was added to the prayer in the edition of 1687.

136 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck, Cambridge 1992 (1651), 164.

137 Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690, II, §230.

the very frame of a body'.¹³⁸ The poet John Dryden also used the term faction in many of his works published in the 1690s.¹³⁹ In spite of such a vital tradition of condemning faction, however, the reality of its existence could not be denied in many late seventeenth-century texts. In the royal court, for instance, court factions still had a significant role, and Thomas Osborne wrote in the mid-1670s that it was 'very difficult to steer amongst so many rocks of faction, without striking upon some'. The parliamentary factions of Whigs and Tories were also becoming increasingly important, as Edmund Ludlow related: '... the parliament was fallen into such factions and divisions, that anyone who usually attended and observed the business of the house, could, after a debate on any question, easily number the votes that would be on each side, before the question was put.'¹⁴⁰

When definitions in dictionaries are combined, faction appears to have typically meant 'a withdrawing a (smaller or greater) number from the main body (either of a church or state) governing themselves by their own counsels, and (openly) opposing the established government'.¹⁴¹ This kind of rather general definition left numerous possibilities for the use of the term in unambiguously derogatory senses both in ecclesiastical and secular issues. In Kersey's edition of 1731, faction was also defined generally as 'a division among the people', which enabled a wide usage, and as 'a separate party',¹⁴² which underscored the distinctly separated status of faction with relation to society as a whole. In its most general and not strictly politico-religious sense, faction could be defined simply as 'a company or band of men'.¹⁴³ With such a definition, any grouping could be called a faction. The term was conventionally considered nearly synonymous with party and sect,¹⁴⁴ and, therefore, dictionary editors did not usually consider it necessary to distinguish between the terms.

Some individual dictionary definitions deserve a closer scrutiny, as each of them reveals some special feature of the the term faction in early eighteenth-

138 *COPC*: William Temple, *Essay upon the Original and Nature of Government*, 1679.

139 *COPC*: John Dryden, *Satires*, 1693; *OED*: faction.

140 *HCET*: Thomas Osborne, *Selections from the Correspondence of Arthur Capel Earl of Essex 1675-1677*; *COPC*: Edmund Ludlow, *Memoirs*, 1698.

141 Coles 1701; *Glossographia* 1707; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; The same definition was borrowed by Cocker-Hawkins, 1724, for the word factious.

142 Kersey 1731.

143 Phillips-Kersey 1706; Kersey 1715; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737; The general sense of faction is illustrated by Ryder's way of writing about factions in favour of some ancient poets. *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 10 October 1715, 116.

144 The numerous instances in which party and faction appear in practically identical significations include the following: [Daniel Defoe], *The History of the Kentish Petition, Answer'd*, 1701, 3; Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, passim.; [Defoe], *A New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty*, 1702, 1; *A Vindication of the Constitution*, 1703, 3; Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 395-6; [Ward], *A Fair Shell, but a Rotten Kernel*, 1705, preface, 58-9; *Honesty the Best Policy: Or, the Mischiefs of Faction*, 1711, 3; [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 8; [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW22*, 15 June 1720; Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, Epilogue; CL, *The Third Edition, Dedication*, x; CL2, 12 November 1720; C40, 24 April 1727; C66, 7 October 1727; *A Political Lecture*, 1733, 14; Plaxton, *An Exhortation to Unanimity and Concord*, 1745, 2, 6; Keith, *A Collection of Papers and Other Tracts*, 1749, xxiii. Faction and sect appeared in a synonymous sense in 'An Elegy Balladwise on the Death of John Dolben', *A Tory Pill, to Purge Whig Melancholy*, 1715, 12, and as parallel phenomena in *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 7. All the three terms party, faction and sect were synonymous in *Who Plot Best*, 1712, 2, and *Le Chevalier de St. George*, 1713, 60.

century understanding. Interesting, for instance, is that while no entry for party was included in Bullokar-Browne's old dictionary (1719), faction could still be defined as 'a sect or division into sundry opinions'. It may have been that faction, as an apparently negative term, had been considered a part of the English politico-religious language while the more ambiguous expression party was not – not at least in the early seventeenth century, when the dictionary had been originally compiled.

Moréri-Collier (1701) presented faction as a synonym for zealots ('a faction of wicked people' in the Old Testament) and for schism (caused in the medieval Church by French and Italian factions). However, when defining the term faction itself, the author was content with mentioning solely an ancient sense of it, which deliberately underscored the military associations of the term, creating images of senseless fighting and killing that could surpass even the negative military connotations of the term party. According to Moréri-Collier (1701), factions had been 'the several parties that fought on chariots in the cirque' in ancient Rome, fighters that had been distinguished by their various colours and that had enjoyed various degrees of popularity among the emperors and the audience. The same definition, though distinctly separated from the political sense of faction, was mentioned in Chambers (1728). In the Augustan Age, which was deeply committed to everything Roman, such an association of faction could hardly remain unacknowledged. Members of the political elite with a classical education were probably well aware of such a sense.¹⁴⁵ From the point of view of this sense, faction stood for cruel violence rather than civilised political disagreement.

Cocker-Hawkins's (1704) definition 'division *from* government' for faction was interestingly substituted in the 1724 edition with 'making parties and divisions *in* the government'. Without extending the conclusion too far given the lack of additional evidence on parallel prepositional expressions, it seems obvious that, in the latter edition, faction was considered a more natural part of governing than in the former, in which faction was presented essentially as a group of people intentionally excluding themselves from government. This minor change in definition may well be a reflection of an emerging conception of factions as an inevitable feature of government.

Beginning in the 1720s, some secularisation in definitions for faction is observable. Chambers (1728) already saw faction and the still synonymous party formed 'in a state' without mentioning possible religious connections. In addition to the conventionally repeated definition for faction, Gordon-Bailey (1730) listed in a separate entry the synonyms 'a party, a company or band of men, a sect; a cabal or party, formed in a state to disturb the public repose'. The former sense was general and, with its inclusion of sect, liable to religious associations, whereas the latter referred more exclusively to the secular sphere of politics. The pejorativeness of this political sense was based on the

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145 A vision resembling gladiatorial spectacles appeared in the prologue for Griffin's play, when martial drums call audience 'to see two factions, Whig and Tory fight'. Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 7.

disturbance of cherished social harmony rather than on associating faction with religious disputes. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) distinguished even more clearly between the spheres of religion and politics, stating that faction was 'a party or sect, in religious or civil matters; a set of people differing from the public establishment'. He also mentioned the familiar fact that faction was often 'taken in an ill sense for the promoters of riots, rebellions, etc.'. This secularisation of the concept faction experienced a further step in Fenning's (1741) definition of faction as 'a party in a state; a tumult, discord, or dissension' with no more references to sects or other potentially religious phenomena. The transformatory process which the concept faction was experiencing is also demonstrated by the fact that the otherwise traditionalist Johnson (1755) was able to exclude references to religious disputes when defining faction as simply 'a party in a state'. Yet, in Johnson's definition, there was still no distinction drawn between faction and party, a fact that hardly contributed to more positive notions of competing political groupings, particularly as Johnson regarded faction as synonymous with any tumult, discord or dissension. Gradually, however, a distinction drawn in political discourse between faction and party was registered in dictionaries. By the mid-eighteenth century, most dictionaries such as Martin (1749), *A Pocket Dictionary* (1753) and Wesley (1764) already defined faction as 'a seditious party', that is, something considerably worse than party in general.

The 'word family' of faction was rather restricted. The alternative senses of faction listed in dictionaries were not so numerous as those of party, and this may be one reason for it being seldom combined with other words, the most common phrase being the highly derogatory 'spirit of faction'.¹⁴⁶ Yet some derivatives of faction were extant. Factious was an adjective widely applied to the followers of or those inclined to factions or sects. It referred to troublesome and unquiet behaviour, contentions, seditions and mutinies.¹⁴⁷ Instances of the use of this term are interesting in that they suggest that faction was indeed something worse than party. In expressions such as 'factious party',¹⁴⁸ often referring to religious disputes, the attribute factious made a party seem worse than the sole term party would have connoted. Factious were those who advanced their private aims at the cost of others. One writer suggested that 'the truly factious' were not very numerous nor very powerful if only stigmatised and disregarded.¹⁴⁹ All opponents, whether religious or political, were

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146 See *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 15 April 1716, 220; [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW50*, 24 December 1720; C69, 28 October 1727; Higgons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 199; Warren, *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 17; The neighbouring term fraction, as defined in dictionaries, had no religious or political senses whatsoever. It was used in only one of the consulted sources in such a sense, when Ford wrote that 'religion is rent into numerous fractions, and men's Christianity is estimated from being of this or that party'. Ford, *Unity the Greatest Security*, 1715, 10. In the deficiency of supporting evidence, fraction cannot be regarded as an alternative party word for faction in the period under study.

147 Cocker-Hawkins 1704 and 1724; Phillips-Kersey 1706; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737.

148 [Defoe], *The History of the Kentish Petition, Answer'd*, 1701, 35; Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, 1702, Vol. II, 70, 417, 459.

149 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 7, 36.

frequently called factious.¹⁵⁰

Fenning's (1741) definition of the term already appears to be secular, factious being 'given to faction, or public dissensions; loud and vehement in support of any party; proceeding from, or tending to, public discord'. Secularisation of the concept did not radically diminish its pejorativeness, however, the term factiously remaining 'criminally discontented' and factiousness 'inclination to public dissension; violent clamorousness in support of a party'. According to Johnson (1755), a factious person was 'given to faction, loud and violent in a party, publicly dissentious [and] addicted to form parties and raise public disturbances'. What deserves further attention is the fact that his quotations describing the senses of faction include three from the beheaded King Charles and one from Clarendon, the historian of the Great Rebellion, thus closely associating the phenomenon of faction with the seventeenth-century Civil War and supporting the continuity of the national trauma.

Dictionaries gave definitions for faction, but how was the term used in contemporary political discourse? Above all, faction was a term indicating extreme controversy which was used by both parties with different objects of criticism but basically the same pejorative content. Whiggish polemicists, for instance, did not fail to call Tories 'the criminal faction'.¹⁵¹ As an anonymous author pointed out, the term appeared to be 'in everyone's disposal to fix as he pleases' and hence it was 'arbitrarily used' to blacken political opponents.¹⁵²

Another term of offensive kind . . . is faction. All sides seem to express by it, such malecontents in government as are, through some private interest, restless in perplexing and distressing any endeavours for the public good. But as everyone puts in equal pretensions to be for the constitution, and the good of their country, all disown themselves concerned in such a charge, and lay it upon their opposers, or persons of contrary sentiments. Just as it fares with heresy and orthodoxy; everyone is orthodox to himself, and finds the heretic no where but in the person of one who is of a different opinion.

The analogy drawn between political and religious terms recalls the close affinity of the language used in religious and political discourse. As one might expect, the author directed this definition of faction against Tories, who, according to him, placed the word close to the denominations of Whigs, Dissenters, republicans and fanatics whenever they appeared in print.¹⁵³

At the beginning of the century, Whiggish writers did not yet distinguish clearly between party and faction. The terms appeared as nearly synonymous

150 See e.g. [Baron], *An Historical Account of Comprehension, and Toleration*, title; [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 4; Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren*, 1709, 6.

151 [Oldmixon], *The False Steps of the Ministry after the Revolution*, 1714, 18.

152 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 42–3; Similar accusations of the abuse of the term were presented by [Defoe], *A New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty*, 1702, 3.

153 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 43.

when Steele, referring to Robert Harley's efforts to form a new Tory ministry in the summer of 1710, claimed that 'the state affairs' were 'canvassed by parties and factions',¹⁵⁴ and when Addison insisted that positions in the administration should not be given merely for being 'useful to a party' or following methods 'grateful to their faction'.¹⁵⁵ In Defoe's propaganda against High-Church Tories, both party and faction had extremely pejorative connotations, but the latter was even more derogatory than the former. As a reaction to Sacheverell's famous sermon, Defoe wrote about traditionalist Tories as 'a party' and 'this faction (for such they are)' and accused them of engineering 'party-tricks' and forming 'a faction to disquiet us'. Neither did he hesitate to use descriptions such as 'the party now struggling . . . against the established Church', 'a perjured party' or 'the vile attempts of a wretched party to overthrow a nation'.¹⁵⁶ In Defoe's one-sided definition, faction was identical to High-Church Toryism.¹⁵⁷

These I call the faction - and venture to tell the gentlemen that quarrel at the word, that if they please to tell us what faction is, I undertake to prove, the present party, commonly called High-Church, to be a faction, from all the real parts, that a faction can be reasonably said to consist of - such as dividing from the constitution, conspiring against the sovereign, breaking the public peace, envying the glory and prosperity of the government, and refusing to give obedience to the laws . . . whenever I say the faction, by way of definition, I profess to mean plainly, and desire to be understood, the High-Church party in England, and I shall seldom give them any other name.

Defoe strengthened his smears against High-Church Tories by using the definite article in the front of the word party,¹⁵⁸ suggesting that there was only one party in the country. As a further instance of Whiggish and dissenting polemics can be mentioned the dialogue *Honour Retriev'd from Faction* in which the exact meanings of the terms party and faction were discussed. The text contained a suggestion that party could be honourable when used in a political crisis to oppose a detrimental party that already existed and that such a good party should not be called a faction.¹⁵⁹

One of the most original but most inconsistent writers on party was Toland. In the very beginning of the century, he was paid for an attempt to silence party strife,¹⁶⁰ and he wrote in favour of abolishing all parties, using the words party and faction interchangeably. Interestingly, he wrote about 'religious and political factions', thus distinguishing between the two.¹⁶¹ In the same way,

154 Steele, T193, 4 July 1710; Goldgar 1961, 56.

155 Addison, S125, 2 July 1711.

156 Daniel Defoe, *A Review of the State of the British Nation* (R), Vol. 6, No. 94 (R6/94), 10 November 1709, R6/119, 10 January 1710.

157 Defoe, R6/103, 1 December 1709.

158 See, for example, Defoe, R6/100, 24 November 1709, and R6/101, 26 November 1709.

159 *Honour Retriv'd from Faction*, 1713, 11-12; For acceptance of a good party as a tool against a bad party, see Mansfield 1965, 13-14.

160 Hill 1976, 88; Downie 1979, 42.

161 [John Toland], *The Art of Governing by Partys*, 1701, 3, 6, 41, 57, 121.

Toland used the terms faction and party as synonyms in 1705.¹⁶² In 1717, Toland was already writing in very different circumstances. He then denied the existence of 'any imaginary republican faction' and insinuated that the Tories had connections with Catholics who, according to the common wisdom of English Protestants, were 'a mere political faction'. At the same time, however, he readily declared that the Whigs were 'the party fittest for the king to consult and employ',¹⁶³ not hesitating to vindicate a party. This recognition of party as a basis for government seems contradictory to the much more conventional view of 1701 but is explicable by the changed circumstances. Pocock has suggested that, in the text of 1701, the existence of parties in general was to be denounced, whereas, in the text of 1717, good men were simply resisting an already existing party of bad men.¹⁶⁴ Toland may, of course, have held a wavering attitude towards the acceptability of political party. In 1701, he was bound by strong anti-party conventions, whereas, in 1717, this radical Whig could, in a suitable situation, argue openly in favour of a party.

In Tory descriptions of faction, faction was always a Whig phenomenon. Anti-Whig attacks included both warnings for the alleged dangerous designs of the faction, and allusions pointing at weaknesses in that faction. For the ultra-traditionalist Hearne, faction was a swearword standing for a conspiracy of Whigs and Dissenters that seemed to be fostering all those evils which Hearne himself opposed. He and his fellow traditionalists felt that the established Church was threatened by 'the prevailing of faction and schism in the nation'. Whigs entering governmental offices they called 'favourers of the faction', faction constituting the opposite of 'the honest gentlemen' whom they themselves sympathised.¹⁶⁵ This faction, wrote Edward Ward, attacked the Church and her clergy, aiming 'to undermine the most orthodox and best of Churches, and the most admirable constitution of all the governments in the universe'.¹⁶⁶ This 'republican faction,' preached Sacheverell, defended 'the horrid actions and principles of forty-one', that is, Puritanism of the Civil War period. Characteristically of traditionalist thought, in his famous sermon of 1709, Sacheverell compared faction with fatal illnesses of the body.¹⁶⁷

During the Tory rule of the early 1710s, the Whigs were described as 'the Whig-faction', 'a faction here at home', 'that set of factious politicians', 'an irritated faction', 'a restless and dangerous faction' or 'a sinking faction'. They were contrasted as 'more factious' than the Tories who represented 'the greater and better part of the nation'. Whigs were presented as 'domestic enemies', 'a faction, ready to join in any design against the government in Church or state' and as a 'faction' which was used by 'usurpers, or encroaching favourites, and

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162 [John Toland], *The Memorial of the State of England*, 1705, 4.

163 [Toland], *The State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, [1717], 13, 16, 22; Toland had himself worked actively to advance republican and freethinking ideas.

164 Pocock 1975, 483-4.

165 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 16 October 1705, Vol. I, 56; 6 September 1706, Vol. I, 286-7; 5 July 1710, Vol. III, 20.

166 [Ward], *A Fair Shell, but A Rotten Kernel*, 1705, preface.

167 Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren*, 1709, 13, 23.

ambitious ministers'.¹⁶⁸ During the Succession Crisis of 1714, the Jacobite George Lockhart's memoirs referred to 'a government so embarrassed with faction', and the High-Church clergyman Atterbury called the Whigs 'the invading faction'.¹⁶⁹ Tory clergymen also frequently employed the word faction as well as the word party in their sermons when criticising Protestant Dissenters or the Whig party.¹⁷⁰ As to Whiggish accusations of Tories as a faction, Swift used the weapon of irony, trying to prove that the Tories could by no means be one: 'I took the author for a friend to our faction (for so with great propriety of speech they call the Queen and ministry, almost the whole clergy, and nine parts of ten of the kingdom)'.¹⁷¹

In the 1700s and 1710s, traditionalist writers did not usually draw distinctions between party and faction. The two were used interchangeably to describe biblical events, the religious groupings of the reign of Elizabeth I, and the events of the Civil War.¹⁷² Interestingly, however, Swift's texts contain hints of a willingness to distinguish between parties and factions. Swift suggested in 1711 that the Whigs were actually not a party 'according to the common acception of the word' but something worse, that is, a faction. Therefore, he wrote about 'party, or rather of faction (to avoid mistake)', thus implying that there was a difference in the pejorative degree of the two terms. In Swift's polemic, the Whigs constituted not a party 'but a faction, raised and strengthened by incidents and intrigues, and by deceiving the people with false representations of things'.¹⁷³ Much of Swift's political journalism of the period 1710-14 concentrated on the disastrous consequences of the Whig Junto governments of 1694-1700 and 1708-10. In his essays, the Junto appeared as a corrupt political interest that had rejected former Whig principles and only aimed at gaining riches at the cost of the traditional landed interest.¹⁷⁴

In his election propaganda of 1710, Henry St. John, later Viscount Bolingbroke, was to a great extent following the same traditionalist rhetoric, calling the Whig ministry a 'faction in opposition to the crown', a 'factious

168 [King], E4, 24 August 1710, E10, 28 September 1710; [Swift], E36, 12 April 1711; [Swift], *The Conduct of the Allies*, 1711, 15, 45; [Swift], *Some Advice Humbly Offer'd to the Members of the October Club*, 1712, 72, 75-6, 80; Abel Boyer, *An Essay Towards the History of the Last Ministry and Parliament*, 1710, 39-40. Boyer's way of using the expression must have been ironical as he was himself a fervent Whig.

169 COPC: George Lockhart, *Memoirs concerning the Affairs of Scotland*, 1714; COPC: Atterbury, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, 1714; Atterbury's pamphlet was the only piece of powerful Tory propaganda during the election campaign of late 1714, whereas Whig polemic was widespread indeed. Atterbury endeavoured to save the Tory party from Whig one-party rule. After having been accused of Jacobitism, he attacked the monarch himself in this anonymous pamphlet and provoked a search for the writer. Bennett 1975, 186, 192-3; Hill 1976, 153.

170 Needham, *Considerations concerning the Origine and Cure of Church-Divisions*, 1710, 5; Hole, *The Danger of Division*, 1702, 23; [Tufton], *The History of Faction*, 1705, Preface.

171 [Swift], E17, 30 November 1710.

172 *An Antidote against Rebellion*, 1704, passim.; [Tufton], *The History of Faction*, 1705, 12; *A View of the Present Divisions in Great Britain*, 1708, passim.

173 [Swift], E31, 8 March 1711, E35, 5 April 1711, E36, 12 April 1711; See also E29, 22 February 1711, E30, 1 March 1711, E34, 29 March 1711, E44, 11 July 1711.

174 Hayton 1984, 64.

cabal' and 'conspirators'.¹⁷⁵ By the mid-1720s, however, a new period in Tory publishing had been opened with the birth of the *Craftsman* under the leadership of Bolingbroke. Not surprisingly, this leading journal of the opposition saw the oligarchic Whig government as a faction of which the audience should be aware, insisting that the English should no more be led by the 'ill designing patrons of faction'.¹⁷⁶ Being frequently accused of representing a faction themselves,¹⁷⁷ the writers of the journal considered it necessary to define what real faction was. In their view, opposition could not be faction; instead, failure to support the opposition constituted faction.¹⁷⁸

. . . to oppose things, which are not blame-worthy, or which are of no material consequence to the national interest, with such violence as may disorder the harmony of government, is certainly faction. But it is likewise faction, and faction of the worst kind, either not to oppose at all, or not to oppose in earnest, when points of the greatest importance to the nation are concerned.

Opposition writers were thus redirecting accusations of factiousness so that opposition to Walpole could not, by definition, be called a faction.

When government papers wrote that only opposition against good government and just measures constituted faction and hinted that opposition to Walpole was an instance of this type of faction,¹⁷⁹ the *Craftsman* answered by resisting factions as a threat to the admirable English constitution and by defining the position of the opposition to Walpole through positively charged concepts of civic humanism:¹⁸⁰

. . . all divisions of people into parties and factions, about unessential points of government, or religion, tend to weaken the foundation of liberty, and may be made use of by ambitious prince, or wicked ministers, to subvert our constitution . . .

That as all opposition to a good administration is undoubtedly factious and wicked, it is equally certain that opposition to a bad administration is the strongest, visible mark, which any man can give his country, of patriotism and public virtue.

Parallel arguments were put forward by *Fog's Journal* as an answer to the way 'the oppressors have constantly stigmatised the patriots [opposition] with the name faction'. By defining what did not constitute a faction, the writer attempted to show that opposition to Walpole, which opposed bribery and

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175 [Bolingbroke], *A Letter to the Examiner*, 1710, in Swift, *The Examiner and Other Pieces Written in 1710–11*, ed. Herbert Davis, Oxford 1940.

176 C40, 24 April 1727.

177 See e.g. *A Political Lecture, Occasioned by a late Political Catechism Address'd to the Freeholders*, 1733, 1 and 11, which claimed that the faction of the opposition was attempting to abolish English liberty, the governing ministry and reigning royal family altogether and to make faction permanent.

178 C250, 17 April 1731.

179 *The London Journal*, No. 711, 10 February 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, February 1733, Reel 134; *The London Journal*, No. 735, 28 July 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, July 1733, Reel 134.

180 C368, 21 June 1733.

corruption and defended the constitution and the rights of the subjects was far from faction, whereas he hinted that government itself might well be run by a faction.¹⁸¹ When, in his *Freeholder's Political Catechism*, Bolingbroke pointed out that the Roman Empire had fallen into a state of slavery due to faction,¹⁸² everyone knew which faction in contemporary England was blamed for constituting a parallel danger.

By the days of the *Craftsman*, the secularisation of the term faction had already proceeded far. The paper appears to have been one of the first users of the expression 'political faction' which, in the 30 January 1727 issue, unambiguously separated such political organisations from religious and other comparable associations, even if religious and 'civil affairs' were continuously treated as analogous phenomena. Importantly, this separation was done on the anniversary of Charles I's beheading, the day on which the sins of factions religious and political had been traditionally treated as intermingled. Intellectual change is also revealed by the fact that the connection between religious and political affairs was described in terms of a law of nature resembling Newtonian mechanics, 'principles and opinions . . . revolv[ing] in certain periods',¹⁸³ rather than through the traditionalist language of organic analogies.

Unlike traditional Tory polemic, Bolingbroke and the *Craftsman* also drew distinctions between the terms of party and faction. Bolingbroke's unpublished memorial from 1717 already expressed an unusually neutral understanding of political party. Bolingbroke wrote about 'my party', gave a list of the main objectives of his party, admitted the engagement of private interests in the party, and even appears to have held the attitude that the way his own party understood the public good was not the only right one.¹⁸⁴ Some twenty years later, when reviewing the history of the reign of Charles II, Bolingbroke argued that there had first been parties which had then given rise to factions. In other words, parties provided a foundation for factions, the first being less an evil than the latter. Characteristically of his criticism towards the Whig administration, Bolingbroke also suggested that the real differences between the 'national parties' had disappeared and that those who attempted to maintain the party division had turned from a party into a faction. National interests had become subordinate to personal ones by the faction of the Walpolean Whig administration. Bolingbroke claimed that 'the boundaries where party ceases and faction commences are . . . strongly marked',¹⁸⁵ though he did not trouble to define those boundaries more distinctly than he had done when pointing to the different interests served by each. It was only in an essay of the *Craftsman* written in 1739 that the terms party and faction were 'defined and distinguished':¹⁸⁶

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181 *Fog's Journal*, No. 319, 14 December 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, December 1734, Reel 134.

182 Bolingbroke, *The Freeholder's Political Catechism*, 1733, 10.

183 C17, 30 January 1727.

184 COPC: Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham*, 1717.

185 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 11, 13, 63, 98.

186 C674, 9 June 1739, in *GM*, Vol. IX, June 1739, Reel 137.

By party, as I understand the sense of the word, and think I could prove it from the English history, was always meant a national division of opinions, concerning the form and methods of government, for the benefit of the whole community, according to the different judgements of men; that their conformity to those principles, as the motive of their respective actions, distinguished the party; that from the moment this contention for the real service of their country was given up by men invested with power, and a corrupt influence, upon which only they united, they became a faction; for I conceive a faction to be a set of men armed with power, and acting upon no one principle of party, or any notion of public good, but to preserve and share the spoils amongst themselves, as their only cement; that they may be able to do every thing contrary to the interest of the nation, and the bent of the whole people - faction is founded upon a share of power, as well as plunder.

The organ of the opposition to Walpole claimed that this definition of party was the correct one and one that had never changed. According to the opponents to the Whig administration, party had always meant a nationwide division of views concerning both the constitution and practical government. Importantly, it was not defined as rising from divisions in religion. As a result of differing political values, this definition suggested, such a political division appeared as a natural one. Furthermore, as everyone within this division aimed at advancing the common good, the undertone of the definition of party was neutral if not positive. Its potential for positive associations becomes particularly visible when it is contrasted with the definition for faction. The *Craftsman* argued that parties tended to turn into factions once a tiny group holding political power quitted their previous political values, failed to advance the common good any longer and instead concentrated on guarding their own interests, often via questionable methods. In relation to faction as well, no religious associations were seen as applicable. Party and faction were secular and distinct concepts that should have been used by keeping such important distinctions in mind.

Bolingbroke also discussed this distinction between party and faction in his *Idea of a Patriot King* (written in 1738, published in 1749), proceeding so far as to state that 'faction is to party what the superlative is to the positive: party is a political evil, and faction is the worst of all parties'.¹⁸⁷ The emerging distinction between the concepts was thus made explicit, and so was the essentially political character of the two. Though Bolingbroke's definition hardly represented a universally accepted interpretation of the concept of political party, it points to the relative semantic status of each of the terms: party was a negative political phenomenon and faction was even more so. As Bolingbroke continued, 'parties, even before they degenerate into absolute factions, are still numbers of men associated together for certain purposes, and certain interests, which are not, or which are not allowed to be, those of the community'.¹⁸⁸

187 Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 401.

188 Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 402; Bolingbroke employed the statement 'this national party degenerated soon into factions' also in his *Of the State of Parties at the Accession of King George the First*, s.a., 435.

Importantly, both parties and their degenerate form factions, were presented here as political phenomena, not as phenomena with religious connections.

At the same time, the continuous strength of traditionalist conceptions of party and faction are exemplified in the pamphlet *The Danger of Faction to a Free People*, published in 1732 and directed against the opposition to Walpole. As customary, arguments against factions in this pamphlet were drawn not only from the newly rekindled civic humanism, with reference to true patriotism and virtue, but above all from the infinite fountains of ancient medicine and Christian doctrine. A fashionable emphasis on liberty is visible in a statement recognising the unavoidability of factions under a free government. According to the pamphleteer, this form of government let the passions of the subjects reign and consequently made them easily dissatisfied with the course of things, thus giving chance for the emergence of factions, one of the most alarming phenomena in the mixed constitution. Making use of medical metaphors, the author claimed that faction was 'a disease of . . . inveterate . . . nature' and argued that it was the responsibility of the monarch to act like a physician, observing the weaknesses in the constitution and taking measures to cure factious disorders in the body politic which contained the potential for turning the entire nation into a diseased man. Exploiting the authority of religion rather rudely, the author characterised faction as 'hell-born like sin' and maintained that 'faction is indeed gone forth among us with high hand, like the devil in the Revelations'.¹⁸⁹

Early eighteenth-century political writings very seldom contain statements sympathetic towards a continuous existence of parties in English society. Instead, there are plenty of instances demonstrating that parties and factions were generally conceived as having been formed against or in opposition to something or someone, not in favour of some positive aim.¹⁹⁰ From the 1730s onwards, however, some such statements occurred, but still usually presented along with a due abhorrence of some aspects of party. In 1732, James Pitt had already suggested that a 'full liberty of examining all doctrines and opinions' in a free government caused positive results that outshaded the 'small evil of faction'.¹⁹¹ When Bolingbroke stated that 'parties we must have', he was pointing to parties in favour of and against the constitution, yet continued by claiming that the former party division had disappeared long ago and only

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189 *The Danger of Faction to a Free People*, 1732, 5–7, 22, 25; Identical medicalisation of faction can be found in *An Essay on Faction*, written in verse and published the following year. The associations provoked by the poem recall those observed with connection to party vocabulary of medical origin. The anonymous poet formulated: 'From man to man the swift delusions roll, And factious madness blinds the patriot soul; No more the charms of legal rule he sees. But, surfeited with health, invokes disease'. *An Essay on Faction*, 1733, 4. Also in connection with the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, organic analogical political metaphors were revived by clergymen at least, Gilpin preaching with reference to factions: 'What an impediment private factions are to public business, needs not illustration. Can the limbs be disjointed and the body not suffer?' *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 22.

190 In addition to instances quoted above, see e.g. *The Free Briton*, No. 224, 14 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134, and *The London Journal*, No. 770, 30 March 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, March 1734, Reel 134.

191 Miller 1994, 96.

continued to be artificially fomented by the government.¹⁹² By contrast, the government paper *London Journal* dared to suggest, while ridiculing the statement of Bolingbroke's that former parties were about to disappear, that 'folly and madness of party will never be cured till human nature is cured; and perhaps it is better for liberty, if they never should be cured'.¹⁹³ The existence of a party division into the establishment Whigs on one hand and Tories and opposition Whigs on the other suited the interests of the Whig oligarchy to such an extent that it made this government writer reject old prejudices against political pluralism and put forward the surprising statement that pluralism was impossible to remove and that such a removal was not even desirable from the point of view of sacred British liberty. Changing circumstances could lead to changing views, but there may have been a more profound transformation in the background.

Other mid-1730s statements recognising the inevitability of parties include the following: 'There is no country but its peace has been disturbed by contending parties'.¹⁹⁴ By 1736, one writer, while considering party and public spirit self-evident counter-concepts, was prepared to point out that 'party in this country will probably at all times prevail' and 'the prevalence of which has been in all times, and must always be, of the most mischievous and dangerous consequence to this nation'. What remained to be done by Englishmen was 'to watch its pretences and its progress, and be constantly upon our guard, to elude its artifices and defeat its success'. The dichotomy into party and public spirit is illustrative of the continuous unsuitability of party to the generally held ideals of civic humanism: whereas party aimed at personal interests, public spirit aimed at taking care of issues; whereas party intended to govern, public spirit intended to reform; and whereas passion constituted the principle of party, the principle of public spirit was constituted by virtue.¹⁹⁵ In 1739, another pamphleteer expressed a surprisingly 'scientific' view that numerous sects and parties would not weaken the nation if 'an unjust, persecuting spirit' was rejected and people could disagree in a way similar to philosophers. With such a utopian reservation, the party and sectarian differences¹⁹⁶

would quicken our search after knowledge, cause due examination of the points of dispute, produce clear discoveries, and good defences of the truth. And from the multitude of vying counsellors, we should always be furnished with many wise schemes, and great designs for the public benefit.

The statement, which contained a great deal of optimistic belief in progress, demonstrates that an acceptance of pluralism, at least at the level of principle,

192 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 167.

193 *The London Journal*, No. 760, 19 January 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, January 1734, Reel 134.

194 *The Fog's Journal*, No. 310, 12 October 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, October 1734, Reel 134.

195 *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 11–13, 20; 'to reform' was a linguistic idiom gradually entering the language of politics in a secular sense.

196 *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 5–6.

was gaining ground among the political nation. In 1743, an anonymous writer already defined party as the pursuit of a 'set of principles, which they take to be for the public good' and faction as the pursuit of 'private advantage'.¹⁹⁷ Edward Spelman pointed out the same year that 'in all free governments there ever were and ever will be parties', as 'parties are not only the effect, but the support, of liberty'.¹⁹⁸

Synonyms and euphemisms for party

The terms party and faction, with which the early eighteenth-century English conventionally expressed their conceptualisations of political groupings, remained for long overwhelmingly pejorative in their connotations. In addition to these terms, contemporaries also applied other derogatory expressions in descriptions of the phenomenon of parties. Synonyms for party included words such as cause and cabal. Division was widely applied, and the term side, which often appeared in a party political context, was useful as a rather neutral general expression. No matter how deep-rooted the prevalent anti-party attitudes were, however, party was not simply a negative phenomenon to many members of the political elite. Many had gained office by or at least expected benefit from their party allegiance. Therefore, terminology to express a neutral or even positive understanding of party was also needed. When communicating their views on parties in print and in diaries, early eighteenth-century English often substituted milder expressions for words considered too direct. These euphemisms for party included words such as friends, honesty and patriotism, the last two being derived from the tradition of civic humanism.

The word cause had been in particularly widespread use during sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religious controversies. It had then denoted religiously motivated movements that had called forth the efforts of their supporters. During the Republican rule of the 1640s, it had been specifically applied to the Puritan cause.¹⁹⁹ This religious association of 'the good old cause' remained vital for long; still at the turn of the eighteenth century, the term often denoted religious rather than purely political groupings and questions. Both traditionalist Anglicans and Dissenters were viewed as defenders of 'the cause'.²⁰⁰ As many early eighteenth-century English felt an aversion towards the events of the 1640s, the word carried extra impetus in propagandistic

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197 Miller 1994, 96-7.

198 Jones 1992b, 36.

199 OED: cause.

200 Leslie wrote against dissenters in 1707: 'The poor and shifting reasons they give for the conforming to the Church of England occasionally, and yet keeping up a schism against her, renders their cause tenfold more senseless and deformed, a monster indeed!' *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 71; In 1710, a traditionalist Tory was defined as 'the High-Church champion, defender of the cause' by *The Modern Champions*, 1710. This broadsheet, which was aimed at a large public, did not defend either Whigs or Tories but demonstrated how Tories accused Whigs of advocating 'the shameful and detested cause of moderation' and Whigs Tories of supporting 'the High-Church Jacobite cause'.

statements, such as in Defoe's attack against the Tories as the High Church. Typically of the polemicists of the day, Defoe used a vocabulary resembling that of his opponents who tended to conflate ecclesiastical and political issues, Defoe's aim being to make readers associate orthodox Anglicanism with radical Puritanism of the 1640s. The synonymy of the terms party and cause was also evident when he claimed that 'their cause is villainous, and that makes the party cowardly; . . . Assassinations and murder is something more suitable to the high-flying cause, and been more in use among their party, than in other cases'.²⁰¹ In addition to party, faction sometimes occurred as a synonym for cause. An anti-Whig poem illustrates this synonymy by stating: 'This weakness of the throne bred wondrous strife, strengthened the faction, gave their cause new life.'²⁰²

The word cause frequently appeared in texts which clearly dealt with political rather than purely religious parties – and often in an unsurprisingly pejorative sense. James Yonge (1647–1721), a Plymouth surgeon, registered in his diary the tragedy of his brother, who had been 'a zealous Whig and thought to have got that cause rampant' in the city of Plymouth. When this political campaign had failed, leading to mere hatred toward the campaigner among the locals, the brother had fallen ill and died.²⁰³ In another instance, Ryder gave a highly negative connotation to cause when he, in 1716, wrote about the political activities of a person lately executed for participating in the Jacobite rising of 1715. According to Ryder, the Jacobite's speeches had abounded with misleading information designed 'to advance the party and cause'.²⁰⁴ Ryder wrote as if there was only one party – the crushed Jacobites – and as if party and cause were synonymous. Finally, in a parallel manner, someone could be brought into disrepute by referring to him as something like 'a furious partisan of the cause of Whiggism'.²⁰⁵

When used in political or politico-religious senses, however, cause did not always carry the pejorative connotations connected conventionally with party and faction. Due to its very general meaning, cause was a particularly useful word for political polemicists.²⁰⁶ In expressions such as 'majesty's most righteous cause', 'the common cause', 'the public cause', 'the Christian cause', 'the cause of God and true religion' or 'the Protestant cause', the meaning of cause was so positive that the expression practically excluded the legitimacy of

201 Defoe, R6/119, 10 January 1710; other instances of Defoe using the terms party and cause synonymously can be found in R6/12, 30 April 1709, and R6/13, 3 May 1709; Party and cause appear in synonymous senses also in Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 560, Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 11–13, *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 7, and *The Dictionary . . . of Mr Peter Bayle*, 1734–38, Vol. 2, 799.

202 [Ward], *A Fair Shell, but a Rotten Kernel*, 1705, 41; Faction and cause were synonymous also in *The Dictionary . . . of Mr Peter Bayle*, 1734–38, Vol. 3, 172.

203 *The Journal of James Yonge, Plymouth Surgeon*, ed. F.N.L. Poynter, Hamden Connecticut 1963, 1698, 207–8.

204 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 16 July 1716, 276.

205 *The Craftsman* exploited this possibility of putting politicians in a questionable light in C24, 6 March 1727, and C327, 7 October 1732.

206 Contemporary dictionaries do not bring much light to the conceptual history of cause as political term. Cause was defined in very general terms as 'principle, motive, reason, subject', for instance. Phillips-Kersey 1706; Kersey 1715; Kersey 1731; [Defoe] 1737.

all dissent. In these expressions, cause was made positive by connecting it with universally held values such as a respect towards monarchy, traditions of fighting on behalf of Protestantism, and the discursive paradigm of civic humanism. On the basis of these authoritative discourses, cause could easily be defended in election propaganda that aimed at activating the members of a party, as did Atterbury in 1714, with special reference to Anglican High-Church Protestantism:²⁰⁷

I must own, I cannot, without great indignation, observe the lukewarm, indolent, cowardly, lazy, desponding, and narrow tempers of some among us: to their shame be it said, they profess honest principles, nay, and are really honest in their inclinations, but yet relinquish the cause, and think they deserve commendation, because they do not concur in the iniquity of the times.

Causes that had been turned positive by the exploitation of religious associations were undoubtedly utilised by some Tories to advance their politico-religious objectives. Anticlerical writers did not fail to express their horror for what they presented as 'the cause of God and of his Church' being used as a cover for a cause that was as 'vile and woful' as it was 'impious'.²⁰⁸

Cabal was another party word derived from both seventeenth-century political confrontations and much older religious contexts. Its religious associations are visible in dictionaries published in the early part of the century which agreed that cabal, or *cabal-la*, or *cabbala*, initially stood for the 'secret science expounding divine mysteries' and built on the mysterious doctrines of the Jewish tradition. A dictionary printed at the very beginning of the century termed cabal exclusively as 'a certain sect amongst the Jews' engaged with magic and witchcraft.²⁰⁹

Since at least the early 1670s, however, the concept cabal had generally referred in political writings to 'a Junto, or private (or secret) council (or consult or confederacy), a particular party, set, or gang' or 'a society of men united by the same interest'. The synonymity of cabal, faction and party in early eighteenth-century understanding is particularly visible in a common entry for all in Chambers 1728. A term for the mysterious Jewish doctrine had gained a political meaning in 1668–1673, when the ministry had been dominated by 'the

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207 *COPC*: John Stevens, *Journal*, 1689; Dryden, *Satires*, 1693; White Kennett, *Complete History of England*, 1706; Joseph Addison, *The Present State of the War, and the Necessity of an Augmentation, Considered*, 1708; Atterbury, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, 1714 (notice also the use of the attribute honest for legitimating the line of one's own party); George Berkeley, *An Essay Towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*, 1721; Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham*, 1717; Addison, F2, 26 December 1715. F4, 2 January 1716.

208 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW35*, 14 September 1720.

209 Moréri-Collier 1701; Coles 1701 and 1732; Cocker-Hawkins 1704; Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Kersey 1731; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755; For an instance of cabala being used with reference to the Jewish tradition in a political periodical, see C9, 2 January 1727; One might add that this magical tradition of cabala had not been unfamiliar even to the great figures of the seventeenth-century intellectual revolution, including Sir Isaac Newton.

cabal', a feared combination of competitive rivals for influence. The name for this loose confederacy of leading ministers had been formed as a wordplay out of the first letters of the names of the 'caballiers': Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley and Lauderdale. The first two had been concealed Catholics and the next two Puritan sympathisers. While its members disagreed on many questions and intrigued against each other, the only question in which the cabal seems to have been united – in addition to their rather cynical attitude towards politics, including corruption – was that of religious toleration.²¹⁰ Given this suspicious background including heterodoxy and plotting, it is no surprise that the compilers of dictionaries agreed that the word cabal was more often used in a negative than positive sense. Most dictionaries also included the verb 'to cabal' which meant 'to make parties, to plot (or meet or consult) privately'. The role of religious toleration forming a uniting force within the original cabal may also explain some of the rhetorical power of the term when used by Tories: it had been only the questionable idea of toleration that had kept the plotting assembly together, which was not unlike accusations directed by Tories against Whigs.

In the course of time, the term cabal was generalised and secularised. Chambers (1728) already distinguished between cabal and *cabbala* by using different spelling. By the 1730s and 1740s, the direct association of cabal with the Jewish secret sciences was decreasing and an overwhelmingly political sense dominating dictionary entries. For Gordon-Bailey (1730), cabal was 'a meeting together or consultation, privately on some party matters, also the persons caballing'. The verb cabal he understood as 'to make parties, to plot privately', and caballer was 'one who joins in cabals; a party man'. In his etymological dictionary, Bailey (1733) wanted to record older usages and hence presented cabal and cabala as various forms of the same expression that stood for either 'a secret science' or 'a juncto, or private council, a particular party, set, or gang'. Neither did Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) make a distinction between cabal and cabala, but the verb cabal carried an explicitly negative political message, meaning 'to plot, conspire, or make parties against either a public state, prince, or private persons, either for redressing real grievances, or to destroy the government or party against whom it is undertaken'. Fenning (1741), who no more cared about cabala in defining the concept cabal, expressed the same attitudes by defining cabal as 'a body of men united in some design to disturb or change the administration of a state'. He also drew a line between the terms cabal and party, stating that the difference was 'in the same degree as few from many', that is, cabal was a smaller organised group aiming at political change than party. Fenning added that cabal was frequently

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210 Coles 1701; Coles-Johnson 1732; Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Cocker-Hawkins 1724; Chambers 1728; Kersey 1731; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755; Wesley 1764; Jones 1991, 10; Holmes 1993a, 111–12; Bolingbroke referred to 'the famous cabal' of the reign of Charles II in his *Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 38–9, 50, 64; For cabal as a wordplay, see C674, 9 June 1739, in *GM*, Vol. IX, June 1739, Reel 137; The wordplay was a particularly successful one, as one of the senses of cabal was 'a way of discovering secrets from the letters in a word by which they pretend to unfold all the mysteries in divinity'. *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

employed 'figuratively' and then it meant 'an intrigue, or plot to introduce change in an administration'. Finally, a clear distinction between cabal and party was also made in Johnson (1755). According to Johnson as well, 'a cabal differs from a party, as few from many'. Johnson also mentioned a more general sense to cabal as any form of intrigue.

In public discourse, cabal carried a sense of criticism directed at the governing elite, a sense that built on a combination of associations derived from religious prejudices towards the Jews²¹¹ and on recent historical experience. During the first two decades of the eighteenth century, political propagandists of both political extremes used the expression in their writings to reproach political rivals. Toland listed 'parties, factions, clubs, and cabals' as near synonyms,²¹² and Defoe criticised 'cabals . . . against the toleration', using the words 'cabals, party-making and faction' as equal expressions.²¹³ In August 1710, St. John called the fallen Whig ministry a 'factious cabal', 'the conspirators' and 'cabals of upstarts'.²¹⁴ In Swift's texts, the expression cabal held a more negative association to be attached to Whigs than that of the term party, as he wrote: 'I look upon these champions, rather as retained by a cabal than a party'. Consequently, Swift readily used the word in attacks against the leading Whigs as 'a routed cabal of hated politicians'.²¹⁵

In the 1720s and 1730s, the word cabal occurred occasionally in oppositional writings, particularly those influenced by the strengthening of civic humanism in political thought. An edition of *Cato's Letters*, for instance, was opened with assurances that the journal was no product of some faction, cabal or party.²¹⁶ In the *Craftsman* of the early 1730s, cabal was mentioned a number of times as a means, with 'no relation to merit', to proceed to high political positions and as a faction-like measure for the governing ministry to strengthen their monopoly of power so that they could rule independently of all parties. In his *Dissertation on Parties*, Bolingbroke pointed out that the frequent parliamentary elections required by the British constitution prevented the formation of 'a ministerial cabal' or at least helped in abolishing one.²¹⁷ Ministerial papers replied by writing about an opposition that tended to 'cabal without any view of serving the public, and direct their followers without suffering them to know the

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211 Another instance of the use of anti-Semitic attitudes for the purposes of political propaganda can be found in Defoe's *Ballance*, 1705, 37, which referred to 'the rabbis of the Jacobite faction', thus drawing a parallel between a despised ethnic community and those Englishmen who supported the divine right of the descendants of James II to the throne of England.

212 [Toland], *The Art of Governing by Partys*, 1701, 9.

213 Defoe, R6/17, 12 May 1709, R6/93, 8 November 1709.

214 [Bolingbroke], *A Letter to the Examiner*, 1710; The association of Whiggism with low social origins was a common device of Tory polemicists. Whereas professionals and businessmen tended to be Whigs, there were few Whigs among country gentlemen and the inferior Anglican clergy. See Corns, Speck and Downie 1982, 12.

215 [Swift], E26, 1 February 1711, E37, 19 April 1711.

216 [Gordon], Dedication in *Cato's Letters*, The Third Edition, 1769, x.

217 C238, 23 January 1731; C306, 13 May 1732; *Fog's Journal*, No. 237, 19 May 1733, pointed to cabals during the French Wars of Religion; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 101; Bolingbroke used 'cabal' in a general sense also in his *Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism*, 1736, 362; Cabal appeared in a general sense, with reference to the reign of Elizabeth, also in Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 413.

transactions of their cabals'.²¹⁸ Otherwise, the term seems to have been rarely used. This decline in the frequency of the term cabal in discussions on political groupings may be a sign not only of a calming of party strife but also a piecemeal growing recognition of various associations working side by side in order to achieve some political goals.

Division was another apparent and by no means less hated substitute for the term party. In dictionaries, division, in addition to its very general sense of 'distributing of any whole into its proper parts', was also defined as 'a going into parties', 'separation, discord, variance', 'disagreement', 'odds', or even more pejoratively 'strife, contention, quarrelling'.²¹⁹ In one of the dictionaries, the synonyms for division included sect and faction, and in some sources party, even schism,²²⁰ the term thus being seen as part of the politico-religious party terminology. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) offered a definition slightly distinctive from others, depicting division as 'a separating, disuniting, partition, distribution, strife, quarrel, faction, sedition'. It is worthwhile to note that the editors considered the pejoratively charged terms faction and sedition as synonymous to division. Fenning (1741) and Johnson (1755) gave the following many-sided description of division: 'the act of separating space or body into parts; the state of a thing, whose parts are separated or divided; discord, or difference which occasions a separation between friends; a distinction'. When defining the social aspects of division, Johnson's only sources of quotations were Scripture, referring to a division among the people, and the old title *Decay of Piety*, referring to divisions between the Anglicans and Catholics.

Contemporaries could not but agree, as Toland wrote in 1701, that England had a great number of 'religious, politic[al], and parliamentary divisions'.²²¹ Many would only have added some negative attribute such as 'sad' in the front of the term division.²²² Toland drew a distinction between religious and political divisions, something which every contemporary commentator did not care to do, and also distinguished divisions in Parliament,²²³ which had become an everyday phenomenon together with annual parliaments after the Revolution of 1689.²²⁴ As division was frequently used by writers of all ideological directions to characterise the plurality of views in both Church and state, it is of interest to compare these two fields of usage and consider whether distinct meanings had really emerged.

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218 *The Free Briton*, No. 224, 14 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134.

219 Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Cocker-Hawkins 1724; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; [Defoe] 1737; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

220 Bullokar-Browne 1719: Division was listed with sect and party in *A Sure Way to Orthodoxy*, 1718, 19-20, 32, with party in C213, 1 August 1730, and with schism in *A Free-Thinker at Oxford*, 1719, 8.

221 [Toland], *The Art of Governing by Partys*, 1701, 90.

222 Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 87.

223 In the affairs of Parliament, division had a long history also as a technical word signifying voting in either House. Since 1620, division had been used to denote separating of the members into two groups so that their votes could be counted. Division as voting was used at both Houses of Parliament. Bishop Nicolson applied the term to voting at the House of Lords in *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 17 February 1708, 453; *OED*: division.

224 Holmes 1993, 222.

The term division was frequently heard in Anglican sermons and appears in various other documents left by the servants of the established Church. Occurrences of the term in sermons were nothing new, the combination 'division and faction' having been used by Restoration divines such as Tillotson.²²⁵ Published literature contained frequent references to divisions and subdivisions among Christians throughout Church history. The Church of England since the Reformation was seen as particularly troubled by divisions, the term division being used in the sense of heresy and schism. Such 'divisions in the Church of Christ' and 'divisions in our most holy faith' were strictly condemned as 'the evil spirit of division'.²²⁶ The current division of the Church was known to consist, in addition to the division between Anglicans and Dissenters, of the division between High Church and Low Church. This latter division was declared undesirable by High-Church writers in particular.²²⁷

In documents produced by clergymen, division frequently stood for the Protestant Dissenters. Naish, for instance, wrote in his diary about Dissenters in his parish who, in addition to 'their division from the Church', were constantly quarrelling among themselves for reasons that had nothing to do with religious doctrine, something that Naish took as demonstration of their 'perverse temper of mind'.²²⁸ Evelyn summarised a sermon in which 'divisions and dissensions in matters of religion' had been presented as an obstacle to a continuous reformation.²²⁹ Hearne reported a sermon preached at the main church of the University of Oxford having insisted that the auditors should keep their distance from Presbyterians and other sectaries who caused divisions and had 'already once ruined the Church and government'²³⁰ – this being to listeners an unquestionable reference to the Civil War. The dissenting point of view was, of course, very different, the Dissenters being seen by Defoe as innocent sufferers from principally political divisions.²³¹

The clergy used sermons for condemning the 'unhappy divisions' among the English. Some preachers saw divisions, in organic analogical terms, as having caused wounds in the body politic and wished that they might be rapidly cured in order that the British nation could recover its original strength.²³² Others saw divisions – on the basis of the biblical teaching that a divided kingdom could not stand – as forces that destroyed civil society and government within the nation by 'run[n]ing men first into parties, and then into opposition'. The message was that 'the ruins of societies have ever been occasioned by divisions' which led to

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225 HCET: Tillotson, Sermons on 'The Folly of Scoffing at Religion' 1671, and 'Of the Tryall of the Spirits', 1679. In the authorised version of the Bible, published in 1611 and still in use at the turn of the eighteenth century, there was the passage: 'I heare that there be diuisions among you.' (*Corinthians* 11:18).

226 Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 75; Giffard, *Family Religion*, 1713, 42, 49; See also [Defoe], *Whigs and Tories United*, 1714, 33; *Protestant Advice to the Whigs and Tories*, 1715, 13; *The Church of England the Sole Encourager of Free-Thinking*, 1717, 13.

227 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 17.

228 *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 30 May 1701, 44.

229 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 16 August 1702, Vol. V, 513.

230 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 16 December 1705, Vol. I, 130.

231 [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 8, 10.

232 Smith, *The Olive Branch*, 1715, 8; Balquy, *The Duty of Benevolence*, 1727, 18.

God taking away his peace from the people, and, in the case of England, claimed one preacher in 1715, 'the judgement of God . . . is upon us for our iniquities'.²³³ One more way to approach the problem of religious divisions was to expound it as a consequence of 'the corruption of human nature' on one hand and of a direct 'instigation of the Devil' on the other. The first epistle to the Corinthians, when suitably interpreted, provided a basis for such explanations: 'There must be also heresies, or', added the preacher, 'as the word denotes, divisions among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you'.²³⁴

Preaching against division gained new force with the Test Act controversy of the 1730s. Basing his sermon on a passage from the Epistle to the Romans, one preacher insisted that to avoid the misfortunes that faction was capable of causing, the listeners should have 'mark[ed] them which cause division', particularly when divisions were created in a country governed by a government with a rational basis. This preacher did not mince his words when vindicating the established order against oppositional forces. Stating that 'there is scarce a crime in the black catalogue of sins which the authors of such divisions are not guilty of', he gave a long list of various consequences of their actions.²³⁵

Sermons against division appeared in numbers also in connection with the Jacobite rising of 1745. For instance, one clergyman insisted on unanimity and concord among the English on the basis of St Paul's teaching that 'there be no divisions among you; but . . . you be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment'.²³⁶ Another preacher of the late-1740s declared that the biblical words 'where bitter zeal and strife is, . . . there is confusion and every evil work' originally stood for religious divisions but concerned civil government as well. However, he provided the following comparatively secular definition for division:²³⁷

By divisions [in civil government] . . . I mean such, as when men confederate together, to subvert settled governments, either by force and violence, or any other unwarrantable means, or set themselves to condemn indiscriminately all the measures of an administration, actuated only by the wild passions that in all ages have produced the most tragical events, I mean those of ambition and revenge.

Mawson's explicit message was that divisions, i.e. parties, had encouraged the Jacobite rising of 1745, and it was through unity that further rebellions could be prevented.²³⁸

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233 Ford, *Unity the Greatest Security*, 1715, 6, 15–16; See also Needham, *Considerations concerning the Origine and Cure of our Church-Divisions*, 1710, 4–5; Claydon 1996, 129.

234 Bradford, *Christian Religion the Occasion: not the Cause of Division*, 1716, 13, 18.

235 *A Discourse on the Wickedness and Danger of Fomenting Divisions in a State*, 1733, 3, 5, 11.

236 Plaxton, *An Exhortation to Unanimity and Concord*, 1745, 1–2, 6.

237 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 4, 8, 11.

238 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 24.

Parallel terminology of division can also be found in more politically directed texts of the period. History provided an endless number of examples of divisions with severe consequences.²³⁹ *King Charles I's Political Catechism* had declared 'faction and division' an evil most typical of aristocracy, divisions being created between the monarch and Parliament and within Parliament.²⁴⁰ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* and Edmund Ludlow's memoirs both mentioned 'division and faction' in Parliament, the former adding 'subdivisions' that were occasioned by diversity in religious opinions.²⁴¹

Particularly at times of war – which was practically a normal state in eighteenth-century Britain – language of division was a natural part of everyday political rhetoric. The Spanish War of Succession gave rise to constantly repeated complaints against 'our unhappy divisions' which Louis XIV, 'the common invader of the liberties of Europe', was utilising to achieve a dominance of the Continent.²⁴² The nation was seen as 'divided, subdivided, and torn asunder with factions and parties, to the scandal of our holy religion, the disturbance of the state, the obstruction of public peace, the joy of our enemies, the reproach of our understandings, the hindrance of trade, and the confusion of our interest at home and abroad'.²⁴³ Defoe regretted, in 1702, 'intestine divisions' and 'sharp and shameful divisions' which he claimed were disturbing English war efforts on the Continent:²⁴⁴

A nation divided in the constituent parts of its government, can admit no harmony amongst its subjects, but from the king on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill, every individual must suffer more or less, by such a division, yet such is our misfortune, that we are divided in our parliaments, divided in our councils, and this division runs through all the counties, cities, corporations and societies in the kingdom, and creates and nourishes heats, jars, and animosities among people of all rank.

Also in 1715, Defoe pointed out that divisions caused disturbances within the nation and increased the risk of foreign invasion.²⁴⁵ Similar lamentations of political division as a threat to national security can be found in numerous texts by writers such as Addison, according to whom²⁴⁶

there cannot a greater judgment befall a country than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a government into two distinct people, and makes them greater strangers and more averse to one another, than if

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239 See e.g. [Acherley], *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, preface, and Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 14.

240 Henry Parker, *Charles I, King, A Political Catechism*, 1643, reprinted in 1710, 8, and 1740, 12.

241 COPC: Ludlow, *Memoirs*, 1698; Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, 1702, Vol. II, 389, Vol. III, 453.

242 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, iii.

243 *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 3.

244 [Daniel Defoe], *The Dangers of Europe, from The Growing Power of France with Some Free Thoughts on Remedies*, 1702, preface and 18.

245 [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder: Or, The Castration of Whig and Tory*, 1715, 17, 21.

246 Addison, S125, 24 July 1711.

they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a division are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person.

In political propaganda, divisions were presented as a creation of the rival party. A Tory publication would habitually insinuate that it was in the interest of Whigs to promote 'national and Church divisions'.²⁴⁷ For Bolingbroke, division was a central concept in his writings on political parties, the opprobrious terms division and faction appearing in close connection. Bolingbroke also applied a couple of times the expression 'political divisions',²⁴⁸ with the obvious purpose of distinguishing between religious and political reasons for pluralism. By the early 1730s, the *Craftsman* and some other papers were ready to report how the 'mischievous spirit of division' had been declining for some time.²⁴⁹ However, the defenders of the government argued that it was the opposition headed by the journal – *the opposition* being used in a determined form – which was to be blamed for 'our present divisions at home'.²⁵⁰ When answering the *Craftsman*'s polemic, one of the leading government papers ostentatiously applied Bolingbroke's expression 'political divisions' as opposed to religious ones that had been discussed previously in the same essay.²⁵¹ The application of such an expression on both sides of the political divide illustrates a growing awareness in differences between religious and political divisions.

The talk of 'our unhappy divisions', whether within the nation at large or within the governing Whigs, was to continue throughout the 1730s and 1740s.²⁵² The radical theological interpretation of the author of *Harmony without Uniformity* (1740), in which division was recognised as a natural phenomenon, appears to have been a solitary case amongst condemnations of

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247 *Robert against Ferguson*, 1704, 4.

248 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, passim; 'National divisions' seems to have been a particular favourite expression of Bolingbroke's. *Ibid.*, 12, 25, 86; In *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 412, Bolingbroke also employed the expression 'popular divisions'; The expression 'political divisions' appeared at least in *ibid.*, 74 and 86.

249 C213, 1 August 1730; Parallel views about the reconciliation of divisions, seen as a result of unifying foreign policy, were expressed in *The Free Briton*, No. 224, 14 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134.

250 *The Danger of Faction to a Free People*, 1732, 27–8; Up to at least the mid-1720s, the term opposition had been used for the act of opposing, not for any organised group of opposers. The definite expression 'the opposition' started to appear in print around 1731 and became common usage by 1737, referring to all opponents of Walpole. What had occasionally been 'an opposition' raised by groups out of office turned into 'the opposition' working much more consistently. Foord 1964, 107, 154–5; In the consulted dictionaries, one of the first references to political opposition was the definition 'the struggle of one party against another' in *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

251 *The London Journal*, No. 762, 2 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, February 1734, Reel 134.

252 See e.g. *The London Journal*, No. 743, 22 September 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, September 1733, Reel 134; *The Old Whig*, No. 44, 8 January 1736, in *GM*, Vol. VI, January 1736, Reel 136, with reference to the proposal of repealing the Test Act; *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 3; Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 3; *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 6; *The Common Sense*, No. 360, 7 January 1744, in *GM*, Vol. XIV, January 1744, Reel 138; Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738, 402.

division. This author found, on the basis of Genesis, no negative consequences in division:²⁵³

There was no sooner one person created, but the Creator divided him into two; and no sooner made two, but he united them into one. Thus people may be divided into two or more different societies, and yet be one in heart, affection and benevolence.

In other words, the existence of a plurality of human groupings did not mean that the groups were incapable of agreeing on basic values that kept society together. Plurality of values was not dangerous but rather a natural state of affairs. This conception made no breakthrough in the early eighteenth century, but the period experienced an important development, a growing separation between religious and political divisions.

Side was a party word with an remarkably neutral sense. Because of its very general character it lacked inherently pejorative associations typical of other terms. Expressions such as 'this side, and that'²⁵⁴ were natural in a political system based on a two-party division. The origin of side as a party word is also evident: it stood for the opposite sides on which the rival parties were seated in Parliament. One member of Parliament had made a distinction between the two sides of the House of Commons already in 1673,²⁵⁵ and printed sources from the turn of the century contain numerous references to parties as sides. Burnet referred, with that expression, to groups which had participated in political conflicts during the reign of Charles II. Evelyn's diary discussed the events of the Glorious Revolution with references to 'dissatisfaction on both sides'.²⁵⁶ Swift mentioned how the Tory lords in Parliament summoned after the Glorious Revolution had been 'looked upon with an evil eye by the warm zealots of the other side', the Whigs. Party-political polemics of the early 1710s were delineated with the term sides by Swift, Addison and Defoe,²⁵⁷ and the synonymous character of the terms party and side is also visible in Steele's statement 'when a man declares himself openly on one side, that party will take no more notice of him, because he is sure; and the set of men whom he declares against, for the same reason are violent against him'.²⁵⁸ This use of the term

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253 *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 2.

254 The expression was used to describe the party division in Place. *The Arbitration*, [1710], 5.

255 Harris 1993, 1.

256 *HCET*: Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, 1703; Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 1689–1690.

257 Swift, E15, 2 November 1710, E43, 31 May 1711; A nonjuror was someone who refused to take an oath of allegiance to William and Mary in 1689 because such an oath would have violated the oath sworn to James II, the previous monarch; Addison, S125, 24 July 1711; See, for example, Addison to George Stepney [Vienna], Whitehall 6 November 1705, *The Letters*, 53, and Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 5 May 1709, *The Letters*, 134; *COPC*: Defoe, *An Appeal to Honour and Justice*, 1715.

258 Steele, T193, 4 July 1710; Other instances of the synonymy of party and side can be found in the epilogue to Griffin's *Whig and Tory*, 1720, in [Trenchard and Gordon], IW1, 20 January 1720, in C40, 24 April 1727, and in Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 14; Side might in an occasional poem also appear as a synonym to faction and sect. 'An Elegy Balladwise . . .' in *A Tory Pill, to Purge Whig Melancholy*, 1715, 12.

sides as an alternative expression for parties continued still in the 1740s²⁵⁹ but is rather uninteresting as far as developments in the meanings of the concept of political party are concerned.

Much more interesting substitutive vocabulary can be found amongst euphemisms for party. One of the most obvious of these was the general expression friends, used in a specific sense. In a fairly unorganised political system, friends was a term through which political identities were defined. The term friends could be applied to defining a party and creating unity in a way that avoided awkward associations connected with other party words. Friends was also a useful expression for excluding outsiders as friends of the rival party.

Holmes has previously paid some attention to the synonymy of party and friends,²⁶⁰ whereas Robert Shephard's study on early modern court factions gives reason to consider whether friends, instead of referring to all the adherents of a party, only concerned a tiny circle of party leaders. Among court factions – which provided a natural source for later party terminology – the friends of the leader had consisted merely of his close associates treated as near equals. The friends shared the same education or had reached their status due to their abilities or their agreeable views in politics and religion. A clear hierarchical distinction separated the friends from mere followers or servants. Friendship in court factions stood for mutual assistance in gaining benefits,²⁶¹ and the same was also true of early parties. The early eighteenth-century party euphemism friends obviously still carried much of the same connotations the term had conveyed when used within court factions.²⁶²

The synonymous character of the terms party and friends is demonstrated by textual variations in Swift's *Examiner* essays. The original paper number 26 and also the collected edition of 1712 contained the sentence 'if *your party* ever happen to turn up again'. However, in later editions the same sentence read 'if *your friends* ever happen to turn up again'.²⁶³ This verbal conversion already made the sentence less negative. Swift's understanding of party as friends was explicit also in his reference to a leading Whig who could 'not expect to continue in the government, nor would [he], when all his friends were out'.²⁶⁴ Other instances of the use of friend as a term of party politics can be found in the papers of Hearne, who saw particular friendship among the Whigs. Hearne also wrote in his diary how, in the common room of his college, it was usual 'amongst friends' to 'talk of the Whigs and Dissenters',²⁶⁵ that is, to speak ill of politico-religious rivals within and outside the University. Likewise, Nicolson reported in his diary how a leading Tory clergyman had called the current leading minister 'his friend'²⁶⁶ in an evidently political sense.

259 Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, London, 4 February 1742, *Selected Letters*, 23.

260 Holmes 1987, 16.

261 Shephard 1992, 725–8, 735.

262 Shaftesbury, for instance, called the Whigs 'our party' and Whig party leaders 'our friends'. Klein 1994, 139.

263 Compare the original Swift, E26, 1 February 1711, to notes on later textual variations in Herbert Davis's edition of his works.

264 Swift to Addison, Dublin, 22 August 1710, *The Letters*, 465.

265 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 29 September 1705, Vol. I, 50.

266 *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 9 March 1711, 557.

Addison's correspondence illustrates how the phrase friends could signify both fellow members of the writer's own party and those of the rival party. Addison wrote about the Irish Whigs referring to 'their friends in England' and to 'my Lord Lieutenant's friends'. He reported on the successes of the Whigs by revealing the 'unspeakable diligence in all my Lord Lieutenant's friends to work this point to his satisfaction'. Sometimes he mentioned 'our great officers of state', and after the beginning of the Whig monopoly of power in 1715 he openly spoke about 'our friends' and 'our ministers'. Addison's loyal Whiggism, as well as the euphemistic character of the term friends, became explicit when he gave his excuses for being absent from a vote in the House of Commons: 'I do not remember that since I have been in the House I have separated from my friends in a single vote'. Elsewhere, he referred to 'Mr Harley and his friends', to 'this gentleman [archdeacon Percivall] and his friends', to Irish Tories and 'their friends in England', to 'his [Mr Ludlow's] friend Mr Sanders who is one of the most able and active men in his party', and to 'all the friends and adherents of two former governors'. He also described a parliamentary division in words which illustrate the close connection between the terms party and friends:²⁶⁷

Mr Medlycott's election has made a great noise. All the Scotch members present were for him, notwithstanding which he would have lost it, had not Sir H. Dutton Colt's *friends* gone to a new opera which was acted that night, while Mr Medlycott's *friends* stuck close to a man. These gentlemen however have been so reproached by *their party* for this piece of negligence, that it will have a good effect upon them for the remaining part of the Parliament.

Another report on parliamentary proceedings indirectly shows that both the Whigs and the Tories could be regarded as parties and the existence of these parties be expressed in friend terminology.²⁶⁸ The same sense of the phrase friends as fellow adherents of a party appears also in one of Addison's

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267 Addison to Charles Montagu, Earl of Manchester (Venice), 24 February 1708, *The Letters*, 91; Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 13 June 1709, *The Letters*, 148-9; Addison to John Somers, Baron Somers of Evesham (London), Dublin Castle, 4 July 1709, *The Letters*, 164; Addison to Sidney, Earl of Godolphin, Dublin Castle, 2 August 1709, *The Letters*, 169; Addison to Charles Spencer (London), Dublin Castle, 2 August 1709, *The Letters*, 170; Addison to Sidney (London), Dublin Castle, 10 August 1709, *The Letters*, 174-5; Addison to Sidney (London), Dublin Castle, 12 August 1709, *The Letters*, 177; Addison to Charles Montagu, Earl of Halifax (London), Dublin Castle, 1 September 1709, *The Letters*, 184; Addison to Charles Spencer (London), Dublin Castle, 8 June 1710, *The Letters*, 223; Addison [to Charles Delafaye, Bath], London, 8 June 1715, *The Letters*, 339; Addison to Charles Delafaye [Bath], [London], 18 June 1715, *The Letters*, 343; The division discussed in the quotation had concerned a petition arising from the Westminster election. Thomas Medlycott had been elected by Tory votes, but the election result had been questioned by the Whig candidate Henry Dutton Colt. Consequently, the case had been given to the House of Commons to decide. Counting on their majority in Parliament, some 35 Whig members had been absent attending an opera performance. The loss of the vote had caused plenty of altercation within the Whig party. Speck 1984, 111; Italics in the quotation by PI.

268 Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 23 May 1710, *The Letters*, 219.

published essays. Referring to a stereotype of country Tories, Addison wrote that 'some of Sir Rogers friends are afraid of the old knight is imposed upon by a designing fellow [,] . . . some discarded Whig'.²⁶⁹ Other terms in Addison's letters that were used in a meaning close to that of party adherence include relations, adherents, personal acquaintances and correspondents.²⁷⁰ The opposite expression to friends in polemical texts could be enemies or adversaries.²⁷¹

Examples of friendship-based party vocabulary in published literature include Toland's allusion that party leaders cheat 'their friends'²⁷² and Defoe's way to divide the people into 'the friends of the government' and 'another sort of people among them, who are kept together as a party, and supported in their aversions to the government'. Defoe also referred to the 'politic[al] friends' of the High Church.²⁷³ Clement discussed the Whig ministry and 'their friends',²⁷⁴ and Swift referred to 'the Whig leaders' and 'their friends'.²⁷⁵ In a Whiggish polemical poem, a Tory asked: 'What would my friends the Tories think?'²⁷⁶ In a dialogue produced by the same propaganda machine, two Tories spoke interchangeably about 'our friends' and 'our party'.²⁷⁷ In an analogous manner, Tory propaganda put words in the mouths of Whigs who maintained that 'a show of a party' would raise the 'spirits of our friends'.²⁷⁸ A publication of the late 1720s referred to Jacobites as the friends of the Pretender,²⁷⁹ and the influential *Craftsman* wrote about 'friendship between politicians' which could be either 'practical or theoretical'.²⁸⁰ In the early 1730s, governmental writers opposing the *Craftsman* insisted that friends of the current administration and those of the country were the same,²⁸¹ excluding political alternatives. Party terminology derived from the general and traditionally used expression friends thus seems to have been common throughout the early eighteenth century. It offered an alternative and less direct way for expressing one's own party identity and for associating someone with a rival political grouping.

Civic humanism and classical republicanism in particular have been interpreted as having offered much of the basis for eighteenth-century oppositional thought. Even if it is not the purpose of this study to focus on the tradition of civic humanism, it is important to briefly discuss a couple of

269 Addison, S131, 31 July 1711.

270 Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 13 June 1709, *The Letters*, 149; Addison to John Somers, Baron Somers of Evesham (London), Dublin Castle, 4 July 1709, *The Letters*, 164; Addison to Sidney, Earl of Godolphin (London), Dublin Castle, 2 August 1709, *The Letters*, 169.

271 Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 20 May 1710, *The Letters*, 217; Addison, F29, 30 March 1716.

272 [Toland], *The Art of Governing by Partys*, 1701, 51.

273 Defoe, R6/9, 23 April 1709, R6/81, 11 October 1709.

274 [Clement], *Faults on both Sides*, 1710, 20.

275 [Swift], *Some Advice Humbly Offer'd to the Members of the October Club*, 1712, 78.

276 *Whig and Tory*, [1714].

277 *The True Picture of a Modern Tory*, 1702, 3–5.

278 *Advice from the Shades Below*, No. 2, 1710, 16.

279 [Concanen], *The Speculatist*, 29 July 1727.

280 C251, 24 April 1731.

281 *A Political Lecture*, 1733, 2.

euphemisms for party, expressions the essentially positive content of which was based on that tradition. In the case of euphemisms such as honesty and patriotism, civic humanism provided indirect legitimation for party.

A particularly preferred euphemism for expressing shared party identity was the adjective honest. Unlike so much of political vocabulary, it was an undisputed term capable of creating associations that were consistently emphatic. All contemporaries would with high probability have agreed that honest referred to such admired qualities as being 'good, virtuous, just, upright'. Everyone should, of course, have been honest.²⁸²

In the language of politics, the attribute honest legitimated the existence of the writer's own party. Everyone wished to be regarded as honest, honesty being 'the best policy at all times, and in all places'. Honest was listed together with the attributes wise, judicious and religious, whereas it was contrasted with 'cunning, violent, selfish, and hypocritical'. Honesty was associated, at least among traditionalist writers, with truth, religion and Christianity whereas the opposite was seen to consist of 'deceit, fraud, worldly politics, and knavery'. Defoe went as far as to suggest that a man could be appreciated independently of his party inclination provided he was honest. Generally, however, the attribute honest and the noun honesty directed suspicion towards rival groups as potentially dishonest and consequently not deserving appreciation as legitimate competitors for political power.²⁸³ Hence the applicability of the term among writers with differing ideological backgrounds was high. One of the clearest instances of the euphemistic character of the term is Addison's expression 'an honest party of men'²⁸⁴ which enabled him present the Whig party in an utterly respectable light.

At the very beginning of the century, a propagandist stated that he was 'no otherwise a party-man, than as I am a well-wisher to the honest part of the nation in general'. With this 'honest part' he meant those who were 'serviceable to the present government out of a principle of affection, and duty, and not interest'.²⁸⁵ The same idea was echoed forty-five years later when Gilpin stated that being 'a party-man' for the defence of honesty was a positive issue and encouraged 'every honest man' to form a party in favour of what mid-eighteenth-century England valued, that is 'virtue and religion, . . . liberty and public good'.²⁸⁶ To put it other way, the adjective honest, with all the admirable

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282 Kersey 1715; Kersey 1731; [Defoe] 1737; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 3.

283 *The Way To Bring the World to Rights* was published in 1711. The dialogue *Robert against Ferguson*, 1704, passim, is illustrative of the customary reproaches against the adherents of the rival party for lack of honesty. Davenant's dialogue *Sir Thomas Double*, 1710, 24, demonstrates the willingness of everyone to appear as honest in politics. Synonymous and antonymous adjectives were listed in [Whiston], *The Supposal, or A New Scheme of Government*, 1712, 143, 146; See also [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 12, where Defoe saw honest men in every party, and 32, where he argued that 'where party-business is greatest, there conscience and honesty are kicked out'.

284 Addison, F29, 30 March 1716.

285 *The Modern Whig Dictator*, 1702, preface.

286 Gilpin, *The bad Consequences of Dissention*, 1747, 11; In a parallel manner, Pope wished in a letter that a patriot prince would become 'the head of the only good party in the kingdom, that of honest men; I wish him head of no other party'. Goldgar 1976, 177.

qualities associated with it, was capable of turning the otherwise detestable denomination party-man into an acceptable expression.

Perhaps the best illustration of the efficacy of the term honest in justifying the ideology and actions of one's own party can be found in the notes of the ultra-traditionalist Hearne. For instance, in Hearne's papers, the attribute honest was capable of transforming a dubious party-political practice into an acceptable enterprise.²⁸⁷ It also served to emphasise the contrast between the politicians of Hearne's own political group (who were losing power) and the new government. Reluctant to endorse any principles that were later to be called parliamentarism and party system, Hearne wrote, with reference to a change of ministry: 'There will be a total removal of all honest men, and . . . the favourers of the faction will [be] put in their room'.²⁸⁸ Hearne hardly wrote about Tories at all. Seldom did he write about High-Church men either. Instead, referring to persons who supported High-Church and Tory attitudes, he wrote truly positively about 'honest men', 'honest members', 'honest Church of England men' and 'true sons of the Church of England', who typically appeared as conscientious and ingenious country gentlemen.²⁸⁹ When writing about the contrast of the two rival parties, he called one 'the Whiggish party' or 'Low-Church men' and the other 'the honest men', 'the honest part of the nation' or, sometimes alternatively, 'the High-Church men'. Emphasising the contrast between 'party' and 'honest men', he recorded a detailed description of how 'the Whiggish, fanatical party' had manhandled 'an honest gentleman' who had been campaigning for a parliamentary seat.²⁹⁰

For some other writers, honest was not so exclusive a term as it was for Hearne. Some saw 'honest and well-meaning' persons on both sides being misled by party-men. For them, 'the honest part of the nation' consisted of

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287 On 10 October 1705 (*Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. I, 54), Hearne enclosed a Tory propaganda poem illustrative of the potential of the term honest for Tories. The poem defended a disastrous Tory attempt to 'tack' an Occasional Conformity bill to war supply (Bennett 1975, 79-80; Holmes 1993, 344):

The crown is tacked unto the Church,
The Church unto the crown,
The Whigs are slightly tacked to both,
And so may soon come down.
Since all the world is a general tack
Of one thing to another,
Why then about one honest tack
Do fools make such a pother?

288 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 16 October 1705, Vol. I, 56.

289 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 17 November 1705, Vol. I, 79; 31 January 1706, Vol. I, 174. Some honest gentlemen were nonjuring as well. 24 March 1706, Vol. I, 208; 21 April 1706, Vol. I, 230-1; 22 December 1706, Vol. I, 313; On the side of printed literature, similar use of the expression 'a very honest, peaceable man' as an euphemism for Tory can be found in *A Presbyterian Getting On Horse-Back*, 1717, 34.

290 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 26 January 1706, Vol. I, 169; 26 April 1706, Vol. I, 234-5; 27 February 1707, Vol. I, 336-7; another fellow traditionalist, who had suffered at the hands of political rivals, Hearne was ready to call 'a martyr'. In a parallel way, in a piece of Tory propaganda published some ten years later, an honest Tory was said to have been abused by Whigs that had behaved 'as if they were some of them that seized our Saviour'. Both were describing a politico-religious conflict in religious terminology derived from the authoritative sources of Church history. *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 8 February 1706, Vol. I, 180; *A Presbyterian Getting On Horse-Back*, 1717, 34.

people who were not truly committed to either party. These truly honest men were unable to support a party in all questions, as every party sometimes affronted the values of honesty. Country Whig writers of the 1720s in particular presented honesty as a natural quality of men, the public at large, 'even one honest man of the meanest understanding' being capable of 'judg[ing] honestly in public affairs'. They insisted that 'an honest Briton' should 'learn to value an honest man of another party more than a knave of our own'. Of course, such views sympathetic towards the extension of political discourse found their opponents who could not accept so naive a trust in the honesty of 'the mob of England'.²⁹¹

If honesty was such an effective term for turning loathsome party activity into respectable action, patriotism was a more disputed one for doing the same. Patriotism, unlike so many of early eighteenth-century political terms, seems to have purely secular origins, being derived from the civic humanist tradition. This term has achieved attention in previous research on the secular tradition of political thought.²⁹² Some further remarks on the basis of the sources consulted for this study are, however, of interest.

During the first two decades of the eighteenth century, the term patriot occurred every now and then in published literature. It was not yet considered a term with particular importance in discourse on political pluralism, even though it was sometimes presented as a positive counter-concept for the negative party-man.²⁹³ There was a tendency among supporters of each of the parties to make the term their exclusive possession. Tories in particular seem to have turned to this concept when seeking for legitimation of Tory views and politicians. When, in 1702, a pamphlet vindicating 'true patriots of our established Church, English liberty, and ancient monarchy' was published, patriot was a term highlighting the political integrity of leading Tory politicians.²⁹⁴ In his diary, another Tory, Hearne, termed those who had voted in favour of the bill for preventing occasional conformity as 'worthy patriots'.²⁹⁵ In 1710, a piece of most rigid Tory propaganda, underscoring the threats that Whigs caused to monarchy, wrote about 'the royal martyr King Charles the First, and those other worthy patriots that suffered for their loyalty and firm adherence to the Church of England'.²⁹⁶ Disputes about the right to call oneself patriot were also rising. In his sermon of 1713, Sacheverell denied the right of 'an abandoned faction', that is Whigs and Dissenters, to call themselves patriots.²⁹⁷

291 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 26, 39–40; Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 5, 8; *The Humble Confession and Petition of a Whig with his Eyes Open*, 1712, 8–9; [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 13; *Cato's Letters*, The Second Edition, 1720, preface, iii, v; CL20, 11 February 1721; C21, 17 February 1727; C29, 13 March 1727; C204, 30 May 1730; *A Letter from Waitwell Longhead . . . to his Friend Sir Politick Wou'd be*, 1731, 3.

292 Skinner 1974, 99–100, 112.

293 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 29; [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 11: The same contrast is visible in *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 14–15.

294 *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented*, 1702, title.

295 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 27 October 1705, Vol. I, 59.

296 *Monarchy Sacrific'd*, 1710, title. Note the questioning religious content of the verb sacrifice.

297 Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government Destructive of Both*, 1713, 22.

It is established among historians that the terms of patriotism formed a central part of the armoury which the opposition to Walpole had in its possession.²⁹⁸ Patriot was no neologism introduced by the opposition of the 1720s; yet the frequency of its use achieved a wholly new extension among the oppositional writers headed by Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke's restrictive use of patriot as a synonym for a supporter of opposition provoked more widespread disputes over the proper sense of the word and led to the word being used in highly ironical senses. According to Kathleen Wilson, patriotism stood for 'love of country, protection of the constitution and the liberties it guaranteed, and a devotion to the public good, unscathed by personal interest or private aggrandisement'. Talk about patriotism could unite different political groupings because Englishmen of the 1720s shared a positive understanding of the term. Patriotism could hide various partisan interests under the positive ideals of the love of country and the protection of the constitution. Patriotism stood for action for the public good and setting aside all private interests. Who would not have wished to be called a patriot? In opposition rhetoric it was, of course, Walpole's government which provided the best illustrations of the counter-concept of patriotism, that is, measures violating English liberties and constitutional traditions.²⁹⁹

The rise of patriot to its position as a central political term really seems to have happened with the publication of *Cato's Letters* in the early 1720s³⁰⁰ and was perpetuated by the essays of the *Craftsman* from the late-1720s onwards.³⁰¹ Without proceeding to an extensive analysis of the concept patriotism in the oppositional ideology of Bolingbroke's circle, it can be argued that the concept was used so repeatedly in their writings that it unavoidably started to lose its effectiveness. On one hand, the *Craftsman* complained how 'real patriots' had been attacked by the writers of the government and 'the principles of patriotism' ridiculed, stated that 'true patriot' was 'a character indeed somewhat scarce', called for 'real patriotism and a truly public spirit', longed for 'the warmest patriotism and sincerest concern for the public good', and found 'the most eminent patriots' in the ancient world. On the other hand, it wrote ironically about establishment Whigs as 'zealous patriots' or sometimes spoke openly about 'anti-patriots',³⁰² referring to the current ministry.

The *Craftsman's* way of using the term patriot could not pass unnoticed amongst the defenders of the Whig establishment. One writer probably had Bolingbroke in mind when he wrote: 'If such a sycophant [of the vulgar] be a man of fortune and figure, and not employed in the administration of public

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298 See Foord 1964, 154, for instance.

299 Wilson 1995, 23, 123–4.

300 In *Cato's Letters*, the term patriot was at least twice used in a rather obscure and possibly ironical sense to question the integrity of politicians under criticism. CL20, 11 February 1721; CL27, 25 March 1721. It was defined as a person for whom 'to serve his country is his private pleasure' and who 'does good to [mankind] by gratifying himself'. Quoted in Burt 1992, 74.

301 However, Chambers 1728 did not yet define patriotism.

302 C2, 9 December 1726; C19, 10 February 1727; C21, 17 February 1727; C29, 13 March 1727; C359, 19 May 1733; C722, 3 May 1740, BL Burney, Vol. 349B.

affairs, he is among the populace in a free country generally distinguished by the name of patriot'.³⁰³ Another author referred to what he considered the original ancient meaning of the term patriot as 'those men who have been eminent in defending, or illustriously bold in obtaining . . . [the] liberties . . . of [the] country'. The author regarded it as unacceptable that the supporters of the 'faction' – obviously meaning the opposition led by Bolingbroke – called themselves patriots.³⁰⁴ One more writer in favour of the government condemned the opposition's way of using the term and instead described patriotism, used as a 'mask' by the opposition, as the 'foster-father' of faction which 'affects the name and qualities of its imaginary parent'. As to true patriotism, the writer maintained, it was based on truth and virtue and campaigned for the public good, whereas Bolingbroke's troops did neither.³⁰⁵ The term patriot finally achieved such a degree of politicisation that Henry Fielding, when starting a new paper called the *True Patriot* in 1745, underscored its non-partisan nature and defined it as 'love of one's country carried into action'.³⁰⁶ Dictionaries of the mid-eighteenth century also seem to have avoided giving patriotism any other definitions than 'acting like a father of his country'.³⁰⁷

Talk about patriotism provided an alternative secular way of defending a 'good' political party. However, the term could be received in conflicting ways, and it did not yet form the only or even dominant way of conceptualising political party in the early eighteenth century. Instead of mere patriotism, party involved faction, cabal, cause, division, side, friendship and honesty as well, not to mention its looming associations with heresy, schism and sect.

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303 For criticisms of *The Craftsman's* use of the term patriot, see [Concanen], *The Speculatist*, 13 July 1728, and *A Letter from Wairwell Longhead*, 1731, 10; An identical argument that claims of patriotism were merely a plot of the opposition to achieve popularity appeared in *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 14–15.

304 *The History of Modern Patriots*, 1732, 2, 4. Modern was an essentially pejorative attribute here.

305 *The Danger of Faction to a Free People*, 1732, 7–8; The expression 'patriot mask' was also used in *An Essay on Faction*, 1733, 9.

306 Miller 1994, 95.

307 Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

■ Associations of Party Denominations

Whig and Tory as connectors of religious and political discourses

An important way of conceptualising political parties was to attach proper names to them. Such names were not adopted voluntarily by party conventions but were given by opponents on the basis of their prejudices towards the rival party. These party names and contemporary definitions for them are revealing as to how political parties were understood. Associations derived from the spheres of religion and politics were initially intermixed in them, but signs of a tendency towards a separation between Church parties and political parties, and a connected secularisation of political parties, are traceable.

The use of party-names had had a long history by the early eighteenth century. Most seventeenth-century terms of group identity had originated in Reformation discourse and continued to be associated with religious controversy. Stereotypes based on religious associations remained forceful because, being ambiguous, they provided a complete description of the ideology of the opponents. They were often based on ambivalent references to background doctrines and on an exploitation of implications that could lead to senseless extensions of meaning.¹

The two contending parties in early eighteenth-century England were referred to as Whigs and Tories, and both labels were applied to opponents with the purpose of questioning their respectability. The derogatory origins of the terms were familiar to informed readers.² They were known to be nicknames derived from past religious confrontations in Scotland and Ireland,³ and they entered English political discourse at the time of the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–81.⁴ Until the Revolution of 1688, however, Whig and Tory remained rarely used nicknames and conceptually subordinate to the language of Church politics. Their etymologies as Irish Catholic and Scottish Covenanter rebels well fitted with the concerns of the day, though it was the terminology of religious parties of the Civil War period that was most commonly used in political debates. These denominations include the ‘Church of England and loyal party’ and ‘old cavalier party’ for the anti-dissenting side and ‘fanatic and

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1 Albers 1993, 333; Condren 1994, 49–50.

2 *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 9, suggested that ‘some’ still remembered the origins of the names; The etymology of the terms was discussed in [Toland], *The Art of Governing by Partys*, 1701, 35, 37, 44, 119; [Toland], *State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, [1717], 14–18; [Clement], *Faults on both Sides*, 1710, 12–13.

3 See Bramston, *The Art of Politicks*, 1729, 5.

4 Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, Vol. I, 1681, 124, 198–9.

Presbyterian party' for the pro-dissenting side. The terms Whig and Tory entered parliamentary language only after the Glorious Revolution,⁵ replacing the older division into Court and Country.⁶

Those who had seen the introduction of the terms Whig and Tory had considered them 'of very scandalous significations'. Neither party had initially approved its appellation, the connotations of which were highly pejorative.⁷ Commentators associated the divisive names with a civil war, as abusive words were expected to be followed by violence,⁸ or at least the calling of names was condemned as ridiculous. Halifax, for instance, lamented how the English 'played the fool with throwing Whig and Tory at one another, as boys do snowballs'.⁹ Many also cherished hopes of a swift disappearance of the terms. Halifax saw denominations as weapons in a propaganda war and stated: 'They are not of long continuance, but after they have passed a little while, and that they are grown nauseous by being so often repeated, they give place to something that is newer. Thus, after Whig, [and] Tory . . . have had their time, now they are dead and forgotten'.¹⁰

Contrary to Halifax's wishes, however, Whig and Tory were neither dead nor forgotten but were to revive with unforeseen intensity by the turn of the eighteenth century. The parties had begun as genuine ideological disagreements, and though these differences may have been balanced by some shared socio-economic interests of the political elite, the party labels survived. Most political writers saw politics as a struggle between Whigs and Tories and did not hesitate to exaggerate the dangers connected with the doctrines of the rival party.¹¹ Each party created caricatures of the opponents with which all

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5 Willman 1974, 251, 254, 262; Hill 1976, 21; Goldie 1990, 78–9; Harris 1993, 1, 8; Hill 1996, 12.

6 Court and Country denoted the supporters of a strong monarchical executive power and backers of Parliament respectively. In the 1690s, both the Whigs and Tories were divided between their Court and Country wings. Though occurring occasionally in early eighteenth-century texts, the terms referred to rather incoherent groupings. The terms survived, but they became used polemically rather than as expressions describing party structure. Hill 1976, 27; Horwitz 1977, 317; Clark 1980, 299, 302–3; Jones 1984, xiv; Hayton 1984, 37; Speck 1988, 185; Harris 1993, 1, 52–3, 141, 148, 162, 165; [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 6; [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 15; C103, 22 June 1728; Roger Acherley, *The Britannic Constitution: Or, the Fundamental Form of Government in Britain*, The Second Edition, 1759, 573; Compare *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 30 December 1701, Vol. V, 484, and [Toland], *State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, [1717], 18; Court and Country were also used in place of the term opposition to distinguish those supporting the king and his ministers from everyone else. Beattie 1970, 5–6; Foord 1964, 107, 154; Gunn 1972, 6; Dickinson 1977, 91; Clark 1980, 299; Hill 1996, 12–13; The early 1730s experienced attempts to reintroduce this older distinction by the opposition to Walpole. Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 26; *The Craftsman* for 4 August 1739, in *GM*, Vol. IX, August 1739, 424–5, Reel 137; Compare with *The London Journal*, No. 734, 21 July 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, July 1733, Reel 134.

7 [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 11, claimed that both the terms Whig and Tory had been 'owned and gloried in . . . under those agreeable expositions, which each side give to their party-name'. However, that was still seldom done in published texts.

8 Willman 1974, 263; Charles Davenant's dialogue *The True Picture of a Modern Whig*, 1701, 6, suggested that a civil war was the real aim of the Whigs.

9 Halifax, 'The Character of a Trimmer', *The Works of George Savile Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, New York 1989, Vol. I, 179.

10 Halifax, 'The Anatomy of an Equivalent', 1688, *The Works of George Savile Marquis of Halifax*, Vol. I, 265.

11 Gunn 1972, 4–5.

opposition activities were associated.¹² These stereotypes reveal a great deal about the ideology of their creators, as Swift pointed out: 'A Whig forms an image of a Tory, just after the thing he most abhors; and that image serves to represent the whole body'.¹³

The first part of the 1690s also saw the emergence of a party system in Parliament. The terms Whig and Tory came to symbolise an increasing amount of shared attitudes towards major political questions within each party,¹⁴ and, although for much of William's reign (1689–1701) contemporary terminology reflected the complexity of partisan groupings, few observers were able to write about politics without using party labels. Whig and Tory might be called improper and vulgar expressions, but they were anyway employed to draw distinctions between the major political groupings.¹⁵ The use of both terms was so common that their pejorativeness weakened unavoidably, even to the point that some writers could proudly apply one of the terms to denote themselves.

In early eighteenth-century political literature, the party names were applied in a way that shows the essential meanings of the words having retained tones derived from the Exclusion Crisis. There were 'two great parties, of late known by the names of Whig and Tory', both 'reproaching and branding each other with names of ignoring and reproach'. So much so that, during the parliamentary session of 1708 when the parties were particularly factious (sometimes both parties opposing the ministry) an angry polemist pointed out how 'there is nothing but Whig and Tory, High Church and Low Church, heard among us'.¹⁶ Many wished that they had been able to avoid 'the invidious names of Whig and Tory, High and Low Church, and other discriminating appellations' but had to recognise that 'the best and the politest in their discourses and writings are forced to use them, to avoid tedious circumlocutions'.¹⁷ When, some time before the end of the reign of Anne, Bishop Burnet wrote about the terms Whig and Tory, he had to concede that 'terms that I have much spoken against, and even hated' had to be used 'to avoid making always a longer description' as both were 'now become as common as if they had been words of our language'.¹⁸

Whig and Tory had indeed become part of the English language. The names of the parties deserve special attention, as they constitute an exemplary case of the close interplay of religious questions and party politics. These connections become easier to understand when the shared memories concerning the traumatic events of the 1640s and 1650s are taken into consideration. The reading audience of the reign of Anne was exposed to often repeated references to the politico-religious conflicts of the Civil War. Religion (anti-Catholicism)

12 Corns, Speck and Downie 1982, 2.

13 Swift, E33, 22 March 1711.

14 Clark 1980, 296.

15 Horwitz 1977, 317.

16 OED: Tory, Whig; *Occasional Thoughts Concerning Our Present Divisions, And Their Remedies*, 1704, 5; *A View Of the present Divisions in Great-Britain*, 1708, 3; Hill 1976, 112–13.

17 Abel Boyer's *Political State of Great Britain for 1711* as cited in Speck 1970, 1.

18 Gilbert Burnet's *History of My Own Time* as quoted in Richards 1972, 154.

had also played a significant role in the emergence of the Whigs and Tories towards the end of the reign of Charles II.¹⁹ Although the division partly followed the older division into Court and Country, it must not be interpreted as a purely constitutional conflict. Even though some Whigs were radical parliamentarians and some Tories defended absolute monarchy, the more traditionalist Whigs and more moderate Tories wished to maintain much of the English constitution untouched.²⁰ As the relatively peaceful processes of the Glorious Revolution and Hanoverian Succession show, the majority of the English elites shared the ideal of a mixed constitution. Religion was a more divisive issue, and this tendency can be seen nowhere as distinctly as in the language of party.

Considering the extent to which Whig and Tory had become part of everyday language, a surprising observation is to be made when dictionaries are consulted for definitions of Whig and Tory. Despite the historical reality of party divisions and the constant application of the terms Whig and Tory in political discourse, both were totally overlooked in such originally seventeenth-century dictionaries as Coles (1701), Cocker-Hawkins (1704), *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707), Bullokar-Browne (1719), and even by Kersey (1732). The lexicographers' reaction to the terms was obvious: Whig and Tory were for long not considered respectable enough or sufficiently important terms to be accepted as a part of the English language and entered in dictionaries.

The word Tory, applied to the supporters of the more traditionalist of the two parties, had originated from the seventeenth-century dispossessed Irish, who had become outlaws and lived by plundering and killing English settlers and soldiers. These Irish Tories had become familiar to the seventeenth-century English reading audience as despised Catholic extremists and robbers. However, the meaning of the term was considerably extended during the Exclusion Crisis at the turn of the 1680s to denote those Englishmen who opposed the exclusion of Catholic James, Duke of York, from the succession to the crown. One reason for this adaptation of the term may well have been the fact that many of James's friends were Irish. This new Tory party opposed the goals of the Whigs, popular sovereignty and contract theory in particular. It was characterised by the support of the Anglican clergy for the union of traditional monarchy and the established Church. This union included the defence of the doctrines of divine hereditary right, passive obedience and the rejection of any concessions to religious sects.²¹

Soon after the Exclusion Crisis, an observer expressed the conceptual shift in party names in these simplifying terms: 'Instead of Cavalier and Roundhead, now they are called Tories and Whigs'.²² Such statements illustrate the strong

19 Holmes 1975, 5–6.

20 Harris 1993, 108.

21 For the reasons for the birth of the Tory party, see Holmes 1993, 127, 139–41.

22 OED: Tory; Higgons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 326; The theory of a direct development from the Royalists to the Cavaliers, the Court party and later the Tories, and from the Puritans to the Roundheads, the Country party and the later Whigs, was repeated in C17, 30 January 1727 (the anniversary of the execution of Charles I); Bulmer-Thomas 1965,

association between the emerging new party names and the detested names of the parties in the Civil War. Naturally enough, when creating a stereotype of Tory, Whig polemicists were eager to draw connections between the Cavaliers and the Tories.²³ Whigs claimed that Tory principles posed a threat to the Revolution Settlement of 1689 and to the coming Protestant Succession, leading to tyranny and Catholicism.²⁴ For vindicating the privileges of the Church of England, Tories were called high-flyers. For being potentially favourable to the Restoration of the Catholic line of Stuarts, they were often termed as Jacobites.²⁵ The stereotype Tory was a monarchist, a land-owner, a favourer of Catholicism, hysterically afraid of Protestant plots, supporter of priestcraft, a potential Jacobite, a xenophobic, and an isolationist.²⁶ During the Whig ascendancy, a Tory could easily be branded a traitor,²⁷ and the real or imagined threat of a Stuart Restoration was frequently turned against the opponents of the Whig ministry: 'The Jacobites and Tories are the same men, only with this difference, that the Jacobites are real enemies professed, and the Tories real enemies not professed'.²⁸ The party denominations still carried a meaning: As a Tory was understood essentially as a secret adversary to the established political order, it made sense to distinguish between political groupings as Whigs and Tories.

The reality of the stereotype of a Tory was, of course, questionable. Few of the Tories genuinely sympathised with Catholicism, but they were dedicated to those traditionalist political theories of the Anglican Church which underlined monarchical right and authority. They were adherents to an ideology of passive obedience and non-resistance to monarchs and accepted the doctrine of the divine right of monarchs. Furthermore, the Tories were a party of intolerant Anglicanism. This conviction made them oppose any attempts to alter the sacred order of succession or to reduce the exclusive religious authority of the Anglican Church.²⁹

It is striking that dictionaries refrained for so long from listing Tory among their entries in a situation where public discourse provided an abundance of instances of the use of the term. Tory was accepted into dictionaries only after the most intense party strife was already abating. In 1715, Kersey did mention

4; Willman 1974, 251–2; Corns, Speck, Downie 1982, 19; See also Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 37; Later in the same text (54), however, Bolingbroke denied a complete resemblance between the Tories and Cavaliers and the Whigs and Roundheads.

23 Corns, Speck, Downie 1982, 18; continuity from Cavaliers and Roundheads to Tories and Whigs was suggested by a Tory character in the Whig propaganda dialogue *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 11; The writer of *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 13, asked for permission to speak about Tories as a party as old as the Cavalier side of the Civil Wars.

24 Swift summarised their accusations against Tories in the words 'popery, arbitrary power, and the Pretender'. [Swift], E39, 3 May 1711; Richards 1972, 92.

25 *Robert against Ferguson*, 1704, title; [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, title and 43; [Trenchard], CL80, 9 June 1722; C40, 24 April 1727; Bolingbroke, *On the Spirit of Patriotism*, 1736, 357.

26 Redwood 1976, 20–1; Downie 1979, 7–8.

27 Gordon's *Creed of an Independent Whig*, 1720, 23–4, declared that Tory and traitor were 'synonymous terms'.

28 *The London Journal*, No. 723, 5 May 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, May 1733, Reel 134.

29 Holmes 1975, 6; Hill 1976, 21; Harris 1993, 82.

Tory but still refrained from expressing the political sense of the term, referring with Tory merely to 'an Irish robber, or bog-trotter'. In a handbook for secretaries (1721), Tories were presented as 'Irish outlaws'. By the 1720s, however, Tory was entering dictionaries as a political expression as well. Whereas Cocker-Hawkins (1704) printed nothing about the expression, the edition of 1724 already contained an entry for these 'Irish thieves and cut-throats' and even stated the political sense of Tory, the word being 'applied now to one party in England, in revenge for their being by them denominated Whigs'.

The breakthrough of the term Tory in dictionaries occurred in the late 1720s together with Chambers's (1728) lengthy article on the etymology of the term and history of this 'party or faction'. The article describing the 'two celebrated parties' was based on French sources because 'the division has gone so deep, that it is presumed, no Englishman, who has any concern or principles at all, but inclines more to one side than the other' and could thus provide a neutral description. Quoting Frenchmen was a safe solution to the problem of defining the party denominations, as two accounts of English parties had been published on the Continent in 1717. The continental observers interpreted the Whigs and Tories in the context of at least a hundred years of domestic political strife and two hundred years of disagreements on the proper extent of Reformation. Tory and Whig appeared as direct continuations of Cavalier and Roundhead of the Civil War and the Episcopalians and Presbyterians of the Reformation; the first consistently defending the interests of the monarch and the established Church, the latter those of the people and radical Protestantism.

In several dictionaries published in the 1730s, the term Tory was already discussed at a length appropriate for a society in which parties and party denominations were a reality. According to Gordon-Bailey (1730), a Tory was³⁰

a name which the Protestants of Ireland gave to those Irish robbers, etc. that were outlawed for robbery and murder; also the enemies of King Charles I accusing him of favouring the rebellion and massacre of the Protestants in Ireland, gave his partisans the name of Tories; but of late the name has been transmitted to those that affect the style of High-Church men, and since the death of King James II to the partisans of the Chevalier de St. George [=the Pretender].

The reference to Tory having been used already during the Civil War illustrated where the roots of the term were to be found. The contrast between Protestants and Catholics is also noteworthy. Gordon-Bailey stated that those called Tories pretended to defend the Anglican Church yet actually wished for the return of a French-supported Catholic monarch. In a parallel manner, Bailey (1733) first referred to the Irish connection but then stated that Tory was 'now a nick-name given to such as call themselves High-Church men, or to the partisans of the Chevalier de St. George', i.e. the Catholic Pretender.

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30 An identical explanation of the origin of the term had appeared in [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 11.

Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) also emphasised the dynastic definition of Tory to such an extent that he played down the religious element of party confrontations, stating that Tory

at first meant those Irish papists who murdered and plundered the Protestants, but of late years it has meant all those Englishmen of any profession in religion that espoused the cause of the Pretender, in opposition to the House of Hanover.

'Murdering Protestants' was an extremely negative expression in a conspicuously Protestant political culture, but supporting the exiled claimant to the throne was hardly less than that. Fenning (1741) offered a further alternative political approach to defining Tory, setting references to both confessional and dynastic rivalries aside and concentrating more objectively on the tenets of a Tory and on the reality of the party conflict of the day. According to Fenning, a Tory was 'a person who pretends to adhere to the ancient constitution of the state, to the apostolic hierarchy of the Church, and professes to oppose the measures of the Whigs'. Fenning was not convinced by the sincerity of Tory commitment to the ancient constitution or to the traditions of the Anglican Church. What was more certain was that the Tories opposed whatever the Whigs were aiming to achieve.

Johnson's Tory inclination can be seen in his dictionary where Tory was introduced as 'a cant term, derived, I suppose, from an Irish word signifying a savage'. Johnson saw Tory as a denomination that was not to be taken seriously when used for abuse, and he consciously played down the strong religious associations created by the etymology of the word. He was the only lexicographer that displayed Tory as a term of honour, as 'one who adheres to the ancient constitution of the state, and the apostolical hierarchy of the Church of England, opposed to Whig'. The connotations of the term differ dramatically from those provided by Fenning, a Tory now understood as giving honest allegiance to the inherited order of both the state and Anglican Church – not whatever Church – unlike the Whigs.³¹

In spite of these political definitions for Tory, the term was not universally recognised by editors. Kersey (1731) still saw Tory exclusively as 'an Irish robber or bog-trotter', no party references being visible, and Coles-Johnson (1732), though declaring itself 'newly corrected', completely neglected such an entry.³² For Defoe, who published a new dictionary in the late 1730s, Tory still remained 'a word used by the Protestants in Ireland, to signify the common robbers', the religious association of the term appearing as considerably strong. Martin (1749) continued the tradition of denying the reality of parties by defining Tory as an Irish robber and 'a royalist, in the time of King Charles I', thus ignoring nearly eighty years of party struggle.

In dictionaries, the manner of discussing the origin and meaning of the term Tory was sometimes timid, but that was not the case in printed polemic. In a

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31 A parallel definition for Tory appeared also in *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

32 Kersey 1731; Coles-Johnson 1732.

Whiggish dialogue from 1702, Tory appears as a character who revered Scripture as an unquestionable authority, confused the fear of God with honouring the monarch, considered the execution of Charles I as the starting point of all troubles, and concentrated on lamenting such 'sins of the people'. A Whiggish counterpart answered with a fanciful politico-religious interpretation of the origin of the term Tory, maintaining that the fratricide Cain³³ had been the first of the Tories, that Tories had been historically called 'Cainites', and that Tory and murderer were terms of synonymous root. The Whig maintained and the Tory character also soon conceded that, at the time of the Irish massacre during the Civil War, the term Tory had been applied to murderers, Tory being 'an Irish word, and signifies the same in Irish as Cain does in Hebrew, or murderer in English'. After such a pseudo-religious start, criticism against Tories was primarily secular. The emphasis was laid on constitutional issues in which the Tories, universally understood, were accused of contributing to absolutism and 'slavery'. The religious element was reintroduced with the Tory's confession towards the end of the dialogue that Tories were ready to cooperate with a ruler without minding his religion.³⁴ This was simply one way to say that Tories were not loyal to Protestantism which was seen as an inseparable part of the English free constitution.

The term Tory most often appeared in Whiggish texts and referred to political opponents. By the early 1710s, however, a leading Tory propagandist could privately discuss the two parties almost as equal competitors for political power. Swift reported how 'the Queen passed by us with all Tories about her; not one Whig: . . . and I have seen her without one Tory'.³⁵ In his published works, he denounced the party character of the Tories by writing about 'those who were called the Tories', whereas he referred to Whigs as 'the late party' who had been in control of ministerial power.³⁶ For Bolingbroke, the relationship to the party name Tory became complicated towards the end of the 1710s, when he wrote his vindication in exile, disillusioned by the way, as he saw it, his party had deserted him. He was more inclined than any other writer to talk candidly about 'the Tory party' and even admit having once been a Tory himself.³⁷

The term Whig has an analogous word history to that of Tory. Ever since the 1640s, it had referred to 'whiggamores', sectaries and rebellious adherents of the radical Protestant cause in the Scottish moorlands. In connection with the Exclusion Crisis, it was applied by political opponents to the Exclusioners, i.e. to those who opposed the succession of James, Duke of York, to the crown, on the grounds of his being a Roman Catholic.³⁸ The Whigs wished to restrict

33 In seventeenth-century historical imagination, Cain was considered the person who had first started a heresy and thus become the father of all heretics (Harrison 1990, 105). This assumption was applicable to political polemic as well: Tories appeared here as heretics.

34 *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 3–4, 8, 20, 50, 53.

35 *OED*: Tory.

36 Swift, E24, 18 January 1711.

37 *COPC*: Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham*, 1717.

38 *OED*: Whig; Bulmer-Thomas 1965, 4; Willman 1974, 252–3; Corns, Speck and Downie 1982, 9.

monarchical power and – either to foster the principle or simply to gain votes – called for a measure of toleration for the Protestant Dissenters. Thereby they received support from former Puritans and Dissenters.³⁹

In addition to opposing Catholicism, advocating Low-Church principles and having some tolerance towards sectarianism, the most radical of the Whigs vindicated alternative political theories of republicanism, popular sovereignty and contractual government. The more moderate avoided support for theories entailing a right of resistance but wished to see a degree of secularisation in monarchical power. Even such moderate ideas were interpreted by Tories as a tendency to innovate in succession and as a constant readiness for rebellion.⁴⁰ The Tories charged the Whigs for having anti-monarchical and anti-Church ideas which threatened the natural and divine order. The typical Whig was described as willing to cut royal power, as sympathetic to religious dissent, as an anti-Catholic, as a supporter of contractual notions of political power, as a vindicator of continental warfare and as a representative of the newly emerged moneyed interest that benefited from the public credit.⁴¹ For being sympathetic towards Protestant dissent, he was called a fanatic, and for advocating limited monarchical prerogatives, he was branded names such as Commonwealthsman, an enemy to all sorts of monarchy, republican and ‘forty-one man’.⁴² As Swift pointed out, ‘we charge the [Whigs] with a design of destroying the established Church, and introducing fanaticism and freethinking in its stead. We accuse them as enemies to monarchy; as endeavouring to undermine the present form of government, and to build a commonwealth, or some new scheme of their own, upon its ruins’.⁴³ The *Craftsman* also summarised the stereotypical picture of a Whig as ‘a man of republican principles, a Presbyterian, and a sworn enemy to the Church of England and the regal prerogative’. A Whig was easily also called an ‘atheist, or libertine, and an enemy to all government whatsoever’.⁴⁴

Whig entered dictionaries with a delay comparable to that of Tory. No consulted dictionary printed an entry for Whig before 1715, even though by then the term had been part of political discourse for thirty-five years. When entries started to appear, political senses were for long surpassed by unspecific etymological explanations. As late as 1731, Kersey’s dictionary passed by all party-political senses and instead echoed an old definition of whig as ‘whey, butter-milk, or very small beer’. This neglect is peculiar as Kersey had been the

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39 Thomas Naish recorded in his diary a story according to which the lower house of Convocation ‘had been abused and scandalised by some Whiggish people as if they favoured Presbyter[ianism]’. Importantly, such opposition to Anglicanism was recorded on a day when the nation was commemorating the downfall of monarchy and the established Church with the execution of Charles I. *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 30 January 1703, 49. See also Holmes 1975, 6; Harris 1993, 82; Holmes 1993, 125–7.

40 Hill 1976, 21; Redwood 1976; Holmes 1993, 138–41.

41 Richards 1972, 92; Downie 1979, 7–8.

42 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 43; [Trenchard], CL80, 9 June 1722; Higgons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 326, maintained that the Whigs followed in detail ‘their predecessors in 41’.

43 Swift, E39, 3 May 1711; For parallel arguments, see *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 5.

44 C40, 24 April 1727.

first to introduce the term in 1715. Writing in the beginning of Whig rule, he explained the etymology of the denomination and underplayed its derogatory power. Kersey omitted negative references to Scottish rebels, referred to the above-mentioned harmless things and added that Whig had been used as 'a nickname, given to those that were against the court interest'. In Kersey's view, Whig as a term of abuse belonged to the past. In 1715 and even more in 1731, they were the proper representatives of the court interest. Kersey and most other editors did not define the Whig ideology, referring ambiguously to Whiggism as 'the tenets and practice of the Whigs'. No dictionary accorded the term Toryism a comparable entry, even though such a term for Tory ideology was in use.⁴⁵ Whiggism appeared as the only established political 'doctrine', no matter how unspecific.

When a definition of Tory was added to the third edition of Cocker-Hawkins (1724), no separate entry was given to Whigs. The Whigs were mentioned only in passing under an entry dedicated to their political rivals, which may imply that the editor regarded Tory as a continuously applicable nickname, something that Whig was not. The Whigs had been – in the past – 'a people in Scotland, of whom many were executed . . . for [being] rebels, in opposing their government'. *The Secretary's Guide* (1721) was another wordbook that listed Tory but excluded Whig. Secretaries were perhaps not supposed to use in their writings the name of the party that governed the country even though many leading Whigs already applied the term to themselves. In the late 1720s, however, definitions of Whig and its derivatives became more detailed. Chambers (1728) was the first dictionary dedicating to it more than passing reference and yet in a way that did not discriminate between the two parties. This sort of neutrality was made possible by quotations from French sources. Chambers's account of the origin of the terms did not contain anything not already known to an informed audience.

In the 1730s, Whig already belonged to the standard vocabulary of dictionaries. Though Gordon-Bailey (1730) simply stated that a Whig was 'one of a party opposite to the Tories', he already provided entries for terms such as whiggish, whiggishly and Whiggism. Whiggish was 'a nickname, the opposite to that of Tory, and is applied to those that were against the court interest, in the time of King Charles II, King James II, etc., and for it, in the reign of King William and King George', and, by implication, continued to represent the 'ins' of Hanoverian England. Whiggism was briefly 'the principles of the Whigs', no reference being made to their sympathy for religious toleration or their concern for trading interests, for instance. It was the relationship to the governing monarch which made the difference. A similar approach underscoring the Whig relation to the court interest characterised Bailey's (1733) and Defoe's (1737) definitions. Neither were the religious associations of the term entirely disregarded. When defining Whig, Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) mentioned

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45 One of the very few instances of the use of the term Toryism was that by Bolingbroke in his *Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 28; The consulted sources also contain an instance of the alternative derivation 'Torydom'. Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 4.

three religious connections, including Scottish sectarianism, English Protestant dissent and anti-Catholicism:

Whig a party-name or distinction at first given to the field conventiclers in the west of Scotland, upon account of their feeding much upon sour milk; and now generally means a Dissenter from the Church of England, though sometimes it means only one who is strenuous against the Pretender, and his party.

The linguistic transition from a religious term of abuse to a more general religiously flavoured nickname and further to an increasingly secular party denomination is visible.

Before long, the etymologies for Whig turned so numerous that no definite conclusions about its origin could be based on dictionaries. More interesting than the actual origin of the term are the ways in which editors attempted to explain such a common but problematic expression. Fenning (1741), for instance, offered an explanation based on a Scottish Whig author:⁴⁶

Whig a party formerly opposite to the court. Burnet shows the true original of this word to be owing to the whiggamores, or carriers in Scotland, who were contractedly called wiggs . . . [as] whiggam [was] a word they used in driving their horses.

Fenning's choice of a quotation from Burnet avoided inconvenient religious associations by giving a harmless and even positive etymology to Whig. Furthermore, Whigs had formerly opposed the court but were by definition no more doing so, and the assumption in the background was that, being identical with the current government, they could never again disagree with the court interest.

The most realistic definition for the ideology of the Whigs that any dictionary – or much of political polemic for that matter – could provide was the one printed in *A Pocket Dictionary* (1753). This secular definition avoided direct associations with religious questions and instead underscored the commonly shared, though unspecific, values of English liberty. Like Martin (1749), it still disputed implicitly the continued existence of a Whig party by using the past tense in the definition:

Whig a party name first given to some in Scotland, who kept their meetings in the fields, from their common food being sour milk; a party name in the last reigns given to those who maintained, that liberty was the birthright of every man, and that kings being created for the good of

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46 A similar interpretation of the term Whig as a denomination for Scottish religious enthusiasts had already appeared before in print. Defoe had formulated the origin of the party name in the following terms in 1713: ' . . . they, in the government of Scotland first used the name of Whig, which they applied to those, by them esteemed enthusiasts, who generally kept their meetings in the fields, and their common food was sour milk, and from that sort of diet were called Whigs. For Whig in Scotland signifies sour milk or sour whey'. [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 11.

the people, and the preservation of liberty, could not have a divine right to become tyrants, or to subvert that constitution they had sworn to protect.

Martin's definition was not equally secular, as it saw Whig as a nickname of 'the fanatics, that were against the king's interest'.

Johnson's (1755) approach to term Whig, when compared to his sympathetic treatment of Tory as loyalty to the established order, appears as particularly tendentious. Whig could be 'whey' but above all it was 'the name of a faction'. Johnson's way of quoting Burnet at length, unlike Fenning's shortening, reminded the readers about the fundamentally religious associations of the term, Whig being derived

from a word, whiggam, used in driving their horses, all that drove were called whiggamores, and shorter the whiggs. Now in that year before the news came down of Duke Hamilton's defeat [1648?], the ministers animated their people to rise and march to Edinburgh; and they came up marching on the head of their parishes with an unheard-of fury, praying and preaching all the way as they came . . . This was called the whiggamor's inroad; and ever after that, all that opposed the court came in contempt to be called whigs: and from Scotland the word was brought into England, where it is now one of our unhappy terms of disunion.

In other words, the term Whig had originated in a rebellion against the established order motivated by sectarian enthusiasm and led by clergymen hostile to the Anglican Church. Johnson wished his readers would associate these threats with the English Whigs. He strengthened the association by carefully chosen quotations from Swift, perhaps the most ardent critic of the Whigs ever since the early 1710s, and excluding all alternative views. Swift's statement 'whoever has a true value for Church and state, should avoid the extremes of Whig for the sake of the former, and the extremes of Tory on the account of the latter', was relevant advice for the readers of the 1750s, particularly when Tory threats to the state unquestionably belonged to history. Preconceptions unfavourable to Whigs were further strengthened by Swift's claim that 'I could quote passages from fifty pamphlets, wholly made up of Whiggism and atheism', the two being constantly linked in Tory propaganda.

Religious connotations which Tory polemicists attempted to associate with Whiggism are also explicit in a booklet published in the late 1700s, at a time of repeated campaigns against occasional conformity. Whig was defined from an ostentatiously religious point of view, appearing as an opportunist whose religiousity was pretended and only motivated by a search for private economic advantage. A Whig was presented as identical with a Protestant Dissenter and a despised occasional attender for Anglican communion with the sole purpose of evading the legal restraints for non-Anglicans entering public office:⁴⁷

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47 *Hickelty Pickelty: Or, a Medley of Characters Adapted to the Age*, 1708, 3-4.

A Whig Is one that divides his religion between his conscience and his purse, and comes to church not to serve God, but himself. The face of the law makes him wear the mask of the Gospel, which uses not as a means to save his soul, but his place. He loves merit well, but not so well as to lose by it. He pawns his faith for an office, and brings in his body to save his bail. He goes to church to fit him for an employ, kneels with the congregation, but prays by him; and asks God forgiveness for coming there. If he is forced to stay for a sermon, he hangs down his head and frowns out the three quarters of an hour, and when he comes home thinks to make amends by abusing the preacher. Charity is directly against his principle, yet he swallows the communion, notwithstanding his qualm to it. When he smooths the way to preferment, he would make a bad martyr and good traveller, for his conscience is so large he can never go out of the way. And in a Jewish government, [he] would venture circumcision, with a mental reservation, to be chief minister of state.

For as long as the name of one of the two leading parties could be defined in purely religious terms as above - even if by the rival party - it is unfounded to talk about an emergence of genuinely 'political' parties, not to say a universal acceptance of a concept for political pluralism.

In every early eighteenth-century quotation of the word Whig in the *OED*, with one exception in a quote from Hume, the sense is pejorative. Whiggish could be used as a synonym of 'factious, seditious, restless, uneasy'. The word was mainly applied by political opponents, while the adherents of the party long avoided the use of the word or substituted it with other expressions.⁴⁸ Published literature seldom contained explicit statements of the writer's own 'Whiggishness'. The radical impression given to Whiggism still made Steele, an active Whig, write in 1713: 'I am, with relation to the government of the Church, a Tory, with regard to the state, a Whig'.⁴⁹ But clearly the Whigs were less reluctant than the Tories to adopt the party name attached to them, provided that they denied all negative associations connected with it.⁵⁰ An early example of a positive definition of Whiggism can be found in a pamphlet in which the writer stated that, if behaving rationally and being unable ever to rebel against the monarch were Whiggism, he proudly adhered to Whiggism.⁵¹

After the Hanoverian Succession, a triumph for Whigs, the tone in Whiggish texts changed. In 1716, Addison attempted to convince his readers about the superiority of Whig policies when compared with the policies of the Tories by writing very positively about the 'Whig-scheme' which he claimed to have been beneficial to the country for several centuries. He did not hesitate to

48 *OED*: Whig, Whiggish.

49 Steele, G1, 12 March 1713. Defoe also pointed out two years later that the best English statesmen were both Whigs and Tories - Whigs in questions concerning the state and Tories in issues related to the Church. [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 31.

50 Hill 1976, 25.

51 *The Humble Confession*, 1712, 45; T. Wagstaffe's letter to Hearne, 3 March 1714, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. IV, 316, contains a dubious report about Lord Wharton having owned to the Queen that he was a Whig. Such an arrogant act was quickly condemned by the traditionalist audience.

mention terms such as 'the Whigs', 'Whig-ministry' and even 'the Whig-party'. By 1716, it had become respectable to be a Whig and even to state it in public. This respectability of party adherence was based on the definition that 'by Whigs I always mean those who are friends to our constitution, both in Church and state'. The definition was so broad that the Tories consequently became suspected of being 'enemies to the present establishment'. Addison's conclusion was that both the Whigs and the majority of Tories were 'true lovers of their religion and country' who had been 'divided by accidental friendships and circumstances' rather than 'by any essential distinction'.⁵² The success of Whiggism after the ascension of a new German monarch also encouraged Ryder to record such overwhelmingly positive attributes as 'a strong active Whig' and 'an honest, true Whig' in his diary.⁵³

From the early 1720s onwards, when Whig governments had become a rule, it became fashionable to declare oneself a Whig. Whiggism had become the only established political doctrine, and disputes now centered on what real Whiggism was. The much read manifesto of radical Whiggism, *Cato's Letters*, proudly associated the principles of a Whig with 'the doctrine of liberty',⁵⁴ a political mantra with an unspecified meaning echoed by most writers.⁵⁵ The circle of the *Craftsman* already wished to appear as 'very good Whig[s], with honest principles', contrasting the opposition principles of 'old Whigs' with the government's questionable principles of 'modern Whigs' who had deserted true Whiggism.⁵⁶ The *Old Whig*, a paper presenting oppositional views at the time of the Test Act controversy of the mid-1730s, suggested that the term Whig had originally meant 'an inviolable attachment to the people's liberties' while, in the 1730s, it was 'retained by men propagating all the slavish doctrines of ecclesiastical and political tyranny, and sapping the foundations of liberty, by denying the right of private judgement'. To underline the interconnection between religious and political freedom, the writer continued: 'Thus too the name of Protestant is prostituted to the purposes of superstition, priestly domination, etc.'⁵⁷ The opposition claimed that both the glorious terms of Whig and Protestant were abused by the government at the cost of liberty while a true Whig would defend both religious and political liberty.

52 Addison, F54, 25 June 1716.

53 *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 30 January 1716, 174, 8 November 1716, 361.

54 [Trenchard], CL13, 21 June 1720; Other partial statements emphasising the Whiggish zeal for liberty include Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 19.

55 The concepts of freedom and liberty were understood differently by different late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Englishmen. Some few saw them in terms of inherent natural human rights, whereas a great majority of Englishmen continued to conceive liberties (in plural) as privileges of an individual or a group. Freedom was mainly seen in negative terms as defense against the crown and the masses. Miller 1992, 54–4.

56 C118, 5 October 1728; C368, 21 June 1733; Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735; C674, 9 June 1739, in *GM*, Vol. IX, June 1739, 313, Reel 137.

57 *The Old Whig*, No. 20, 24 July 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, July 1735, 372, Reel 135.

Debate on the character of party denominations

The word history of the terms Whig and Tory reveals the rather dubious politico-religious background of the party names that dominated the political scene. The names were based on both religious and constitutional associations attached to them in the course of history. Different writers intentionally emphasised either group of associations. An analysis of these associations helps in deciphering to what extent the supporters of each party understood the party confrontation as a religious and to what extent as a secular matter.

Purely religious interpretations of Whig and Tory can be found in abundance in Hearne's diary. Hearne was unwilling to draw any distinctions between his religious and political opponents, emphasising in Whiggism what he considered religiously unsound and seeing what he understood as threats to the Church and monarchy as inseparable. It was not unusual for him to use expressions such as 'a Whig and a countenancer of fanatics', 'the fanatics and the Whigs', 'the Whigs and Presbyterians' and 'the Presbyterians and the rest of the Whigs' to express his religiously motivated hatred towards the adherents of the rival party. For Hearne, fanatic and Whig meant very much the same. He eagerly contrasted Whigs not with Tories but with 'the true Church of England men' with whom he himself steadily identified. Hearne's manner of considering religious integrity of first importance is also revealed by the fact that he called Whigs 'pretended hypocritical saints' – saints referring to Interregnum sectarians – on the basis of a rumour that a Whig MP had been dancing on Sunday. A stereotypical Whig, as viewed in Hearne's diary, had 'little or nothing of religion'.⁵⁸

Parallel arguments against Whiggism as religious unsoundness occurred in a number of Tory publications. Whigs were viewed as abettors of Dissenters;⁵⁹ they were pictured as 'angry at any defense made in behalf of the Church of Christ'; and the alleged union between the Whigs and Dissenters was compared to that of Herod and Pontius Pilate against Christ and his Church.⁶⁰ Particularly in the crisis year 1710, when all arguments related to the future of the Church of England seemed to gather wide popular support, religion was offered as the

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58 Instances include Hearne's comments on one Francis Fox whose behaviour in relation to religious rites Hearne interpreted as a sign of his being 'got in with the Whigs'. *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 24 August 1705, Vol. I, 34. Whigs appeared in primarily religious context also in the following cases: On 8 September 1705, Vol. I, 43, and on 17 September 1705, Vol. I, 45, Hearne called people Whigs because of their attitude towards some recently published confessional book. On 23 September 1705, Vol. I, 48, and 29 September 1705, Vol. I, 50, Hearne declared a preacher Whiggish. See also: 8 October 1705, Vol. I, 53; 9 October 1705, Vol. I, 54; 10 October 1705, Vol. I, 54; 14 October 1705, Vol. I, 56; 3 November 1705, Vol. I, 65; 5 November 1705, Vol. I, 66; 17 January 1706, Vol. I, 164; 19 March 1706, Vol. I, 205; 24 March 1706, Vol. I, 208; 23 June 1708, Vol. II, 115; 22 December 1709, Vol. II, 330; 24 February 1710, Vol. II, 348; 2 March 1710 (Sacheverell riots), Vol. II, 350. Possibly the only instance of Hearne using the term Tory was recorded on 19 November 1705, Vol. I, 86; For explicit association of Whigs and Presbyterians, see also the lines of Edward Ward's High-Church character the poem *Helter Skelter, or the Devil upon two Sticks*, [late 1700s].

59 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 4; See also Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 31.

60 [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 17, 60.

major dividing issue between the two parties. The conflict between Whigs and Tories was associated with the condemned separation into High Church and Low Church. The attitude towards the Dissenters was seen as the sole matter that caused the division in both, even to the point that a writer declared: 'Had we no Dissenters, we should have no Whigs or Tories'.⁶¹

Emphasising the religious associations of Whig and Tory was clearly a Tory weapon in the propaganda war. Yet suggestions based on religion could not go unnoticed among the Whigs either. Associations between fanaticism and Whiggism were consistently repudiated. Some Whigs would rather have used a phrase such as 'the Whig-Church interest' or 'the Church-Whigs' as much more positive expressions for defining their relationship to the established Church.⁶² It should also be born in mind that, in reality, Whiggish support for the Dissenters could not be taken for granted,⁶³ and that Whiggish writers also made use of the religious associations of the party division whenever it was in their interest to do so.

As far as alternative secular associations of Whig and Tory are concerned, Whiggish writers evidently favoured these, but an increasing number of Tories also wished to view political divisions through constitutional rather than religious lenses. The character of political discourse was in the process of transformation. In his *Civil Polity* (1703), Paxton put forward a noteworthy point about a shift that was taking place in the character of the party conflict between Whigs and Tories:⁶⁴

... the very nature of the dispute between the two parties is gradually changed: For now it is not, as formerly, so much upon the score of religion, (although that is continued, or rather revived) as it is upon points of government.

This statement is very important. Firstly, it reflects an awareness of change in the relationship between politics and religion, a change that can be translated as secularisation of politics. Secondly, it emphasises the gradual character of the shift from a religion-dominated political discourse towards an increasingly

61 Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 42.

62 See e.g. *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 6 December 1705, 324, which reports Lord Sommers having criticised the use of the terms as reproach, and 13 December 1705, 327, recording a visit of Coll. Studholme: The expression 'Whig Church' was questioned as meaning the same as 'any Church, no Church, or all Churches', i.e. shaking the foundation of the established Church, by Baron in *An Historical Account of Comprehension and Toleration*, 1705, 8; *The Church of England Man's Memorial*, 1719, 19, still continued degrading the term Whig Church: The expression Church-Whigs appeared in Defoe's *Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 32, and in *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 30 January 1716, 176. This expression distinguished between Whigs conforming to the Anglican Church and dissenting Whigs.

63 See e.g. [Defoe], *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 40, and Ryder's comments on attempts to remove the Schism and Occasional Conformity Acts in 1716. *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 30 January 1716, 176, and 8 November 1716, 361.

64 Paxton, *Civil Polity*, 1703, 588. Paxton's analysis on the political lines followed by each of the rivaling parties was simplistic. He presented the Tory party as consisting of those who advocated an extension of the royal power, whereas Whigs he saw merely as campaigners for limiting the same.

secular political discourse. Thirdly, however, it recognises the continuance and even revival of religious issues in political discourse. Paxton's account offers only one point of view; yet other primary sources support his condensed analysis of the on-going transformations in political discourse.

As the Whigs wanted to play down suggestions of a religious basis for the party conflict, their commonplace accusation was that the Tories were abusing religion as a means to win popular support.⁶⁵ Instead, the Whigs willingly overemphasised the constitutional aspects of the party division. Toland presented it as a 'state-distinction', no matter how much the Tories endeavoured⁶⁶

to persuade the populace, that Whig and Tory is a religious distinction, when it is purely civil; the body of the Church of England being the real Whiggish party, and the Dissenters from it not being reckoned Whigs by any means of account of their dissent, but because they join with the others for civil liberty and the Protestant succession.

After denying religious causes of party conflict, Toland presented the Whigs as defenders of the constitution against Tories, who also threatened the Protestant interest. A Tory he defined as a person 'who retained his old notions of passive obedience, unlimited prerogative, the divine right of monarchy, or who was averse to liberty of conscience'. In his propagandistic words, 'the Whigs declare for settled laws, against arbitrary will, maintained by the Tories, and the limited, conditional, legally hereditary monarchy . . . against a monarchy indefeasibly hereditary, unlimited, and absolute, claimed by the same Tories'. It was important to add that the Whigs were 'no democratic commonwealthmen, but zealous supporters of the ancient constitution and King, Lords and Commons' and defenders of 'liberty and property'. Unsurprisingly, the Whigs appeared in Toland's text as 'the party fittest for the king to consult and employ'. Instead of calling for a dissolution of parties, this writer vindicated the existence of the Whig party and party distinction.⁶⁷

The significance of the religious origin of party terminology was minimised by the Whigs. Clement pointed out that Whigs and Tories were 'taken from words signifying parties differing in their religious sentiments' and consequently 'the world has been led into, and still persists in a mistake, as if the one sort were altogether Dissenters, and the other included all that were true Church of England men'. He concluded that the two parties were 'more truly to be accounted factions in the state than in the Church'.⁶⁸ The Whiggish attitude in favour of a primarily dynastic and constitutional character of the party

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65 Addison's irony from the time of the Sacheverell affair is illustrative of Whig insinuations. Addison hinted to alleged Catholic sympathies among the Tories when he made a fictitious Roman correspondent enquire after 'the two religious orders which are lately sprung up amongst you, the Whigs and Tories, with the points of doctrine, severities in discipline, penances, mortifications, and good works, by which they differ one from another'. [Addison], T129, 4 February 1710; See also Corns, Speck and Downie 1982, 20.

66 [Toland], *State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, [1717], 16.

67 [Toland], *State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, [1717], 14–18.

68 [Clement], *Faults on both Sides*, 1710, 13.

division is also illustrated by the statement from 1734, according to which the basic distinction between a Whig and Tory ever since the Revolution of 1688 had been that 'the Tory is for restoring the pretended issue of King James, and the Whig for adhering to the settlement then made'.⁶⁹

This 'constitutionalisation' of the party conflict did not remain the sole property of the Whigs. Some publications favourable to Tory thought paid attention to constitutional issues as well, emphasising continuity in inherited political values. One pamphlet simplified the contrast between Whigs and Tories to the Tory maintenance that the constitution had not changed as a result of the Revolution of 1688 nor the Protestant Succession of 1714. The Tories venerated the institution of hereditary though limited monarchy. Even if the royal line had changed, the constitution had not and should never change, maintained the Tories.⁷⁰ Such a veneration of continuity of the political system represented a commonly shared ideal. The implicit point of the statement was obvious: the Whigs wished to see changes in the ancient constitution, something that no proper Englishman could regard as acceptable.

The most important terms in the constitutional party dispute included 'loyalty' which could be interpreted differently depending on the prevalent attitude in each party towards the theory of the divine right of the monarchs. The question of loyalty was, to a large extent, theological: did the monarch rule by 'His permissive power' or 'by His appointment'? Whereas Whig polemic presented the Whiggish version of loyalty as legally bound, and might even equate loyalty with Whiggism by using the expression 'the loyal party' in a synonymous sense,⁷¹ Tory propaganda consistently questioned Whiggish loyalty, suggesting that what Whigs really aimed at was a revolutionary change both in 'the constitution of our government, nay even the doctrines of the Scripture'. This would have meant commonwealth in the state and irreligion in the Church.⁷² In Tory propaganda, the character of a Whig was ostentatiously contrasted with that of 'the loyal Churchman'.⁷³

A more impartial constitutional approach to parties would have it that both parties could be considered 'guardians of the constitution' though defending different parts of it. Whereas the Whigs would have placed all power in the hands of the people (something that hardly any establishment Whig really wished), the Tories would have centered it in the hands of the monarch (something that not even most of the Tories were prepared to do). Both parties thus achieved an indirect justification for their existence as preservers of the

69 * * * * *
The Daily Courant, 1 January 1734, in *Supplement for the Gentleman's Magazine 1734*, Reel 134.

70 *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 11.

71 Exemplified by *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 5–6; Ryder saw Whiggish mughouses during the Succession Crisis as a good way of fostering loyalty. *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 20 July 1716, 279. See *ibid.*, 7 June 1716, 253, for equating loyalty and Whiggism. See also [Defoe], *A New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty*, Dublin, 1702, title.

72 Ward wrote in 1705 in *A Fair Shell*, 39: 'Whiggish loyalty most bright does shine, when they are just baffled in some base design'. According to *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 3, Whigs hated 'those Tory-words dutiful and loyal'. See also page 11.

73 *Whiggism laid open, And The Loyal Church-man's Health*, [1710], title.

limited monarchical constitution.⁷⁴ Such an approach comes close to an interpretation of political parties as parties in a contract. However, this approach was relatively seldom advocated in early eighteenth-century sources.

Many authors cherished hopes of a quick disappearance of the party names and with them the party conflict altogether. A traditionalist author pointed out that Queen Anne had 'nothing more at heart, than that the names Tory and Whig may be buried in oblivion'.⁷⁵ Whig and Tory were called 'opprobrious names' and 'contumelious nicknames'.⁷⁶ They were characterised as 'foolish names', 'trifling and insignificant words' and 'names invented in hell', the etymology of which 'carries in it both ill-nature and scandal'. Defoe went so far as to suggest that 'our distinction is only ill names misapplied'.⁷⁷ Many endeavoured to convince the audience that the two parties, or at least the majorities of their adherents, actually had shared goals, that most of the accusations on both sides were unfounded, and hence the existence of two parties was needless.⁷⁸ A commonplace argument was that the principles of each of the parties had changed so much that the old denominations had a long time ago lost their original significations, become useless, and could be laid aside.⁷⁹ Tories and Whigs could be claimed to share many values, both conforming to the Church and state, and any accusations based on either constitutional or religious disagreements being thus unfounded.⁸⁰ The neglect of party denominations was also called for to facilitate a unified fight against 'popery and slavery', the immemorial enemies of all English parties.⁸¹

However, the most obvious though never outspoken motive for calls to quit party denominations was the desire of election winners to create a sense of unity in the country. This was a strategy employed by the politically superior party to persuade the minority party to give up opposition. After a Tory victory in 1710, Swift characterised party-names as 'foolish', 'cantwords', 'conceited appellations' and 'fantastic names', calling for their rejection.⁸² Likewise, a Whig polemist suggested after the Whig ascendancy to power in the mid-1710s: 'Let us hear no more of Whig, and Tory; High Church, and Low'.⁸³ Yet much of Whig and Tory, as well as High Church and Low, was heard until at least the early 1720s.

74 Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 7, 9; A parallel definition of the original constitutional principles of each of the parties was given by Gordon in CL96, 29 September 1722.

75 Boyer, *An Essay Towards the History of the Last Ministry and Parliament*, 1710, 40.

76 [Toland], *The Art of Governing by Partys*, 1701, 35, 119.

77 [Defoe], *The Dangers of Europe*, 1702, 18; [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder, Or, The Castration of Whig and Tory*, 1715, 2-8.

78 Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 4; See also CL20, 11 February 1721; [Gordon], CL66, 17 February 1722; [Trenchard], CL69, 10 March 1722; [Trenchard], CL80, 9 June 1722; C29, 13 March 1727; C40, 24 April 1727; C103, 22 June 1728; C172, 18 October 1729; C213, 1 August 1730; C355, 21 April 1733; C366, 7 July 1733; Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation*, 1728, 32; *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 39.

79 Swift, E43, 31 May 1711; [Atterbury], *English Advice to English Freeholder*, s.a., 4.

80 [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 29-31, 35.

81 [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 22.

82 [Swift], E35, 5 April 1711, E43, 31 May 1711; [Swift], *The Conduct of the Allies*, 1711, 5; [Swift], *Some Reasons to Prove, That no Person is obliged by his Principles, as a Whig, To Oppose Her Majesty or Her Present Ministry. In a Letter to a Whig-Lord*, 1712, in *Political Tracts 1711-1713*, ed. Herbert Davis, Oxford 1951, 123.

83 *Now, or Never: Or, Seasonable Thoughts for the Present Times*, 1714, 24.

Parties in the Church

For an understanding of the associative powers of Whig and Tory, a brief analysis of the linked terms High Church and Low Church is also essential. As seen in the chapter 'Defining the sphere of religion', the Church of England had a long history of divisive conflicts concerning the need to further the Reformation. Many of the early eighteenth-century tensions were continuations of such fundamental disagreements and of further politico-religious tensions created by the Civil War and the Restoration Settlement which had initiated a permanent conflict between the established Church and religious dissent, and another disagreement between the opponents and favourers of dissent within the Church. The High Church had a majority among the inferior clergy, the Low Church among the bishops.⁸⁴

The division into High and Low Churchmen emerged after the passage of the Act of Toleration in 1689. High Churchmen continued to urge a return to the monopoly of the Church of England supporting a unitary state. They wished to conserve monarchical authority and refused to grant Dissenters the right of organising separate Churches or entering public office. By contrast, Low Churchmen endeavoured to accommodate the Church to an increasing religious pluralism. They supported the Revolution Settlement, recognised religious dissent and called for a limited toleration. The two groupings remained united by a shared willingness to safeguard the dominant status of the Anglican Church, by orthodox doctrine and by a reluctant attitude towards any further extensions of toleration. By 1701, however, the division reached a highly exacerbated state, the High Churchmen considering themselves defenders of the inherited institution and doctrines of the Church against intruding fanatics, and the leading Low Churchmen preventing High Churchmen to proceed within the hierarchy of the Church.⁸⁵

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⁸⁴ Speck 1978, 83–4; De Krey 1985, 112; Rupp 1986, 53; Harris 1993, 6–7, 42.

⁸⁵ Holmes 1975, 6, 21; Burt 1992, 19–20; Rose 1993, 175; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 46; Defoe discussed the emergence of High Church and Low Church in *The Weakest go to the Wall*, 1714, 26; The rise of the religious parties into the center of political life is visible in Edward Clarke's letter to John Locke, 29 January 1702, reporting that a bill requiring an oath of loyalty to the Church had been rejected in Parliament much to the annoyance of 'the High Churchmen'. *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VII, 316; Evelyn recorded the emergence of the party distinction into High Churchmen and Low Churchmen, supplementing the distinction into Whigs and Tories, as late as 11 October 1705. *The Diary of John Evelyn*, Vol. V, 612; As an illustration of the reality of religious parties within the Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury Tenison asked Thomas Naish whether he was 'a High Church preacher'. Naish was saved from this unfavourable suspicion by a servant of the Archbishop's who denied the charge. *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 24 November 1707, 59. Other illustrations are offered by William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle, who recorded a conversation with divines in high positions who were 'all High Church' and commented briefly on evenings spent 'in disputed between High and Low Church' or with 'much banter on High and Low Church'. *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 11 November 1705, 301, 4 February 1706, 371, and 16 February 1707, 423. See also *ibid.*, 3 March 1711, 554, and 17 March 1711, 560, for the conflict between High Church and Low Church. *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne* contain several references to rivalry between religious parties, out of which that of 3 April 1706, Vol. I, 217, and 20 April 1706, Vol. I, 229, are illustrative, showing how both parties endeavoured to place their own men in high ecclesiastical positions.

The constant use of terminology derived from the word Church in political discourse illustrates the continuous significance of religious issues in politics. The question of the extent of freedom to religious minorities and the health of religion continued to be highly sensitive issues among the lay politicians and ordinary voters. In the beginning of the century, disagreements on these issues deepened the division between the Whigs and Tories⁸⁶ to such an extent that a pamphleteer argued that 'all the noise about High and Low Church . . . signifies no more than Whig and Tory'.⁸⁷ In 1708, an anonymous observer wrote with reference to parties in England:⁸⁸

... the Church is principally engaged in the dispute, and yet the state equally with the Church, is involved in the dangerous consequences thereof . . . They are merely on the account of religion; for so I take the invidious distinction of High Church and Low Church plainly to import; . . .

The centrality of the terms High Church and Low Church to the party-political debate of the 1700s and 1710s is further illustrated by comments from three contemporary authors. According to Tindal, 'nothing is more disputed at present than who is the best Churchman, both High and Low Church laying claim to it'. Swift reported ironically that, in London, 'the very ladies are split asunder into High Church and Low, and out of zeal for religion, have hardly time to say their prayers'. In another letter, he reported whole Leicester being divided into 'High and Low'. In Addison's view, 'the terms High Church and Low Church, as commonly used, do not so much denote a principle, as they distinguish a party'.⁸⁹ In a further comment, it was suggested that 'all condemn the distinctions of High and Low Church, when at the same time they scruple not to defend or plead the cause of one side or other'.⁹⁰

Dictionaries, once again, completely neglected entries for the names of the religious parties, which illustrates the inconvenient character of the denominations and the unwillingness of the editors to get involved in potentially dangerous religious strife. The entry closest to High Church was Fenning's (1741) and Johnson's (1755) definition for high-flyer as 'one that carries his opinions to extravagance'. One explanation for this silence may be that the use of the terms High Church and Low Church declined rather dramatically after the Hanoverian Succession.⁹¹ No editor cared to list a word

86 Holmes 1987, xx.

87 Cited by Gascoigne 1989, 91; See also De Krey 1985, 74.

88 *A View of the Present Divisions in Great Britain*, 1708, 16-17.

89 *OED*: High-Church; Swift to the Rev. William Tisdall, London, 16 December 1703, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 39; Swift to Archbishop King, Leicester, 6 December 1707, *ibid.*, Vol. I, 59.

90 *An Antidote against Rebellion*, 1704, 23.

91 Among the scarce references to 'the High-Church party' after 1720 can be mentioned the following: *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 21, attempted to convince the readers that High Church had overcome Low Church; *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 6, in which the party was characterised as a continuously existing force; and *Harmony without Uniformity*, 1740, 3-4, which discussed metaphorically 'birds of prey, as the eagle and other high-flyers' who were the only birds incapable of living in harmony with the rest of the animal world. Likewise,

that was, as was generally perceived, happily falling into oblivion. The rise of the terminology of religious parties at the turn of the century reflects the revival of religious issues in political discourse, whereas its decline illustrates the pacification of religious debate with political implications.

High Churchmen believed in the interdependence of the monarchy and Anglicanism and consequently advocated a uniform state Church. They opposed comprehension or toleration of diversity in Church polity and demanded a strict enforcement of the laws against Dissenters.⁹² High Church aimed at the restoration of the concept of a national Church in a Christian kingdom. Their actions were motivated by a conviction that the established Church was in acute danger caused by intellectual challenges to the truths of Christianity. They were prepared to realise their religious ideals through political action, if necessary.⁹³

The term High Churchman first appeared in 1677. It was occasionally used as a counter-concept of 'moderate men' but became more generally applied only after the Revolution of 1688.⁹⁴ Early eighteenth-century definitions for High Church are few. One of them was provided by Acherley (1741) who argued that, in constitutional issues, the High party 'retained the old notions of the Church power, dominion, and supremacy, above the king' and it was distinguished from the (much more recommendable) Low party also in its attitudes towards 'national liberties, and to a Popish monarchy'. In religious questions, one of the major failings of the High party, as understood by Acherley, was it having been so 'unkind to the Protestant Dissenters, disowning any affinity with them, as if they were not Protestants, and treating them with unfriendly pressures'.⁹⁵ The same anti-Catholic and pan-Protestant assumptions underlying the concept High Church were expressed in a definition for the related expression 'high-flyer' which appeared in an earlier pamphlet:⁹⁶

A *high-flyer* is a paper-kite. The Pope is the lanthorn at the tail of it, and the higher he flies the faster he draws popery after him. He screw up religion at such a pitch, that it may be ready to break upon the first opportunity that offers to his interest. The good of the Church is his pretence, but ambition his end. And when the scale is loaden with honours, you are sure of his casting vote. He stickles hard against Dissenters, but is in charity with Rome, and to extirpate the first, would submit to the last. He measures the good of his country by the h[e]ight of

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Acherley's *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 1, still listed High Church and Low Church as 'run[n]g through the whole body of the people'. There were also reprints of texts originally published during the first two decades of the century, reissued without commentary and with the purpose of negating the need of party denominations before the ensuing general elections, in which the old division into High Church and Low Church still appeared. See C59, 19 August 1727, and C713, 1 March 1740.

92 See *OED*: High-Church, High-Churchman.

93 Rupp 1986, 53, 56, 70.

94 For the first occurrence of the term, see Goldie 1990, 81; Gascoigne 1989, 28.

95 Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 4.

96 *Hickelty Pickelty*, 1708, 11-12: For High Churchmen being considered papists, see also Nicolson reporting a speech by Hooper, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 6 December 1705, 322, several places in Ward's unpaginated propaganda poem *Helter Skelter*, [late 1700s], and *The Humble Confession*, 1712, 9.

his passions, or the depth of his pocket, and if they two be satisfied, he cares not who rules. He quarrels about names and ceremonies, till he justles religion out of doors, and she is nowhere to be found less than in those that profess her most. He is, and he is not, as occasion serves, and like the Jews for their Messiah, in readiness for a new revolution.

This High-Church stereotype consisted also of pictures of worldly and intolerant ultra-traditionalism and willingness to cooperate with Catholics and Stuarts to restore both.⁹⁷

In public discourse, pejorative connotations were associated with the appellation High Church, and it became practically synonymous with that of Tory, so that someone could be described as 'a very High Churchman, a great Tory'. Religious and political meanings became deeply intermixed in the term so that it could refer to certain devotional practices or views but often stood for the religious dimension of the Tory party.⁹⁸ Whiggish and dissenting writers used it as a hostile nickname, much like the earlier terms high-flyer, high-flying and high-flown Churchman.⁹⁹ Drake complained that Churchmen were reproached by 'the Dissenters and their hirelings' with nicknames such as 'high-flying' which were used to misrepresent 'all care of the present constitution, ecclesiastical or civil'.¹⁰⁰

High Church first denounced the appellation for good. In his famous sermon of 1709, Sacheverell asked: 'Have they not lately villanously divided us with knavish distinctions of High, and Low Churchmen'?¹⁰¹ During the ensuing election campaign, the *Examiner* gave definitions to these terms, claiming that words such as 'high flyer' were designedly 'applied as to convey a wrong idea into the mind' and thereby increase divisions. The right idea was that the High Churchmen were 'only for continuing things as they are'. The division into High and Low Church was presented to mean the same as 'high subject' and 'low subject'. The proper division with respect to the Church would have been into 'true Churchmen, false Churchmen, and no Churchmen'. As the Church had 'multitudes of sincere and affectionate friends' and 'true Churchmen', in other words, High-Church Tories, so it had 'many inveterate and malicious

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97 Albers 1993, 320–1.

98 This instance is from *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 12 September 1716, 325; Nockles 1993, 336; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 34.

99 Addison to John Somers, Baron Somers of Evesham (London), Dublin Castle, 12 August 1709, *The Letters*, 177; Defoe, R6/Preface, no. 94, 10 November 1709, no. 101, 26 November 1709; *COPC*: Defoe, *An Appeal to Honour and Justice*, 1715.

100 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 9; Hearne, for instance, at first very much approved Drake's pamphlet which revealed 'the designs of the Whigs for destroying the Church'. A few days later he wrote down the news he had heard concerning indignation the pamphlet aroused at court and the consequent order to find the persons behind this anonymous publication. The following year, it was already suggested that the writer presented Low Church and had wished to do harm to High Church. In reality, Drake was a Tory. *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 9 July 1705, Vol. I, 3, 12 July 1705, Vol. I, 4, 26 April 1706, Vol. I, 234; A parallel argument about High Church being used as a term of approach by the enemies of the Church was put forward by John Byrom in his letter to John Stansfield, dated in Cambridge on 17 December 1709, *Selections from the Journals and Papers of John Byrom, Poet-diarist-shorthand writer 1691–1763*, ed. Henry Talon, 1950, 34.

101 Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brehren*, 1709, 19.

enemies', or Dissenters and radical Whigs, and 'great numbers of men, who though they are not upon principle, enemies to the Church, yet link themselves in interest with those that are', that is, Low-Church Whigs.¹⁰²

After the introduction of the antithetic term Low Churchman,¹⁰³ however, High Churchman gradually began to appear in a more appreciatory sense. Charles Leslie wrote in 1704: 'I venture, for it is a venture at this time, to own the name of a High-Churchman. No man thinks it a disparagement to be high, that is zealous in any good thing'. An anonymous writer pointed out that 'a High-Church clergyman is a holyman in his conversation'. Positive statements about being a High Churchman may have made even such genuine traditionalists as Hearne record events in which 'the High Church party' or 'High Churchmen' were involved. After the Sacheverell affair, a supporter of High Church defined a High-Church clergyman as 'fully convinced [that] the Church of England is a right and true Church, orthodox and sound in her doctrine'. High Churchmen wished to guarantee that these inherited doctrines, as interpreted by the representatives of High Church themselves, would continue without alteration. Such a wish would be supported by a considerable majority of the English population. In published statements, and even in a diary, however, many would still add a reservation by rendering the expression in the form 'one called a High Churchman',¹⁰⁴ as the attitude towards the party-names remained condemnatory. Drake, for instance, declared the distinction into High and Low Church as 'dangerous' as well as 'impertinent and groundless', though adding that, if such names were nevertheless used, only orthodox priests of the established Church deserved the denomination.¹⁰⁵

Although the Tories usually avoided the term that the Whigs used for them, they did not hesitate to employ the expression 'Churchmen', 'the Church party' or 'the Church of England party' when defending the policies of their party. The term 'Church party' was frequently used as an euphemism for the Tory party and even more distinctly as an opposite for the Whig party or simply the dissenting party. With suitable attributes, even a party term could be turned into a respectable signification. Hearne, for instance, wrote sympathetically about 'loyal Church Parliament men' and 'an honest Church of England man'. An even more positive expression was created when all reference to party was dropped out. In Hearne's words, the Whigs willingly opposed in Parliament the choice of 'a true friend of the Church' to the Speaker of the House. The slogan

102 [King, ed.], E8, 21 September 1710, E12, 12 October 1710.

103 De Krey 1985, 81.

104 OED: High-Church; *The Character of a High-Church-Man*, 7, 1708; *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 4 July 1705, Vol. I, 1, and 5 October 1709, Vol. I, 279. On 1 October 1706, Vol. I, 291, Hearne wrote about someone who pretended to be 'a very high Churchman' but was really not. On 1 May 1706, Vol. I, 230, he added the reservation 'as they are called' to the expression 'the High-Church party'; [Leslie], *The Second Part of the Wolf Stript of His Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707; *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 6; *The Humble Confession*, 1712, 11, contained a reference to a person who 'prides himself in the name of High Church'.

105 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 16-17; 'The unhappy distinction of High and Low Churchmen' was regretted also in *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 3 April 1706, Vol. I, 217.

of the Tory party in connection with this vote seems to have been something like 'Church and honesty',¹⁰⁶ both euphemisms turning party into a positive phenomenon. Likewise, Swift and Atterbury indirectly admitted that the Churchmen formed a party when they used the expressions 'Church party' and 'the Church interest'.¹⁰⁷ The terms party and interest at once received a much more legitimate sense when applied to established Anglican values. If a party represented the majority and worked for the established Church, it was acceptable.

Low Churchmen differed less than High Churchmen from Protestant Dissenters and defended limited toleration for them, as many Low Churchmen believed in the importance of free inquiry in the search for religious truth. Because of their moderate policy in relation to comprehension of Dissenters to the established Church, they were sometimes also called moderate men, either in a good or bad sense.¹⁰⁸ Their actual moderation was limited, however. Low Churchmen also wanted religious control within the state to continue. They differed from High Church in that they did not regard dissent but rather heterodoxy as the major threat to the Church. In politics, they were dedicated to defending the Protestant Succession and hence supported the Whig party.¹⁰⁹

An illustrative contemporary formulation for Low Church can be found from Acherley (1741). Anti-Catholicism, a Church subordinated to secular control, anti-absolutism, rising nationalism, and pan-Protestantism were the phenomena that characterised what Acherley saw as an ideal Anglican:¹¹⁰

The Low party . . . [is] rigid against popery, and against Church dominion above the king, or over the fellow-subjects, jealous of the national liberties, resolute for a Protestant monarchy, and favourable to the Protestant religion, as it is professed in the Protestant Churches of

106 Instances of the use of the term 'Church party' as a synonym for Tory and opposed to 'the Whiggish party' include Luttrell's account of nominating candidates for the general election in the City of London in 1701, in *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, Vol. V, 18 November 1701, 110–11. A Tory and Churchman, and the Tories and the Church party, appeared synonymous in *The Whigs Thirty Two Queries, And as many of the Tories in Answer to them*, 1701, 8, 19. See also [Davenant], *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented*, 1702, 4; *A Modest Defence of the Government*, 1702, 4–5, 8, 17; *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 25 October 1705, Vol. I, 58, 27 October 1705, Vol. I, 59, 3 November 1705, Vol. I, 64, 21, 13 November 1705, Vol. I, 70, April 1706, Vol. I, 231; 10 December 1709, Vol. I, 324. On 1 November 1705, Vol. I, 62, Hearne recorded a poem dedicated to the Tory candidate who lost the election for the Speakership. The poem advised him ironically: 'The Church and honesty disown, do this and then the chair is thy own'. *A Vindication of the Constitution*, 1703, 15, treated the terms 'Church party' and 'Dissenting party' as the original opposites that had later become nicknamed as Tories and Whigs.

107 [King, ed.], E4, 24 August 1710; Swift, *The Conduct of the Allies*, 1711, 11; E43, 31 May 1711. Also in his private correspondence, Swift saw the Whigs being opposed not by Tories but by 'the Church party'. *Journal to Stella*, 9 February 1712, Vol. II, 488; *COPC*: Atterbury, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, 1714.

108 For the synonymity of moderate and Low Churchman, see Sage, *The Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705, preface, and Tindal, *A New Catechism*, 1710, 3; For the union of dissenters, their political adherents and the Low Church, see *The Humble Confession*, 1712, 9; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 37.

109 Chamberlain 1995, 195–6, 209.

110 Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 4.

Scotland and Holland, and lately in the reformed Churches of France, . . . treating the Protestant Dissenters as brethren, with an indulging and tolerating temper.

Many a High-Church writer would rather have stated that being a Low-Church clergyman meant negligence of that ecclesiastical and secular legislation that formed the foundation of the only right Church of England,¹¹¹ or that the Whigs and Low Churchmen together were 'a party forming against the old principles in Church and state'.¹¹²

The senses of the word Low Church varied drastically depending upon who the user was. Among High-Church and Tory writers the connotations were unambiguously pejorative. Low Churchmen appeared as traitors within the Church that were ready to tolerate not only dissent but even deism and atheism.¹¹³ The stereotype of Low Churchman built on their alliance with the Presbyterians, both carrying the guilt of murdering the King in 1649, advocating a heterodox theology and forming a threat to the safety of the established Church.¹¹⁴ Someone could be described as 'so wretched a Low-Churchmen, as to dispute all the articles of the Christian faith'. Hearne reported having heard a sermon in which the alleged designs of 'the Low Churchmen and fanatics' to discriminate against 'all persons well-affected to the Church' were bitterly criticised, thus reflecting the widespread High-Church suspicion of a conspiracy between the Low Churchmen and Dissenters against the established order in the national Church. In order to emphasise the interconnection between their political and religious enemies, Tory writers might characterise a person 'one of the violentest Whigs and most rascally Low-Church men of the age' or write about 'the Whiggish or Low-Church party'. The most ruthless Tory propaganda did not hesitate to declare: 'The ugliest monster I can think of, is a republican, factious, dissenting, Church of England clergyman, alias a Low Churchman'.¹¹⁵ Deficiency of integrity in religion automatically entailed a suspicion of the political integrity of the person. Dissent and republicanism went hand in hand.

Needless to say, Whigs rebutted on 'the imputation of fanaticism and Low Church fixed upon them'. A Whig would rather define Low Churchman as a clergymen 'that treated the Dissenters with temper and moderation'.¹¹⁶ The Whig were highly sensitive of the significance of terminology derived from the

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111 *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 7.

112 Swift, E36, 12 April 1711.

113 Chamberlain 1995, 195.

114 Goldie 1990, 79; Albers 1993, 321–2.

115 OED: Low-Church; *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 20 January 1706, Vol. I, 166, and 1 October 1706, Vol. I, 291. Other references to Low Churchmen as opposed to 'honest' men and the connection between the Low Church and the Whig party can be found in *ibid.*, 26 January 1706, Vol. I, 169, 4 April 1706, Vol. I, 219, 30 April 1706, Vol. I, 230, 24 January 1707, Vol. I, 322, 10 February 1708, Vol. II, 93; 19 January 1710, Vol. II, 336, and Dr. T. Smith to Hearne, *ibid.*, 18 February 1710, Vol. II, 346; *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 16; For a connection drawn between Low Church and fanatics, see *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 6 December 1705, 322, summarising a statement by Hooper, the bishop of Bath and Wells.

116 OED: Low-Church, Low-Churchman.

Church in public discourse. Steele's discussion of the term Church, for instance, illustrates an awareness that Church was a concept fiercely disputed and abused in party strife for political purposes. Steele's argument represents the point of view of the party that had suffered most from the application of Church-terminology in public discourse:¹¹⁷

There is not a term in our language which wants explanation so much as the word Church. One would think when people utter it, they should have in their minds ideas of virtue and religion; but that important monosyllable drags all the other words in the language after it, and it is made use of to express both praise and blame, according to the character of him who speaks it. By this means it happens, that no one knows what his neighbour means when he says such a one is for or against the Church . . . This prepossession is the best handle imaginable for politicians to make use of, for managing the loves and hatreds of mankind to the purposes to which they would lead them.

Steele's point about the abuse of Church-terminology for political purposes certainly carried a lot of truth in it. Yet such applications were also made automatically, with genuine conviction, conceptions of a separation between political power and the religious life of the nation having not been universally adopted. The Church really mattered, even to a great majority of politicians.

The ultimate purpose of the Whigs, when taking up the issue of the use of the term Church for political purposes, was to play down the religious dimensions of party conflict, which had proved fatal to them in 1710, and to exaggerate the somewhat artificial constitutional aspects of party conflict. This intention is reflected in a Whig propaganda poem published around 1714 and directed at a large public. In the poetic dialogue, a Whig, step by step, convinces an initially suspicious Tory of the uselessness of the terms High Church and Low Church to such an extent that the Tory finally swears that he will vote Whig in ensuing elections. Toryism is subtly made to advocate Catholicism and the pretending House of Stuarts:¹¹⁸

Tory: Should I with those who are Low Church drink,
what would my friends the Tories think?

Whig: I may as well demand of thee,
what thoughts the Whigs would have of me.

Whig: Thy Church and mine is the very same,
though High and Low they do it name.

Tory: Indeed, my friend, if that be so,
much pains is taken to make it two.

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117 [Steele], G80, 12 June 1713.

118 *Whig and Tory*, [1714].

Whig: Those very men thou are taught to hate,
are truest friends to Church and state.

Tory: Least Popery should get fooling here,
for Whigs I will vote each tripple year.

Whig: And let no other names be known,
than honest men, and foes to the crown.

The same theme of the Tories abusing the term Church for political purposes appears in a pamphlet discussing 'the notorious abuse of the words Church, schismatic, fanatic' and 'the present conduct of those called High-Church'. The author's willingness to distinguish between religious and political considerations is noteworthy:¹¹⁹

... there certainly never was a word more tortured, and made use of to so many ill purposes as the word Church has of late been ... the word Church ... has inflamed and embittered the minds and tempers of those whose office it professedly is to teach charity and goodwill [i.e. the clergy] ... This term which used to convey some thoughts of religion, now seems to be stripped of all such considerations ... [Christian belief] will not go one jot towards procuring a person the appellation of a Churchman, if he falls not in likewise with some political schemes of those who make this outcry ... the word Church, and the bad use a party have made of it, even to the great disturbance of neighbourly society, and civil government; ...

In 1716, Addison criticised Tories for monopolising the term Church and insisted that the Whigs should have shown that Tory accusations of Whig irreligiosity were unfounded. In that way, the term Church as a synonym for Tory would become only an 'empty denomination'.¹²⁰ The theme of the misuse of Church for sinister motives remained a topic for radical Whiggish publications. Gordon's *Creed of an Independent Whig* declared, for instance: 'I believe that the word Church, an innocent word in its nature, has done more mischief, than ever I fear it will do good', expressing one's exaggerated anticlerical horror of what the clergy had been capable of causing by the use of that word.¹²¹ All in all, the Church continued to play a major role in the formation of party identity well into the eighteenth century.

119 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 2–3, 17.

120 Addison, F29, 30 March 1716.

121 Gordon, *The Creed of an Independent Whig*, 1720, 17; a similar statement concerning the abuse of the word Church appeared at about the same time in [Trenchard and Gordon], IW23, 22 June 1720.

■ Debate on Fanaticism, Moderation and Possibilities for Toleration

Dangers of enthusiasm and fanaticism

In addition to politico-religious terms already analysed, other important religious expressions were also applied in political contexts. In the discourse on political pluralism, these expressions usually depicted adherence to the rival party. Prominent among religious terms of party adherence were enthusiasm, fanaticism, zeal, moderation and toleration.

Public discourse on enthusiasm was an inheritance from the seventeenth century, when England had experienced several outbreaks of 'enthusiasm' that had seriously endangered social peace. The term had been used against those radical forms of Protestantism which claimed extraordinary access to the divine and sometimes involved uncontrolled passions. Soon this negative label became applied more generally, at first to Puritanism and, after the Restoration, to all forms of nonconformity. The Restoration saw an expansion in criticism of enthusiasm. The renewal of the events of the preceding decades was so much feared, that everything seen as corresponding enthusiasm was opposed. Enthusiasts became suspect of a universal conspiracy aimed at the destruction of all orderly government and religion. Even slight dissent could be interpreted as conspiratory radicalism.

The fears of enthusiasm remained vital in the eighteenth century. Enthusiasm, rejecting reason, involving divine inspiration for an individual interpretation of the obligation to the authorities and thereby justifying attempts to overturn the established order, was understood as constituting a genuine threat to civil society. The governing elite in both parties believed in the necessity of controlling it.¹ Locke, for instance, argued that the opinions of an enthusiast were founded purely on 'the conceits of a warmed or overweening brain'. An enthusiast claimed that whatever opinions he insisted on and actions he carried out, were achieved through illumination from the spirit of God, and hence his views were incontestable by any human being.²

* * * * *

1 Trenchard referred to the unanimity in resisting enthusiasm when he argued that, during the constitutional crises of the later seventeenth century, both Whigs and Tories had aimed at preserving the English monarchy and the organisation of the established Church against the attempts of its 'enthusiastic friends and enemies'. [Trenchard], CL69, 19 March 1722; Bolingbroke characterised the Civil War period as 'the fury of faction and enthusiasm'. Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation Upon Parties*, 1735, 30; Redwood 1976, 72–3, 75; Pocock 1988, 169; Spellman 1993, 78; Miller 1994, 144; Klein 1994, 160–2.

2 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 4.19.3, 4.19.6–7; Locke's understanding of enthusiasm is also discussed in Yolton 1993, 324.

In religious controversy, the term enthusiasm was used to refer to any dissent from the Church of England. Whereas the established Church underscored the primacy of scriptural revelation, some radical Protestant sects did believe in the possibility of individual revelation without Church and state acting as mediators. Among the supporters of the established Church, enthusiasm came to refer to such mistaken zeal among various heretics. With its association with old anti-sectarian polemic, enthusiasm was used against religious deviants as a more negative alternative to traditional accusations of 'frenzy', 'fury', 'fanaticism' and 'zeal'. As an unspecific term of abuse, it was applied to any uncomfortable religious phenomenon. As John Byrom, himself considered an enthusiast, pointed out in 1751: 'Enthusiasm is grown into a fashionable term of reproach' applicable to anyone.³ The Whigs, some of whom were Presbyterians or sectarians or their sympathisers, underscored that they had nothing to do with 'the spirit of enthusiastical . . . fancy and frenzy'. They rather suggested that it was the persecuting policy advocated by the High Church that gave rise to enthusiasm.⁴

Though enthusiasm could justify radical political action, there were few direct references to political enthusiasm in the early eighteenth century. In the 1700s, however, supporters of High-Church values easily branded their opponents with the label, and Tories associated Whigs with religious enthusiasm.⁵ An illustration of this politico-religious labelling can be found in Charles Leslie's pamphlet (1707) in which he suggested that Whigs and Dissenters continued to promote the republican, sectarian and enthusiastic values of the 1640s and 1650s. Rebellion against civil government and enthusiasm in religion had been and would stay as necessarily connected. Enthusiasm was, in this traditionalist interpretation, a 'political' phenomenon as well:⁶

Enthusiasm . . . extends itself both to Church and state. A Whig is a state enthusiast, as a Dissenter is an ecclesiastical. They will be tied to no rules or government but of their own framing, and alterable at their pleasure. They have said we are gods, and who are lords over us? Hence they will not be obliged to any Church or communion. And this is the true ground of all their dissensions, and of all the loofness and wickedness of the age, to have no principles, but guided wholly by our own humour or fancy, which is properly enthusiasm.

Leslie was extending the reference of the term enthusiasm from religious to political issues. The comparability and interconnection between the two areas of life was taken as self-evident. For Tory readers who despised Whigs and

3 Spoo 1964, 54–7, 60–1; Pocock 1988, 169; Pocock 1993, 61–2.

4 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 10; [Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 13.

5 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 28 August 1709, Vol. II, 244, 24 November 1709, Vol. II, 313; see also [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 11.

6 [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 3–5; Sacheverell expressed a parallel horror at the rise of 'enthusiastic sects' during the Civil War in his *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government*, 1713, 19; other lamentations of the negative consequences of enthusiasm include *A Letter to the Revd Mr Law*, 1719, 8.

feared the return of the anarchy of the mid-seventeenth century, Leslie's was a convincing argument. Later in the eighteenth century, however, statements portraying political opponents as enthusiasts were rare. In 1734, a Whig governmental paper endeavoured to blacken Bolingbroke by suggesting that he was 'a mere enthusiast',⁷ but this may have been a vain attempt to exploit an old association against a Tory opponent. As conceptions of the separate character of the spheres of religion and politics were strengthening, explaining political opposition with references to religious enthusiasm lost credibility.

Though enthusiasm remained an overwhelmingly negative term, there were some attempts to change its meaning. Shaftesbury dared to oppose the polemical sense of the term and endeavoured to revive an ancient positive sense instead - though with limited success. For Shaftesbury, enthusiasm was a central feature of humanity, 'a very natural honest passion' and the kind of devotion related to sociability. Such recommendations of 'enthusiasm as the best for state' were, however, countered by arguments that 'every kind of enthusiasm [was] dangerous to a state', as illustrated by fate of Charles I. On the other hand, Shaftesbury's writings also widened the applicability of the polemical sense of enthusiasm, as they turned the term against the Church herself and criticised the High Church for enthusiasm. The 'high-flyers' now also became called 'enthusiasts', 'zealots' and 'fanatics'.⁸ Anticlerical suggestions of enthusiasm in the background of the High-Church also appeared in Gordon's *Cato's Letters*.⁹

A further aspect of enthusiasm was that of another traditionalist discourse, medicine. Enthusiasm was considered a strong emotion that belonged to the sphere of medicine as well as to that of religion, hence it was also discussed in medical terms. Enthusiasm was not seen merely as the work of the devil; it could also be interpreted as a state of mind affected by bodily humours.¹⁰ It was believed that any excessive passion was capable of causing madness, and that enthusiasm was a form of madness. Mandeville, for instance, pointed out that violent passions tended to advance some people into the state of enthusiasm, and Blackmore medicalised appearances of enthusiasm among religious sectarians.¹¹ Theologians such as Warburton and Peter Annet called enthusiasm a 'disease' and an 'infection'.¹² Long discussions on enthusiasm as religious delirium and a form of madness were also provided by Gordon and Trenchard in the early 1720s. An enthusiast was anyone who attempted to make others follow his opinions.¹³

7 *The Daily Courant*, 13 November 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, November 1734, 602-3, Reel 134.

8 *Daily Courant*, 17 April 1735, in *GM*, April 1735, Vol. V, Reel 135; Spoo 1964, 61-2; Klein 1994, 165-7.

9 [Gordon], CL66, 17 February 1722.

10 For explaining enthusiasm, see Spoo 1964, 57-8.

11 Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, 1714, 227; Richard Blackmore, *A Treatise of the Spleen and Vapours: or hypocondriacal and hysterical affections*, 1725, 262.

12 Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 36; Annet, *Judging for Ourselves; Or Free-Thinking, The Great Duty of Religion*, 1739, preface.

13 Gordon, *The Humourist*, 1720, 6; [Gordon], CL123, 6 April 1723; [Trenchard], CL124, 13 April 1723; Bolingbroke wrote about 'enthusiasm and madness' of the Civil War in his *Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 36; A fierce attack on religious, political and medical

In dictionary entries, references to politics were not made, but the medical aspect of enthusiasm as 'religious madness' or 'melancholy . . . mixed with devotion'¹⁴ remained relevant. The positive sense of the term was also listed in some entries. Chambers (1728), Gordon-Bailey (1730) and Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) all saw enthusiasm as 'a prophetic or poetic rage or fury, which transports the mind, raises and enflames the imagination, and makes it think and express things extraordinary and surprising'. An enthusiast was 'one who pretends to be inspired by the divine spirit, and to have a true sight and knowledge of things; and who is transported with imaginary revelations'. Chambers added that the word was generally understood in an ill sense, referring to the Quakers, Anabaptists and other radical sects. Bailey (1733) saw enthusiasm as 'an inspiration, whether real or imaginary, fanaticism; a ravishment of the spirit; a poetical fury' and enthusiast as 'one who fancies himself inspired with the divine spirit, and so to have a true sight and knowledge of things'. Dyche-Pardon probably expressed much of contemporary feeling by denouncing enthusiasm of all types but more particularly religious enthusiasm. This rejection of excessive religiosity as questioning both revealed religion and human reason and threatening even the political system may have been strengthened by the rise of Methodism in the late 1730s.¹⁵

the word is generally applied to those persons who pretend to have divine revelation, to support some monstrous, ridiculous, or absurd notions in religious matters, and thereby takes away both reason and revelation, and substitutes in the room thereof the groundless fancies, and obstinate result of self-willedness, by using extravagant gestures and words, pretending to things not only improbable, but also impossible.

Dyche-Pardon's attack on enthusiasm was echoed by his statement that enthusiast 'commonly means a person poisoned with the notions of being divinely inspired when he is not, and upon that account commits a great number of irregularities both in words and actions'. Fenning's entry in 1741 expresses similar rejection of enthusiasm as an essentially religious delusion:

Enthusiasm strong but vain persuation [sic] that a person is guided or inspired in an extraordinary manner, by immediate impulses and operations of the Holy Ghost; an extraordinary emotion or elevation of the soul, which warms and heats the imagination, and enables it to conceive and express things both exalted and surprising.

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enthusiasm as a threat to society was contained in *The Old Whig*, No. 155, 23 February 1738, in *GM*, February 1738, Vol. VIII, Reel 137, and No. 156, 2 March 1738, and No. 157, 9 March 1738, both published in the number of March 1738. Enthusiasm appeared as madness and parallel to plague.

14 Chambers 1728; Wesley 1764.

15 See essays of *The Old Whig* mentioned in note 13 and nearly simultaneous on 'the pernicious nature and tendency of Methodism' in *Common Sense*, 19 April 1739, in *GM*, May 1739, Vol. IX, Reel 137.

If, in the 1740s, someone still attempted to label political opponents enthusiasts in a religious sense, he clearly took the risk of applying an old-fashioned expression that was unlikely to convince the audience.

Johnson (1755) already clearly distinguished between various senses of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm could refer theologically to 'a vain belief of private revelation; a vain confidence of divine favour or communication', more generally to 'heat of imagination; violence of passion; confidence in opinion', or, in relation to poetry, to 'elevation of fancy; [and the] exaltation of ideas'. Particularly general was the definition of enthusiastic as 'vehemently hot in any cause'. This development towards an increasingly secular and positive concept of enthusiasm is illustrated by the *Craftsman*'s point that 'no nation ever arrived to a great pitch of glory [in politics], which was not actuated by a spirit of enthusiasm'.¹⁶ By 1740, enthusiasm in a non-religious sense could even appear as necessary for achieving positive goals in politics.

The nearly synonymous expression fanatic, which was frequently used in the 1700s, had initially denoted someone possessed by either deity or devil. On the Continent, the term had been used for religious sectaries during religious wars with reference both to their religious irrationality and the potential political consequences of their existence. In England, the term came to use in the 1640s, referring to those with an excessive and mistaken enthusiasm, especially in religious matters.

Fanaticism was viewed as a phenomenon that had risen in the seventeenth century. As Clarendon pointed out in his history of the Civil War, 'new terms and distinctions were brought into discourse, and fanatics were now [in 1644] first brought into appellation'. Due to its negative sense of a strong adherence to some idea, fanatic had become a central concept of discrimination in discourse between political and religious antagonists. The defenders of the established order did not separate theological motives from political ones when damning the 'madmen' of the Nonconformist minority.¹⁷ The term came to stand for Dissenters and their Low-Church Anglican sympathisers alike. Soon after the introduction of the party names, fanatic became a synonym for Whig as well.¹⁸ As the Dissenters tended to be faithful supporters of the Whigs, the Whigs were referred to as 'the dissenting party' and simply as 'the fanatics'. It was easy for traditionalists to refer to 'fanatics and bloody peace-breaking Whigs' who were, at any time, ready for a republican rebellion of the type of 1649 when Charles I was executed.¹⁹ Swift described the way the Whigs appeared to be vindicating

16 C723, 10 May 1740, BL Burney, Vol. 349B.

17 Conze and Reinhart 1975, 303–308; *OED*: fanatic; Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, Vol. III, 1702, 453; Evelyn reported having heard a sermon in which fanaticism was taken as a phenomenon that had appeared in the seventeenth century to disturb the peace of the Church of England. *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 17 October 1703, Vol. V, 546.

18 Goldie 1990, 79.

19 De Krey 1985, 21; The statement on fanatics and Whigs comes from a pamphlet of Defoe's in which he summarised Tory arguments in an intentionally exaggerating manner. [Defoe], *A New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty*, 1702, 2, 7; William Nicolson reported about the use of the term 'fanatic' as a reproach against dissenters, Whigs and even the Low Church in *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 6 December 1705, 322, 324; For Hearne, Whig and fanatic were nearly synonymous. See *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 23

'fanaticism and infidelity in religion; and anarchy, under the name of a commonwealth, in government'. According to Swift, such ideas were propagated by writers who were 'fanatics by profession'.²⁰

The frequent use of the term fanatic already decreased its power as a derogatory expression, but still Whiggish and dissenting authors complained of its abuse. Presbyterian writers eagerly denounced all their connections with 'sectaries or fanatics'.²¹ Fanatic remained a disputed concept, and the debaters were well aware of this, widening or restricting its meaning and underscoring positive or negative connotations as best suited them:²²

[A] term which has made a great noise in the world, been . . . little understood, and . . . much misapplied . . . is fanatic . . . By fanatic, . . . according to the strict meaning of the word, is to be understood a person enlightened or taught by some supernatural means . . . where it is applied with propriety, as custom has now settled its meaning, we understand by it, such a person as has run into such delusions in religious matters, and advances such notions as are inconsistent with, or destructive of moral obligations, and the ties of civil society.

The author was particularly critical of how the Tories used the term to delude readers and blacken the image of the Whigs.²³ Another Whiggish definition denied all allegations of a connection between fanaticism and Whiggism:²⁴

. . . fanatics of most kinds have usually taken the advantage of some great convulsion or division in the state to broach their extravagancies; well knowing, that while the minds of the people are unsettled, they will the more readily embrace any new opinions . . . Fanaticism implies an uncommon pretence to religion and sanctity, and sometimes inspiration itself, together with an evident mixture of madness or infatuation, accompanied for the most part with a restlessness and turbulence of spirit, which is inconsistent with the peace of society, and any settled form of government.

Dictionaries defined the term fanaticism since the mid-1710s, after decades of intense politico-religious debate during which it had not been applied merely in a theological sense. For Kersey (1715), fanaticism was 'pretended inspiration'. Fanatics he presented rather restrictively as 'a reproachful title, commonly given to Quakers, Muggletonians, etc.'. Bullokar-Browne (1719) saw no reason to restrict the use of the word to mistaken religiosity but instead defined

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September 1705, Vol. I, 48, 28 September 1705, Vol. I, 50, 29 September 1705, Vol. I, 50, 23 December 1705, Vol. I, 139, 20 January 1706, Vol. I, 166, 19 March 1706, Vol. I, 205, 26 April 1706, Vol. I, 234, 26 April 1706, Vol. I, 237, 1 October 1706, Vol. I, 291, 27 February 1707, Vol. I, 336, 22 March 1708, Vol. II, 100, for references to fanatics; Other instances of connecting 'Whigs and fanatics' include Leslie, *The New Association*, 1702, Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 31, and Higgons, *A Short View of the English History*, 1727, 327; According to *The Character of a Modern Tory*, 1713, 20, 'fanaticism' belonged to the 'jargon' of Tories.

20 Swift, E15, 16 November 1710.

21 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 29-30.

22 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 29, 33.

23 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 33, 43.

24 [Ambrose Philips], *The Free-Thinker*, No. 31 (FT31), 7 July 1718.

fanatical or fanatic generally as 'distracted, mad, frantic, out of his wits'.²⁵ Between the editions of 1706 and 1720 of Phillips-Kersey, the vocabulary of fanaticism was one of the additions. A fanatic appeared as a person 'that pretends to revelations and inspirations, a religious coxcomb', whose 'tenets or opinions' constituted fanaticism, and whose reference group were the fanatics, 'a reproachful title, commonly given to Quakers, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, and other sectaries that dissent from the Church of England'.

From the late 1720s onwards, dictionaries always contained an entry for fanaticism.²⁶ What was new in Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) was a clear restriction of fanaticism to the sphere of religion. Fanaticism was 'extravagance, wildness, or enthusiasm in religious matters', fanatic 'a professor or believer of odd, romantic, out of the way notions in religion' and fanatic 'whimsical, inclined to enthusiasm or romantic notions, especially in religion'. Fenning (1741) confirms this restriction of the concept of fanaticism to religion, it being defined merely as 'religious madness'. A fanatic was 'a person who has wild notions in religion; an enthusiast', and the adjective fanatic stood for 'entertaining wild, imaginary, and enthusiastic notions in religion'. By the mid-century, fanaticism appeared as a synonym for 'enthusiasm; religious frenzy' and fanatic for 'an enthusiast; a man mad with wild notions of religion'. Such definitions in Johnson (1755) left little room for calling political rivals 'fanatics'. At the same time, occurrences of the term fanaticism declined rapidly. The consulted material contains few instances of the term after 1720, which suggests that it was losing its role as a polemical weapon against political opponents. Even in religious discourse, instances become difficult to find.

Right degree of zeal

Among religious terms applied in political contexts, the word zeal is one of the most frequent to appear. Debate on the proper amount of zeal in issues both religious and political was typical of an age looking for a permanent solution to excesses of zeal experienced in preceding centuries. Zeal and party adherence remained closely connected in contemporary minds.

The term zeal occurs regularly in texts dealing with questions of pluralism, as sectarianism was associated with a distorted type of zeal. A variety of other religious usages for the term were also available.²⁷ As this term of biblical origin could carry both highly positive and negative connotations, it proved useful in

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25 Possibly to encounter suggestions that Methodism was fanaticism, Wesley 1764 still defined fanatic as merely 'mad', thus following this old way of definition.

26 Chambers 1728; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

27 An instance of this commonplace association between sectarianism and zeal can be found from Synge, *The Case of Toleration*, 1726, 25, who pointed out that some tended to regard all sectaries as zealous to convert others and to strengthen the position of their own grouping; For other religious uses of zeal, see *COPC*: John Tillotson, *Of the Education of Children*, 1694; Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, 1694; John Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer*, 1694; Abel Boyer, *Memoirs of the Life and Negotiations of Sir William Temple*, 1714; John Lewis, *Life and Sufferings of John Wicliffe*, 1720.

secular polemic as well, including discussions on adherence to political parties. Zeal might refer to rivalry and partisanship, but, zeal in favour of a 'right cause' appeared as utterly positive. Zeal was characteristically a 'party virtue' which one's own side praised while the other condemned. Zeal was 'in itself a thing indifferent, and made good or bad, only with respect to the end it aims at, and the means it makes use of to accomplish it'.²⁸ Zeal was a perfect term for political rhetoric.

Negative associations of zeal could be derived from the Bible. The biblical basis of the term is visible in Moréri-Collier (1701) who presented zealots as 'a faction of wicked people' in the time of Roman attacks against Jews. The politico-religious faction of Jewish zealots, though pretending that they were working 'out of zeal for the glory of God', had been characterised by sedition, robbery, plunder, cruelty and impiety. It was the zealots who had caused divisions within Israel and contributed to its falling under the domination of the Roman Empire.²⁹ The history of zealots provided a powerful analogy for eighteenth-century thinkers who willingly turned to the history of Israel for comparisons which might help in interpreting their own political realities. For instance, Mawson (1746), preaching in the aftermath of the Jacobite rising of 1745, suggested that the biblical message on the evil character of zeal and zealots concerned acute political as well as religious issues.³⁰ Elsewhere, the same sense of the 'desperate faction of the zealots, who . . . soon put the whole nation into flames' was present. The word, which was often 'taken in an ill sense, for a separatist or schismatic, a fanatic', became redirected from religious discourse to the more secular discourse of party politics.³¹ Being called a 'zealot of the party' almost always meant a highly negative statement.³²

In other dictionaries originating from the seventeenth century, zealot might appear in a more general sense of 'one that is jealous or zealous', 'a bigot' or 'hot, furious, fervent, passionate in their way and opinion'.³³ Dictionary entries illustrate a tendency for the term to become more general and, at the same time, more secular in meaning. In this case, such generalisation and secularisation may have increased the usefulness of the term in political party rhetoric. Phillips-Kersey (1706), for instance, placed the term primarily in the area of religious discourse but did not exclude other uses, stating that a zealot was 'a zealous person, a great stickler or party-man, chiefly in matters of religion'. As to the prevalent connotation of the term, Phillips-Kersey added that zeal was 'often taken in an ill sense, for a separatist or schismatic, a fanatic'. *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707), Kersey (1715 and 1731) and Bailey

28 William King, *The Advantages of Education, Religious and Political*, 1706, 27; Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 4.

29 Moréri-Collier 1701; The Jewish connection was also mentioned in Chambers 1728.

30 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 3–4, 12.

31 *OED*: zealot.

32 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702. Compare the use of the term on iii and 10; *A Free-Thinker at Oxford*, 1719, 61; *Weekly Miscellany*, No. 68, 30 March 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, March 1734, 151, Reel 134; *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animositities*, 1736, 12.

33 Coles 1701; Cocker-Hawkins 1704 and 1724.

(1733) all agreed on such a definition but added an even more general and, what is noteworthy, overwhelmingly positive description of zeal as 'an earnest passion for anything, (more) especially (for one's) religion'. Burrough, for instance, expressed his positive understanding of the term in a similar way, stating that 'zeal in general may be defined an earnest concern for or against a thing, and a vigorous pursuit of such concern'.³⁴ *Glossographia* also added the words 'or the good of one's country' to the definition, thus drawing a parallel between religious and political activism and providing a good starting point for the application of zeal as a political concept. Reference to political zeal was not included in most dictionaries, but this does not mean that the editors saw the term as purely religious, and lacking in political applicability.

The meaning of zeal remained rather ambiguous throughout the early eighteenth century. For Gordon-Bailey (1730), a zealot was 'a zealous person, a great stickler for a party, principle or opinion'. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) still defined zeal in biblical terms:

Zeal has various significations in Scripture; sometimes it means a fervent or earnest desire to promote or propagate any doctrine or opinion; sometimes the anger or indignation that is expressed against any thing; sometimes it means jealousy, sometimes envy, etc.

The applicability of the term zealot was not restricted to the sphere of religion, as it could mean very generally 'one that is a great favourer of, stickler for, or promoter of any opinion'. Likewise, Fenning (1741) and Johnson (1755) saw zeal as 'a passionate ardour or affection for any thing, person, or cause',³⁵ pointing out that zealot was 'generally used in dispraise'. Even if Johnson's quotations for zeal-vocabulary were mainly derived from religious texts, religious associations were gradually losing their dominant position. A quotation from Swift associating political and religious party activity yet using the term zealous in a positive general sense is illustrative of this development: 'To enter into a party as into an order of friars, with so resigned an obedience to superiors, is very unsuitable with the civil and religious liberties we so zealously assert'.

Zeal was used in distinctly political contexts in expressions such as 'the zeal of the Whig side' and Tory zeal 'for the honour of the prince and the safety of the Church'.³⁶ References to mistaken zeal for party at the cost of public good were many.³⁷ More particularly, the Civil War was seen as having been fought

34 J. Burrough, *Zeal and Moderation Reconcil'd*, 1718, 5.

35 A parallel definition had appeared in Chambers 1728.

36 *COPC*: Kennett, *Complete History of England*, 1706; Atterbury, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, 1714.

37 Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690, 255; *Robert against Ferguson*, 1704, 21; Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 12; Addison wrote against Tory religious zeal and party zealots in Addison to John Somers, Baron Somers of Evesham (London), Dublin Castle, 4 July 1709, *The Letters*, 164; Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 27 May 1710, *The Letters*, 220; Addison, S185, 2 October 1711, S201, 20 October 1711, S445, 31 July 1712, S459, 16 August 1712; *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, 19; C29, 13 March 1727; C40, 24 April 1727; *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 3; *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 6; Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 8.

with party-zeal. Mawson (1746), for instance, opposed the rebellion of 1745 by recalling the 1640s as a warning against mistaken religious zeal.³⁸ Whenever possible, Tories were prepared to depict Whigs as having been (in the seventeenth century) 'very zealous, a preaching, praying, canting tribe' that had 'set up for reformers, and found everything, even the crown itself faulty'.³⁹ In Swift's essays, zeal could express disagreement with the policy of the competing party, both the Whigs and Tories pretending 'a mighty zeal for our religion and government'. As to the Whigs, he attacked them for 'their zeal for frequent revolutions'.⁴⁰ Whigs and Dissenters, in turn, criticised Tories for a mistaken persecuting type of zeal as against alternative forms of Protestantism. In 1705, Defoe stated that those who supported 'a hotheaded zeal in difference of opinions', as opposed to those advocating moderation, were not following the teachings of Christianity. In an Oxford sermon preached the same year, the audience was told not to be zealous and abuse those in power.⁴¹

The religious background of the term zeal provided the basis not only for its negative but also for positive senses. The term was known to occur also in positive senses in the Bible. Zeal could stand for 'such an eagerness of desire, or affectionate concern, for any thing, as is attended with a passionate warmth in the pursuit, or defence of it'. More particularly, such positive zeal generally concerned the interest of the Christian religion.⁴² Zeal for God, religion and Church as well as zeal against anything disturbing true religion were distinctly positive expressions for a great majority of writers.⁴³ Since the 1690s, the *Book of Common Prayer* contained a prayer for the double anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot and William III's landing in which the congregation wished for a 'spirit of fervent zeal for our holy religion', similar to that experienced in connection with the two national crises, to continue.⁴⁴ This positive religious sense of zeal may have facilitated the use of the term in positive political senses as well. Bolingbroke, for instance, emphasised the positive political zeal of the Hanoverian Tories,⁴⁵ and Defoe wrote positively about zeal against Catholicism and the House of Stuart.⁴⁶

38 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 5.

39 *The True Picture of an Ancient Tory*, 1702, 11. This is a Tory statement in a dialogue most probably written by a Tory; See also *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 9.

40 [Swift], E15, 16 November 1710, E38, April 1711.

41 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 48; This sermon is reported in *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 23 August 1705, Vol. I, 33. Hearne, as a fervent opponent of Whigs, was irritated by the sermon and certainly found Tory zeal critical about political leaders justified; see also *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 17–18, and Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 5.

42 Stevenson opened his sermon with a quotation from Galatians 4:18: 'But it is good to be zealously-affected always, in a good thing'. Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation reconcil'd*, 1728, 3; Mawson preached on James 3:15: 'For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work'. Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 3.

43 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 9 October 1705, Vol. I, 54; Burrough, *Zeal and Moderation Reconcil'd*, 1718, 1–2, 10; Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation reconcil'd*, 1728, 28.

44 *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1693 and later editions. The prayer is missing from the 1681 edition, i.e. it was probably added to the book after the Glorious Revolution.

45 COPC: Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham*, 1717; Zeal is used in both positive and negative senses in Bolingbroke's *Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, passim.

46 COPC: Defoe, *An Apeal to Honour and Justice*, 1715.

Mistaken religious zeal, when connected to politics, could, of course, also lead to disasters.⁴⁷ Dissenting writers such as Defoe might cynically point out that religious zeal had often been mixed with politics by politicians to win public support and achieve political ends. 'Religious zealots of all sorts' became accused for being uncompromising advocates of their cause.⁴⁸ The anticlerical writers of the *Independent Whig* offered a particularly disparaging description of the abuse of the term zeal:⁴⁹

I do not know any word, in any language, which, next to the word Church, has so much wickedness and roguery, to answer for, as the word zeal. It is indeed an important and dreadful monosyllable, which, when used with proper gestures and emphasis, can turn a cutthroat into a saint, and a madman into a martyr. It can commit bloodshed and butchery, with innocent hands; destroy life and property, with a good conscience; and dispeople nations with applause.

In other words, the term was abused by designing religious leaders to mislead the masses. The writers were referring to the way the High Church was said to discriminate between other religious inclinations. Nevertheless, they defined 'true' zeal as a particularly recommendable phenomenon: 'True zeal is a sincere and warm concern for the glory of God, and the spiritual welfare of mankind'. For these republicans, zeal was 'a virtue full of affection, meekness, humanity and benevolence'.⁵⁰

An alternative positive use of the term zeal, which directly concerned the sphere of politics and was distinctly secular, can be found in variations of the expression 'zeal of a true public spirit'. This expression, influenced by rising classical republicanism and suitable for the pursuit of a civil religion, was used by Hoadly, for instance, in a sermon in 1717. With public spirit, Hoadly meant a 'desire of the happiness of others' and 'generous and diffusive love of mankind'.⁵¹ Other ways of expressing this positive patriotic sense of zeal include Tindal's 'zeal for the interest of their country', Acherley's admiration of Whigs being 'zealous in the cause of liberty',⁵² and the *Craftsman's* 'unbiased zeal for the public' as opposed to adherence of a party. Related to this sense of zeal was also the *Craftsman's* manner of viewing the Puritans of the reign of Charles I. On the 78th anniversary of Charles I's beheading, the journal already dared to suggest that the Puritan zeal against the measures of the court,

47 This was pointed out also by Stevenson, even though he took zeal, when temperate, as a necessary phenomenon. Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation reconcil'd*, 1728, 19, 28.

48 [Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 28–9; A poem published in 1715 referred to the role of religious zeal in motivating people's political actions: 'Faction grew strongest to prevail, Still covered over with holy zeal; Which quick as sulphur does inspire The mob, and sets them all on fire'. *The Country Hobb upon the Town Mobb: Or, the Party Scuffle*, 1715, 8; *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animisities*, 1736, 3–4.

49 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW23, 22 June 1720; An analogous statement concerning mistaken zeal for God appeared in Gordon's CL123, 6 April 1723.

50 IW23, 22 June 1720.

51 Benjamin Hoadly, *The Nature and Duty of a Public Spirit*, 1717, 13, 32.

52 Matthew Tindal, *An Account of a Manuscript, entitul'd, Destruction the Certain Consequence of Division*, 1718, 17; Acherley, *Reasons for Uniformity in the State*, 1741, 19.

which had extended royal prerogative and violated the rights of subjects, had been praiseworthy.⁵³ Such a statement fitted the interest of the opposition of the late 1720s but may have hurt the feelings of traditionalist elements of the nation still repenting the national sin of murdering Charles I, God's anointed. Instead, at the time of the Jacobite rising of 1745, most Englishmen would probably have agreed with Warren's statement that all English subjects shared a 'zeal' for George II and his government.⁵⁴

Interesting, from the point of view of both the gradual secularisation of society and the generalisation in meaning of the term zeal, is a statement written soon after the South Sea Bubble (1720), a significant stock market crisis affecting even contemporary political culture:⁵⁵

... at present a great share of our zeal and violence for the Church, is changed into a zeal for the stocks; and the reason is plain, there is nowadays more to be got by alley than the altar . . .

This statement reflects awareness of structural transformations enhanced by economic change; as a result of the financial revolution, the 'alleys' of London had become the world's leading center of finance. At the same time, public discourse was, after centuries of disputation about matters of the 'altar', becoming less concerned with religious issues and turning instead to economic issues such as corruption. A single statement alone is not sufficient evidence for a transformation from a concentration on religion to concentration on economic issues, particularly as the author greeted this transformation with cynicism. As an anticlerical writer, he opposed excessive religious zeal, but, as a critic of growing financial power, which appeared to him as a dangerously destabilising force, he also opposed the excessive zeal for business at the cost of religious values. As a spokesman for moderate Anglicanism and great landowners, he wished to see zeal for the altar and that for the alley be overtaken by republican values such as 'public spirit' and 'patriotism'.

Moderation as virtue and vice

In late seventeenth-century public discourse, disagreements on the correct treatment of religious Dissenters gave rise to an increasing use of terms such as moderation and toleration, both of which quickly found their way into connected political debates. Moderation formed a counter-concept for zeal and an alternative expression for the concept toleration. Moderation, although not meaning the same as an acceptance of pluralism, inherently contained the possibility of an existence of several religious alternatives. By implication, the

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53 C17, 30 January 1727; C66, 7 October 1727; governmental writers wrote sneeringly about the opposition's 'zeal for liberty'. *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 15; 'Zeal for the public' and 'a spirit of faction' were contrasted by Warren in the sermon *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 16–17.

54 Warren, *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 17.

55 [Trenchard and Gordon], *A Collection of all the Humorous Letters*, No. 5, 1721.

adoption of the term and shifts in its meaning towards an increasingly positive direction may also have contributed to the development of more sympathetic attitudes towards pluralism in general, including the plurality of political values.

Initially, moderation had formed a counter-concept for rigidity, high-handedness and immodesty.⁵⁶ However, an important conceptual transformation can be dated to the early eighteenth century. When late seventeenth-century Low-Church divines began to call for moderation, they meant comprehension of such Dissenters within the Church whose doctrine did not differ considerably from that of the established Church.⁵⁷ In the course of the eighteenth-century, these divines came to constitute the elite of the Church and started to develop 'a cult of religious moderation' as a reaction to Tory exploitation of fears of the 'Church in danger' for political purposes. Whereas, in the very beginning of the century, moderation carried pejorative connotations of Whiggish halfheartedness, and the High Church chose 'No Moderation' as a motto for their campaign in 1702, in the course of the century, Low-Church writers increasingly presented moderation as a cardinal Christian virtue. There may well have been political motives behind this emphasis on moderation: the Whiggish political elite longed for political stability, and an avoidance of quarrelsome ideological issues was a good way of advancing that purpose. Their long-standing campaign for moderation was so successful that, by the mid-1740s, an observer could suggest that the English clergy as a whole had grown more moderate.⁵⁸

The campaign for moderation was successful in that, from the beginning of the century, moderation became a popular catchword, particularly in Whiggish and dissenting rhetoric. It was also used by traditionalists as a weapon against their major ideological opponents. The applications of the concept being so contradictory, statements in favour of moderation and attacks against it should be seen in the context of the on-going politico-religious debate. Condren has rightly pointed out that the use of the term moderation in discourse, unlike one might first expect, often 'signals areas of heated disagreement and frustration'.⁵⁹

Moderation was an important ideological concept for many political polemicists. Defoe offers an illustrative instance. Moderation became a key term to him, yet a vague and inconsistently used one that he seldom bothered to define. Defoe used the concept already in the early years of the century when working as a ministerial writer for Harley, advocating internal stability within Britain and propagating fierce warfare against France. Defoe's concept of

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⁵⁶ Condren 1994, 159.

⁵⁷ Chamberlain 1995, 195.

⁵⁸ Walsh and Taylor 1993, 53.

⁵⁹ Condren 1994, 156, 159; an example of the centrality of the term moderation in the politico-religious discourse of the first two decades of the eighteenth century is offered by an ephemeral broadsheet which described a duel between a Tory and a Whig character, the first attacking 'the shameful and detested cause of moderation' and the latter fighting for 'the upright and blessed principles of moderation'. *The Modern Champions*, 1710, no pagination.

moderation may actually have been initiated by the leading minister Harley himself. Defoe's claims for impartiality and moderation were supported by an almost complete exclusion of the then current party names from the paper. The purpose of the use of the term moderation was evident: to make any criticism against the paper ineffective by maintaining that the paper represented the purest form of moderation.⁶⁰

Moderation remained a central term in Defoe's later works as well. This aspect can be seen in *An Apeal to Honour and Justice* (1715), a text with which Defoe intended to defend himself against accusations of libel. Defoe called for the voice of 'moderate principles' to be heard. He warned the readers that the period of moderation achieved as a result of the Hanoverian Succession would not last for long, as there were people who wished to revive old religious disputes. In Defoe's rhetoric, moderation appeared as the sole virtue by which the internal peace of the nation could be preserved.⁶¹

Other dissenting, anticlerical and Whiggish writers soon joined Defoe's calls for moderation as opposed to High-Church principles. Toland described party-men as those who 'abhor moderation'. Addison vindicated moderation and liberty of conscience which he saw as interconnected. An anonymous Whig insisted that 'those who profess and act moderation' (i.e. Whigs) should not be called a party. Furthermore, moderation was also echoed in Whiggish popular ballads directed to the audience at large.⁶² As a result of all this polemic on moderation, the concept became associated with Whiggism to such an extent that Hearne regarded a preacher's tendency to lay the emphasis on moderation in his sermon as a certain sign of his Whiggish inclinations.⁶³

When defined in Whiggish texts of the early part of the century, moderation might stand for the rule 'that we admit no heat against our neighbour for differing with us in opinion, or principle of religion'. This definition was based on an assumption that such a 'heat' was generally attended by passion, and all that was passionate was also irrational. Moderation in matters of opinion was needed, argued these defenders of moderation, because being mistaken and differing in opinions was natural to human beings. Furthermore, immoderation was viewed as an unchristian attitude, whereas the 'truly moderate', or those who were not ready to persecute their neighbours for holding different views, were depicted, in this Whiggish approach to moderation, as better Christians.⁶⁴ In Whiggish political texts, moderation appeared as virtue in a person's 'religion and political relation considered as a member of either Church or state'. Moderation was a virtue that regulated human passions and made people

60 Richards 1972, 59–60, 62–4; Downie 1979, 65, 73, 81.

61 *COPC*: Defoe, *An Apeal to Honour and Justice*, 1715; Phillipson has argued that Defoe's calls for moderation were attempts to create a political culture which would temper party zeal. Phillipson 1993, 223.

62 Toland, *The Memorial of the State of England*, 1705, 4; Addison, T257, 30 November 1710; *Reflections upon the Humour of the British Nation in Religion and Politics*, 1714, 15; *The Country Courtship, or, The Maiden's Choice, Who prefer'd a Moderate Man before a Whig or Tory*, 1713.

63 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 23 August 1705, Vol. I, 33, and 23 September 1705, Vol. I, 47–8.

64 [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, 44–5, 48.

duly concerned with each issue, that is, made them avoid both indifference and extremity. Moderation, as here defined, was to be recommended *both* in religion and in politics. The justification for this highly sympathetic view of moderation could, when wished, be found in the Bible.⁶⁵

Moderation was such an important term for the Whig party⁶⁶ that, for some whiggishly inclined persons, the expression 'moderate man' seems to have become an euphemism for one's own position in the religious questions that divided the views of the governing elite. John Hardy, for instance, commented in his letter to John Locke on a text he had recently read which dealt with religious questions and had been welcomed by 'all moderate men'.⁶⁷ In some pamphlets published at the very beginning of the eighteenth century, 'the moderate party' was openly contrasted with 'that violent party, which calls itself the Church of England'. 'Moderate man' thus became synonymous with the term 'Low-Church man'.⁶⁸

The supporters of the High Church, or the major opponents to 'moderate men', also adopted the expression moderation for calling their ideological rivals. For them, of course, 'moderate principles' in both religion and politics, as opposed to orthodox Anglicanism, were something to despise and far from a virtue. Traditionalist writers might question the very justification of the term when applied to Whigs by pointing out poetically: 'A Whig and moderate, a pleasant fiction, for it is a terms an errant contradiction'. In a Tory pamphlet defining the much contested terms of the crisis year 1710, 'a moderate man' was straightforwardly defined as 'one who has no moderation'. According to the Tory press, moderation was a 'fallacious name' that Whigs readily used with the purpose of concealing their real motives⁶⁹ against the established Church so much loved by the Tories themselves. Some of the best examples of this criticism of the Whiggish 'pretence of moderation' can be found in Hearne's diary which contains references to 'fanatical moderators' working against the Church and to the questionable character of 'Presbyterian moderation'. In Hearne's descriptions, a person who supported 'moderate principles' advocated republicanism and opposed the Church of England. As a person, Hearne characterised a 'moderate man' with lukewarmness and 'a cool, heavy, flat temper'.⁷⁰

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65 *Chuse which you Please*, 1710, 5–6; *The Humble Confession*, 15, with reference to *Philippians* 4:5.

66 A further illustration of this centrality of moderation to Whiggism can be found in Swift's suggestion that the leading Whigs had been accused by their own supporters for lack of moderation. Swift to Archbishop King, London, 12 February 1708, *Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 70.

67 John Hardy to Locke, 17 September 1700, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, Vol. VII, 142.

68 [Dennis], *The Danger of Priestcraft*, 1702, 7; Sage, *The Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705, preface; Tindal, *A New Catechism with Dr. Hickes's Thirty Nine Articles*, 1710, 3.

69 *The Modern Whig Dictator*, 1702, 9; [Ward], *A Fair Shell, but A Rotten Kernel*, 1705, preface; [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 36; *Reflexions upon the Politeness of Manners*, 1707, 129; *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 12.

70 Naish reported how bishops had made some vote for a person of 'moderate principles' against their will and how 'some person of moderate principles' was favoured in a nomination at the cost of traditionalist Churchmen. *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 24.

Orthodox Anglicans were generally critical of the term moderation, which was viewed merely as a word 'in fashion'⁷¹ that had 'come to town again'. Drake's *Memorial of the Church of England* (1705) suggested that moderation had recently been 'the word, the passpartout, that opened all the place doors',⁷² that is, men holding 'moderate principles' had been favoured in nominations at the cost of Orthodox Anglicans. The Whigs were told to have introduced the concept of moderation in 1703, to have abandoned it in 1705 when gaining power, and to have reintroduced it in 1710 after losing political positions.⁷³ In 1710, a Whiggish character in a Tory propaganda dialogue confessed that his special purpose had been 'to make the modern Whigs everywhere cry up moderation', a term that had been misleadingly attractive in appearance in the eyes of the public tired of difficulties caused by factions. Another obscure piece of Tory propaganda from the same year recommended, with the words of a hellish politician, that the Whigs should take 'the mask of moderation' back to use and vigorously attack both Church and state. According to the Tory press, moderation had been recommended to the people by the Whigs though true moderation was never what the Whigs really intended.⁷⁴

To many other Tories as well, moderation became a term of reproach, the morality and Christianity of which was questioned on the basis of its meaning 'indifferency in a good cause, relaxing the discipline of the Church, or betraying it to its enemies'.⁷⁵ It was suggested that a conspiracy existed between 'moderate Churchmen' and religious enthusiasts, both of whom aiming at subverting the established order in ecclesiastical and political matters.⁷⁶ In Swift's words illustrating the abundant use of ecclesiastical vocabulary 'these very sons of moderation' (or Whigs) and 'men of incensed moderation' had been 'pleased to excommunicate every man who disagreed with them in the smallest article of their political creed'.⁷⁷ High-Church preachers made use of the Bible to attack the concept of moderation.⁷⁸ In political battles as well, the concept played a role at least to the end of the 1710s. Atterbury, for instance,

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November 1707, 59–60, and 10 December 1707, 62. *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 29 September 1705, Vol. I, 50, 20 January 1706, Vol. I, 166, 28 January 1706, Vol. I, 172, 2 March 1706, Vol. I, 196, 28 April 1706, Vol. I, 237, 10 January 1708, Vol. II, 88, 16 March 1710, Vol. II, 360; *Chuse which you Please*, 1710, 5, offered a parallel description of the notions of a 'Sacheverellite', who, according to this Whiggish pamphlet, took moderation criminal both in ecclesiastical and political affairs and believed that all moderate men were either religious Dissenters or republicans, if not both.

71 [Tufton], *The History of Faction*, 1705, 70; Another description of moderation as a 'name . . . in fashion' has been recorded in Gascoigne 1989, 75; An instance of Tory hatred of moderation is William Shippen's satirical poem against Whiggish moderation with the title *Moderation Display'd*, 1705, 7.

72 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 7.

73 Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 23; *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 6.

74 [Davenant], *Sir Thomas Double*, 1710, 7, 24; *Advice from the Shades Below*, 1710, 15.

75 *The True Genuine Tory-Address*, 1710, 6.

76 [Leslie], *The New Association Of those called, Moderate-Church-Man, with the Modern Whigs and Fanaticks*, 1702, 1–2.

77 Swift discussed, as he wrote, the 'endless unprofitable haranguing about moderation' among Whigs in E12, 12 October 1710, E19, 14 December 1710, E30, 1 March 1711, and E43, 31 May 1711.

78 Edmund Chishull, *Modesty and Moderation; Or, the True Relative Duty of the Tolerated and Establish'd Parties in any Society of Men*, 1712, 5–7.

claimed in the heat of the Succession Crisis in 1714 that 'Whiggish moderation' threatened every subject.⁷⁹

Moderation was clearly a concept that was widely debated for as long as religious tensions were high. Once religious fervour calmed down, the frequency of the occurrences as well as disputes about its proper definition settled down. At the same time, appeals for moderation were supported by a widely shared conception of the Church of England as an ideal middle position between superstition and enthusiasm. The English compromise between religious unity and religious freedom, realised in the Acts of Uniformity and Toleration respectively, became glorified. Such 'moderation leading in religion' seemed to bring stability to the political system that might otherwise be characterised by strife.⁸⁰

As early as in 1718, a pamphleteer presenting an optimistic dissenting view wrote about 'the moderate and good-natured temper of the times' that, he believed, would soon remove the conflict between the established Church and Dissenters. In reality, moderation seems to have remained a disputed term at least until the end of the 1720s. This is shown by Burrough's sermon from the same year in which High-Church arguments about the character of moderation were once again repeated. According to Burrough, it was mistaken to call the defence of the established Church immoderate at the same time when 'lukewarm indifference in matters of religion . . . is mistaken for the laudable virtue of moderation'. To him and many a fellow High-Church Anglican, moderation was 'such a prudent temper of mind, as with a holy and regular zeal, steers its course in the middle way between the two extremes of a cold indifference, and an implacable furious bigotry'. According to Burrough, such true moderation between sectarian enthusiasm and Catholicism was represented only by the Church of England herself, not by Dissenters or their sympathisers.⁸¹ A similar type of reconciliation of the terms zeal and moderation in favour of the Anglican Church was attempted by Stevenson in a sermon he preached in 1728. According to Stevenson, moderation would lead to indifference in religion if it was not attended by a proper amount of zeal.⁸² As a further sign of the continuously disputed character of the concept moderation, in 1720 the *Independent Whig* raised the issue of moderation by claiming, with reference to the High-Church clergy, that moderation had been made 'a vice, and esteemed to be lukewarmness, and an indifference to religion and goodness'.⁸³

In contrast, the few occurrences of the term moderation in texts from the 1730s and 1740s would indicate that the term was applied much more rarely and mostly in positive senses. In connection with the revival of religious questions in the mid-1730s, for instance, moderation could be depicted together

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79 COPC: Atterbury, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, 1714.

80 Walsh and Taylor 1993, 55–6; Addison, S3, 3 March 1711.

81 *The Church of England's Apology*, 1718, 30; Burrough, *Zeal and Moderation Reconcil'd*, 1718, 1–2, 20.

82 Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation reconcil'd*, 1728, 28.

83 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW22*, 15 June 1720.

with charity and justice as qualities that could overcome the hated party-spirit in society. In 1739, a pamphleteer celebrated the way many had moved 'from a persecuting spirit, to a happy temper of moderation'. This transformation, argued the author, had been a long one and was by no means complete by 1739.⁸⁴ Moderation had become an overwhelmingly positive attribute which was willingly applied in advertising the writer's own political direction. In 1740, the *Daily Gazetteer* recommended itself to the readers as a paper written with a particular 'spirit of moderation'. In 1745, Fielding's *True Patriot* published a letter in which the paper was thanked for perfectly Christian moderation towards all parties.⁸⁵

Whigs glorified moderation throughout the early eighteenth century and Tories vilified it at least until around 1720. How, then, was such a highly contentious term treated in contemporary dictionaries? The easiest solution for editors was, of course, to refrain from defining the term. The consulted dictionaries seem to have followed this line up to the mid-1710s, when definitions of moderation as 'temperance, prudence, discretion'⁸⁶ started to appear. Interestingly, moderation was accepted to cited dictionaries at a stage when its use in public discourse may already have been in decline. Together with the vocabulary of fanaticism, moderation was one of the few additions to Phillips-Kersey (1720) when compared with the edition of 1706. In addition to the mentioned positive adjectives, Phillips-Kersey, typical of an age committed to the questions of virtue, defined moderation as 'a virtue that governs all the passions', a definition repeated by Gordon-Bailey (1730). Moderate for Gordon-Bailey as well as Bailey (1733) meant 'temperate, sober, that does not exceed', whereas Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) defined the same as 'reasonable, equitable, that keeps within due bounds, that does not break out into extravagancies of any kind'. Dyche's entry for moderation was characterised by an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards the general phenomenon:

Moderateness/moderation that happy disposition of mind that sedately considers the reasonableness, justice, and equity of a thing that a person does or forbears, and that makes proper allowances for the actor and action.

Fenning (1741) similarly echoed his admiration for moderation, seeing it as 'the state of keeping a due mean between extremes; forbearance of extremity; calmness, temperance, or equanimity'. Fenning, like most other dictionary editors, consciously avoided direct references to the religious or political connections of moderation. Much of the intensity of the politico-religious strife

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84 *Free Briton*, No. 191, 19 July 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, July 1733, Reel 134; *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosities*, 1736, 18.

85 *The Daily Gazetteer*, No. 1531, 16 May 1740, BL Burney, Vol. 351; *The True Patriot*, No. 7, 17 December 1745, BL Burney.

86 Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; *The Secretary's Guide* 1721; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737. An interesting addition by Bailey and Defoe was 'government' as a synonym for moderation. Both must have meant 'government' in a very general sense with no reference to political government.

around the concept, which had been so characteristic of the early part of the century, had withered away by the 1740s, and the term appeared as increasingly non-political.⁸⁷ Tory views of moderation did not find their way into dictionaries. Neither did Whigs continue their requests for moderation as intensively after 1720.

Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) emerges as an interesting exception in the otherwise consensual line of relatively non-political definitions of moderation. Johnson, who had obviously rejected early eighteenth-century Tory hatred towards moderation, added to definitions the positively charged expression 'the contrary temper to party violence', thus expressing a sense familiar to informed readers but omitted by their lexicographers wishing to stay outside political controversy. A number of Johnson's quotations for moderation and moderate were derived from seventeenth-century theological discourse and referred to the moderation of Anglicanism as opposed to the immoderation of Catholicism and Protestant sects. In this context, moderate appeared positively as 'not extreme in opinion; not sanguine in tenet' or 'placed between extremes; holding the mean'. The religious background of the term was noticeable, but so is the political and increasingly secular sense of the term. Pope's verse 'In moderation placing all my glory, while Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory' and Swift's report from Parliament where 'a number of moderate members managed . . . to obtain a majority' illustrate the political applicability of the term.

One of the few instances of the concept moderation having been used in an unambiguously political sense can be found in Bolingbroke's remarks on history that were originally published in the *Craftsman* in the early 1730s. Without giving any references to religious issues, as customary when the concept moderation was in question, Bolingbroke wrote about 'true political moderation' that, according to him, consisted of opposing the policy of the government only when the national interest was in danger and then only with measures proper for the extent of the danger.⁸⁸ In other words, opposition to Walpole headed by Bolingbroke represented the true form of political moderation as opposed to all other claims for moderation. The anti-Walpolean opposition thus attempted to adopt the positively charged concept for their exclusive use while consciously rejecting its religious implications.

Limits of toleration

By the dawn of the eighteenth century, toleration had become a principal term of English politico-religious discourse. The term had its roots in continental Reformation controversies in which it had gained an essentially negative connotation. In the seventeenth century, English ideas of toleration were part of

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87 Parallel non-political definitions of moderation appeared in Martin 1749 and *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

88 [Bolingbroke], C250, 17 April 1731.

a European discourse characterised by a slow transformation from a confessional state towards a more tolerant one. Generally speaking, prevalent trends of thought continued to oppose the very idea of toleration. Toleration was understood to stand for enduring an evil. Calls for allowing variety in religious opinions were associated with subversive thought and considered a threat to both religion and political stability. In England, it was mainly among dissenting thinkers, often refugees from the Continent, that arguments in favour of toleration first started to appear.⁸⁹

In the early eighteenth century, the issue of toleration was regarded as an ancient one. Clarendon, for instance, wrote in his history how foreign Protestants had been tolerated in Elizabethan England and how this toleration had created anxiety among the Anglican clergy for the possibility of toleration also being extended to English dissenting Protestants.⁹⁰ Fears of the rise in the status of dissenting Protestants had come true in the Civil War, an event that also played a major role in the early eighteenth-century understanding of toleration.

For Interregnum Puritans as well, toleration had been a despicable word. Their attempts to enforce Calvinism throughout England gave rise to abundant texts defending religious toleration and confessional pluralism. Once subjected to discrimination, radical sects started to use toleration as their watchword, even though their demands for toleration were not based on any genuine conviction of a need of religious liberty but rather on the circumstances of sectarian rivalry. Most sects remained fundamentally intolerant. Still, in pro-toleration texts, belief in a necessary connection between religious and political freedom won increasing support.⁹¹

In the early eighteenth century, it was frequently argued that Dissenters had themselves been unwilling to tolerate rival Churches once they had gained a strong political status during the Interregnum. In the words of Drake's pamphlet, all Churches, and the English Protestant Dissenters in particular, had in their turns 'experimentally demonstrated' that 'they will not so much as tolerate the exercise of the rites of a dissenting Church, though in subjection'. What annoyed Drake was that the English elite had nevertheless 'perpetuated the toleration to the Dissenters'.⁹² In a pamphlet contrasting the texts of Presbyterians after the parliamentary victory in the Civil War and during the Sacheverell controversy in 1710, it was pointed out 'how very violent the Presbyterians in 1645 . . . were, against any toleration in religion, when they had the power in their hands; and how very clamorous they are now for it'.⁹³

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89 Luther had created the term 'tollerantz' in 1541 and used it negatively with reference to the Catholic Church. Schreiner 1990, 477, 489; Redwood 1976, 89; Martin 1990, 67–8, building merely on the OED; Grell, Israel and Tyacke 1991, 14–15.

90 Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, Vol. II, 1702, 417.

91 Zaret 1989, 169–70; Besier 1990, 499; Tyacke 1991, 29; Trevor-Roper 1991, 390; Schochet 1992, 127.

92 [Drake], *The Memorial of the Church of England*, 1705, 9, 16, 36.

93 *Bodkins and Thimbles: or, 1645 against 1710. Containing the Opinions of the Old and New Presbyterians, Touching Toleration, Separation, Schism; And the Necessity of Uniformity in a National Church: Faithfully set down in their own Words*, 1710, preface.

Neither did the Restoration bring any extended toleration for the sectaries. Quite the contrary, the religious monopoly of Anglicanism was reintroduced and Dissenters became subject to persecution unknown in the Interregnum. Among Restoration general public, the concept of toleration gained an even stronger pejorative connotation, when it was applied in declarations issued by Stuart monarchs in favour of Catholics and sectaries. The monarchs were suspected of aiming at intolerant Catholic absolutism with which the pretended toleration was associated.⁹⁴

In late seventeenth-century England, the concept of toleration was used in a variety of ways. All religious groups used the term loosely and synonymously with indulgence. Only gradually did the indulgence granted to Dissenters turn in common parlance into toleration.⁹⁵ Toleration could refer either to any relief of religious Dissenters, to comprehension of the Presbyterians to the established Church, or sometimes even to the recognition of nonconformity in legislation. Importantly, however, toleration hardly ever referred to an equal right of religious liberty for everyone. Its synonym 'liberty of conscience' was used in equally imprecise senses, referring to a just claim, within limits set by order and public peace, to hold religious beliefs that differed from the established practices. Neither did 'liberty of conscience' refer to unlimited religious freedom, as it was almost universally held that full membership in civil society entailed a membership in the established Church and vice versa.⁹⁶

In late seventeenth-century continental legal and political theory, it was increasingly argued that the defence of the right faith and securing the eternal life of the subjects were no major responsibilities of state. As natural religion gradually replaced dogmatical doctrines, governments could reject attempts to achieve confessional conformity. This type of toleration was no more seen merely as a way of winning time until a return to original religious harmony but as a way of establishing a lasting peace. Toleration was gradually turning into a concept expressing a permanent coexistence of Churches and differing interpretations of truth.⁹⁷ It should be noticed, however, that this transformation was completed in no country by the mid-eighteenth century.

In England, the most articulate and best-known arguments in favour of toleration had been put forward by Locke, who had maintained that 'the mutual toleration of Christians in their different professions of religion' was 'the chief characteristic mark of the true Church' on the basis of both gospel and reason.⁹⁸

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94 Besier 1990, 499; Trevor-Roper 1991, 390.

95 Indulgence, the most usual synonym for toleration, which had been widely used in the reign of James II, was, by the early eighteenth century, much less common. Its religious origin can be seen in Gordon-Bailey's (1730) and Bailey's (1733) almost identical definitions of indulgence as 'fondness, favour, gentleness, aptness to bear with or tolerate; also pardon and forgiveness of sins'. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) expressed the same in the following words: 'an allowance or permission of mere favour and goodness'. According to Fenning (1741), indulgence had a rather general and not necessarily religion-associated meaning as 'compliance with, or granting the desires and requests of others through fondness; forbearance, or connivance at faults; a favour granted'; see also Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Webb 1992, 159.

96 Schochet 1992, 127, 137; Schochet 1995, 127, 141-2; Schochet 1996, 170.

97 Schreiner 1990, 489.

98 Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 1689.

In addition to toleration among sects holding different beliefs, Locke discussed toleration by the civil power of differing religious practices. He opposed all attempts to force people to adopt a 'true religion' and emphasised the essential distinction between religion and civil government. According to Locke, the state could not and should not even attempt to save souls, and, in normal circumstances, civil authorities had no right to intervene religious issues. Neither had religious sects any right to compel others to adopt their beliefs. Locke supported the moderate or Low-Church elements of the Church of England but advocated a more radical version of toleration, openly attacking persecuting divines. Universal religious liberty, however, remained out of question even for Locke. By toleration he referred to allowing Protestant sectarian pluralism as well as to the Low-Church idea of comprehension of Christians (not Catholics) within the Church of England.⁹⁹

Because of his suspected heterodoxy, the reception of Locke's views on toleration was generally reserved.¹⁰⁰ There were, however, some exceptions. Shaftesbury became another prominent advocate of toleration who dared to argue that 'variety of opinion was not to be cured', that 'it was impossible all should be of the one mind', and that 'there can be no rational belief but where comparison is allowed, examination permitted, and a sincere toleration established'.¹⁰¹ Tindal also earned a questionable reputation as a defender of toleration. During the Church-in-danger controversy, he denied the existence of danger and argued instead that toleration had removed the Dissenters' prejudices towards the established Church and had made them ready to return to the Church of England on the condition that the High Church did not reactivate religious dissent with its uncompromising conduct.¹⁰²

Indeed, toleration achieved a firmer, though far from established, status with the passing of the Act of Toleration in 1689. This Act was an unwelcome and even disreputable compromise for most contemporaries who continued to talk about indulgence, not toleration, being granted to Dissenters as a relief from discriminatory legislation that actually remained in force. The suspension was conditional, and indulgence could be withdrawn by the civil authorities at any time. Oaths had to be taken, congregations registered, doors kept open during worship. Restrictions to hold public office were not removed.¹⁰³ Some authoritative statements from the 1700s illustrate how toleration could not be assumed to form a self-evident part of the English political system. Queen Anne, when giving one of her first speeches after coming to the throne, was

99 Goldie 1991, 362; Schochet 1992, 127; Goldie 1993b, 144, 161–2; Yolton 1993, 123–7; Schochet 1995, 127.

100 See, for example, Edward Byrom's letter to his son John Byrom, Manchester, 16 September 1709, *Selections from the Journals and Papers of John Byrom*, 33, in which Locke was called 'a Socinian or an atheist'; Clark 1985, 280, 294; *The Diary of Dudley Ryder 1715–1716*, 21 August 1715, 82, offers an example of Locke's support of 'universal unlimited toleration' being admired – and misunderstood; Trenchard and Gordon dared to speak in favour of Locke in IW45, 23 November 1720.

101 [Shaftesbury], *Miscellaneous Reflections*, 1714, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. III, 104, 319.

102 Tindal, *A New Catechism*, 1710, 3.

103 Spurr 1991, 376; Trevor-Roper 1991, 402.

reported as having made a particular promise that she would maintain the toleration established in the reign of her predecessors.¹⁰⁴ In 1705, the chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons reminded the audience of the existence of toleration that had been granted but at the same time deplored 'the infinite mischief' and 'the wicked effects' of distinguishing between various religious groups.¹⁰⁵

Toleration, or indulgence as many Tories wished to call the phenomenon, and particularly its excessive extent, continued to be lamented in numerous traditionalist texts.¹⁰⁶ Whigs were accused for their alleged view that 'toleration must include . . . a liberty to Socinianism, deism, Hobbism, atheism'.¹⁰⁷ A real traditionalist invasion against toleration started in the late-1690s with Atterbury's *Letter to a Convocation-Man* (1697) in which 'universal unlimited toleration' was presented as an euphemism for attacks against political and ecclesiastical power and for attempts to create more widespread religious indifference.¹⁰⁸ The Sacheverell affair in particular demonstrates the existence of differing interpretations of the Act of Toleration. The Whigs did not distinguish between indulgence and toleration, whereas several Tories preferred the term indulgence, maintaining that no toleration had been awarded by law.¹⁰⁹ Sacheverell carried out a traditionalist attack against the toleration granted after the Glorious Revolution in terms of an organic analogy:¹¹⁰

Schism, and faction, are things of impudent, and encroaching natures, they thrive upon concessions, take permission for power, and advance toleration immediately into an establishment. And are therefore to be treated like growing mischiefs, or insectious [sic] plagues, kept at a distance, least their deadly contagion spreads.

Even some supporters of the High Church were surprised at such an open denial of the justification for toleration.¹¹¹

Arguments against toleration were repeatedly heard during the Tory government of 1710–14. The 'indulgence' enjoyed by Dissenters was cancelled with the Occasional Conformity Act of 1711 and Schism Act of 1714. George Sewell, for instance, defended the bill and answered claims that the proposed law would destroy toleration by pointing out that such a shift would only mean that 'the government which was pleased to grant that indulgence, thinks fit to retract it', toleration being nothing more than 'a temporary indulgence' for exercising religion to those unable to conform for the sake of their conscience,

104 Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, 27 February 1703, vol. V, 273.

105 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 11 November 1705, Vol. V, 615.

106 [Ward], *A Fair Shell, but a Rotten Kernel*, 1705, preface; Sage, *The Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705; [Baron], *An Historical Account of Comprehension, and Toleration*. Part I, 1705; *Rectius Declinandum*, 1709, 15.

107 [Davenant], *The Old and Modern Whig*, 1702, 18.

108 Atterbury, *A Letter to a Convocation-Man*, 1697, 3.

109 Tyacke 1991, 47.

110 Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church and State*, 1709, 23.

111 D. Evans to Hearne, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 10 November 1709, Vol. II, 304–5.

awarded in an expectation of a speedy return to conformity. Sewell disputed what he presented as Dissenters' attempt to 'enlarge its meaning to signify everything they want, as they restrain others to what limited sense they please'. In his High-Church opinion, free dissenting education could by no means be included in the confines of toleration.¹¹² Dissenting education was banned, and it was only the repeal of these acts in 1719 that re-established religious toleration in English legislation. Still, the issue of toleration remained a topic of public discourse throughout the century.¹¹³

Toleration was a term that few early eighteenth-century dictionaries, no matter how critical the editor was towards the phenomenon itself, could omit for good. In older dictionaries, toleration was standardly defined simply as 'an indulgence' (Coles 1701) or 'indulgence, liberty of conscience, sufferance' (Cocker-Hawkins 1704), thus no conceptual separation between these various terms was made. The basic attitude in the background of definitions for toleration was implicitly negative: Phillips-Kersey (1706), *Glossographia Anglicana Nova* (1707), Kersey (1715 and 1731), and Bailey (1733) all regarded it as 'suffering, permitting or allowing of', with an implicit assumption that the phenomenon itself was not approved. Likewise, Bullokar-Browne (1719) mentioned the senses 'an enduring, a sufferance', and Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) still repeated the definition 'permission, sufferance, allowance, connivance'.¹¹⁴

Basic definitions of toleration did not move in any radically novel directions during the first half of the century. It is noteworthy, however, that entries for toleration began to refer explicitly to both political and religious toleration, thus reflecting a distinction drawn by Locke, among others. Chambers (1728) was the first to introduce this distinction in an English dictionary, expressing a basically positive attitude towards toleration. According to him, toleration had been a central concept in religious disputes among Protestants ever since the Reformation. Chambers maintained that 'all who have reasoned consistently from the principles of the Reformation, have been for toleration; as well as perceiving they had no right to oblige any body to follow their particular sentiments'. The real matter of dispute was, where the limits of toleration should have been set. Reviewing Jacques Basnage's writings, Chambers stated that ecclesiastical toleration allowed different and even opposite sentiments among the members of the Church, whereas civil or political toleration permitted them in civil society. Political toleration entailed that any sect not holding doctrines dangerous to the welfare of the state enjoyed the protection of law independently of their religious beliefs.

Gordon-Bailey made a similar distinction between the types of toleration (1730):

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¹¹² Sewell, *Schism, Destructive of the Government*, 1714, 8, 17, 20.

¹¹³ Spurr 1991, 376.

¹¹⁴ In medieval Latin, 'tolerare' had been used as a synonym for 'permittere', for instance, but distinguished sharply from 'approbare'. Schreiner 1990, 449; Analogous definitions for toleration appeared in Martin 1749, *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753 and Wesley 1764.

Civil toleration signifies impunity and safety in the state, for every sect which does not maintain any doctrine inconsistent with the peace and welfare of the state.

Ecclesiastical toleration is an allowance of opinions, which, not being fundamentals, do not hinder those who profess them, from being members of the Church.

This distinction between an allowance of religious diversity within a state and a tolerance of a variety of opinions within the established Church was also made in the *Weekly Miscellany* (1735) which argued that ecclesiastical toleration meant 'the receiving anyone to Church communion' while civil toleration stood for 'the allowing a man all the privileges belonging to an establishment'. Ecclesiastical liberty was necessarily restricted by the duty of the Church to control the soundness of faith and morals, and civil toleration had to be likewise limited, because every society had the right of protecting the true religion by making it an established one.¹¹⁵ Such anti-dissenting definitions of ecclesiastical and civil toleration were countered by claims that religion and politics were separate spheres and that the state had no major duty to maintain religion.¹¹⁶

Both civil and ecclesiastical toleration still concerned religious issues. Yet the distinction is important. 'Civil toleration', when discussed in a 'political' sense independently of the traditionally dominant 'ecclesiastical toleration', could be potentially extended to cover an increasing variety of secular opinions. Furthermore, developments within religious discourse in the eighteenth century towards a growing acceptance of 'ecclesiastical toleration' may have contributed to an increase in 'civil toleration'. The two types of toleration were continuously linked in the minds of Englishmen but were more equal than they had been in the very beginning of the eighteenth century, when 'ecclesiastical toleration' still was the dominant idiom.¹¹⁷ Indeed, considerable secularisation and generalisation occurred in the concept of toleration later in the eighteenth century. Whereas the concept had traditionally been used in a 'Church-political' sense concerning to what extent it was possible and reasonable for the state to practise religious toleration, secularisation and generalisation of the concept made it applicable to all spheres of discourse, including philosophical and political discourse, for letting those thinking and acting differently do so.¹¹⁸

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115 *Weekly Miscellany*, No. 112, 1 February 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, February 1735, Reel 135.

116 [Agricola], 'Remarks on the Weekly Miscellany of Feb. 1', *GM*, Vol. V, March 1735, Reel 135.

117 Another novelty that appeared at the level of dictionaries was the distinction between toleration and tolerance introduced by Fenning (1741) and Johnson (1755). Whereas Fenning and Johnson expressed the essential contents of the noun toleration in defining it conventionally as 'allowance given to something not approved' and the verb to tolerate in explaining it as 'to suffer or allow without opposition' or 'to allow so as not to hinder; to suffer', they added an interpretation of tolerance as 'the power or act of abounding or suffering' or 'the power of enduring; act of enduring'. The difference in the meaning of the two terms remained small. Toleration retained its status as the more widely applied concept in public discourse throughout the early eighteenth century, whereas tolerance was used seldom. Even then, it referred to matters neither religious nor political.

118 Besier 1990, 495.

Such secularisation and generalisation did not happen overnight. Some mid-eighteenth-century English lexicographers still took distinctly traditionalist stands when defining the disputed concept of toleration. Johnson (1755) made a misleading use of quotations, ignoring, for instance, numerous positive references to toleration contained in Locke's texts and quoting instead a pejorative sentence from his writings on education that states: 'Crying should not be tolerated in children'. The rest of Johnson's quotations repeated highly derogatory senses of toleration and the related verb, representing a religion-connected interpretation of the concept:

Men should not tolerate themselves one minute in any known sin.
Decay of Piety.

We are fully convinced that we shall always tolerate them, but not that they will tolerate us. *Swift.*

I shall not speak against the indulgence and toleration granted to these men.
South's Sermons.

In Johnson's quotations, intolerance found justification in the higher goal of resisting sin and in the unwillingness of the tolerated sects to tolerate the established Church. Neither was a distinction made between indulgence and toleration. Equally revealing as to the connotations of toleration is John Trusler's discussion of difference between the verbs to tolerate and to suffer:¹¹⁹

We *tolerate* a thing, when, knowing it, and, having sufficient power, we do not hinder it.

The words, *tolerate* and *suffer*, are never used, but, with respect to bad things, or, such, as we believe so; . . .

The legislative power is, sometimes, obliged to *tolerate* certain evils in order to prevent worse. It is, sometimes, prudence to *suffer* even abuse in the discipline of the Church rather than destroy its unity.

The connotations of toleration remained highly pejorative. Toleration was an unwanted state of affairs necessitated only by willingness to prevent developments to what was seen as an even worse situation, that is, the dissolution of a unitary state or Church.

For a considerable majority of Hanoverian Englishmen, toleration in the sense of 'not hindering' remained a question causing constant uneasiness because of the strong underlying ideal of uniformity. Claims for 'an absolute, unrestrained toleration' were consistently refuted and the right of the authorities to promote 'true religion' by human legislation assertively vindicated. According to the Anglican rector Stebbing (1724), for instance, to tolerate meant 'not to hinder a thing when it is, or so far as it is, in our power to hinder

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119 Trusler, *The Difference, Between Words*, 1766, 200–1.

it'. It was in the power of the political establishment to prevent Dissenters from entering public offices, and this was a bar that Stebbing and his numerous congenial souls strongly supported. Yet even writers such as Stebbing rather consistently denounced the use of violence for forcing people's consciences to uniform patterns of religious thought, even in cases in which persecution was in the interest of 'true religion'.¹²⁰

No matter how cautiously dictionaries handled the term toleration, and even if the term was easily 'cavilled at',¹²¹ defences of toleration also appeared. Some writers drew the conclusion that reason made toleration essential:¹²²

If both parties refuse to meet each other, and to walk together in a middle way, the weaker party must needs be tolerated. There is indeed a third way, by subverting the rejected side; but we believe, that in the present case it is so abhorrent to human reason and Christian charity, that we will not take it into consideration.

The author argued in favour of toleration in spite of the widely shared assumption, already stated by John Corbet in 1660, that¹²³

multiformity of religion publicly professed does not well comport with the spirit of this nation, which is free, eager, jealous, apt to animosities and jealousies, besides that it has ever had a strong propension [sic] to uniformity . . . toleration being not the daughter of amity but of enmity at least, in some degree, supposes the party tolerated to be a burden, . . .

Defoe ventured to write about 'the happy state' and 'heavenly principle of toleration' during the Schism Bill controversy of 1714, thus searching for a divine justification for protecting Dissenters from religious discrimination. According to Defoe, an establishment of toleration would immediately have led to social harmony, people being able to attend different Churches yet working together to foster economy. Indeed, Defoe maintained that 'real absolute toleration' of both different religions and diversity within the same religion was the best means of preserving the national Church. He also provided a distinct counter-concept for toleration. According to Defoe, persecution demonstrated the dark side of human nature. Interesting is his statement that persecution 'obstructs all progress in knowledge, or advancement of learning and sciences'. Although Defoe no more than his contemporaries should be seen as a future-oriented believer in progress, seventeenth-century intellectual developments had increased confidence in the possibility of progress. Defoe's argument was actually rather commonplace among defenders of toleration, pointing to the stability and welfare of Holland, an idealised country where 'men enjoy a full and impartial toleration'.¹²⁴

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120 Stebbing, *An Essay Concerning Civil Government*, 1724, 170, 176–7.

121 Bolingbroke, *A Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 35.

122 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 36; Toleration to dissenters was also vindicated in *Whigs and Tories United: Or, the Interest of Great-Britain Considered* (1714), 12.

123 *Three Questions of Present Importance*, 1702, 36.

124 [Defoe], *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, 1714, 5–6, 29, 38, 44; Other defenders of dissenters during the Schism Bill controversy included *Whigs and Tories United*, 1714, 12.

A writer who advocated limited toleration as a compromise between religious persecution and full freedom of religious thought probably best reflects the reality of religious toleration in eighteenth-century England. On the one hand, he maintained, in accordance with Locke and other defenders of toleration, that liberty of conscience was a primary natural right that could not be disputed. Violence only prevented the expression of real thoughts whereas it could not change people's beliefs. On the other hand, he considered the tendency to persecute another feature natural for human beings. The reconciliation of these two assumptions formed the major reason for limited toleration:¹²⁵

... as every man has a good opinion of himself and his party, he pretends, that an unbounded liberty ought to be granted to him alone, and that it ought to be denied to all such as are of an opinion contrary to his. Others, again, run into the other extreme, and assert, that an equal privilege ought to be allowed to all parties; and so, that error should have as much law of its side, as the truth ... If the former be followed, there will never be toleration, nor peace, among men; by reason everyone will pretend, that the point wherein he differs from his adversaries, is of too great importance, ever to suffer him to bear with men of contrary sentiments ... If we side with the latter, we hamper ourselves in the most dreadful consequences; because it necessarily follows, from the principle of universal toleration, that the course of error will never be stopped, nor blasphemy hindered; ...

Aware of the threats to toleration posed by High-Church attacks such as Sacheverell's, the writer yet demanded that toleration should be carefully observed once it had been awarded.¹²⁶

In the early 1720s, toleration was most strongly advocated by the radical republican press. These anticlerical papers might state, for instance, that 'every religion which refuses to tolerate other religions, charges itself, by so doing, with tyranny and imposture'.¹²⁷ Despite constituting only a tiny and unrepresentative minority, even an anomaly,¹²⁸ the followers of Locke and Shaftesbury were visible in contemporary discourse, advocating a radical view of the relationship between the state and subject. Being a good subject was increasingly seen as an ability to contribute to the political community, not as the right choice of Church:¹²⁹

the magistrate has nothing to do with speculations that purely concern another life: Nor is it of any consequence to him, whether his subjects have a greater fondness for a cloak or a surplice: Their affection to the political power, and their capacity to serve it, are only to be consulted and encouraged.

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125 *Le Parterre de Fleurs*, 1710, 111, 113–14.

126 *Le Parterre de Fleurs*, 1710, 116.

127 [Trenchard and Gordon], *A Collection of all the Humorous Letters*, No. 5, 1721.

128 Clark 1988, 279, 289.

129 Gordon, *The Character of an Independent Whig*, 1719, 8–9; For an extended discussion on 'good citizenship', see Burt 1992, from 41 onwards.

In the mid-1730s, viewpoints in favour of limited toleration, yet opposing any extensions of it, were again on the agenda when the possibility of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was discussed. Presbyterian sermons and writings dating from the time of the Interregnum were reprinted in an attempt to demonstrate how Dissenters had been willing to deny toleration to any deviant religious group once in a dominant position. The pseudonymous 'sincere lover of present constitution' argued that Dissenters had good reason to be satisfied with that 'indulgence and toleration' English legislation had already granted them and that no one was ready to deny.¹³⁰ Warburton wrote in his famous defence of an alliance between Church and state in favour of the prevailing system which included both an established Church and 'a full toleration to all the rest' who were, however, to be strictly excluded from public offices. According to Warburton's argument, which opposed any change in the Test and Corporation Acts, allowing Dissenters to enter positions with political power would have been the beginning of serious mischiefs to the entire society.¹³¹

A writer more sympathetic towards the repeal of the laws discriminating against Dissenters in political life might cite the writings of Bolingbroke who had once stated, rather over-optimistically, that no Englishman wished to make Dissenters' lives more difficult, as 'experience has removed prejudices' towards them. According to Bolingbroke, indulgence had created the results that persecution could never reach. Some favourers of toleration seem to have believed that the policy of toleration, as opposed to the policy of force, was leading to a reconciliation between various lines of Protestantism and even to a disappearance of distinctions.¹³² Other defenders of toleration were pleased with what they saw as an extension of people's rights in religious matters by writers such as Locke, now openly recommended and cited, and a growing conviction that persecution for religious reasons was against both the teachings of Christianity, the principles of the law of nature and the welfare of the state. The reign of Anne was already seen by some of these observers of the late 1730s as a reverse in this basically positive progress of toleration.¹³³

In principle, the idea of a natural right to toleration had hardly become more acceptable by the 1750s. In practise, however, by the mid-eighteenth century, the discriminatory features of the legislation could be avoided in a number of ways.¹³⁴ From the 1760s onwards, toleration to religious dissent was increasingly considered an interest of the state, as fears for political consequences of religious pluralism were in decline. Toleration was still understood to involve serious risks, but, at the same time, it was seen by many as a means of decreasing the dangers of conflict. Some thinkers followed Locke by interpreting civil and spiritual as separate but parallel spheres on the basis that civil interventions in religious matters were unlikely to produce desired

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130 Grey, *A Caveat Against the Dissenters*, 1736, 1.

131 Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State*, 1736, 63.

132 *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious Animosity*, 1736, 17.

133 *Observations on the Conduct of the Tories, the Whigs, and the Dissenters*, 1739, 11–12, 16–17.

134 Trevor-Roper 1991, 402.

effects. Others argued for the same on the basis that every individual had a natural right to search for religious truth, or, for that matter, any truth, on his own. Freedom of thought was represented as a specifically Protestant right.¹³⁵

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135 Miller 1994, 303–4, 312, 314.

■ Associations between Freethinking and Political Pluralism

Semantic field of freethinking

At the end of the seventeenth century, English intellectuals were involved in two conflicts that were also reflected in political discourse. One of these is known as the 'battle of the books', the other as the deist controversy. In the former dispute between the ancients and moderns, the ancients maintained that ancient wisdom remained superior in all branches of knowledge, whereas the moderns suggested that human knowledge could increase. In the latter confrontation between Anglicans and deists, Protestant Christianity seemed to be at stake.¹

Favourable conditions for an increase in the popularity of deism had been provided by the Civil War which had first created possibilities for freedom of discussion. At least in London, the public had been able to choose their religious community and express religious feelings more openly once a multitude of separatist congregations had emerged.² The existence and increase in the number of persistently vocal religious sects weakened the status of the traditional theory of uniformity. The Civil War, and potentially also the Scientific Revolution, fostered republican and to some extent even democratic thought, particularly among religious radicals, and provided the critics of the established order with an ideological basis. Furthermore, those travelling on the Continent had observed that several religious truths existed side by side,³ though seldom tolerated within one country.

Most Restoration politicians strived for uniformity. Nevertheless, scepticism, rationalism, natural religion and deism became fashionable in some elite circles after the Restoration. The anticlerical writings of these radical freethinkers, a considerable amount of which came into circulation after the lapse of pre-publication censorship in 1695, as well as their uncontrollable coffee house discussions, formed an unprecedented challenge to the worldview cherished by the Anglican Church. These publications and discussions dared to question the ideal of a confessional state and even to suggest that the Church should be seen

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1 These two intellectual disputes were connected but in a rather surprising manner: whereas the deists were inclined towards the ancients, Anglicanism was defended most actively by the moderns. The capability of Anglicanism to reconcile its doctrine with mechanical natural philosophy meant that Christian orthodoxy in its English form allowed, at least potentially, the idea of progress, whereas the radical deists, though 'modern' in many other aspects, preferred assumptions of a timeless past. Levine 1995, 220-1.

2 Burke 1989, 42-3.

3 Jacob 1981, 6, 29-30, 32, 47; Horstmann 1980, 85-6, 146; Hill 1995, 54.

merely as an institution of social and political convenience.⁴

Continental trends of thought contributed to the rise of English deism, while specifically English features also developed. Whereas Pierre Bayle's deistical arguments for toleration were negative and sceptical, the English deists thought more positively, asserting that a natural knowable basis for human belief and action existed. That basis had merely been obscured by censorship and the intolerant clergy.⁵ To some extent at least, the deists vindicated secularisation by calling for a novel belief structure independent of the Church and political authority.⁶ When criticising the religious monopoly of the Church of England, they advocated the toleration of intellectual and religious pluralism within the political system.⁷

Clergymen of the 1690s became concerned about what they saw as the spread of atheism at every level of society. Orthodox writers were agreed that the time in which they lived was one of conspicuous irreligion. Freethinkers were known to organise suspect meetings at coffee houses, and such meetings were held as indicative of numerous underground gatherings. Consequently, freethinkers were accused of forming a cabal or party. There may indeed have been cooperation within the tiny circle of freethinkers, but they never became particularly organised, not to say conspiratorial. Neither did they ever achieve popular support worth mentioning, but rather remained an anomaly.

The small but vociferous group of radical freethinkers consisted of persons such as Anthony Collins, Matthew Tindal and John Toland. These men followed ideas introduced during the political and scientific revolutions, criticising established theology, the prevalent Anglican interpretation of Newton's work and the political activities of the clergy. Instead, they adopted a pantheistic-materialistic conception of a universe where matter was in continuous motion without divine intervention. In politics, they advocated a secular order and representative system, where the ultimate source of power was the people, not God. The deistic belief in the ability of human reason to achieve religious truth could thus be extended to the lesser sphere of politics as well.

No matter how modest the real threat of freethinking was, it appeared as dangerous in the eyes of the establishment. This was not only due to its unorthodox theology. Equally threatening was its association with radical republican politics. Such an association was reasonably justified, given the involvement of Toland, for instance, in propagating both republican and pantheistic thought. From the political point of view it is noteworthy that Toland belonged to a radical faction of Whigs.⁸ Some later republicans

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4 Stromberg 1954, 132; Redwood 1976, 32, 35, 41, 221; Jacob 1976, 201–2; Champion 1992, 7.

5 Popkin 1991, 210–11. Popkin, unlike Levine, suggests that English deists believed in the possibility of progress.

6 Force 1981, 227.

7 Champion 1992, 230.

8 Jacob 1976, 205–6, 208–9, 227, 230; Jacob 1981, 22, 25, 62, 65, 80, 88, 151; Harrison 1990, 88–9; Russell 1993, 664–5; Levine 1995, 229; For a connection between religious and political radicalism, see also Clark 1985, chapter 5 and Champion 1992, 13–15, 23, who has suggested that republicanism and freethinking were 'conceptually' interrelated; for freethinkers being characterised as a 'party', see *The True Patriot* as quoted in *GM*, Vol. XVI, January 1746, Reel 139.

propagated the gospel of freethinking as well. Trenchard and Gordon, for instance, insisted that people should be educated to think freely and to appreciate other men's right to do so. They depicted a constant interest in events and debate on all political and religious issues as essential.⁹

In early eighteenth-century England, liberty of thought was debated more anxiously than perhaps in any other historical period.¹⁰ Margaret Jacob has provided the clearest model for interpreting this debate. She has argued that, both the religious and political establishments were in the hands of Newtonians who regarded Newton's cosmic order as controlled by the will of God, a natural model for a Christian human society. Political power had been given into the hands of the natural rulers by Providence. The Newtonians were usually moderate Whigs who, in spite of some shared ideological background, opposed the radical freethinking wing of Whiggism. These establishment Whigs supported moderate Anglicanism and constitutional monarchy and rejected both the radicalism of religious sectarianism and democratic republicanism. Their opponents the Tories had formerly been devoted to divine right theories but had turned into populist critics of Whig governments. The Tories were devoted Anglicans who based their theories of society on non-mechanical systems of nature. They opposed both the radicals and the Newtonian Whigs, considering both as one entity and charging all Whigs for favouring freethinking, irreligion, libertines, atheists and deists. Such accusations were not completely unfounded, as the radical dimensions of urban Whig culture had offered favourable circumstances for the growth of religious heterodoxy.¹¹

The governing elite, which perceived freethinking as an agent dissolving the established order, tried to protect itself against the scepticism of the freethinkers by advocating uniformity based either on orthodox Anglicanism, like most Tories did, or on rhetoric of unique English liberty, which was a favourite topic for most Whigs. Attitudes opposing heterodoxy became reflected in contemporary terminology. Derogatory labels such as deist, atheist and libertine came into common use; yet the exact meaning of each became confused in the controversy. Even the freethinkers themselves were not always certain what their own denomination 'freethinker' actually stood for. Hence they could be criticised for using a term that was indefinite and could be used in various manners and contexts.¹²

By the early 1690s, the concept freethinking emerged as a response to the necessity of having an up-to-date denomination for those who denounced traditional Christian values. The term was first used for a loose, tiny, prophetic sect which made a living in scribbling. This neologism became associated with atheism, and its centrality is illustrated by being called a 'modish phrase' and the period being characterised as a 'freethinking and freer practising age'.¹³ In

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9 Robbins 1959, 120–1.

10 Horstmann 1980, 146.

11 Jacob 1981, 65, 91, 93, 95–6, 98–9, 118; See also Dickinson 1981, 34, and Clark 1985, 46, 123–5.

12 Lund 1995, 5–6.

13 *OED*: free-thinker, free-thinking, free-thought (1708, 1716); Horstmann 1980, 13, 140;

the 1720s, Mandeville made a figure representing traditionalist Anglicanism speak about 'these wicked times of scoffers and freethinkers',¹⁴ and, in 1740, the governmental organ the *Daily Gazetteer* wrote about 'this freethinking age'.¹⁵

Despite its common use in politico-religious discourse, the term freethinker was listed in only six of the consulted dictionaries and in only three published in the period 1700-1750¹⁶ - a fact illustrating the disputed dirty-word character of the term and possibly a shared willingness to deny the existence of the entire phenomenon of growing religious diversity. It demonstrates how slowly politico-religious neologisms could become 'officially' incorporated in the English language. The first reference to freethinking in an English dictionary occurred in the work of Chambers (1728), who presented it as a synonym for deist.¹⁷ It was Fenning (1741), who also included new entries such as 'coffee house' and 'tolerance', that first defined the term in an entry of its own:

Freethinker a person who is not biassed by any prejudice; a term, perhaps improperly, assumed and given to persons who deny Revelation, and are no friends to Christian religion.

Fenning's basic definition is positive, reflecting an early Enlightenment ideal of independent reasoning as opposed to blind adherence to party leadership. However, this positive approach is accompanied by an awareness of the disputed position of the term. The term was commonly used in a highly derogatory sense, questioning the acceptability of the entire phenomenon of freethinking. No dictionary published after 1740 could omit this latter sense which was much more familiar to the public at large.¹⁸ Not all authors wrote as positively about freethinking as Fenning. The duality within his definition illustrates the inherent ambiguity of this much disputed term.

Terminological innovations incorporated by preceding dictionaries could not be omitted by Johnson (1755). Faithful to his traditionalist world-view, Johnson offered only the pejorative sense of freethinker, considering it synonymous to libertine, 'a contemner of religion', and leaving out references to more extended usages of the word. Johnson's quotations for freethinker were borrowed from Addison and Swift, the first representing freethinker as a modern equivalent of atheist and the latter ridiculing freethinking logic for causing the entire order of society to collapse. These restricted definitions suggest that, at least in Johnson's interpretation, freethinker was initially a

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Miller 1993, 599-601; Russell 1993, 672. Differing timings have been given in previous research for the first occurrence of the term, the earliest being Jacob's 1692. Jacob 1976, 202-3. Toland was called a 'candid freethinker' in 1697. Horstmann 1980, 13; Miller 1993, 599-601; Russell 1993, 672.

14 Mandeville, 'An Essay on Charity, and Charity-Schools', [1723], in *The Fable of the Bees*, 287.

15 *The Daily Gazetteer*, No. 1669, 24 October 1740.

16 Each dictionary listed in the introduction was checked for the word freethinker and related terminology.

17 This synonymy was also stated in Wesley 1764.

18 Freethinking was briefly defined also in Martin 1749 and *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753.

purely religious term and remained so, even though it had occasionally been used in political discourse to conceptualise the phenomenon of growing diversity in politics.

It is argued in this chapter that the early eighteenth-century understanding of growing political pluralism was related to negative reactions to pluralism in religion, including the rise of freethinking. The rise of political pluralism, political consciousness and participation in political discourse occurred concurrently with the growth of alternative forms of Christianity and the emergence of deism. Because of the intimate connection between religious and political discourses, religious freethinking and political pluralism were conceived as parallel developments if not as two forms of the same phenomenon. This latter interpretation was supported by the suspect politico-religious activities of figures such as Toland. Both religious freethinking and rising political pluralism were part of a process of modernisation that inspired contemporaries with a fear of innovation and change, and hence it was logical to conceptualise them, to some extent, with the same terminology. Furthermore, as John Redwood has pointed out, political parties became involved in the deist controversy, as many issues could be debated by asking whether the policies proposed by each party were leading the nation closer to or further from God. In such debates, politicians eagerly turned to accusations of atheism as a weapon against their political opponents.¹⁹ In ideological disputes, it was conventional to use religious terminology, to equate freethinking with atheism and atheism with anarchy.²⁰

The use of the religion-based neologism freethinker in political contexts demonstrates the association between religious and political fragmentation. The vocabulary of religious pluralism was employed to describe political pluralism. Connotations linked with the former were also linked with the latter, reinforcing ideas of a unitary society and revealing prejudices towards the assumed decline in the status of the established Church and the growth of political diversity. Addison gave one of the best characterisations of the early eighteenth-century state of political diversity, condensing much of contemporary understanding of political pluralism²¹

there is scarce any man in England, of what denomination soever, that is not a freethinker in politics, and has not some particular notions of his own, by which he distinguishes himself from the rest of the community. Our island, which was formerly called a nation of saints, may now be called a nation of statesmen.

Addison was suggesting that Englishmen – as opposed to foreigners – thought freely about political questions, held dramatically diverse political views and were thereby separated from one another. In a sense, many English thinkers had

19 Redwood 1976, 36.

20 Phiddian 1989, 76.

21 Addison, F53, 22 June 1716; The phrase 'nation of saints' probably refers to the religious sectaries of the Civil War period.

abandoned religious enthusiasm of the Civil War in favour of political speculation, a fact that certainly sounded like freethinking. Addison's expression 'freethinker in politics' was not merely metaphorical²² – the spheres of religion and politics being closely interrelated – but an easily understandable way of conceptualising political pluralism. It never became widely applied but was accepted by contemporaries, reappearing as late as in 1757 in the title *Political Freethinker*.

Addison's reference to a transformation of England from 'a nation of saints' into 'a nation of statesmen', which was repeated in an essay of the *Craftsman* in 1729 with a slightly less critical undertone,²³ was an attempt to conceptualise secularisation and the connected growth of political pluralism. Addison's argument receives support from some recent studies on secularisation of politics. The proportion of religious titles turned into decline in the late seventeenth century, whereas the secular press developed into a considerable competitor to the pulpit as a distributor of news, as an informer of 'statesmen'. Coffee houses – frequented by freethinkers as well – appeared better places for collecting information than church-yards after services. For the newspaper press, unlike the pulpit, nothing was completely sacred. Periodical publications created a sense of an accelerated tempo in the affairs of the world, each paper necessarily containing 'new' information that those willing to keep themselves informed should consult. As a consequence of an addiction to news, a mental change gradually occurred so that being informed in everyday events became more important than being wise in eternal truths.²⁴ This, in turn, could be interpreted as freethinking.

As the exact meaning of the neologism freethinking had not been fixed, and as the dictionaries which dared to contain an entry for it disagreed on its meaning, the term could easily be used for various purposes. Likewise, its synonymous expressions carried conflicting connotations that could be exploited in political debates. The most important synonyms for freethinking were atheism, libertinism and deism.

In early modern England, atheism in its modern sense as a total denial of the existence of God was practically impossible. At least proclaiming such was out of question. Widespread application of the term in politico-religious discourse cannot thus be considered an indication of a proliferation of atheism in the modern sense. The almost universal concern for the danger of growing atheism rather reflects the strength of commonly shared traditionalist values.

The eighteenth century opened with a widespread feeling of an unprecedented growth in atheism and deism. This concern is reflected in the

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22 Metaphors can, of course, also be illuminating. They can be markers of some creative concept giving access to ideas and perceptions that might otherwise be difficult to trace. In fact, metaphors can even offer a key to understanding the whole of a text. Nash 1989, 145. Metaphors provide a means to extend vocabulary and produce new nuances of meaning to describe novelties in political circumstances, either to praise or condemn. The growth of political pluralism was a phenomenon that could be conceptualised – and condemned – through metaphorical expressions.

23 C170, 30 August 1729.

24 Eisenstein 1984, 93; Sommerville 1992, 182–3.

papers of men as diverse as John Evelyn, William Nicolson, Thomas Hearne and John Byrom. As an aged man, Evelyn spent much time in religious contemplation, but that does not alone explain a conspicuous awareness of the rise of atheism appearing in the last volume of his diary. Evelyn frequented Anglican masses and reported having heard sermons and catechisings that specifically concentrated on the rise of atheism. He had lived through seventeenth-century crises but still maintained in the early 1700s that his country had never experienced 'a more profane, and atheistical age: most of the youth [are] atheist[s], theists [=deists], Arians and sectaries'. Atheism appeared to the old man as 'wickedness began to prevail exceedingly in England'. Concrete measures against atheism such as the foundation of societies for the reformation of manners were also recorded in the diary.²⁵

Nicolson, as the Bishop of Carlisle and a Low-Church member of the House of Lords, was another informed observer of intellectual trends. He reported in 1705 a reply to the Queen's speech in the House of Lords in which 'the prevailing growth of atheism' had been particularly lamented.²⁶ On the traditionalist Tory side, Hearne together with his High-Church and Jacobite friends genuinely saw the growth of atheism as a threat to the Church.²⁷ Byrom, another diarist sympathetic to Jacobitism, once received a letter from his father urging him to avoid everything connected with atheism, that 'snare of the devil, thrown among sharp wits and ingenuous youths to oppose their reason to revelation, and because they cannot apprehend reason, to make them sceptics, and so entice them to read other books than the Bible and the comments upon it'.²⁸

In periodical literature, proclamations of 'a damned atheistical age' continued to appear in the 1720s, though some writers questioned the basis of such claims.²⁹ In sermons, atheism was depicted as one of the greatest threats to the Church and entire society,³⁰ and its growth remained an important topic, being raised in connection with the rebellion of 1745, for instance: 'Atheism and irreligion, infidelity and vice, have made a large and formidable progress in our land. This deluge of impiety must have ill effects, as it tends to increase and inflame party-rage'.³¹ Throughout the century, atheism was condemned as a desperate alternative,³² but it continued to be regarded as a universal problem by a considerable majority of the political elite.

Ever since its first appearance in the mid-sixteenth century, the term atheism had been used to refer to 'godless' attitudes and behaviour that the orthodox feared. It was used in a broad, loose and abusive sense. It could be used to refer

25 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, Vol. V, 4 February 1700, 378, 25 March 1700, 390–1, May 1700, 408, 26 July 1702, 510–11, 31 October 1703, 548.

26 *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 6 December 1705, 320.

27 *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 6 September 1706, Vol. I, 286.

28 Edward Byrom to John Byrom, Manchester 16 September 1709, *Selections from the Journals and Papers of John Byrom*, 33.

29 [Concanen], *The Speculatist*, 30 April 1726.

30 Laurence, *Christian Religion the best Friend to Civil Government*, 1717, 6.

31 Warren, *Religion and Loyalty inseparable*, 1745, 8.

32 Mawson, *The Mischiefs of Division*, 1746, 26.

to open irreligion, and it was a brand for those who questioned arguments supportive of theism and for those advocating non-religious theories of the origins of religion. However, the term was also used to describe phenomena that did not necessarily imply an enmity to religion: any deviation from orthodoxy, any cynical attitude towards Christian beliefs, or even any readiness to tolerate other beliefs. Traditionalist propagandists drew no distinctions between atheists, Socinians or Quakers but rather suggested that they were all results of schism, as illustrated by their shared opposition to the established truths of Church and state.

Orthodox writers created a stereotypical image of an atheist as one who questioned the existence of God, the authority of the Bible, the immortality of the soul, and the eternal life. An atheist was considered to prefer natural explanations, to reject the established religion as priestcraft and have a strong inclination to worldliness. When someone was accused of being an atheist, the implication was that he was assaulting fundamental Christian doctrines not merely through his writings but also through his deeds. Theoretical irreligion and behaviour breaking norms were considered necessarily linked.

Atheism was an inclusive concept offering a stereotype for describing various sins in thought and practice suspected of threatening religion. The inherited mixture of condemnatory attitudes enabled traditionalist polemicists to point to the potential atheism of views that at first sight appear as completely innocent or non-religious. The concept enabled them to express concerns about any development that might have religious implications. The paranoid fear of infidelity made writers use the term to describe harmless secularist tendencies in areas which coincided with the stereotype of an atheist, and politics was certainly such an area. In the background loomed a fear that any religious doubt could turn into overt irreligion. The use of imprecise expressions against condemned atheists was also facilitated by the fact that distinguishing the heterodox from the orthodox had, in a time of growing religious diversity, become difficult.

From the point of view of political discourse, it is significant that an atheist was regarded as an advocate of Machiavellian thought. He could thus be presumed to favour radical Whiggism or republicanism,³³ and, consequently, a Whig could easily be accused of atheism. A model case was offered by Toland, who was both a Whig and heterodox. Toland himself, of course, denounced atheism and claimed that the growth of atheism was a consequence of defects in the religious system introduced by priestcraft.³⁴

In political polemic, atheism was a serviceable term of derision, one of the strongest available, even though its frequent use reduced its polemical power. Tory propaganda did not fail to portray the Whigs as 'an illiterate, atheistical party' or claim that there were 'Whig-libertines' and 'Whig-atheists' working

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33 Redwood 1976, 29–30, 221; Hunter 1985, 135–6, 138–9, 141–2, 153–4, 156; Harrison 1990, 34; Lund 1995, 6–7; Hill 1995, 56; For the applicability of the term atheism, see also *The Old Whig*, No. 20, 24 July 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, July 1735, Reel 135.

34 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysteries*, 1696, 176.

among them.³⁵ Swift suggested that this Whiggish atheism was not so much a matter of religion but of policy. The Whigs had united with atheists and freethinkers in a conspiracy because they shared political views and hardly differed in religious affairs either. Swift and other traditionalist polemicists were determined to find connections between all forms of religious and political dissent.³⁶

Locke and his followers paid attention to the status of atheism as a term of abuse. In his *Two Treatises of Government*, denying Robert Filmer's accusations of atheism, Locke suggested that Filmer himself was abusing Christianity to advance his own interest and charging with atheism those who declined to submit to his doctrines.³⁷ In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke referred to the tendency among the supporters of an established opinion to charge those who dared to dissent with terms such as atheist. Locke denounced such usage.³⁸ Atheism he condemned as a crime and sort of madness that deserved no toleration.³⁹ The *Independent Whig*, a populariser of Lockean thought, also lamented the way men of sound knowledge were so generally accused of atheism. The anticlerical journal itself, however, made repeated use of the same expression, accusing High-Church clergymen of being worse than atheists.⁴⁰

The meaning of atheism did not go through noteworthy changes during the first half of the eighteenth century; the relevance of atheism in political polemic simply declined as secularisation took further steps. Atheism was not defined by every dictionary, but those who ventured to write an entry agreed on the definition. Atheism was 'the opinions and practice of those that deny the being of a God' and atheist 'one who holds and maintains such wicked doctrines; a godless fellow, a miscreant, an infidel'. In addition to consisting of 'disbelief' and 'wicked tenets', atheism was depicted generally as a 'damnable opinion'.⁴¹ According to Chambers (1728) and Gordon-Bailey (1730), an atheist had 'no religion, true or false'. Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) attempted to demonstrate the illogical character of atheism by referring to its disbelief in 'a first, immaterial cause of all things' and its vain attempts to demonstrate the impossibility of God. Johnson's (1755) quotations for atheism could hardly have been more condemnatory. In sermons, theological writings and poetry, he found a great number of references to atheism. At least two of these quotations also had political implications, stating, in the words of Tillotson, 'it is the common interest of mankind, to punish all those who would seduce men to atheism', and, in the words of Bentley, that 'no atheist, as such, can be a true

35 Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 29; [Davenant], *The True Picture of a Modern Whig*, 1701, 34.

36 Lund 1995, 9.

37 Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690, I, §154.

38 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 1.2.25.

39 Yolton 1993, 23.

40 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW5, 17 February 1720; IW18, 18 May 1720; IW22, 15 June 1720; IW42, 2 November 1720.

41 Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; Chambers 1728; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737; Fenning 1741; Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755.

friend, an affectionate relation, or a loyal subject'. Resisting atheism was presented as a concern of society as a whole, and atheism was seen to be depriving a person of social qualities essential for a loyal subject. No attempt was made to define atheism without simultaneously condemning it.

Atheism might appear in connection with the term libertinism in texts representing any line of thought. The extremely pejorative connotations of the two terms then supported each other.⁴² Like atheism, libertinism carried connotations of a sceptical attitude towards the established conceptions of religion, nature and society. Unlike the nearly synonymous freethinker, it was defined in most dictionaries, which were also rather unanimous as to the meaning of this older expression. Etymologically, the term was explained to have emerged during the abhorred sectarian phase of the Protestant Reformation. Moréri-Collier (1701), for instance, told how libertines had originally been

a sect of heretics . . . who about 1525 divulged their errors in Holland and Brabant. They maintained, that whatsoever is done by men, is done by the spirit of God: and from thence concluded, that there was no sin, but those that thought it so, because all came from God.

Chambers (1728) and Dyche-Pardon (1740/1750) added that, for the libertines, 'religion [had been] a mere state trick', thus illustrating a political connection of the otherwise religious term. Such an association naturally facilitated the use of the term in political propaganda.

In addition to connotations parallel with those of atheism, libertinism also had a specifically sexual sense,⁴³ referring to licentious behaviour. This was expressed indirectly in definitions where a libertine appeared as 'a loose and dissolute epicure', 'a dissolute, or lewd liver', 'one of a loose and debauched life and principles', 'one who pays no regard to the precepts of religion', 'one who acts without restraint', or 'one of a loose life, or careless of religion'. Libertinism meant 'a dissolute life, and conversation', 'sensuality, licentiousness', 'irreligion', and 'false liberty of belief and manners, which will have no other dependance but on particular fancy and passion; a living at large, or according to a person's inclination/following one's own pleasures, without regard to the divine laws'. Neither is considerable change observable in definitions for libertinism. It was continuously understood in pejorative religious terms.⁴⁴

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42 See, for instance, [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, 176; [Dennis], *The Danger of Priestcraft*, 1702, 9; [Rogers], *The Republican Conclave: or, the Present State of Whiggism in England*, 1707, 14; *Reflexions upon the Politeness of Manners*, 1707, The Epistle Dedicatory; [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW*, Dedication, 1721, xli; *IW*42, 2 November 1720; *C40*, 24 April 1727.

43 Hill 1995, 61.

44 Coles 1701; Cocker-Hawkins 1704 and 1724; Phillips-Kersey 1706; *Glossographia* 1707; Kersey 1715; Bullokar-Browne 1719; Gordon-Bailey 1730; Kersey 1731; Bailey 1733; [Defoe] 1737; Dyche-Pardon 1740/1750; Fenning 1741; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Johnson 1755; Wesley 1764.

The term libertine did have its political uses, as already seen in the expression 'Whig-libertines'. In a comedy acted in a London theatre in 1720, a character abusing religion for political purposes and admiring constant change was branded with the opprobrious title of a libertine.⁴⁵ In contrast, in the republican *Independent Whig* of the same year, the notion that libertines were irreligious and completely mistaken was questioned.⁴⁶ Libertinism also came up in public discourse when Mandeville was accused for libertinism by the Grand Jury of Middlesex after the publication of his *Fable of the Bees*.⁴⁷ The attitude of the *Craftsman* towards libertinism was more conventional. It was mentioned together with vices such as corruption and luxury that had led to a loss of liberty and destruction of the Roman constitution. The organ of the opposition pointed to an inevitable connection between these developments,⁴⁸ suggesting that prevalent libertinism endangered the free constitution of Britain. In other words, libertinism was presented as a symptom of a severe political crisis.

Like libertinism, deism was a well-known and uniformly defined yet ambiguously used religious term that occasionally entered political texts. A new phase in the history of English deism started with the publication of Toland's *Christianity not Mysteriorious* (1696) which was followed by a fifty-year controversy between suspected deists and their opponents. The major argument of the tiny deist direction of thought was that moral order was based on God-given laws of nature, not on revelation or organised religion.⁴⁹ Such views were, of course, entirely unacceptable to the orthodox majority.

Deism was often associated with the assumed growth of atheism, and an awareness of its existence added to fears of the growth of irreligion. Chambers (1728), a freethinker himself, argued: 'The number of deists is daily increasing. In England, a great part of the men of speculation and letters, are pretended to incline that way'. In reality, deism was a heterogeneous phenomenon, consisting of extreme manifestations of rationalising tendencies within religious thought. Attempts to demonstrate the rationality of religion might turn into deism once the sufficiency of revelation as a sole source of religious truth was questioned. Deistical ideas sometimes rose among the orthodox themselves. Most deists, however, were freethinkers who shared radical thoughts such as strong anticlericalism, a belief in the positive effects of toleration, and an insistence on the right of free enquiry. In spite of a genuine belief in the existence of God and acceptance of a moral law by most deists, they were believed to question all revelation and miracles, and to represent God as a mere first cause of the universe.⁵⁰

Few early eighteenth-century dictionaries failed to define deism.⁵¹ Moréri-

45 Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 10.

46 [Trenchard and Gordon], *IW*45, 23 November 1720.

47 Mandeville, 'A Vindication of the Book . . .', [1724], in *The Fable of the Bees*, 388.

48 *C4*, 16 December 1726.

49 Webb 1992, 161.

50 Redwood 1976, 30; Rupp 1986, 277; Harrison 1990, 62; Levine 1995, 229.

51 Cocker-Hawkins 1704 and *Glossographia* 1707; Cocker-Hawkins's edition of 1724 already contained an entry for deists, defined conventionally as 'those that will not own the divinity of Jesus Christ, or his equality with God the Father; Antitrinitarians'.

Collier (1701) already considered it a universal and undeniable phenomenon:

Deists A certain sort of men who abound among all sects of Christians, who believe that there is one God, providence, virtue, and vice, the immortality of the soul, and rewards and punishments after death; but believe nothing else of the Christian religion, nor any other.

Such a definition was a remarkably neutral one, even though the defects of deistic conceptions and their undesirability in a Christian society were evident. The definition was modified by Gordon-Bailey (1730), for instance, with a reference to the emphasis on reason typical of deists who 'reject revelation, and believe no more than what natural light discovers to them'. The shortest definition of the damnable tenets was provided by Coles (1701) who defined deists plainly as 'antitrinitarians', as persons who denied one of the most fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Johnson (1755) generalised the meaning of the term a bit, defining a deist as 'a man who follows no particular religion, but only acknowledges the existence of God, without any other article or faith'. In other dictionaries, deism was often denounced in words that hardly distinguished it from atheism.⁵²

The only additions that appeared in dictionary entries for deism were Chambers's (1728) and Dyche-Pardon's (1740/1750) interpretation of deism and freethinking as synonymous expressions. Chambers also dared to introduce the major ideas of deism in an objective manner. He pointed out that the multiplicity of religions and weaknesses in defences of revelation made deists call for a return to the simplicity of nature and monotheism. The deists insisted that liberty of thinking and reasoning suffered from religion imposed upon people. Chambers was cautious to underscore that deists did not lack all religion but merely suggested that each person should have been allowed to serve God in the way he considered the right one. Dyche-Pardon also referred to anticlericalism characteristic of deists. Dyche did not dedicate to freethinking a separate entry in his dictionary, which suggests that he considered freethinking merely a new English synonym for deism. For him, a deist was 'a professor, encourager, and supporter of deism' who might also be called a freethinker.

In politico-religious discourse, deism was employed less frequently than other terms of the semantic field of freethinking. It was not defined but usually appeared in the same context with other terms of irreligion such as atheism and libertinism, interpretable as their synonym rather than as an independent doctrine.⁵³ On the traditionalist side, deism was listed as a heresy among other

52 Martin 1749; *A Pocket Dictionary* 1753; Wesley 1764.

53 See, for instance, *Reflexions upon the Politeness of Manners*, 1707, The Epistle Dedicatory; [Leslie], *The Second Part of the Wolf Stript of His Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 3; 'An Elegy Balladwise on the Death of John Dolben, Esq., who departed this life at Epsom, on Monday May 28th, 1710', *A Tory Pill, to Purge Whig Melancholy*, 1715, 12; Swift regarded atheism, deism and freethinking as near synonyms, a freethinker being a disguised atheist; Likewise, Addison wrote about 'infidels, whether distinguished by the title of deist, atheist, or freethinker'. T111, 24 December 1709; According to C398, 16 February 1734, in *GM*, Vol. III, February 1734, Reel 134, deism was 'generally but a softer term for atheism'; Hunter 1985, 156.

heresies that threatened the English nation. It was presented as one of the terms of disguise used by the Whigs and Dissenters to hide their conspiracy.⁵⁴ In Tory propaganda of the 1700s, it was an easy way of blackening Whigs by depicting them as champions of 'republican deists' or listing them together with atheists, deists and commonwealthmen. Even in this kind of polemic, however, a distinction between real atheism and deism started to emerge.⁵⁵ On the Whiggish side, deism was a seldom used term likely to provoke suspicions in readers.⁵⁶ The deists themselves avoided the use of the denomination in their texts.

The meanings of the terms atheism, libertinism and deism were settled, though not always distinct from each other, in early eighteenth-century public discourse. In contrast, the meaning of the recent neologism freethinking was widely disputed between radicals, traditionalists and moderates. For the sake of comparison, contributions to the discourse on freethinking have been divided into respective groups in the following analysis. Introduced first will be some innovative definitions of freethinking put forward by radical writers. Next the traditionalist polemic against freethinking will be analysed, and then, establishment attitudes to freethinking. Finally, the analysis will contain further remarks on statements sympathetic towards freethinking. This division of contributions to the discourse on freethinking follows Jacob's model introduced above. Though somewhat simplistic, and possibly exaggerating the significance of the small group of freethinkers, Jacob's model is nevertheless helpful.

Innovative definitions of freethinking

Freethinking was no new phenomenon in the early eighteenth century; yet the publicity it achieved and reactions it caused were. Also new was the term itself, and its proper definition became an object of fierce dispute. The number of genuine freethinkers remained remarkably small throughout the period, although the politico-religious debate demonstrates that Collins, Toland and Tindal were widely read. The importance of these writers was often belittled, but they could still be perceived as threatening the very basis of Church and state.⁵⁷ Their writings certainly contributed to an idea of toleration, although a breakthrough could occur only after changes in attitudes among the orthodox.

When defining liberty in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke had dedicated considerable attention to a free man's power to think or not to think according to the preference of his own mind. He had also

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54 Atterbury, *A Letter to a Convocation-Man*, 1697, 2, 6.

55 [Davenant], *The Old and Modern Whig Truly Represented*, 1702, 2; [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 25; [Leslie], *The Second Part of the Wolf Stript of His Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, the subtitle; *The Glorious Life and Actions of St. Whigg*, 1708, 29.

56 Ryder wrote in his diary that many lawyers and physicians in London were inclined to deism. *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 11 December 1715, 148, and 2 January 1716, 161.

57 For the importance of the freethinkers, see Lund 1995, 10.

underscored an essential connection between freedom on the one hand and thought on the other: 'Liberty cannot be where there is no thought'.⁵⁸ Locke himself did not write about freethinking, but many of his disciples became important adherents of it, or at least they were categorised as such. Toland, for instance, first earned a reputation as a freethinker as a result of his controversial *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696) in which he endeavoured to demonstrate that 'the use of reason is not so dangerous in religion as it is commonly represented'.⁵⁹

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury, a pupil of Locke's and a patron of Toland's, also had close contact with the freethinking circle and knew continental radicals such as Bayle and Leclerc. Shaftesbury's philosophical writings, published in 1708-14, were conspicuous reminders of the existence of radical, chiefly Whiggish, intellectual undercurrents. Although Shaftesbury vindicated freethinking and freedom of speech, and neither was his own religion orthodox, he wished to distinguish himself from freethinkers such as Toland, Tindal and Collins in matters of religion. This attempt produced little result, as his treatises received a violent response both from the traditionalist Tories and from the moderate Whigs. What caused this reaction was not so much his sympathy towards principles of reason but rather his articulate demand for religious toleration, approval of freethinking, and his open disapproval of the persecution of Nonconformists.

In Shaftesbury's ideal state, the Church enjoyed no autonomous political power and was unable to compel people to conform. Shaftesbury discussed religion and morality as distinct from one another, and the language he used was secular to a great extent. Shaftesbury wanted religion to operate within society according to the principles of sociability and politeness, avoiding enthusiasm, intolerance and conflicts.⁶⁰ Likewise, Shaftesbury was capable of discussing religion, politics and morals as if they had few points of contact. His argument that there were natural differences in opinion among people in religion, politics and morals was also radical.⁶¹ Shaftesbury even dared to speculate on the dangerous question of whether it was impossible for an atheist to be virtuous.⁶²

In his *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm* (1708), Shaftesbury argued strongly in favour of an inevitability of the freedom of thought. In ancient Greece, for instance, 'visionaries and enthusiasts of all kinds were tolerated'. This

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58 Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, 2.21.8, 2.21.12.

59 [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, viii.

60 Horstmann 1980, 152, 155, 159; Sambrook 1988, 276; Champion 1992, 212; Klein 1994, 157-8, 284; Robbins 1959, 129, characterised Shaftesbury as optimistic, liberal and realistic, which is obviously an anachronistic overstatement.

61 [Anthony Ashley Cooper Earl of Shaftesbury], *Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour. In a Letter to a Friend*, 1709, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. I, 79-80. See also 123 on which Shaftesbury wrote about ethics and politics as if they were two separate things; In *Miscellaneous Reflections on the preceding Treatises*, 1714, in *Characteristicks*, vol. III, 271, he wrote about religion and politics as distinct: 'But whatever may be the state of controversy in our religion, or politic concerns, . . .'. On 310 he wrote on morals and politics as if they were separate.

62 [Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury], *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue, or Merit*, 1709, in *Characteristicks*, vol. I, 7.

toleration of contending sects had given rise to 'wonderful . . . harmony and temper'. Vindicating a secular basis for politics, Shaftesbury ironically suggested that the mixture of politics and religion and clerical calls for uniformity of his day were actually innovations:⁶³

a new sort of policy, which extends itself to another world, and considers the future lives and happiness of men rather than the present, has made us leap the bounds of natural humanity . . . And now uniformity in opinion (a hopeful project!) is looked on as the only expedient against this evil. The saving of souls is now the heroic passion of exalted spirits; and is become in a manner the chief care of the magistrate, and the very end of government itself.

In 1709, Shaftesbury advocated 'a freedom of raillery, a liberty in decent language to question every thing'. He despised the way the adherents of the High Church maintained that free speculation would destroy the Church and the whole of society.⁶⁴ In a treatise published posthumously in 1714, he concluded that 'there can be no rational belief but where comparison is allowed, examination permitted, and a sincere toleration established'. No authority on earth, not even the High-Church clergy, could stop people from thinking freely, however much they abused 'those naturally honest appellations of free-livers, freethinkers, latitudinarians, or whatever other character implies a largeness of mind and generous use of understanding'. For Shaftesbury, a freethinker was 'the noblest of characters'; 'variety of opinion was not to be cured'; and 'it was impossible all should be of the one mind'.⁶⁵ Shaftesbury's writings were an open vindication of pluralism in religious matters and possibly also in other spheres. It is no wonder his texts were declared more than twenty years later 'one of the chief causes of the infidelity of the present age' that formed a threat not only to Christianity but to 'all society and government'.⁶⁶

In 1713, the publication of Anthony Collins's *Discourse of Free-Thinking* initiated an even more widespread controversy. Collins built his work on discussions with London deists and published it at a time when the concept of freethinking was increasingly used in a derogatory sense. To counter this development, Collins conspicuously defined the concept in an extremely positive light, as representing rationality, toleration and free enquiry. The anticlerical tone of the treatise and its publication during an acute political crisis guaranteed a wide response,⁶⁷ including numerous other works expounding freethinking. In his book Collins defined freethinking as⁶⁸

63 [Shaftesbury], *A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*, 1708, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. I, 18–9; For similar arguments see *Sensus Communis*, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. I, 83–4 and *Miscellaneous Reflections*, 1714, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. III, 103.

64 [Shaftesbury], *Sensus Communis*, in *Characteristicks*, Vol. I, 1709, 69.

65 [Shaftesbury], *Miscellaneous Reflections*, 1714, in *Characteristicks*, vol. III, 104, 299, 305–6, 311, 319.

66 *Daily Courant*, 17 April 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, April 1735, Reel 135.

67 Rupp 1986, 264–5.

68 [Anthony Collins], *A Discourse of Free-Thinking, Occasion'd by The Rise and Growth of a Sect call'd Free-Thinkers*, 1713, 5.

the use of the understanding in endeavouring to find out the meaning of any proposition whatsoever, in considering the nature of the evidence for or against it, and in judging of it according to the seeming force and weakness of the evidence.

He vindicated individual liberty to think freely by using arguments that, in religious terms, were seemingly conventional. Collins was also a religious man in his own peculiarly unorthodox way. According to Collins's interpretation,⁶⁹

if the knowledge of some truths be required of us by God; if the knowledge of others be useful to society; if the knowledge of no truth be forbidden us by God, or hurtful to us; then we have a right to know, or may lawfully know, any truth whatsoever . . . we have a right to think freely, . . .

In his *Farther Discourse of Free-Thinking* (1713), Collins continued to denounce the suggested antichristianity of freethinking by referring to 'the freethinkers of old Israel, old Greece, and old Rome, who were the ornaments of their respective ages and countries'. In Collins's pantheistic interpretation, all of these ancient freethinking authors had agreed with the doctrines of Christianity and had posed no danger to the Church.⁷⁰

Much of Collins's two treatises concentrated on religious questions, but his freethinking notions also had political implications. Collins himself emphasised connections between various fields of enquiry and wished to show that his thesis was applicable to all of them,⁷¹ evidently including politics. From the political point of view, Collins supplied an interesting reply to the argument that 'to allow and encourage men to think freely, will produce endless divisions in opinion, and by consequence disorder'. Collins's unconventional point was that 'mere diversity of opinions has no tendency in nature to confusion'. Aware of the power of ancient examples, he once again referred to Greece where several groupings had existed side by side. In spite of disagreements even on fundamental principles, their diversity of opinions had never caused confusion. This ideal state had been achieved because people had allowed each other 'to think freely, and to have different opinions'. Implicitly pointing at the High-Church Tories, Collins made his arguments ever more provocative by claiming that 'confusion, disorder, and every evil work' were caused by restraints upon thinking, not by freethinking. Hereby Collins denied the right of the Church to set restrictions on thinking. He recommended liberty of thinking as a remedy to all disorders.⁷² In Collins's thought, freethinking, instead of abolishing society, was a beneficial phenomenon in which the people could place their hope.

Collins's *Farther Discourse of Free-Thinking* also contained claims that concerned popular participation in politics, a phenomenon that aroused conflicting passions among the governing elite. Collins was ruthlessly

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69 [Collins], *A Discourse of Free-Thinking*, 1713, 6.

70 [Anthony Collins], *A Farther Discourse of Free-Thinking: In a Letter to a Clergy-Man. With some Considerations on Mr. Pycroft's Treatise Upon the same Subject*, 1713, 9–10.

71 Horstmann 1980, 24, 26.

72 [Collins], *A Discourse of Free-Thinking*, 1713, 101–3.

questioning some of the very fundamentals of the power and values of the establishment when he argued that freethinking among the men of the street would save both the religious and political system:⁷³

Now as to all useful application of mind to preserve ourselves, either as a Church, or a state, from danger, I look upon the body of the common people of Great Britain to have their share in freethinking; and thereby they will preserve the Church and state too from danger.

... the body of the common people, when they shall get out of the fear into which they were lately misled, will return to their habit of freethinking.

Collins was not the first freethinker to refer provocatively to the common people in an optimistic manner. Toland too had addressed his *Christianity not Mysterious* to plain people who discussed religious issues no matter how the clergy attempted to exclude them from such discourse.⁷⁴ Toland and Collins were both informing the common people about matters that, amongst the elite, were not regarded as proper topics for plebeian discussions.

Appeals to commoners made freethinking alarming in the eyes of the political elite who shared the unstated assumption that the orthodox faith provided an essential system for the control of lower orders. If reverence towards religion among the common people disappeared, they were likely to soon loose that towards political rulers as well. It was therefore not merely the private beliefs of the freethinkers that made them threatening but their very willingness to communicate their ideas to the general public. Members of the political elite became genuinely afraid that spreading freethinking might endanger social and political stability,⁷⁵ and hence it was impossible for them to accept arguments espoused by Shaftesbury, Toland or Collins. The significance of Collins's *Discourse* is demonstrated by the wide discussion which followed. During the discussion, the book was maligned by a number of notable critics, including Steele, Swift and George Berkeley. As a result of this violent debate, the irreligious and antichristian connotations of the word freethinker finally became widely known.⁷⁶

An illustration of the reception of freethinking writings in London coffee houses is provided by Ryder's diary. Not a genuine freethinker himself, this Presbyterian Dissenter was interested in the writings and activities of the freethinkers. An associate of Ryder, a sceptic himself, described 'the club of freethinkers' as a 'set of men who laugh at the prejudice of mankind in favour of revelation and talk with the utmost assurance as if they had the clearest demonstration that the Christian religion is an imposture'. Ryder believed that, on the basis of a willingness to censor Christian doctrines and 'convert' others, someone could be thought a freethinker. This interest in freethinking stretched so far that Ryder, as a member of a group of Dissenters campaigning for the

73 [Collins], *A Farther Discourse of Free-Thinking*, 1713, 21–2.

74 Horstmann 1980, 141.

75 Harrison 1990, 96; Miller 1994, 158, on Charles Davenant's views.

76 Horstmann 1980, 188; Jacob 1981, 157; Russell 1993, 665, 667.

repeal of discriminatory legislation, proposed that their paper vindicating the principles of private judgement and liberty of conscience should have been called the *Freethinker* instead of the originally proposed *Protestant*.⁷⁷ With his proposition, Ryder may have intended to aim the title more provocatively upon the Anglican establishment. On the other hand, in a Protestant political culture, Protestant was one of the most positive of terms, and treating Protestant and freethinker as alternative expressions demonstrates how freethinking could appear as an extremely positive phenomenon to a radical Dissenter.⁷⁸

Freethinking in traditionalist polemic

Collins's book was almost universally condemned.⁷⁹ However, criticism against it, rising from Whig and Tory circles of the political elite, was not unanimous. Collins, like most other freethinkers, was known to have Whig sympathies, and his ideas of free thought provoked orthodox supporters of the unity of Church and state. Traditionalist Anglicans willingly interpreted any deviance from the established religion – particularly if suspected of atheism as in the case of Collins – as an illustration of political disloyalty. From the point of view of the Whigs, the situation at the time of the publication of Collins's work in 1713 was difficult. They were in a minority position out of government, did not enjoy popular support comparable to the Tories, and wanted no associations being drawn between themselves and Collins's alleged atheism. In contrast, the Tories easily found use for associations between Collins's politico-religious heterodoxy and Whiggism. That was just what Tory writers had consistently attempted to create and Whig authors to refute. The controversy which followed thus by no means merely concerned religion; it also concerned what is now known as political ideology.⁸⁰

The fundamental ideological position behind Tory polemic against freethinking was that morality and religion were inseparable. Neither could politics be regarded as a sphere independent of either. As the cohesion of a traditional society appeared to be under threat, the Tories feared that England was turning into a pluralistic and fragmented society. They believed that toleration of diversity in religion, as proposed by the freethinkers, was identical to accepting the dissolution of traditional unitary society.⁸¹

77 Mr. Goodall's words in *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 18 August 1715, 79–80; *Ibid.*, 23 September 1715, 104, 8 November 1716, 361–2.

78 It is doubtful whether these schemes ever led to a foundation of such a paper. Ryder himself began to regret his involvement once it was rumoured that he was attending a club formed against not only atheism and deism but also against conformity. Ryder denied the religious character of the club and decided to frequent it no more in order to avoid being associated with it. The consulted bibliographies do not lend support to a publication titled *The Freethinker* before 1718. When a paper carrying the title came out in 1718, it was written by Ambrose Phillips rather than this group of Dissenters; *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 7 December 1716, 374.

79 Most of the responses were negative. Richard Bentley, however, suggested that the right to think freely might be agreeable whereas free thought did not necessarily lead to deism. Harrison 1990, 80.

80 Phiddian 1989, 63, 67–8.

81 For Tory fears of pluralism, see Browning 1982, 1, 14.

The Tories, however, did not write against freethinking merely out of religious conviction; they were also eager to exploit every hint of Whiggish irreligiousness as a means to defame the character of individual Whig politicians or to reproach the policies of the Whig party as a whole. Religious motivation in political actions tended to be negative rather than positive. Religion was an ideal weapon with which to attack an opponent, as it made use of the power of strong associations.⁸²

Although most Tories knew that all Whigs were not freethinkers, they also knew that freethinkers tended to support Whigs. Tory propaganda could not avoid making use of fears towards freethinking as dreadful atheism by hinting that all Whigs were freethinkers. Tory polemic had traditionally presented the Whigs as political radicals aiming at a renewal of the horrors of the Cromwellian regime, as social upstarts with obscure origins, and as deviants from Anglican norms. These associations were based on the fact that a few Whigs genuinely held such views or had low social status. Seldom being republicans, the Whigs vindicated a limited monarchy. Although not always Dissenters themselves, the Whigs could not accept excessive religious persecution. Not representing any one social group, the Whigs had many professional men and businessmen in their ranks. The target reader or listener of Tory polemic was clearly an Anglican country gentleman or clergyman who feared that the inherited socio-political order, as well as his own position, were threatened by political and religious radicals. In polemic these feared men of innovation were called republicans, Dissenters, atheists, or freethinkers.⁸³ In his sermon of 5 November 1709, Sacheverell referred to religious Dissenters and political Whigs as 'hypocrites, deists, socinians, and atheists' who were to be blamed for what he saw as Anglican 'altars and sacraments' being 'prostituted'.⁸⁴ The conviction of the existence of an atheistic and deistic conspiracy against the religious, social and political order was echoed in other traditionalist papers even if not as presumptuously.⁸⁵

In Swift's writings, suggestions of heterodoxy and potential atheism were usual insults against Whigs both as individual politicians and as a party. During the election campaign of 1710, when a Tory victory was predictable, Swift wrote a libel on Thomas Wharton, a major Whig leader, portraying him as 'a Presbyterian in politics, and an atheist in religion' who was only interested in 'vice and politics'.⁸⁶ Both 'Presbyterian' and 'atheist' had highly pejorative connotations in the understanding of the Anglican audience. Being 'a Presbyterian in politics' stood for adherence to the denounced republicanism of the Interregnum. As an atheist, the Whig politician was also associated with irreligion and spiteful behaviour. Such accusations could build on the fact that

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82 Holmes 1975, 8, 22.

83 Corns, Speck and Downie 1982, 9–10, 12, 17.

84 Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church, and State*, 1709, 7–8.

85 Hearne to Dr. T. Smith, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. II, 329–30.

86 [Swift], *A short Character of his Excellency Thomas Earl of Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland*, 30 August 1710; Wharton was the most libelled member of the Whig Junto. Corns, Speck and Downie 1982, 16.

Wharton was indeed a sceptic, and few of his fellow party leaders were particularly devoted to religion.⁸⁷

The Whigs as a collective body came under Swift's attack in a disguised letter to the *Examiner* in which a supposed Whig interpreted apostle Paul's teachings in a heterodox manner, maintaining that 'there must be heresies in the Church, that the truth may be manifest; and therefore by due course of reasoning, the more heresies there are, the more manifest will the truth be made'. Thereby, Swift charged Whigs for propagating religious heterodoxy and associated them with the group of radical Whigs, 'the tribe of freethinkers', with whom the Whigs formed a conspiracy for handing irreligious works to the innocent public. Swift maintained that the Whig party was ready to accept 'every heterodox professor either in religion or government',⁸⁸ approved 'all sorts of Dissenters' and allowed 'the several gradations of freethinkers' to join. In fact, thought Swift, they were ready to extend their 'liberty of conscience' more than the hated King James II had ever dared, 'having granted it to all the classes of freethinkers'.⁸⁹ Swift contrasted these despicable enemies with the Tory government in which there were no freethinkers.⁹⁰

In the early 1710s, freethinking was widely discussed in traditionalist texts. It was lamented how the clergy had been 'despised and ridiculed by the factious freethinkers' distributing their 'atheistical poison' to subvert Christianity.⁹¹ A poem titled *Free-Thinkers* assaulted freethinking as a mere new form of atheism advocated by drunkards who abused defenceless youth by teaching them immoral, atheistical and republican doctrines. A conversion to freethinking was claimed to entail economic ruin, waste of time in coffee houses, addiction to reading newspapers and excessive use of stimulants. In turn, it was suggested to ensure Whig patronage. In politics and religion, the freethinkers supported anyone who served their private interest: 'Scorning all ties, divine or civil . . . this freethinking is the devil'. If the state of affairs turned unfavourable to them, they could always return to freethinking Holland, their country of origin, if not to hell itself.⁹²

The Tory campaign against 'that atheistical gang'⁹³ or 'the new sect of freethinkers'⁹⁴ gained additional force from the publication of Collins's provocative works in 1713. Churchmen condemned 'excessive liberties' taken

87 Holmes 1975, 8.

88 [Swift], E33, 22 March 1711.

89 [Swift], E35, 5 April 1711, E39, 3 May 1711.

90 [Swift], E22, 4 January 1711, E26, 1 February 1711, E33, 22 March 1711, E35, 5 April 1711, E39, 3 May 1711; in his letter to Ambrose Philips on 14 September 1708, Swift referred ironically to 'free Whiggish thinking'. *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, Vol. I, 100: In 1709, he attacked a Whig leader in his *Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners*: 'It is true he is a man of pleasure, and a freethinker; that is, in other words, he is profligate in his morals, and a despiser of religion; but in point of party, he is one to be confided in; he is an asserter of liberty and property; he rattles it out against Popery, and arbitrary power, and priestcraft and High-Church.' Cited by Goldgar 1961, 46.

91 *Honesty the Best Policy*, 1711, 5–6.

92 *Free-Thinkers. A Poem in Dialogue*, 1711, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12–15, 18, 23, 27–8.

93 Hearne's expression in *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 6 May 1713, Vol. IV, 172.

94 *A New Voyage to the Island of Fools*, 1713, 45.

by 'our pretended freethinkers',⁹⁵ doubting whether that was real freethinking. The rival view would have it that it was the Church of England that represented genuine freethinking. The Anglican Church was presented as a true Church just because she, unlike her rivals, encouraged her members to contemplate questions of doctrine. Atheists, deists, libertines and even Latitudinarian Anglicans were seen as united in the same anti-Church party claiming to be freethinkers, but actually aiming at the destruction of proper Anglican freethinking.⁹⁶ Freethinking, as used by the pretended freethinkers, was presented as 'free-acting, free-printing, free-publishing, free-propagating, detestable opinions, destructive of the belief of all revelation, and of natural religion and law'.⁹⁷ Sacheverell, when preaching to the House of Commons, condemned Collins with ambiguous references to 'this synagogue of libertines' and 'blasphemies, heresies, schisms, and errors of all kinds' entertained by 'our modern infidels'. He took Collins's book as an open challenge to the foundations of government both in the Church and state. Freethinker he saw inevitably as a free-actor neglecting all authority and advocating 'confusion, anarchy, and libertinism', the very characteristics of the Civil War period, a divine deliverance from which was celebrated on the day of Sacheverell's sermon.⁹⁸

Associations between the Whigs and freethinkers became increasingly open. It was suggested that, when favouring freethinking, the Whigs aimed at gaining support among the populace in order to overcome the Tories.⁹⁹ To counter Collins's claims that religious diversity contributed to political stability, Tory writers emphasised the union between the Church and state and denounced diversity of opinions, often in terms of both classical republicanism and Christianity.¹⁰⁰ Swift wrote a mock version of the *Discourse*, the title of which insinuated that the Whigs were endeavouring to popularise freethinking: *Mr C-n's Discourse of Free-Thinking, Put into plain English, by way of Abstract, for the Use of the Poor*. Swift's irony 'revealed' a Whiggish political conspiracy against the Church of England and the political nation. Talking as a supposed Whig, Swift wrote:¹⁰¹

95 Samuel Pycroft, *A Brief Enquiry into Free-Thinking in Matters of Religion; And some Pretended Obstructions to it*, 1713, 2.

96 *The Church of England the Sole Encourager of Free-Thinking*, 1717, the subtitle and 6 and 24–5; the list of condemned irreligious authors presented by this pamphlet contained philosophers such as Hobbes, Locke and Spinoza but also minor figures such as Milton, Toland and Tindal.

97 *Free Thoughts upon the Discourse of Free-Thinking*, 1713, 5.

98 Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government*, 1713, 7–8, 19.

99 *An Answer to the Discourse on Free-Thinking: Wherein The Absurdity and Infidelity of the Sect of Free-Thinkers is undeniably Demonstrated*, 1713, preface.

100 *Free Thoughts upon the Discourse of Free-Thinking*, 1713, 49–50, 52.

101 [Jonathan Swift], *Mr C-n's Discourse of Free-Thinking, Put into plain English, by way of Abstract, for the Use of the Poor*, 1713, 3; Nash has written on Swift's irony: '... irony says what it does not mean and means what it does not say. And yet, ... there is no clear locus of the ironic, no key word, no linguistic focus that announces the trope of irony. Our interpretation is based on our assumptions about Swift's assumptions about everybody's assumptions about life and society'. Nash 1989, 118–9.

Our party having failed, by all their political arguments, to re-establish their power; the wise leaders have determined, that the last and principal remedy should be made use of, for opening the eyes of this blinded nation; . . . [a] system of their divinity, should be published, . . .

In Swift's 'abstract', freethinking arguments in favour of diversity of opinions became completely senseless, leading to anarchy both in religion and politics. The freethinker of Swift's spoke out:¹⁰²

When every single man comes to have a different opinion every day from the whole world, and from himself, by virtue of freethinking, and thinks it is his duty to convert every man to his own freethinking (as all we freethinkers do) how can that possibly create so great a diversity of opinions, . . . Besides, difference in opinion, especially in matters of great moment, breeds no confusion at all. Witness Papists and Protestants, Roundhead and Cavalier, and Whig and Tory now among us.

Swift's irony was motivated both by religious and political considerations. The Whiggism of the leading freethinkers certainly played a major role. It was in the interest of Tory polemicists to demonstrate links between political Whiggism and deism or even atheism. Such a strategy was clearly based on an assumption that the audience regarded political and religious deviance as interrelated. Anticlerical accusations of the freethinkers could also be encountered by questioning their integrity and wisdom and by equating them with the stupid mob.¹⁰³

Because of its very fierceness, traditionalist polemic could not go unanswered. Some freethinkers attempted to answer it by presenting the term freethinker as a 'new fashioned term of reproach' which the party of High-Church Tories abused for striking both their religious and political opponents. Instead, they continued to suggest that freethinking was a most suitable quality for a rational person to be carried with pride. A freethinker was one who made judgements on the basis of evidence, not on authority.¹⁰⁴ For many Whigs, however, traditionalist writings on freethinking were uncomfortable. They regretted freethinking anticlericalism which had alarmed the clergy to attack 'all Whiggish freethinkers'.¹⁰⁵ It may well have been that Tory accusations against 'Whiggish freethinkers' made Addison denounce freethinking and instead contend that the Tories themselves were freethinkers, not so much in religion but even more in politics.

102 [Swift], *Mr C-n's Discourse of Free-Thinking*, 1713, 18.

103 Rupp 1986, 266; Harrison 1990, 80.

104 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 46–7.

105 *Now, or Never: Or, Seasonable Thoughts for the Present Times*, 1714, 9, 13.

Establishment attitudes to freethinking

Jacob has seen the hostility between radical freethinkers and establishment Whigs as a major trend in early eighteenth-century intellectual history. This was because the freethinkers provided an alternative to Newtonianism¹⁰⁶ which had otherwise made a relatively painless breakthrough among the English intellectual elite. It was only gradually that Newtonian influences on political discourse became visible; yet some indications to that direction are traceable. Berkeley, for instance, opposed what he considered a cynical freethinking view of politics¹⁰⁷ and drew instead an analogy between Newton's law of gravitation and the structures of human society:¹⁰⁸

Philosophers are now agreed, that there is a mutual attraction between the most distant parts at least of this solar system. All those bodies that revolve round the sun are drawn towards each other, and towards the sun, by some secret, uniform and never-ceasing principle . . . Now if we carry our thoughts from the corporeal to the moral world, we may observe, in the spirits or minds of men, a like principle of attraction, whereby they are drawn together into communities, clubs, families, friendships, and all the various species of society . . . the good of the whole is inseparable from that of the parts; in promoting therefore the common good, every one does at the same time promote his own private interest.

Holding a conception of society which underscored human inclination for unity, the establishment Whigs had great difficulties in accepting vindications of a complete freedom of thought. Even if some sympathy towards religious pluralism occurred,¹⁰⁹ their status as would-be administrators made them denounce connections with freethinking.

Addison, the main propagandist of the Whigs in the 1710s, had used the term freethinker before introducing the expression 'freethinker in politics' (1716). The connotations of freethinker had always been pejorative in his texts; an atheist, freethinker or deist appeared as nothing like a philosopher or a man of sense. Addison associated freethinking with young age, modest education and atheism and blamed it for causing schisms in families and in society as a whole. He opposed freethinking also by claiming that it was easily accepted by people of humble social standing such as servants, country people, or women. This was merely a rhetorical device for convincing the target reader – an educated mature affluent Anglican city gentleman – that it was not suitable for him to believe freethinking nonsense.¹¹⁰ The gravity of the question of freethinking is illustrated by Addison's dedication of an entire periodical essay of Christmas Eve 1709 to argue against 'infidels, whether distinguished by the title of deist, atheist, or freethinker'. He presented freethinking as a dangerously fashionable

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¹⁰⁶ Jacob 1976, 208, 210.

¹⁰⁷ Redwood 1976, 67.

¹⁰⁸ [George Berkeley], G126, 5 August 1713.

¹⁰⁹ Browning 1982, 13, 16.

¹¹⁰ Addison, T108, 17 December 1709.

mistake in an otherwise glorious epoch. Disbelief disturbed the nation as a result of a few enthusiastic authors aiming at a destruction of common sense. Their learning was false, they deserved no sympathy, and should have been excluded from society.¹¹¹

In his comedy the *Drummer* (1716), Addison used the expression 'freethinker in politics' when entertaining the audience with a freethinker character. This ridiculous character, who held absurd views on the fundamentals of Christianity, strengthened attitudes towards freethinking as dreadful and senseless atheism. Addison assumed that the audience would laugh at a representative of the despised group, at something which it actually feared. In the play, Mr Tinsel – a name not unlike Tindal or Toland – explained to his distressed mistress that atheist was an obsolete word and he was instead a freethinker whose learning was derived from the small group of radical freethinkers which met at coffee houses:¹¹²

Lady I vow, Mr Tinsel, I am afraid malicious people will say I am in love with an atheist.

Tinsel Oh, my dear, that is an old-fashioned word – I am a freethinker, child.

Tinsel To tell you the truth, I have not time to look into these dry matters myself, but I am convinced by four or five learned men, whom I sometimes overhear at a coffee house I frequent.

The humorous, and at the same time critical, elements of this passage consisted of the freethinker's stubborn denial of the shared Christian truths and his failure to utilise his own reason, which made him blindly imitate a separatist group. The terms atheist and freethinker were used as exact synonyms.

Steele was another leading Whig propagandist discussing freethinking in his writings. He maintained that in the biblical and ancient world, as well as in Reformation Europe, pious freethinking had opposed corrupt practices and been entirely in keeping with Christianity. As to the neologism freethinker, it was abused by a tiny group of detestable radicals, 'thoughtless atheists, and illiterate drunkards', who knew nothing about real freethinking, as a mere atheist or infidel was not 'a freethinker in any tolerable sense'.¹¹³ Steele himself used freethinker as a term of abuse in a great variety of contexts. He could call two ladies marrying the same man 'freethinkers',¹¹⁴ or he could give a description of 'a young gentleman, who talks atheistically all day in coffee

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¹¹¹ Addison, T111, 24 December 1709.

¹¹² Joseph Addison, *The Drummer; or, the Haunted-House. A Comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane*, 1716, in *The Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Addison*, ed. A.C. Guthkelch, 1914, 441-2. An instance of the reception of *The Drummer* can be found in *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, in which Ryder reports having gone to see the play that at first appeared as dull but later turned entertaining, being applauded by a full theatre, which Ryder interpreted as a sign of a general approval of the attitudes expressed in the play. 13 March 1716, 202.

¹¹³ Steele, T12, 7 May 1709; [Steele], S234, 28 November 1711.

¹¹⁴ Steele, T69, 17 September 1709.

houses, and in his degrees of understanding sets up for a freethinker'.¹¹⁵ Like Addison, he associated freethinking with youth, modest understanding, atheism and coffee houses.

When some readers took offence at the critical use of the term, Steele assured that he was an admirer of ancient freethinkers – defenders of established religion – who should have been distinguished from atheistical and anticlerical early eighteenth-century freethinkers. Freedom of thought was essentially Christian, and more particularly Protestant, while the modern freethinkers of the coffee houses appeared as deluders of the plain people and abusers of human nature. 'These grave philosophical freethinkers' and 'speculative libertine[s]' were ridiculous enemies to religion who misled their followers.¹¹⁶

The most notable opponent of radical materialism was the Anglican clergyman and Newtonian philosopher Berkeley who, in spite of his Tory political views,¹¹⁷ contributed to the *Guardian*, a leading Whig periodical. Berkeley also held a notion of past freethinking and blamed radicals for the term freethinker having been 'degenerated from its original signification' so that it was 'supposed to denote something contrary to wit and reason'.¹¹⁸ The modern freethinkers had misunderstood freedom of thought when interpreting it mere opposition. Fortunately, they found support only among the ignorant lower orders, which made them all too marginal to really harm the established religion.¹¹⁹ Parallel arguments against 'modern' freethinking as a misinterpretation of the proper sense of the 'noble' term, against turning freethinking into anticlericalism and libertinism and against allowing it to become a mischievous activity of the ignorant also appeared in later decades. It was argued that freethinking, in its original sense, had been 'that laudable spirit which first inspired this nation to break off from the tyrannic superstition of the Church of Rome'. In its mistaken form, however, excessive liberty of thinking led first to scepticism, then to infidelity, and finally to atheism.¹²⁰

In the 1710s, freethinker was still a neologism the exact meaning of which was disputed. Hence the term could easily be used for various purposes, including political propaganda. In spite of occasional references to positive ancient freethinking, the connotations of freethinking remained ostensibly pejorative in contemporary discourse. Freethinking was associated with atheism, schism, the abuse of freedom, moral baseness and a threat to virtue in religion and society. Freethinkers were accused of either teaching nonsense to the vulnerable public and of zeal to make converts or of blind adherence to

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115 Steele, T77, 6 October 1709.

116 Steele, T135, 18 February 1710; Steele, T187, 20 June 1710; [Steele], G3, 14 March 1713.

117 Goldgar 1961, 112.

118 [Berkeley], G39, 25 April 1713.

119 [Berkeley], G39, 25 April 1713, G55, 14 May 1713, G62, 22 May 1713, G70, 1 June 1713, G88, 22 June 1713.

120 *Weekly Miscellany*, No. 22, 12 May 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, May 1733, No. 32, 21 July 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, July 1733, No. 36, 18 August 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, August 1733, and No. 96, 12 October 1734, in *GM*, Vol. IV, October 1734, all on Reel 134; *Weekly Miscellany*, No. 153, 15 November 1735, in *GM*, Vol. V, November 1735, Reel 135; *Universal Spectator*, No. 268, 24 November 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, November 1733, Reel 134; Letter on freethinking signed by 'Birmingham' to the *GM*, Vol. VIII, January 1738, Reel 137.

leaders who only deceived their followers. Freethinking was also linked with low social standing, young age, poor schooling, poor logic, prejudice and intolerance. Furthermore, freethinkers were presented as excessive drinkers. Coffee houses appeared as the bases of religious freethinkers.¹²¹

The same coffee houses were presented as the places where amateur politicians, or 'coffee house politicians', met. Descriptions of lower order middling and even involvement in party politics often contained associations with agitation, division, enthusiasm, party quarrels, constant scepticism and opposition, wasting time by reading propaganda, ridiculous behaviour, low social status, young age, improper education, lack of logic and excessive drinking.¹²² These negative attributes were strengthened by the pejorative connotations of the concept party and by the fact that coffee house politicians were usually blamed for being adherents of the opposing party. The similar connotations of the terms freethinker and coffee house politician, as well as their frequent use in close proximity, led to situations in which there was little difference in meaning between the two. In the mind of a reader, party-political speculations seemed analogous to freethinking, both appearing as highly questionable activities. Criticism of the political activities of the adherents of a rival party could thus build on religious associations.

Around 1710, the discourse on freethinking had gained new force due to Shaftesbury's recent publications. At the same time, the controversy on the safety of the Church was reaching its climax as a consequence of the Sacheverell affair. This state of affairs made Addison and Steele attack both the traditionalist High-Church Tories as 'politicians' and the radical Whigs as 'freethinkers'. One of Addison's favourite methods of scoring propaganda points was to write dream visions. One such essay introduced a tottering building of the 'Temple of Vanity' which was frequented by 'hypocrites, pedants, freethinkers, and prating politicians'. All were 'mischievous pretenders to politics' who were indifferent to virtue and consequently resembled Machiavelli. They acted unlike 'law-givers, heroes, statesmen, philosophers and poets' who served mankind and advanced the interests of their country.¹²³ The terms freethinker and politician were employed in the same context and shared negative associations. Freethinker also appeared as a somewhat political term, being connected with 'pretending to politics' and 'Machiavellism'. Even if the terms were not fully identical, their appearance in the same context enabled associations to be conveyed from one to the another.

A few days later, Steele appealed for an immediate arrest of¹²⁴

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121 See for example Steele, T12, 7 May 1709; Addison, T108, 17 December 1709; Steele, T135, 18 February 1710; Steele, T187, 20 June 1710; Addison, S185, 2 October 1711; Steele, S234, 28 November 1711; Steele, G3, 14 March 1713; Berkeley, G39, 25 April 1713; Berkeley, G83, 16 June 1713; Berkeley, G126, 5 August 1713; Addison, *The Drummer*, 1716, 441-2.

122 See for example Addison, T131, 9 February 1710; Steele, T171, 13 May 1710; Steele, T232, 3 October 1710; Addison, S105, 30 June 1711; Steele, S382, 19 May 1712; Addison, S476, 5 September 1712.

123 Addison, T123, 21 January 1710.

124 Steele, T125, 26 January 1710.

any politician whom they shall catch raving in a coffee house, or any freethinker whom they shall find publishing his deliriums, or any other person who shall give the like manifest signs of a crazed imagination.

In Steele's statement, the terms politician and freethinker shared an association with 'crazed imagination'. An average reader knew that both 'raved in coffee houses' and 'published deliriums'. Once again the connotations of the two terms came close to each other. Later in 1710, Steele characterised a philosopher (the sense of the word here being belittling) and 'somewhat of a politician' in terms that made a reader associate him with freethinkers.¹²⁵

one of those who sets up for knowledge by doubting, and has no other way of making himself considerable but by contradicting all he hears said. He has, besides much doubt and spirit of contradiction, a constant suspicion as to state-affairs.

Steele's portrayal of political interest among the public was amazingly analogous to customary characterisations of religious freethinking. Popular politics, and particularly the Tory campaign against the Whig ministry, appeared as an obscure philosophy based on perpetual questioning of either the fundamentals of Christian religion or the politics of a ministry controlled by the contending party.

Addison's essay of 1712 further illuminates the semantic associations between widespread curiosity in religious freethinking and political speculation. Addison created a literary character in whom the negative attributes of a freethinker in politics and one in religion were combined. These attributes included an incapacity to participate in a sophisticated discourse, a lack of proper respect and education, a lack of genuine learning, constant scepticism as to the basic principles of both Church and state, and the confusion of matters political and religious.¹²⁶

Tom Puzzle . . . has read enough to make him very impertinent: His knowledge is sufficient to raise doubts, but not to clear them. It is a pity that he has so much learning, or that he has not a great deal more. With these qualifications Tom sets up for a freethinker, finds a great many things to blame in the constitution of his country, and gives shrewd intimations that he does not believe another world. In short, Puzzle is an atheist as much as his parts will give him leave. He has got about half a dozen commonplace topics, into which he never fails to turn the conversation, whatever was the occasion of it: Though the matter of debate be about Doway or Denain, . . . his discourse runs upon the unreasonableness of bigotry and priestcraft. This makes Mr Puzzle the admiration of all those who have less sense than himself, and the contempt of all those who have more.

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¹²⁵ Steele, T171, 13 May 1710.

¹²⁶ [Addison], S476, 5 September 1712.

The combination of the concepts freethinker and politician was a phenomenon peculiar to Addison and Steele, leaders of Whig propaganda in the early 1710s. It cannot be considered a universal practice, even though descriptions of lower class freethinkers, whose behaviour was completely altered after involvement in religious speculations, appeared still in the 1730s.¹²⁷ Addison and Steele's combinations were made possible by the particular context of writing and the use of the term politician in a specific ironical sense of a Tory coffee house politician. It was also facilitated by the numerous parallel associations connected with the two concepts. The confluence of freethinker and politician is an exemplary case of the potential of religious terminology in early eighteenth-century political discourse; a potential which could be exploited by all the political groupings of the period.

Freethinking as the core of British liberty

As the descriptions of 'genuine' freethinking as opposed to mistaken 'modern' freethinking demonstrated, all definitions of freethinking were not condemnatory. Towards the end of the 1710s, an interesting attempt to change the meaning of the concept towards a more positive direction occurred. In the 1720s and 1730s, freethinking was also not infrequently interpreted as a positive rather than a negative phenomenon.

The more radical Whigs were disappointed at the manner with which the establishment Whig writers attacked freethinking in the most esteemed periodicals of the early 1710s. Shaftesbury regretted how 'several gentlemen, even of those who passed for moderate . . . seemed . . . to agree . . . that some way should be thought on, to reconcile differences in opinion'.¹²⁸ It was complained that the Whig essayists had given the Tories weapons with which to strike all the Whigs.¹²⁹

It is a pity that so good an authority as the *Spectator* should give this turn to the word freethinker, but it is to be hoped that gentleman was not aware of the mischief this party of men have done with it since. It may be a warning to writers of such note hereafter, how they give any handle to those who are watchful for all occasions of the like kind. From those pert empty creatures, who had not sense enough to distinguish thinking freely, from thinking not at all, or believing nothing, whom that ingenious author ridiculed under that mock-name, the High-clergy have as wantonly as unjustly thrown it upon persons of the best understandings, and all such who think too justly to be imposed upon them.

A more radical Whiggish definition for freethinking was provided by Philips, an associate of the circle of Addison and Steele, in a new periodical entitled provocatively the *Free-Thinker* in 1718. Though criticised by traditionalists, his

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127 *Universal Spectator*, No. 268, 24 November 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, November 1733, Reel 134.

128 [Shaftesbury], *Miscellaneous Reflections*, 1714, in *Characteristicks*, vol. III, 318.

129 *Reflections on the Management Of some late Party-Disputes*, 1715, 46–7.

definition of freethinking probably appeared as acceptable to many members of the political elite, being capable of capturing some fashionable ideas. This new definition of freethinking may well have been introduced by the Whig establishment with the purpose of preventing the troublesome concept being used either by the radical freethinking Whigs or the major political opponents of the establishment Whigs, the High-Church Tories. This conscious shift in the meaning of the concept freethinker was to be carried out by employing rhetoric of a unique British liberty.

Philips rejected the pejorative associations between freethinking and atheism which had dominated the discourse for some twenty years. Instead, he presented freethinking as an ideal of the age, basing this definition on the existence of genuine freethinking in the golden past. For Philips, freethinking was the use of one's own reason free of prejudices and passions. Changing the prevalent sense of the concept, however, was far from an easy task:¹³⁰

It is easy to foresee, that the title, under which this paper appears, will . . . make it be thrown aside with indignation by several well-meaning persons; when at the same time it shall be received with alacrity by some sanguine philosophers . . . The freethinker has, of late years, been so much the subject of satire and ridicule, and his character exposed with so much wit and humour by some ingenious writers, and so blackened with reflections drawn from religion and politics by other more serious authors, . . . [that] a term of honour . . . has . . . in time, by the misapplication of it, become a term of reproach. Thus freethinking (which in itself is undoubtedly the glory and perfection of human nature) is at last worn into disgrace, through the rashness of some, the fears of others, the vices of many, and the specious pretences of crafty and designing men . . . for the benefit of mankind, I endeavour to rescue this word from infamy, and make it a name of praise and reputation, by taking it out of the hands of libertines, by clearing it from the aspersions of bigots, and by reconciling it to the virtuous and the wice, who only have a just claim to it, in its genuine sense.

Philips claimed to be raising freethinking to the positive level at which, he argued, it had been before the recent confrontation of deists and the High-Church clergy. Philips's freethinking was to be regulated by law and reason, benefit society in many ways, and distinguish Britain, as 'the land of philosophers', from all foreign countries. Unlike Addison and many other writers, Philips saw freethinking and philosophy as synonymous:¹³¹

To think freely . . . is . . . to think . . . like a philosopher: It is not to think without the checks of reason and judgement; but without the incumbrances of prejudice and passion . . . It must be granted, society has suffered, in several instances, by gratifying every man in the full liberty of divulging his thoughts; but then, it has profited a thousand times more, by virtue of that very indulgence. Freethinking is the foundation of all human liberty: Remove the one, and the other cannot

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130 [Philips], FT1, 24 March 1718.

131 [Philips], FT1, 24 March 1718.

stand . . . The island of Great Britain may, not improperly, be called the land of philosophers; it being the only spot of ground, . . . where a man is not obliged to direct himself in any degree of his reason, before he can be a good subject.

In his construction of a new ideal of freethinker, Philips made use of associations attached to the prevalent conception of a freethinker, giving them a new positive and somewhat humorous undertone. Philips's new freethinker was¹³²

. . . by nature very curious and inquisitive; in so much as to be thought impertinent by some. He takes nothing upon trust: He will see everything with his own eyes; hear everything with his own ears; and apprehend everything by his own understanding. This odd cast of mind often engages him in disputes, and makes him censured sometimes by his best friends, as obstinate and perverse in his opinion, only because he is somewhat slow of apprehension; and can neither reject off-hand, nor believe at sight.

Furthermore, Philips also excluded some negative qualities from this newly-born character of his. Freethinking could not involve engagement in a party, either political or religious. A real freethinker could converse politely and moderately on politics and religion, basing his arguments on 'the mild force of reason, and the plain evidences of revelation'.¹³³

Philips's reintroduction of what he called the original meaning of freethinking had some success in the sense that the periodical continued for another year and a half, which was a relatively long life for a periodical in early eighteenth-century England. In his concluding essay, Philips continued to define freethinking and emphasise the special status of Britain in comparison with other countries:¹³⁴

. . . the English tongue alone has by a happy conjunction of two ideas, which are the glory of human nature, improved the borrowed phrase, philosopher, into freethinker: A phrase, which not only denotes the full sense of the former; but likewise shows, wherein the very nature and perfection of philosophy consists . . . He alone is properly a wise man, a philosopher, or lover of wisdom, who disdains to submit his reason to the prejudices of custom, of education, of authority, of interest, or of passion: who (to the utmost of his ability) examines into all things impartially, before he determines either to approve, or to reject, them . . .

The status of the term freethinker in the contemporary debate on diversity of opinions is revealed in Philips' claim that without his defence of freethinking¹³⁵

. . . we had probably, . . . thrown the name of freethinking out of the language; which would have rendered it more practicable (in process of time) to banish out of the nation, the manifold privileges, arising from the freedom of thought.

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132 [Philips], FT2, 28 March 1718.

133 [Philips], FT2, 28 March 1718.

134 [Philips], FT159, 28 September 1719.

135 [Philips], FT159, 28 September 1719.

The reception of Philips's unconventional claims of freethinking as the core of British liberty was not unanimously positive. High-Church writers answered it by the means of irony. One author started by congratulating Philips for 'rescuing that noble appellation of freethinker from the universal contempt and odium' and for 'restoring it to its genuine and natural signification', but then continued to describe how the term freethinking¹³⁶

was fallen into the hands of men, who are so violently prejudiced against vulgar notions, as others are for them; and consequently are as far from thinking freely as the most zealous bigots. These men were the cause of its becoming a reproach, but by your prudent management it is turned into a title of respect, and now signifies the same as wiseman.

The message was that the High-Church Tories did not adhere to freethinking notions characteristic of Whiggish commoners. The author maintained that England enjoyed a considerable freedom of thought in spite of the small number of freethinkers. In other words, freethinking had nothing to do with the unique liberties that the Britons enjoyed. The Tories advocated no freethinking as 'all their notions of politics are imbibed in their infancy, and never thoroughly examined'. In other words, Tory ideology was inherited and thus a natural one. As to the 'Church' Whigs, they allowed freethinking only in their words. All in all, it was only a tiny group of radicals who maintained freethinking ideas.¹³⁷

In both opposition publications of the 1720s and governmental papers of the 1730s, freedom of thought – if not always freethinking as such – appeared in contexts that made it an unambiguously positive concept. The *Independent Whig* recommended the *Free-Thinker* to its readers for vindications of public liberty.¹³⁸ Its anticlerical authors criticised religious schools for not allowing freedom of thought which was essential to the 'sacred privilege' of public liberty. Religion and liberty in Protestant England depended on the commonly encouraged free reasoning, that is, freethinking. Free and Protestant were once again presented as near synonyms:¹³⁹

Here in England, why are we free, why Protestant; but because we are guided by reason, and judge for ourselves? And none amongst us complain of the liberty of the press, or the growth of freethinking, but those who would found a dominion upon stupidity and persecution.

Such freedom of expression was also defended in the *Craftsman*, though not by exalting the concept of freethinking. The *Craftsman* maintained that the English possessed a right to debate freely on 'all matters of government and religion' and to express their opinion on 'all political transactions'. This liberty of thinking and publishing thoughts on whatever subject made all other religious and political liberties possible. However, the opposition did not allow a

136 *A Letter to the Free-Thinker*, 1718, 7.

137 *A Letter to the Free-Thinker*, 1718, 8–9, 12–14.

138 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW1, 20 January 1720.

139 [Trenchard and Gordon], IW5, 17 February 1720; Gordon, CL15, 4 February 1721; IW35, 14 September 1720.

freedom to question the fundamentals of either politics or religion.¹⁴⁰ Christianity and the mixed constitution could not be undermined. Finally, an organ of Walpole's government stated in 1733 that 'there are more men in England, who think freely, than in former times; yet these are but few, and those chiefly in cities and great towns'. Furthermore, those people thinking freely were Whigs, in a positive sense.¹⁴¹

A further illustration of the positive potential of the concept of freethinking is Thomas Dawson's discussion on 'the modern way of freethinking' (1731). The operation of the soul being free, and it being impossible to restrain thinking in any way, Dawson argued that freedom of thought was a natural state for human beings. One was a proper freethinker when one's understanding was 'really at liberty to make a serious and careful examination both of the truth and certainty'. In contrast, it was not freethinking to ignore evidence and to judge instead on the basis of passions such as partiality, humour and interest. Neither was it proper freethinking to be indifferent to commonly shared religious beliefs.¹⁴²

Dawson's interpretation suggests that parties either religious or political did not fit into the early eighteenth-century ideal of freethinking. No direct causal relationship between a more positive interpretation of freethinking and the later acceptance of parties existed. Even though freethinking and parties were both aspects of pluralism, they did not become linked in contemporary consciousness in any positive way. Neither did support for idealised freethinking necessarily entail support for what could be called modernity. Dawson, for instance, defined freethinking also in relation to attitude towards change, maintaining that an 'affection to novelty' was not freethinking.¹⁴³

In the early years of the eighteenth century, England experienced several instances of radical religious freethinking. These gave rise to an unparalleled debate on the freedom of thought. This debate also stretched to political discourse because of the continuously close relationship between the spheres of religion and politics. Freethinking provided authors such as Addison and Steele with an avenue for pejorative conceptualisations of political pluralism. In the long run, however, freethinking statements of the unavoidability of diversity in opinions had a more fundamental yet indirect effect in favour of an emerging positive understanding of political pluralism. Freedom of thought necessarily concerned both religious and political issues.

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140 C2, 9 December 1726; C119, 12 October 1728; C280, 13 November 1731.

141 *London Journal*, No. 748, 27 October 1733, in *GM*, Vol. III, October 1733, Reel 134.

142 Dawson, *Good Advice: In a Letter to a Friend, Concerning the Modern Way of Free-Thinking*, 1731, 2-3, 8, 47, 63; other defences of freedom of thought include a defender of the rights of Dissenters who maintained that every person should judge for himself in religious matters, as that would remove heresy and re-establish unity among Christians. *Conscientious Nonconformity*, 1737, 25, 85; In 1739, Annet lectured on freethinking as 'the great duty of religion'. Annet, *Judging for Ourselves; Or Free-Thinking, The Great Duty of Religion*, 1739.

143 Dawson, *Good Advice: In a Letter to a Friend, Concerning the Modern Way of Free-Thinking*, 1731, 4.

■ Conclusion

The objective of this study has been to enhance our knowledge on how members of the political elite in early eighteenth-century England understood the growth of political pluralism. By political pluralism was meant the coexistence of rival value systems in political thought and the existence of a permanent competition between political parties. In the early eighteenth century, a pluralistic society was only in formation, as the traditional ideal of religious uniformity and the connected idea of a polity lacking alternatives were increasingly challenged. Genuine political pluralism would have meant that rival political groupings supporting divergent values were capable of coexistence and cooperation irrespective of their continuous disagreements. In a pluralistic society, which was certainly not achieved by 1750, diversity of views could have been allowed without the fear that the lack of uniformity both in religion and politics might lead to the destruction of the entire political system. The recognition of such political pluralism proved painful for a great majority of the early eighteenth-century political nation.

The issue of the acceptance of political pluralism in early eighteenth-century England concerned much more than the question of the right of existence of political parties. Therefore, the above analysis of experiences of political pluralism could not be limited to mere party theories. In the early eighteenth century, political pluralism was generally conceptualised through terminology that was derived from the traditionally dominant religious discourse. This politico-religious character of the terminology of pluralism was due to the inherited affinity of the spheres of politics and religion. As the amount of specialised secular terminology of politics remained limited, familiar terms from other areas of discourse provided means for conceptualising political pluralism. The study of discourse on political pluralism has thus necessitated the study of the parallel and connected discourse on religious pluralism.

The importance of religious pluralism in contemporary understanding of political pluralism was due to the fact that attitudes towards religious dissent remained a major factor dividing the political nation. Other traditional areas of discourse briefly discussed in this study were those of medicine and warfare. An extended analysis of the discourses of law and classical republicanism, which also played a role in conceptual change but have been discussed elsewhere, has been excluded from this study. Instead, this study has focused on religious concepts of pluralism because they clearly formed the prevalent paradigm for conceptualising political pluralism, and because they have not hitherto received due attention. A wide network of initially religious concepts applied in the discourse on political pluralism has been reconstructed and analysed. This approach revealed essential features of collective experiences of

political pluralism which would not have been reached via a more secular route.

An alternative methodological approach has also been followed in the search for early eighteenth-century understanding of political pluralism. The process of secularisation in politics and the contemporary understanding of rising political pluralism have not been previously examined via concepts as units of analysis. The distinctive goals of the history of concepts when compared with those of the history of political thought have been emphasised: the history of concepts endeavours to reconstruct a whole variety of experiences of political change. The conceptualisations of these experiences were conditioned by both accumulated meanings of available concepts and the contexts and exigencies of the day. Instead of strictly following the programme of *Begriffsgeschichte*, however, this study modified its methods to better accommodate English circumstances. It has already been pointed out, for instance, that, despite important structural change and notable conceptual transformations, the English early eighteenth century does not deserve the name of a 'watershed' to modernity. The seventeenth-century Civil War or the Glorious Revolution had led to no irreversible conceptual transition to modernity. The first two decades of the eighteenth century, for instance, brought a significant reversal of any such process. The pace of conceptual change did accelerate after 1720, but the period as a whole was one of conceptual evolution rather than sudden revolution.

Printed source material of the breadth contained in this study has not usually been employed in comparable analyses of the period. Contemporary dictionaries, for instance, though conventionally resisting linguistic innovations, proved helpful in the reconstruction of the conceptual world of the period. The variety of consulted genres in this study was high and was further augmented by an application of some electronic textbases in the search for conceptual evidence. Electronic databases, however, played only a limited role in searches and brought no easy solution to the consultation or qualitative analysis of the primary sources.

The extent of contemporary awareness of both structural and conceptual change has been demonstrated to have been relatively high, though readiness for innovation in both religion and politics remained nearly non-existent, being restricted to tiny radical circles. It was radical authors who expressed particular concern about deficiencies in political language which they understood to have been caused by the application of ambiguous religious terminology to political discourse. Generally speaking, attitudes towards things modern, novel and innovative remained deeply suspicious. Whereas innovation continued to be a religiously charged pejorative term, defending authentic traditions was what mattered.

The analytical part of this study was opened by discussions on early eighteenth-century conceptions of the limits of the political and religious. The terminology of the political turned out to have often carried multiple opposing meanings accumulated in the course of a clash between classical and modern political theories. Several of these meanings were continuously associated with

religious indifference. The ambiguity and dependence of political terminology on other areas of discourse, religion in particular, which has been underscored by Conal Condren with reference to the seventeenth century, thus appears to have continued well into the eighteenth century.

However, secularisation in 'polit' vocabulary took significant steps starting from the 1720s, as references to Church politics became rarer and a more specific secular sense of politics began to emerge. This decrease in associations between political activity and religious indifference is best illustrated by the step-by-step substitution of the inherently pejorative attribute *politic* with a neutral or even positive adjective *political*. This conceptual shift is most distinctly visible in writings by the opposition to Robert Walpole. Some positive references to Niccolò Machiavelli, few at the turn of the century, also started to reoccur. Descriptions of politics as a suspect activity might occasionally be replaced by references to respectable politicians. As 'polit' vocabulary was increasingly conceived as secular, it lost much of its former strength as vocabulary of abuse.

As to the debate on the limits of the religious, arguments against clerical involvement in political debate, or political divinity, demonstrate a strengthened understanding of politics and religion as separate areas of life. Throughout the period, political preaching and clerical pamphleteering contributed to a conceptual mixture between religious and political terminologies. From the early 1720s, however, this tendency was countered by anticlerical statements emerging first from the tiny republican circles. By the 1730s, politics and religion had already become rather generally understood as separate but interconnected and parallel areas of life.

Though distinctions between the spheres of politics and religion began to be drawn, and though the frequencies of religious terms in political texts decreased, universally understood religious terminology did not lose all of its relevance in political argumentation. Even radical authors of the 1720s, 1730s and 1740s continued to refer to political uniformity, political conformity and political orthodoxy, thus taking a former religious concept and applying it to a political context to propagate innovative political ideas in a way that was the most likely to legitimate their points. In such conceptual loans, which often had an ironic undertone, the sphere of politics already appeared as stronger than that of religion, and these expressions were understood as more metaphorical than had been the case with parallel expressions at the turn of the century.

The analysis of terminology of religious pluralism in chapters seven and eight revealed several noteworthy conceptual developments that were also reflected in conceptualisations of political pluralism. For instance, recognitions of political pluralism were facilitated by a vague substitution of the traditional ideal of uniformity with a more sympathetic concept of diversity. Still, uniformity and orthodoxy in both religion and politics remained the ideal for most writers. In the early years of the century, terms such as heresy and schism, conveying a sense of guilt, found their way into traditionalist descriptions of political pluralism. Jonathan Swift, for instance, called Whig and Tory parties

civil schisms and a schism in politics. These expressions were not mere metaphors but conceptualised a connection between religious and political pluralism in a manner acceptable to most of Swift's readers.

At the end of the period, parallel conceptualisations of political parties with terms of religious pluralism would hardly any more have appeared as plausible. Ironical uses of religious terminology for descriptions of political pluralism also started to appear. To provoke traditionalists, radicals such as John Toland suggested that plurality of values in both religion and politics was potentially beneficial, and the republicans of the early 1720s defended the right to be political heretics.

Terminologies of religious and political pluralism became considerably more distinct in the course of the early eighteenth century. At the beginning of the century, the distinction between the pejorative terms sect, party and faction was yet far from clear. Consequently, associations between religious sects and political parties continued to be unavoidable and could be exploited in political allusions by both parties. By the mid-eighteenth century, however, the specific character of a religious sect as opposed to a political party had already become evident. Parties in politics and sects in religion became increasingly criticised as separate – even if frequently intermixed – phenomena. As a result of a more specific categorisation of religious and political groupings, the pejorative associations which continued to be carried by sectarianism were no longer able to prevent an adoption of more positive attitudes towards political pluralism.

Whatever the potential for conceptual change, the concept of party remained basically derogatory throughout the period. The strength of traditional discourses such as religion, medicine and warfare contributed to continuity in the meanings of party. Nonetheless, some noteworthy semantic developments also occurred. As terminologies used to describe political and religious pluralism were developing in diverse directions, the previous religion-dominated concept of party became substituted by a more specific non-religious concept of *political* party. After a remarkable delay reflecting a denial of the reality of parties, party finally became recognised in dictionaries as a political term. After 1730, it became defined in increasingly secular terms and its political sense became more precisely presented and distinguished from its legal, military and religious senses. The first objective definitions of party as a group of people united in a common design date from the 1740s.

An analysis of party word combinations showed that major mental restraints to an acceptance of parties existed. Several combinations were continuously derived from traditionally dominant discourses. The religious associations of party, though occurring much more seldom after 1720, did not suddenly disappear. For instance, 'Church' was one of the few attributes capable of turning party into a positive phenomenon. On the other hand, synonyms for party such as cause, cabal and division built, to a great extent, on negative religious associations of the terms. Often combined with organic conceptions of society derived from the remnants of Galenic medicine, religious associations survived throughout the period. Neither did the military associations of party

evaporate, even though party conflict became increasingly interpreted via terms of abstract and verbal conflict instead of ones implying a risk of open violence. Juridical uses of party remained unambiguously non-political, and the social senses remained marginal as to the concept of political party. Significant for later developments was the widening use of both party and faction in distinctly secular senses after 1720 and the emergence of a clearer conceptual distinction between the two. Whereas the continuously derogatory term faction was increasingly condemned with secular rather than religious arguments, party became free to gain neutral if not yet positive connotations. The rise of more sympathetic conceptions of parties later in the eighteenth century may also have been facilitated by the existence of euphemisms for party that were derived from the traditions of court factions and classical republicanism.

The names of Whig and Tory, provide an illustrative example of the affinity of the spheres of religion and politics and the continuous importance of the Civil War in early eighteenth-century conceptualisations of party. For a surprisingly long period, dictionary editors refrained from providing these widely used but despised terms with proper definitions. Starting only in the 1720s, forty years after their first introduction, their political senses were listed by some editors. The first secular but still not really objective definitions only saw day-light in the 1750s. In the course of time, the pejorative content of the terms declined as a result of their widespread use, but they continued to be applied in ways that often denied the legitimacy of the rival party. In political discourse, the confessional or constitutional character of the denominations was emphasised as best suited the interests of the writer. Their confessional associations were supported by their use as synonyms for the Church parties of Low Church and High Church up to at least the 1720s.

This study has also demonstrated the relevance of the debates on enthusiasm, fanaticism, zeal, moderation and toleration to early eighteenth-century conceptualisations of political pluralism. Though religious enthusiasm continued to be feared, its plausibility as a political insinuation decreased radically as a consequence of secularisation. By the 1740s, a positive secular sense of enthusiasm had already entered political discourse. Political uses of the term fanaticism declined significantly as well, and seems to have become more clearly restricted to the sphere of religion. Connecting religious and political zeal facilitated both positive and negative arguments and thus formed a valuable tool for political polemicists. The concept of moderation, which entailed an existence of religious alternatives, first turned into a disputed politico-religious concept but later achieved an increasingly positive and secular meaning in public discourse. Likewise, toleration was experienced as an uncomfortable phenomenon by most writers at the beginning of the century. Importantly, however, a conceptual division into ecclesiastical and political toleration gained ground, the latter of which could also later be extended to concern variety in secular opinions.

The associations between the semantic field of religious freethinking and political pluralism have also been discussed. The meaning of the neologism

freethinking, which was defined in only three dictionaries of the period, became an object of fierce disputation and was occasionally applied also to conceptualisations of political pluralism in expressions such as Addison's 'freethinker in politics'. Some radical thinkers vindicated universal freethinking, allowing differences in religious and political opinions even among the common people. Traditionalists also adopted freethinking as a polemical device against their political rivals. Of course, such politico-religious insinuations of atheism, deism, libertinism and freethinking among political opponents lost some of their credibility as secularisation advanced. The moderate establishment in turn defended a fiction of an admirable ancient freethinking fundamentally different from modern freethinking. This fiction did not prevent them from using freethinking in a pejorative sense to criticise coffee house politicians, that is, the middling and lower orders actively supporting the political rivals of the moderates. Finally, in the writings of Ambrose Philips, freethinking was redefined to appear as a beneficial feature in the glorified British system. Importantly, this ideal British freethinker did not get involved in parties either political or religious. However, no matter how critical they were towards political parties, the freethinkers' recognition of diversity most probably contributed to the later formation of positive attitudes towards political pluralism.

This study showed that traditional terminologies continued to provide political discourse with usable idioms. These were mainly used to oppose various signs of political pluralism, but they could also be applied in innovative ways to argue in favour of recognition and sometimes even approval of diversity in politics. Terence Ball's suggestion that an entrance of specialised discourses in the field of political meanings may contribute to conceptual change is thus supported by evidence from early eighteenth-century discourse on political pluralism.

Changes in the structure of eighteenth-century English politics are relatively well known, whereas the slower conceptual transformation has not previously received proper consideration. This study shows that both strong continuity and important shifts were manifest at the conceptual level. The conceptual approach applied in this present analysis has shown itself capable of producing more precise information on contemporary understanding of political parties and thus supplements previous work that has emphasised secular explanations – such as the role of classical political theory – for the inability of early eighteenth-century thinkers to accept parties. Without denying the influence of secular traditions of thought, this study has revealed a previously neglected aspect of the survival of religious associations of party vocabulary well into the eighteenth century. Together these interpretations provide a more complete picture of the history attitudes towards political parties.

The findings of this study also give reason to reconsider some conclusions drawn in previous research on the history of political parties, particularly those claiming that parties had become accepted by 1700 and those doubting the importance and genuineness of early eighteenth-century condemnations of

parties. Suspicious attitudes towards parties were, in the main, genuine and based to a great extent on assumptions of an interconnection between the religious and the political. Neither has this study been able to support the hypothesis that a transition from organic imagery to contract theory contributed to the emergence of positive attitudes towards parties, as far as the early eighteenth century is concerned.

The findings of this study support arguments emphasising the need to consider the religious context in the study of early modern political thought, including that of the century of the Enlightenment. Religion seems indeed to have remained a concern of first importance in public discourse up to at least the 1720s. On the basis of the analysed material, Jonathan Clark's and Justin Champion's suggestion on the central role of religious idioms in eighteenth-century political discourse proved valid as far as the early part of the century is concerned. Likewise, Tony Claydon's point that the patterns of English political discourse in the 1690s remained wedded to early Protestant concepts can be extended to concern the 1700s and 1710s as well. Clark's hypothesis on a connection between religious heterodoxy and radical political thought found support as far as linguistic innovation in discourse on political pluralism is concerned: early eighteenth-century heterodox thinkers were the most eager to apply commonly used religious concepts to political discourse in innovative ways. Champion's suggestion of the intimate conceptual connection between religious and political issues was made more concrete with this present conceptual analysis. The strain between the prevalent thought patterns and material progress proposed by Paul Langford and Gordon Schochet among others, has been demonstrated to have been to a great extent religion-related. This strain is an apt example of what Reinhart Koselleck has characterised as differing paces of political change and change in the language of politics.

The findings of this study, though lending support to much recent work, differ from some previous studies in significant aspects. The combination of an approach appreciating the role of religion and the conceptual method has meant that traditionalist elements have also been analysed, which has led to historical development appearing more complex and less linear. A conceptual analysis of the early eighteenth-century language of politics shows that the secularisation of English political discourse was not completed by the end of the seventeenth century, as suggested by some studies. Neither did the dominant status of religion in public discourse cease immediately after the Hanoverian Succession but continued at least up to the late 1720s. Of course, an understanding of the religious and political as distinct gradually strengthened in the course of the early eighteenth century. The 1720s, as suggested by several historians, and particularly the period after 1730, experienced an acceleration in the secularisation of political discourse. Conceptual developments demonstrate that the nature of religious controversy then indeed changed decisively: religious terms became rarer and less violently applied in texts that, for instance, increasingly discussed political issues through the terminologies of corruption and patriotism. Even thereafter, however, the religious and political

remained parallel in contemporary consciousness: in a society where religion continuously mattered, analogies from religion and religious concepts and metaphors could easily be applied to political issues.

The above findings also appear to be supported by studies focusing on the later eighteenth century, a period not discussed in this study. The assumption of the parallel and united nature of conformity and uniformity in religion and politics continued to influence political discourse also after 1750. The Hanoverian Church of England, the spiritual home of almost all members of the political elite, continued to feel herself threatened by heterodoxy, though not as severely as in the beginning of the century. Despite some progress in moderation and toleration, full religious liberty remained for long out of question.¹

A gradual separation between religious and political discourses was, however, taking place. Recent scholarship suggests that this separation originated, to a great extent, from within religious discourse. Whereas the allowance of limited religious pluralism in the Toleration Act of 1689 had caused deep anxiety among much of the clergy, this initially loathsome compromise gradually turned into an inseparable element of the much revered British constitution in Church and state. Unreasonable religious violence became rejected as a cause of needless disturbance in political harmony. Religious violence, in turn, appeared to be best restricted by a measure of toleration. Warburton (1736) already presented the British combination of limited toleration and civil rights to religious Dissenters as a theoretical ideal which should have been universally adopted. In the long run, a growing sense of security among the clergy contributed to a further increase of moderation among them. As the eighteenth-century progressed, the Anglican Church gradually ceased to feel herself under constant attack by alternative forms of religion. This security was due to the fact that, in reality, the Toleration Act never led to any dramatic rise in the numbers of Dissenters. Instead, eighteenth-century non-Anglican Protestants increasingly found themselves drifting into the margins of a predominantly Anglican society.²

This strengthening feeling of security among the clergy did not immediately make them reject political issues from their sermons and pamphlets. Clergymen continued to defend the British constitution with citations from the Bible, and their texts continued to have a highly political content. Significantly, however, the character and application of religious arguments went through a transformation at the very end of the eighteenth century. This transformation in the 1780s and 1790s was a result of the rising influence of rational and empirical thought on Christianity. Critical and scientific methods of studying the Bible, for instance, inevitably altered the way religious ideas became applied to the questions of the day. The clergy began to turn their attention away from political issues and started instead to focus in their sermons on issues such as social theory. Importantly, it has been argued that this change in the emphasis

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1 Chamberlain 1995, 209.

2 Walsh and Taylor 1993, 57, 61; Albers 1993, 333.

of clerical sermons occurred within Protestant Churches. This secularisation of political thought was not a development forced upon the Anglican Church by the tiny deist and atheist minorities.³

In party politics, religious motivation of the Whig and Tory parties did not disappear after 1750. In the 1750s, the differences between the parties were most easily defined in religious terms. In the 1760s, party division started to gain extra impetus from questions of foreign policy, disagreements on domestic administration, and problems in the rapidly expanding area of economy. Even then, the influence of religious feelings on political identities remained present. More particularly, issues such as royal authority and religious toleration could hardly be discussed without basing the arguments either on the inherited High-Church or on the Low-Church and Dissenting traditions. In party-political pamphlet literature, the emphasis still continued to be laid on religion by a number of writers in the 1770s. Particularly in the localities, parties hardly ever became entirely secular in the eighteenth century. Furthermore, the role of religion in local party politics may have played a considerable role also in the nineteenth century, as nonconformity started to grow again.⁴

Even though commonly shared conceptions of the character of politico-religious divisions remained relatively unchanged throughout the eighteenth century, and even though much of the language also continued as it had been, political discourse was experiencing some transformation. Jan Albers has suggested that politico-religious language, though sincere in its political purposes, became more exaggerated and satirical than it had been in the early eighteenth century.⁵ Religious elements in political discourse became step-by-step less likely to be taken very seriously. Their proportion declined after 1720, the violence of the arguments calmed down, and their associations turned more playful than they had been in the heated years of early eighteenth-century party strife. Robert Hole, Walsh and Taylor have all pointed out that, in English political thought, the period from 1760 to 1832 was also characterised by decisive changes in the relationship between religion and politics. Historians seem to be agreed that, by the 1830s, the English constitution had developed towards legally established pluralism, and that the English political system already functioned to a great extent on the basis of indifferentism and secularism.⁶ A conceptual approach to the politico-religious terminology of the late eighteenth century might also bring more light to this transformation.

On the basis of the findings of this study, when compared to previous research, it can be concluded that the connection or at least the belief in the parallel nature of the growth of pluralism in religion and politics remained vital among most members of the early eighteenth-century elite. In most cases, this interconnection entailed continuity in inherited conceptions of the necessity of both religious and political uniformity. However, gradually emerging more

3 Hole 1989, 4, 7, 11–12; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 60.

4 Bradley 1990, 111–12, 413.

5 Albers 1993, 331–2.

6 Hole 1989, 1–2; Walsh and Taylor 1993, 62.

precise definitions for religious terminology strengthened the separate nature of the sphere of politics and thereby also that of political pluralism, enabling the emergence of more positive attitudes towards political parties. Furthermore, innovative conceptions of political pluralism were frequently expressed in religious terminology. In a basically religious political culture, this continued to be an effective way of introducing conceptual change in the language of politics, including a positive understanding of political pluralism. Gradual transformations in conceptualisations of political pluralism facilitated the emergence of later party theories. The strength of these politico-religious conceptualisations does not rule out effects of additional secular conceptualisations of political pluralism, but the number of alternative ways of conceptualising political pluralism seems to have remained restricted throughout the period.

It should be noted that this study has examined primarily the role of initially religious concepts in discourse on political pluralism. This has been done on the basis of source material that forms only a limited sample of contemporary texts. The results concern conceptual developments within the political elite and do not necessarily represent the attitudes of the public at large. The choice of networks of concepts of pluralism as objects of analysis has prevented deeper analysis of the history of a single concept.

The consulted source material can, however, be considered relatively wide and representative. Major genres and various directions of religious and political thought among the elite have been taken into consideration, whereas sources revealing conceptualisations among the public at large are few, which may be an indication of the restricted nature of political discourse. The analysed concepts include the major concepts of pluralism with a religious origin. An analysis of several concepts provided a more balanced picture of conceptual developments in which changing meanings of one concept necessarily affected meanings of other concepts within the same semantic field. Secular concepts of politics have been studied elsewhere, though supplementary work could certainly be done also in that field. In future work, cooperation with a group of historians studying conceptual change in this period would increase expertise, so that extended source material could be used and more detailed histories of single concepts created. A more extensive study on the theme could also provide more exact information on the use of concepts by groups and individuals.

Further research in the history of concepts might focus on the conceptual study of other neglected areas of discourse and their potential importance to political discourse. These include the languages of medicine, natural philosophy and war. More could be said about the influence of early Protestant concepts in a predominantly Protestant political culture. A conceptual approach might also provide new findings if applied to the study of the secular languages of politics such as law and economy. In addition to the study of the history of political thought, the study of the history of concepts is also needed. Diversity in methodological approaches can create a picture of past thought that highlights the complexity of conceptual change.

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■ Appendix A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON AUTHORS

Individual letter-writers in collections of correspondence have not been included. Several anonymous and pseudonymous early eighteenth-century authors inevitably remain, due to the lack of adequate sources, unidentified.

ACHERLEY, Roger (1665?–1740), lawyer, constitutional writer, and politician, was the son of a landowner and studied law in London. This committed Hanoverian expected a reward in the form of a government post but, to his great disappointment, he was never awarded one. Acherley's reputation was based not so much on his career as a lawyer but on his writings on political, legal and constitutional issues. Acherley was a supporter of an extreme form of contract theory (*DNB*, Vol. I, 57–8).

ADDISON, Joseph (1672–1719), essayist and politician, was son of an Anglican clergyman. He studied in Oxford, specialising in Latin poetry, and, due to his highly valued scholarship, he was made a Fellow. His grand tour through Europe at the turn of the century was supported by the Whig government, the political values of which Addison shared. Addison achieved popularity among the leading Whigs, and, as a useful propagandist, he was given a government post. Addison's career as a civil servant in London and Dublin lasted until the fall of the Whigs in 1710 and again from 1716 to 1718, when the Hanoverian Succession and Addison's skills as a polemicist supporting the Hanoverians brought Addison back to politics to the status of a Secretary of State. He was a MP from 1708 to 1719. In addition to poems and a travel book, Addison wrote an opera, hundreds of periodical essays, the tragedy *Cato* that achieved widespread popularity due to the classical values expressed in it, and an unsuccessful comedy (Sambrook 1986, 259; Hill 1988, 440–1).

ANNET, Peter (1693–1769), was initially a schoolmaster who lost his employment for his deistical writings. He was also a member of the Robin Hood debating society which was known for its heterodox theological discussions. Annet's reputation as a deist only grew in the 1760s due to his writings, which led to his imprisonment (*DNB*, Vol. I, 481).

ATTERBURY, Francis (1662–1732), Bishop of Rochester, was a leading High Churchman and Tory. He had gentry background and was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church. Atterbury enjoyed being involved in controversies. He achieved a promotion to the position of royal chaplain and became close to Queen Anne. In his numerous polemical writings, Atterbury attacked values of leading Low-Church divines, above all toleration of diversity within Protestantism. For Atterbury, who won the support of much of the lower clergy, the Church was divinely ordained, organic, independent of political power, and a major supporter of monarchy. In the Sacheverell affair, Atterbury was a fervent supporter of High-Church principles, whereas he found the Hanoverian Succession uncomfortable. Many of the Tory essays in *The Examiner* were contributed by him. His ecclesiastical career finally brought him the see of bishop in 1713; but he was frequently more interested in politics. In politics, he opposed the Whigs, and Walpole in particular, and eagerly supported the Tory opposition and even the Jacobite cause. This made him isolated among bishops who were mostly Whigs, but popular among the Oxford-educated lower clergy and country Tories. Engaged in a Jacobite plot in 1721, Atterbury was sentenced to deprivation and banishment, which made Atterbury the favourite of the Tory mob and clergy. In 1723, Atterbury went to France to join the Jacobite court (Treasure 1992, 18–20).

BAILEY, Nathan (–1742), lexicographer and schoolmaster, belonged to the Seventh-day Baptists. Using Kersey's *Dictionarium* (1708) as a basis, he first published his *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* in 1721, the sixth edition (1733) of which was used for this study. This wordbook became probably the most popular of the eighteenth century and appeared in thirty editions by 1802. Bailey's last wordbook, *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1730) was based on George Gordon's work. This work, which surpassed in coverage all previous dictionaries, has also been used in this study. Johnson used a copy of Bailey's dictionary as the foundation for his own (*DNB*, Vol. I, 881; Reddick 1990, 13–14; *The Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment* (*BCE*) 1991, 53; Kolb 1991, 124).

BALGUY, John (1686–1748), clergyman and theologian, was the son of a schoolmaster and studied classics in Cambridge. Balguy was a hardworking sermon-writer. He supported Hoadly in the Bangorian controversy, was a follower of Clarke's philosophy, and, in his writings, he presented deity as benevolent and working through a universe of order and beauty. In the late 1720s, he also preached on the question of party spirit (*DNB*, Vol. I, 980; *BCE* 1991, 53).

BARON, William (1636–), was Chaplain in Ordinary and Rector of Hamstead, Marshall, and Enborne, Berks (Watt/*British Biographical Archive* (*BBA*) Card 71, Frame 39 (71/39)).

BAYLE, Pierre (1647–1706), French Protestant author, was originally professor of philosophy but left France in 1681 and later taught in Rotterdam. When in Holland, he published his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697) which had a considerable influence on eighteenth-century freethinking. The numerous editions and translations (1710 and the mid-1730s) of this dictionary provided a source for many English writers as well. In his dictionary, Bayle argued strongly against fanaticism and intolerance and recommended toleration instead (*BCE* 1991, 57).

BERKELEY, George (1685–1753), divine and philosopher, was born in Ireland but considered himself an Englishman. He studied at Trinity College, Dublin, where he became fellow, tutor, and finally lecturer in Greek and Hebrew. After studying Locke's texts, he presented his own philosophy in books published from the 1710s onwards. He travelled widely on the Continent and America. While in London, he had contacts with the leading literary figures of the time and contributed anti-freethinking essays to *The Guardian*. He also wrote on immaterialism, metaphysics, medicine, optics and mathematics as well as on ecclesiastical, social and economic issues. Towards the end of his life, this clergyman became Bishop of Cloyne (Sambrook 1986, 261; John W. Yolton in *BCE*, 61).

BILLINGSLEY, John (1657–1722), nonconformist minister, studied at Cambridge and published numerous religious tracts (*DNB*, Vol. II, 497).

BLACKMORE, Richard, Sir (1654–1729), physician and writer, was the son of an attorney. He studied at Westminster and Oxford, worked temporarily as a schoolmaster, travelled abroad, and was finally elected Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Blackmore became physician in ordinary to King William III and Queen Anne and was knighted in 1697 for his medical services. Politically, he was a supporter of the Revolution of 1688. He wrote poetry and numerous medical treatises (*DNB*, Vol. II, 591–3; 'Blackmore, Sir Richard', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 24 September 1997).

BOLINGBROKE, Henry St John, Viscount (1678–1751), leading Tory politician, was born a nobleman and educated at Eton. He held a Tory seat in Parliament from 1701 onwards and soon achieved a reputation as the best speaker in the House of Commons. St John's rise in politics is considered the result of his own ability, not patronage. He became the leader of the traditionalist Tories by 1702, and he held many government posts including those of Secretary of War and Secretary of State. What was typical of Bolingbroke's paradoxical personality was his way of changing political views with

changing political circumstances. For instance, though leading Anglican High-Church Tories, he was himself a freethinker. Having played a central role in Britain's conclusion of a separate peace with France in 1713, Bolingbroke was created viscount. In 1714, he briefly became the leading minister but lost all positions with the death of Queen Anne the same year. Facing the threat of impeachment, he left the Tories and fled to France to work in the Pretender's service for a short period of time. For much of his exile, he studied history and philosophy at his country estate. After much petitioning and bribery, he was allowed to return to England in 1725 and become an active figure in the opposition to Walpole, particularly through his essays in *The Craftsman*. As an opposition leader, he claimed to be above party and capable of freeing Englishmen from the Whig party as well, but what he needed in order to accomplish that was a united opposition party. These efforts proving unsuccessful, and the failure being fostered by Bolingbroke's questionable reputation, he returned to France and lived there from 1736 to 1743, completing his *Idea of a Patriot King*, the ideas of which were neither original, nor up-to-date, nor very influential. After coming back to England once again, he had little political influence (Sambrook 1986, 262; Hill 1988, 423–6).

BOND, William, the only early eighteenth-century person with this name that can be found in the consulted biographical works was originally a gentleman who turned writer, dramatist and actor. He died in 1735 (Baker/BBA 124/5).

BOYER, Abel (1667–1729), writer, was a native French Protestant who had lived in exile in Holland and, after 1689, in England. He was a good classical scholar and worked as a tutor, teaching the son of Princess Anne, amongst others. Politically, Boyer was a dedicated Whig, a fact that may have hindered his advancement in the teaching profession and prompted him to writing instead. In 1703, he started to publish an annual (later a monthly) register of events. He also edited newspapers and wrote pamphlets (DNB, Vol. II, 1015–16).

BRADFORD, Samuel (1652–1731), divine and bishop, was the son of a London citizen and received his schooling at London, Cambridge and Oxford, studying theology and medicine. He held several ecclesiastical posts, including that of a royal chaplain. He became Bishop in 1718. Religiously he was a committed Protestant and politically he was a loyal Whig. A number of his sermons were published (DNB, Vol. II, 1068–9).

BRAMSTON, James (1694?–1744), clergyman and poet, came from an established family of lawyers. He studied at Westminster and Oxford and became a vicar. In 1729 he published the satirical *Art of Politicks* which, possibly due to its contemporary references, became a popular poem (DNB, Vol. II, 1115).

BULLOKAR, John (ca. 1580–ca. 1641), physician and lexicographer, compiled *The English Expositor* (1616) in his youth. Fourteen editions, many of them revised, appeared of this wordbook, the last of them in 1731. R. Browne re-edited the twelfth edition of his *English Expositor Improv'd* (1719) which was consulted for this study (DNB, Vol. III, 257; 'Encyclopaedias as Dictionaries: Dictionaries: Historical background: From 1604 to 1828', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 24 September 1997).

BURNET, Gilbert (1643–1715), historian and bishop, was a native Scotsman whose father had opposed the Episcopalian Church in Scotland. Burnet received an education of high quality and travelled in England and on the Continent. His personality has been characterised by attributes such as tolerant and moderate, which refer to his opposition to attempts to repress Presbyterianism. Burnet belonged to those Scotsmen who, in the years of Restoration, endeavoured to find a compromise between Presbyterians and Episcopalians. In 1672, Burnet moved to England where he achieved the position of royal chaplain (till 1684). Towards the end of the Restoration period, he became a Whig sympathiser and even worked in Holland as an adviser to William of Orange. After the Glorious Revolution, Burnet, as Bishop of Salisbury, campaigned in favour of the Toleration Act, being ready to allow toleration both to Presbyterians and Non-jurors. In the reign of Anne, he accepted occasional conformity and opposed the views of

Sacheverell. As a Low-Church divine he was deeply despised by the Tories (Hill 1988, 382–4).

BURROUGH, John (b. 1660/1), was a clergyman of whom little is known.

BYROM, John (1692–1763), poet, hymnist, mystic, inventor and diarist, who studied in Cambridge, became a fellow, travelled abroad and studied medicine. He was a religious High Churchman, and politically he was a Jacobite holding strictly traditionalist views though he was not particularly active in advocating them. Byrom also became a Fellow of the Royal Society (*Selections from the Journals and Papers of John Byrom*; Treasure 1992, 89; 'Byrom, John', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 24 September 1997).

CARPENTER, Nathanael (1589–1628?), an Oxford-educated author and philosopher, found an interest in philosophy and mathematics rather than in divinity. His sermons entitled 'Achitophel, or the Picture of a Wicked Politician' were originally preached to Oxford University (*DNB*, Vol. III, 1070–1).

CAVE, Edward (1691–1754), printer, started to publish the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1731. He collected essays published in hundreds of London and country half-sheets to be printed in the magazine which proved a success (*DNB*, Vol. III, 1247–8).

CHAMBERS, Ephraim (–1740), encyclopedist, never went to university but compiled a larger and more appreciated encyclopedia than any previously published. Soon after its publication in 1728, Chambers was made a member of the Royal Society. As visible in some entries of the work, Chambers held views sympathetic to freethinking (*DNB*, Vol. IV, 16–17).

CHEYNE, George (1671–1743), influential London physician, advocated Newtonianism fiercely, concentrating in his observations and experiments on the questions of diet. He was probably the most famous eighteenth-century medical writer to focus on questions of the relationship between physical and mental health in a way that applied Newtonian mechanics to medicine. He also attempted to synthesise Newtonian science and theology (Sambrook 1986, 17–18; *BCE* 1991, 84).

CHISHULL, Edmund (1671–1733), divine and antiquary, studied in Oxford, travelled abroad, and rose in his ecclesiastical career to the status of a royal chaplain to Queen Anne, among other posts. Chishull wrote numerous sermons, some of which were published (*DNB*, Vol. IV, 263).

CLARENDON, Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of (1609–74), historian and leading Royalist, was son of a great landowner and received schooling for the profession of barrister in Oxford. As a MP, he was suspicious towards Charles I's measures, and he joined the opposition. As a moderate, however, he quitted the rebels once their claims turned revolutionary and joined the Royalist side, becoming their leader in the Commons. Later he became a leading adviser for both Charles I and Charles the Prince of Wales. Without achieving success, Hyde searched for a compromise between the sides in the Civil War, supported 'constitutional' monarchy and defended Anglicanism as opposed to Catholicism. Hyde played a central role in organising the Restoration, became the leading minister, and was created an earl in 1661. His career as the chief minister was rather unsuccessful and ended with a banishment to France. There he completed his *History of the Rebellion* which he had started already in 1646 and which was printed posthumously in 1702–4 (Hill 1988, 100–3). This publication inevitably had a considerable effect on early eighteenth-century conceptions of the seventeenth-century Civil War.

CLEMENT, Simon (1695–1720), was a London merchant who worked actively to advance the interests of his profession. He also wrote several pamphlets on economic issues (Palgrave/*BBA* 238/252).

COCKER, Edward (1631–75), arithmetician, teacher, writer and dictionary editor, wrote the book *Arithmetic* which appeared in 100 editions. He also wrote writing manuals and a dictionary which was published posthumously in 1704. This and the edition 1724 were consulted for this study. Both were re-edited by Cocker's friend John Hawkins, a probable successor of Cocker's as a schoolmaster. The edition of 1724 differs from that of 1704 so that there may have been a third editor in the background, or otherwise Hawkins made the changes himself (*DNB*, Vol. IV, 649–50; 'Cocker, Edward', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 24 September 1997).

COLES, Elisha (1640?–1680), lexicographer and stenographer, was the son of a schoolmaster and the nephew of a well-known Calvinist. He studied at Oxford though did not take a degree. When living in London, among other employments, he taught English to foreigners. This work gave rise to his project of compiling a dictionary which first appeared in 1676 and was reprinted at least in 1685, 1692, 1713, 1717 and 1732. The wordbook was not particularly original; it built on its predecessors, adding a few innovations. The editions of 1701 and 1732 of this dictionary were consulted for this study. The latter was revised by Ben. Johnson, but the exact date of revision is not known (*DNB*, Vol. IV, 776; 'Dictionary', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 24 September 1997).

COLLIER, Jeremy (1650–1726), nonjuring clergyman, i.e. traditionalist Anglican and a defender of the Stuarts, was the son of a divine and linguist. He was educated at Cambridge for the clerical profession and held several ecclesiastical posts. After the Revolution of 1688, he participated in the debate on the question of the king's abdication, opposing so actively the interpretation that the throne was vacant that he was prosecuted for his views. Collier continued to oppose the new establishment ostentatiously, making use of traditionalist Anglican ceremonies for that purpose, which led to his discrimination. In contrast, he rose to the status of the leading Non-juror. His career in the Anglican Church being barred, he edited *The Great Historical, Geographical and Poetical Dictionary* (Vols. I and II in 1701, III in 1705 and IV in 1721) which was, to a great extent, translated from the work of the Frenchman Louis Moréri. This dictionary became no success, scholars considering it inaccurate (*DNB*, Vol. IV, 797–802).

COLLINS, Anthony (1676–1729), deist, was educated at Eton and Cambridge. He became a disciple of Locke and Shaftesbury, attacking orthodox theologians who defended divine mysteries. He defined freethinking in a way that allowed him to reject superstition. Questioning the validity of the Bible as a basis for revealed religion, he recommended natural religion instead (Sambrook 1986, 32–3). This was an appalling view for most contemporaries, and Collins was widely criticised both in England and France for his radical defence of freethinking (*BCE* 1991, 99).

CONCANEN, Matthew (1701–1749), writer, was Irish-born. He preferred London to Ireland and literature to the study of law. In the 1720s, he wrote poems, contributed to *The Speculatist* and was involved in hack-writing, defending the ministry. In the 1730s, he continued to criticise Bolingbroke in his writings, to such an extent that he was appointed attorney-general in Jamaica (1732) (*DNB*, Vol. IV, 923–4).

DAVENANT, Charles (1656–1714), political and economic writer, had an academic education, found an interest in theatre, and sat in Parliament. In the early 1700s, he wrote numerous popular political tracts criticising the government, the clergy, and some leading Whigs (*DNB*, Vol. V, 549–50). In his pamphlets, Davenant defended both his own positions and those of the leading Tories. His texts turned more moderate as he achieved a government post in 1703. Classical republicanism played a considerable role in his writings.

DAWSON, Thomas (1676–1740), was probably a doctor of divinity who wrote on several religious subjects (Watt/*BBA* 312/268).

DEFOE, Benjamin Norton, the editor of *A New English Dictionary* (1737, first published in 1735). No background information found.

DEFOE, Daniel (1660–1731), journalist, novelist and government servant, had a London middling sort background and studied at a dissenting academy for a career in a nonconformist ministry. Quitting theoretical studies, however, he chose apprenticeship, preparing himself for a career in business, a career that never became a success. Instead, Defoe got involved in political battles in which his position always remained somewhat uncertain. He fought on the side of the opponents of James II, and held a minor government post under William III. But it was political polemic that was the area closest to Defoe's heart. He wrote in favour of the Glorious Revolution, the Protestant cause, William III, and toleration. In 1702, his rough irony against Anglican traditionalism led to a brief imprisonment, ended by the need of the government to recruit able propagandists. Harley, who shared a dissenting background and principles of moderation with Defoe, became his major employer in the reign of Queen Anne. Defoe's mission was to observe shifts in public opinion around England and to gain the support of the Dissenters for the government. At the time of negotiations for the Union, he did the same in Scotland. *The Review*, which he then wrote, was evidently subsidised by the government. This journal supported the prosecution of Sacheverell but continued to advocate moderate Toryism as opposed to High-Church traditionalism. The Whig government imprisoned Defoe twice (1714, 1715) for his associations with Tories. Yet Defoe succeeded in coming to terms with the new rulers to such an extent that he was later paid by the Whig ministry for editing the leading Jacobite paper so that its readers would accept the Hanoverians. At the same time, he produced a huge number of pamphlets and some famous novels (Hill 1988, 436–8). As Defoe's figure is one full of paradox, not much more can be said about his views other than he was a defender of moderation and toleration as opposed to religious extremism.

DENNIS, John (1657–1734), poet and playwright, son of a wealthy London artisan, received his education at Cambridge, completed a typical *grand tour* to the Continent, and obtained a government sinecure through the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough, but had little success as a writer (Sambrook 1986, 265). Intellectually he was first a Presbyterian but later a radical freethinker (Champion 1992, 187).

DRAKE, James (1667–1707), political writer, was the son of a solicitor. He was educated at Eton and Cambridge, and, in London, he studied medicine and became a Fellow of the College of Physicians. However, in the 1700s, he became better known as a Tory pamphleteer than as a physician. Drake was prosecuted for his allusions against the Whig ministry and Presbyterians. In 1704, he authored together with Mr. Poley the famous *Memorial of the Church of England* which suggested that the established Church was in danger (DNB, Vol. V, 1351–2).

DRYDEN, John (1631–1700), the leading poet, playwright and satirist of the late seventeenth century, was educated in Westminster and Cambridge. In politics, he easily adapted himself to changing circumstances. In the republican period, this youth with Puritan opinions worked at Cromwell's household. In the reign of Charles II, he already praised the monarch like one of the best royalists. Dryden wrote admired plays and poems, some of which contained severe political satire directed against the Whigs. In the reign of James II, this former Puritan, fearing fanaticism and disorder, had already converted to Catholicism (Hill 1988, 271–3).

DUNTON, John (1659–1733), bookseller, was the son of a clergyman. As an apprentice to a bookseller, he became interested in politics on the Whig side. He published several controversial titles, some of them written by himself (DNB, Vol. VI, 236–8).

DYCHE, Thomas (died between 1731 and 1735) schoolmaster and priest, taught in several schools. He compiled vocabularies and was the original editor of the third edition of *A New General English Dictionary* (1740/1750), which was 'finished by William Pardon'. The dictionary first appeared in 1735 (DNB, Vol. VI, 282–3).

EARBERRY, Mathias (1690–1740), a talented Jacobite writer, wrote on deism and constitutional issues and suffered much persecution (Allibone/*BBA* 357/121; Gunn 1983).

EVELYN, John (1620–1706), diarist, was born to a gentry family. He was Anglican and a cautious Royalist who left England for the years of the Interregnum. After the Restoration, he held a minor government post. His fame is based on his lengthy diary which seems to have been written with posterity in mind (Hill 1988, 283–5). Evelyn does not appear to have been much engaged in contemporary political controversies; he rather observed what was going on in society.

FENNING, Daniel, was the editor of *The Royal English Dictionary* (1741) and also wrote on arithmetic, geography and astronomy. He published spelling books and various other practical reference works. Many of these were published in the 1750s, 1760s and early 1770s (Watt/*BBA* 396/56–7), which suggests that Fenning must have been relatively young when compiling his dictionary. Indeed, some catalogues suggest that his dictionary was actually published only in 1761, not in 1741 as printed in the copies of the book. Little is known about the political opinions of Fenning who is not mentioned in most bibliographies and biographies of the eighteenth century.

FERGUSON, Robert (–1714), nonconformist divine, lost his parish in 1662 because of his Calvinism. He plotted first on the side of the Whigs and later on that of the Jacobites (Hill 1988, 320).

FIELDING, Henry (1707–54), novelist, playwright and magistrate, was son of a general. He received a classical education at Eton, and studied law at Leiden. Later, as a magistrate, he acquainted himself with criminal law and what might be called social problems of the day. From the late 1730s onwards, he was the editor of political periodicals such as *The Champion* (1739–41), *The True Patriot* (1745–6) and the *Jacobite's Journal* (1747–8). Above all, however, Fielding was a great novelist (*BCE* 1991, 166; Treasure 1992, 163–8).

FORD, Randolph, London clergyman, some sermons of whose were published in the 1710s (Watt/*BBA* 417/2).

GIFFARD, John (b. 1676/7), was rector, and his *Discourse concerning Family Religion* seems to have been his only published work (Watt/*BBA* 452/248).

GILDON, Charles (1665–1724), writer and clergyman, came from a Royalist and Roman Catholic family and was educated in the ecclesiastical profession. After economic difficulties, he turned to hack-writing. He abandoned Catholicism in favour of deism (*DNB*, Vol. VII, 1226).

GILPIN, William (1724–1804), writer, the son of a captain, was educated at Oxford, was ordained, and worked as a schoolmaster (*DNB*, Vol. VII, 1262–4).

GORDON, George, was the original editor of *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1730), revised by Nathan Bailey. The only George Gordon that published something in the early eighteenth century would seem to have written against Newtonian philosophy, on navigation, astronomy and geography, all being areas typical of dictionary editors. Most of these works were printed in the late 1710s and in the 1720s (Watt/*BBA* 467/376).

GORDON, Thomas (–1750), writer, was probably educated in a Scottish university but moved to London where he first taught foreign languages. After writing pamphlets in connection with the Bangorian controversy, he became an associate of John Trenchard, a Whig politician, and contributed to his anti-High-Church periodicals in the early 1720s. After Trenchard's death in 1723, Walpole gave Gordon a government post (*DNB*, Vol. VIII, 230), which suggests that his writings had been approved by the Prime Minister.

GREY, Zachary (1688–1766), antiquary, studied at Cambridge and made a clerical career. In his writings he attacked Dissenters (*DNB*, Vol. VIII, 661–2).

GRIFFIN, Benjamin (1680–1740), actor and playwright, the son of a priest, was at first an apprentice but turned to the world of drama in the late 1710s. He himself acted the part of Sir John Indolent in his own *Whig and Tory* (1720). His career as an actor appears to have been successful (*DNB*, Vol. VIII, 668–9).

GROSVENOR, Benjamin (1676–1758), first Baptist, turned Presbyterian clergyman. He supported mutual toleration in accordance with moderate Calvinism (*DNB*, Vol. VIII, 721–2).

HALIFAX, George Savile, 1st Marquis of (1633–95), statesman and essayist, was born the first son of a baronet and received his education at Shrewsbury as well as in France and Italy. As a loyal royalist, he rose to the Privy Council in 1672, but, as an independent actor ready to change sides, he was not particularly successful as a politician. Though supporting Protestantism, he did not support the Whigs during the Exclusion Crisis in 1680. In his writings, he defended the middle path in politics which made him unpopular among fellow politicians, yet the favour of Charles II brought him the status of an earl and a marquis. James II dismissed Halifax as a critic of his catholicising policies. Even at the beginning of the Revolution of 1688, Halifax remained neutral. Turning his coat at the right moment, he became the Speaker of the Lords in the Convention and had the honour to formally invite William and Mary to become King and Queen. His new political career was a brief one, however, mostly because of distrust felt towards his turncoat character by the fellow Whigs (Hill 1988, 314–17).

HAMILTON, Sir David (1663–1721), physician, born in Scotland, studied medicine at Leiden and Rheims and became a successful physician of Queen Anne's. He was also diarist who obviously wished his diary to be published. Much of the diary naturally concentrates on medicine. Politically, Hamilton was a Whig (*DNB*, Vol. VIII, 1028; *The Diary of Sir David Hamilton, 1709–1714*, ed. Philip Roberts, 1975).

HAWKINS, John (late seventeenth century), edited the third edition of Cocker's *English Dictionary* printed in 1724. Obviously, however, the work had been originally published much earlier, possibly already in 1678 ('Cocker, Edward', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 25 September 1997). Several men carried this name in late seventeenth-century England, which makes a more certain and detailed identification impossible.

HEARNE, Thomas (1678–1735), historian, antiquarian and assistant librarian at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, concentrated on editing English medieval chronicles, cataloguing the collections of the university library and writing history books. Politically, Hearne was an traditionalist Tory and Jacobite, and this was the reason why he lost his position in 1716 (*Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, Vol. I, vi–vii; 'Hearne, Thomas', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 25 September 1997).

HIGGONS, Bevil (1670–1735), historian and poet, had a gentry background and studied at Oxford and Cambridge. His family was sympathetic towards the exiled Stuarts, and Higgons also spent several years in France. After returning to England, he was imprisoned for some time but later turned to literary work, particularly to historiography. His *Short View of the English History* was first published in 1723 and reprinted several times (*DNB*, Vol. IX, 824–5).

HOADLY, Benjamin (1675–1761), 'controversialist' and bishop, was son of a minor priest. Educated in Cambridge, he proceeded to the post of a fellow, and, after being ordained, moved to London in 1701. There he became a major figure of the Low-Church party, opposing Atterbury among others, and also got involved in politics, as he advocated principles shared by Whig politicians. As an embodiment of Low-Church Whiggism, and disinterested in ecclesiastical responsibilities, he became an object of violent Tory satire. The Hanoverian Succession meant a positive turning point in

Hoadly's career. Thereafter, he could freely attack Anglican traditionalists by insisting, for instance, that the Church could not exist independently of the state. Such statements of disputable, even deistical, doctrinal basis gave rise to a pamphlet war known as the Bangorian Controversy, Hoadly then being Bishop of Bangor. A major consequence of this episode was the suspension of the Lower House of Convocation. Advocating practical views that appear to make the Church an instrument of state, Hoadly became a favourite of Queen Caroline and continued to enjoy preferment in ecclesiastical appointments (Treasure 1992, 24–6).

HOBBS, Thomas (1588–1679), political philosopher, was son of a parson, studied in Oxford, and became tutor to a nobleman. During the Interregnum, Hobbes's royalist fears of anarchy made him stay in France and publish the pro-absolutist *Leviathan* in 1651. When he returned to England a year later, he accepted the authority of the republican government. He also accommodated himself to the Restoration government, though he remained politically suspect. His original political philosophy was condemned by all political and religious groups but particularly by the churchmen who saw dangerous atheism in his attempts to explain man and society as matter and motion. This hostility was also due to Hobbes's suggestion that religion was valuable to politics only as far as it created respect for secular arguments (Hill 1988, 186–8; Yolton 1991a, 224–5). Understandably, Hobbes the atheist remained a condemned figure for the great majority of early eighteenth-century writers.

HOLE, Matthew (1639/40–1730), divine, was educated at Oxford and held a number of ecclesiastical posts. Many of his sermons were printed (*DNB*, Vol. IX, 1020–1).

JOHNSON, Ben., was the re-editor of Coles's *English Dictionary* of 1732. Unfortunately, this person cannot be identified with the available sources.

JOHNSON, Samuel (1709–84), lexicographer, poet, biographer and essayist, was son of a bookseller and sheriff. His mother took the sickly child to be touched by Queen Anne, and Johnson wore the touch-piece for the rest of his life, both being testimonies for a continuous belief in the divine, and healing, origin of kingship. Religiously, Johnson was an orthodox Anglican who put the value of order first. Politically, he was consistently an independent Tory and hater of Whigs. He studied at Lichfield, Stourbridge and briefly at Oxford University but only received his doctorate in 1764. In addition to various other employments, he contributed to *The Gentleman's Magazine* between 1738 and 1743. It was in lexicography, however, where he found the field on which to concentrate between 1747 and 1755. *The Dictionary* became a pioneer work in etymology. The purpose of the compilation was to create standards for the proper use of the English language. In his *Dictionary*, Johnson made use of quotations from a variety of sources – sometimes derived from his memory and thus not always trustworthy – for illustrating various senses of the terms. He paid particular attention to defining the words and was one of the first dictionary editors to attempt to distinguish between the differentiated meanings of words, though it might be added that a considerable number of his definitions were borrowed from previous dictionaries. Importantly, this task of defining commonly used politico-religious terms and choosing quotations for them offered possibilities for the editor to enter his own prejudices in the definitions. This study contains several instances of how Johnson's traditionalism is reflected in the definitions of his *Dictionary* (see the entries for Whig, Tory and toleration, for instance). *The Dictionary* became the most authoritative of its age and made Johnson an appreciated literary figure for the rest of his life (Reddick 1990, particularly 1, 9, 11, 15, 33–4; Kolb 1991, 123–4; *BCE* 1991, 252; Treasure 1992, 176–81, 183). It still constitutes an essential source for the history of concepts of eighteenth-century England.

KEITH, William, Sir (1680–1749), governor of Pennsylvania (1717–26), has been characterised as 'a desperate intriguer, courting always the favour of the people, and not sparing of delusive promises to individuals'. He wrote on colonial issues (Allen/*BBA* 636/120).

KENNETT, White (1660–1728), divine, bishop, historian and antiquarian, was the son of a priest. He studied at Oxford and started anonymous pamphleteering in the early 1680s. Though first arousing contempt among the Whigs, he defended Anglicanism as opposed to Catholicism in the reign of James II and supported the Revolution. He returned to research in the 1690s, writing his *History of England*, for instance. By the late 1700s, Tories already criticised him for his independent views which were moving towards Whiggism (*DNB*, Vol. XI, 2–5).

KERSEY, John, the son of a mathematician, was the first professional English lexicographer. He probably edited *A New English Dictionary*, published in 1702 and which sold for the next seventy years. In this study, the third edition from 1731 has been used. By 1706, he revised Edward Phillips's 1700 edition of *New World of Words* (originally published in 1658) to such an extent that it is justified to talk of a fresh work. The edition of 1706 and the nearly identical one of 1720 were consulted for this study. In 1708, Kersey published yet another *Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum*, an abridgement of the Kersey-Phillips dictionary. This was re-edited in 1715 (used in this study) and 1721 (reprinted in 1731 and used in this study) (Kolb 1991, 124; *BCE* 1991, 263).

KING, William (1650–1729), Archbishop of Dublin, was educated in Dublin. In religion, he opposed both Catholics and Presbyterians. In politics, he was a zealous Whig (*DNB*, Vol. XI, 163–7).

KING, William (1663–1712), writer, was the son of a gentleman. He studied at Oxford and, in the 1690s, engaged in humorous propaganda on the side of the Tories and High Church. He was an active propagandist during the Sacheverell controversy, founding *The Examiner*, the organ of the Tory party (*DNB*, Vol. XI, 161–2).

LAURENCE, John (1668–1732), clergyman and writer, was educated at Cambridge and held several ecclesiastical posts. Apart from several printed sermons, he was the author of texts on gardening (*DNB*, Vol. XI, 647).

LESLIE, Charles (1650–1722), Non-juror and controversialist, was the son of a doctor of divinity. He first studied at Dublin, later turned to law at London, but was finally ordained and held both ecclesiastical and judicial posts. Leslie remained loyal to James II in spite of the Revolution, refusing to take oaths to the new monarchs. This nonjuring attitude, reflected by his visit to the Pretender himself, led to a loss of his post as a lawyer. In the 1690s, he started to write anonymous pamphlets against William III and the leading Whig clergy, the tone of which provoked the government. He also attacked Quakers, deists, Jews and mixed marriages, the relationship between Church and state being one of Leslie's favourite themes in the early years of the eighteenth century. In his periodical *The Rehearsal*, Leslie criticised Locke's political philosophy and advocated that of Filmer (*DNB*, Vol. XI, 956–62).

LEWIS, John (1675–1747), clergyman and author, was the son of a wine cooper who received an education of high quality, including studies at Oxford and Cambridge. He first worked as a tutor and merchant but was later ordained. He was appointed to several ecclesiastical posts, though sometimes opposed by his audience for his views that were openly Whiggish and Low-Church. Towards the end of his life, Lewis turned to writing religious history and biographies, carrying out his work with distinct Protestant prejudices (*DNB*, Vol. XI, 1065–7).

LOCKE, John (1632–1704), physician and philosopher, was the son of an attorney and small landowner and grew up in a family where sympathy towards Puritanism was commonly felt. Locke studied at Westminster School and Christ Church in Oxford, of which he became fellow. Feeling that Oxford's Aristotelian learning could not answer his needs, he focused on experimental science, medicine, politics and religion instead. In 1667, Locke quitted Oxford and moved to London, where he worked as personal physician and occasional political adviser for Lord Ashley (later Earl of Shaftesbury and the father of the third Earl of Shaftesbury), became a Fellow of the Royal Society, and

held posts in colonial administration. In the late 1660s and 1670s he started to write on toleration and human understanding. In the late 1670s, Locke's master Shaftesbury became the organiser of the oppositional Whig party, but – even though he was on his master's side in the Exclusion Crisis, defended the right of resistance in his *Two Treatises of Government* and became surrounded by government spies – Locke's role in the birth of the first political party remains obscure. In the 1680s, Locke lived in exile in Holland, writing on education, toleration and human understanding, and putting the emphasis on reason rather than faith. He supported the Revolution of 1688, returned to England, received a government post and had all his major works printed. Locke quickly became a well-known but far from universally accepted philosopher. In 1695, he became involved in controversy by publishing anonymously his *Reasonableness of Christianity*, which contains Unitarian rather than purely Anglican statements (Hill 1988, 354–8; Yolton 1991b, 301).

LOCKHART, George (1673–1731), author, MP for Scotland, and one of the most active Jacobites, inherited a considerable fortune early in his life. He worked as a commissioner for the union of England and Scotland in 1707 but secretly plotted in favour of the Stuarts. He was imprisoned for several years in 1715. Even after his release, he continued to advocate the interest of the Pretender. His memoirs were published without his consent in 1714 (*DNB*, Vol. XII, 45–7).

LUDLOW, Edmund (1617?–92), ultra-republican, who went to school at Oxford and the Inner Temple. He fought for Parliament and was one of those who signed the death-warrant of Charles I. Ludlow became a leading politician in the republican government. After Restoration, being in danger of the death penalty, he fled to Switzerland, where he wrote his *Memoirs* (Hill 1988, 168–9).

LUTTRELL, Narcissus (1657–1732), annalist and bibliographer, was educated at Cambridge. He supported William III's rise to the throne of England. Luttrell spent his life studying, chronicling events and collecting a large library. Many of his notes on the events of the day were based on newspapers rather than personal observations (*DNB*, Vol. XII, 300–1).

MANDEVILLE, Bernard (1670–1733), Dutch-born doctor of medicine who acted, with little success, as a physician in London from 1692. He wrote poetry, medical works on passions and philosophical writings that resemble Hobbes's controversial thought and became an object of wide criticism. According to Mandeville, who held deistical beliefs, selfish human desires were beneficial to the common good through their economic consequences (Sambrook 1986, 271–2; *BCE* 1991, 310).

MARTIN, Benj[amin] (1704–1782), teacher, mathematician, inventor and collector, specialised in Newtonian mathematics and astronomy and compiled several books summarising current scientific information and ideas. These include the dictionary *Lingua Britannica Reformata* (1749) which endeavoured to provide multiple meanings for words but was not entirely successful in it (*DNB*, Vol. XII; Reddick 1990, 14, 52).

MAWSON, Matthias (1683–1770), bishop, was the son of a wealthy brewer. He was educated at Cambridge and had a long career as a scholar, including a short period as vice-chancellor, but later turned to ecclesiastical appointments. He was bishop of three bishoprics. Few of his sermons were published (*DNB*, Vol. XIII, 111–12).

MIDDLETON, John, doctor of divinity, studied in Oxford and preached in London (Watt/*BBA* 765/283).

MILLER, James (1706–1744), play-wright, studied theology in Oxford and worked as a High-Church preacher but became famous for his comedies (*DNB*, Vol. XIII, 410–11).

MORÉRI, Louis (1643–1680), was French priest and savant, whose *Dictionnaire historique* (1673), translated into English by Jeremy Collier at the turn of the century,

played a role in the formation of eighteenth-century thought, often through the reactions it caused (*BCE* 1991, 339).

NAISH, Thomas (1669–1755), was educated at Salisbury and Oxford and became sub-dean of Salisbury. Some of his sermons were published in the 1700s and 1720s (*Watt/BBA* 805/126). He played a role in ecclesiastical politics and also kept a religious diary until 1728 (*The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 1, 8–10).

NEEDHAM, John (b. 1664/5), was a divine, whose sermons were published between 1710 and 1753 (*Watt/BBA* 808/241).

NICOLSON, William (1655–1727), divine, bishop and antiquary, was the son of a clergyman. He was educated at Oxford and travelled in Germany and France. He had a successful career in the service of the Church of England, and was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. As to his political opinions, Nicolson began as Tory but eventually changed his views towards Whiggism. He became involved with various ecclesiastical disputes (*DNB*, Vol. XIV, 500–2).

OLDMIXON, John (1673–1742), historian and writer, had a gentry background. He started his career as a writer of poems, then turned to history, and then to writing political essays and pamphlets in favour of the Whig party. He later held a government post (*DNB*, Vol. XIV, 1009–12).

OSBORNE, Thomas (1632–1712), statesman, was son of a Royalist landowner. He was elected a MP in 1665. While the leading minister to Charles II, he organised the Court party, later known as the Tory party, in Parliament. The basic values of this grouping built on royalism and strict Anglicanism. Osborne was imprisoned in the 1670s for connections to France. Known as Earl of Danby, he also contributed to the invitation of William and Mary to the throne in 1689. In the early 1690s, he returned to the status of chief minister, being created Duke of Leeds in 1694. In 1695, however, he was impeached for bribery, after which he had little political influence ('Leeds, Thomas Osborne, 1st Duke of', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 25 September 1997).

PARDON, William, was the editor who 'finished' Thomas Dyche's *New General English Dictionary* (1740/1750). No further information on Pardon has been found.

PARKER, Henry (1604–52), political writer and editor of Charles I's *Political Catechism* which was reprinted in 1710 and 1740, supported the Presbyterians in the Civil War but later became an Independent (*DNB*, Vol. XV, 240–1).

PAXTON, Peter (–1711), medical writer and pamphleteer, studied at Cambridge and Oxford. The *DNB* only lists his medical writings, but the *ESTC* suggests that he was also the author of *Civil Polity* (1703) (*DNB*, Vol. XV, 549).

PEARCE, Zachary (1690–1774), divine and bishop, was the son of a distiller. As a student at Cambridge, he contributed essays to Whiggish periodicals. Pearce held several ecclesiastical posts and formed contacts with influential persons including Queen Caroline and the opposition leader Pulteney. He also published scholarly works and sermons (*DNB*, Vol. XV, 596–7).

PHILIPS, Ambrose (1675?–1749), poet and essay-writer, studied at Cambridge and became a fellow there. He had various employments, some of which took him abroad, and published poems, until he became a member of Addison's literary circle in the early 1710s. Philips was secretary to the Hanover Club, and, after the Hanoverian Succession, this loyalty brought him the posts of justice of the peace for Westminster and that of a commissioner for the lottery. In the late 1710s, he wrote, together with Hugh Boulter, Richard West and Gilbert Burnet (Jr.), the periodical *Free-Thinker*. He also published poems and a few unsuccessful plays (*DNB*, Vol. XV, 1058–9).

PHILLIPS, Edward (1630–96?), author, was the son of a London civil servant and a nephew of the poet John Milton. The famous poet took care of his education. He also studied at Oxford though never took a degree. Thereafter, Phillips worked in London as a tutor and in the service of booksellers. He wrote poems, novels and, in 1658, *The New World of Words*, a wordbook that John Kersey re-edited for the editions of 1706 and 1720. Phillips's work had built to a great extent on Thomas Blount's *Glossographia*, published in 1656, but he also employed specialists during the project (*DNB*, Vol. XV, 1083–5; 'Encyclopaedias and Dictionaries: Encyclopaedias: Encyclopaedias in general: Editing and publishing: Authorship', *Britannica Online*, Accessed 27 September 1997).

PLACE, Conyers (1664/5–1738), was clergyman and wrote, in addition to sermons, on various theological questions. These writings were published between 1702 and 1735 (Allibone/BBA 881/80).

PLAXTON, John, was rector of Sutton-upon-Derwent. One of his sermons was published in 1746 (Watt/BBA 881/269).

PYCROFT, Samuel (1682/3–1729), was a fellow of a Cambridge college. His *Brief Enquiry into Free Thinking* (1713) seems to have been his only published work (Allibone/BBA 904/187).

RENNELL, Thomas (b. 1674/5), was clergyman and Fellow of Exeter College. At least three of his sermons were published in the 1700s (Allibone/BBA 922/32).

ROGERS, Thomas, unidentified writer.

RYDER, Dudley (1691–1756), a London law student and diarist, was to become Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench. He was the son of a mercer, his grandfather having lost the family estate for his Puritan views. Ryder studied at a dissenting academy and at the universities of Edinburgh and Leiden. Giving up theology, he turned to the study of law. Originally a Dissenter, he attended Anglican services as well and joined the Church of England during his law studies at London. He made a successful career as a lawyer, partly due to the support of another son of a nonconformist tradesman who introduced him to the Prime Minister. Ryder also became a MP (1733), though he was unwilling to engage in political disputes (*DNB*, Vol. XVII, 529–30).

SACHEVERELL, Henry (1674?–1724), High-Church preacher and polemicist, was the grandson of a nonconformist priest. During his studies at Oxford, he was known for his rabble-rousing sermons in which the union between throne and altar and the danger posed to it by the Dissenters were constant themes. Sacheverell has been characterised as 'unattractive and foolish', being 'superficial in mind, intemperate in language, with a flair for slightly pompous billingsgate'. In 1709, on the anniversary of William III's landing in 1688, Sacheverell preached at St. Paul's a provocative sermon against the Glorious Revolution, the Dissenters and the Whigs in general. In printed form, this sermon sold 40,000 copies, and it caused a serious political crisis for the Whig government. Sacheverell was impeached and suspended from preaching for three years. The public and the Queen, however, tired of the war policies of the ministry and sharing some concern of the Church being in danger, took Sacheverell as the symbol of their hatred towards the Whig ministry. The Whig ministry fell as a consequence of this crisis. After 1713, Sacheverell worked as a priest in London without achieving further promotion (Hill 1988, 427–9).

SAGE, John (1652–1711), Scottish nonjuring bishop, was the son of a Royalist captain. He was educated at St. Andrew's, worked as a schoolmaster and tutor, and also began an ecclesiastical career before the Revolution of 1688. As a Non-juror, his life became troublesome after the Revolution, but, in 1705, he was secretly made a bishop without diocese. He published anonymous texts but, in most cases, the author was well known to the public (*DNB*, Vol. XVII, 604).

SEWELL, George (–1726), ‘controversialist’ and hack-writer, was the son of a clerk and received his education at Eton, Cambridge and Leiden, the last giving him a degree in medicine. He was never particularly successful as a physician, and this made him turn to hack-writing. Politically, Sewell was a Tory who eagerly criticised Bishop Burnet, defended the Schism Bill (1714) and engaged himself with various other types of literary work. After the Hanoverian Succession, he briefly wrote for Walpole, but this never brought him preferment (*DNB*, Vol. XVII, 1223–4).

SHAFTESBURY, Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of (1671–1713), was the grandson of the first Earl of Shaftesbury (1621–83) who was England’s first party leader. He was educated under the supervision of John Locke, studied at Winchester, and made a *grand tour*. He was Member of the House of Commons, and from 1699, attended the House of Lords as a defender of the cause of William. While in Holland, Shaftesbury had contacts with Bayle and Leclerc. He was more interested in philosophy than politics and became a leading Whig moralist, sceptic and even deist who opposed enthusiasm, fanaticism and intolerance. Holding a relatively positive conception of human nature and believing in a universal harmony, he criticised both Hobbes and Locke (Sambrook 1986, 276; *BCE* 1991, 489).

SHIPPEN, William (1673–1743), Tory and Jacobite, was the son of a clergyman. He studied at Cambridge, practised law, and was chosen as MP. This choice giving rise to opposing Whig petitions, he could take his seat only in 1710, after which he soon became a leading High Churchman supporting strictly Anglican policies. After the Hanoverian Succession in 1714, this open Jacobite rose to lead the independent members of the House of Commons, a group held together by their opposition to the new royal family. Shippen spent a few months in prison for his criticism of the House of Hanover, but afterwards he became a tolerated representative of parliamentary Jacobitism who could occasionally fiercely oppose government measures (Treasure 1992, 49–50).

SHUTTLEWORTH, John (1670/1–1750), was clergyman. Only one of his texts, *Persuasive to Union* (1716), would seem to have been printed (Allibone/*BBA* 999/144).

SMITH, Elisha (1683?–1740), was a clergyman with a master’s degree. He was a popular preacher, and dozens of his sermons were published during the first half of the eighteenth century (Watt/*BBA* 1012/185).

STEBBING, Henry (1687–1763), divine, was the son of a grocer and attended Cambridge and Oxford. His ecclesiastical career included appointments such as Chaplain in Ordinary to the King (1732). He achieved fame as an eager defender of Anglican orthodoxy, having had controversies, among others, with Hoadly and Warburton (*DNB*, Vol. XVIII, 1010–11).

STEELE, Richard (1672–1729), dramatist, journalist and Whig politician, the son of a wealthy attorney, studied in Oxford and rose in the Life Guards to the rank of captain. He was principal editor for several periodicals in the 1700s and 1710s, including the official *Gazette*. In his more literary periodicals, Steele cooperated with his friend Joseph Addison. Politically, he was an active Whig who lost his parliamentary seat in 1714 for writing a seditious pamphlet in which he suggested that the policies of the Tory ministry endangered the Protestant succession. Under Whig rule, Steele was knighted, received government posts, and he made a career in the world of theatre (Hill 1988, 439–40; *BCE* 1991, 504).

STEVENS, John. This being a rather common name, it is impossible to deduce whether this writer was a Catholic captain in the army of James II who subsequently published several works and died in 1726, a captain of a ship, Jesuit, book-seller, painter, engraver, or, indeed, someone else.

STEVENSON, William (1683?–1760), was clergyman whose sermons were published in the 1710s, 1720s and 1740s (Watt/BBA 1040/195).

STORY, Thomas (1662–1742), Quaker, began as an Anglican student of law. But he converted to Quakerism in 1689 and soon afterwards started preaching. As an associate of William Penn, he found legal employment among London Quakers, before leaving for Pennsylvania for sixteen years. After his return, he preached both in England and Ireland, becoming a popular figure among his brethren. Some of his sermons were written down and published by his followers (DNB, Vol. XVIII, 1318–19).

STRYPE, John (1643–1737), ecclesiastical historian and biographer, came from a Flemish family that had escaped religious persecution to England and started a successful business in London. He studied at Cambridge and took holy orders there, afterwards holding various priestly posts. He was an eager collector of manuscripts and, at an old age, started to publish what has been regarded as badly-written Church history (DNB, Vol. XIX, 67–9).

SYNGE, Edward (–1762), was son of Edward Synge, Archbishop of Ireland. He studied in Dublin and made a successful clerical career, becoming a bishop (DNB, Vol. XIX, 283).

SWIFT, Jonathan (1677–1745), political journalist and satirist, was an Englishman born in Ireland and one educated at Trinity College in Dublin. Together with an ecclesiastical career, he chose that of a writer and spent plenty of time in England in the 1700s, coming to know literary figures such as Addison and Steele. At this time, he defined himself a Whig, but the failure of the Whigs to offer him a suitable post contributed to his drifting apart from that party. Once the Tories rose to power in 1710, Harley employed Swift as the major writer of the government propaganda machine. For the next four years, Swift remained an influential political figure who had close cooperation with the Tory leaders Harley and Bolingbroke and whose writings won support for government policies. But when the Tories fell in 1714, Swift the political polemicist fell with them. He spent the rest of his life in Ireland without having noteworthy political influence. He continued to hate Whigs, Jacobites, Low Churchmen, Dissenters and freethinkers, writing bitter irony and satire on these and many others (Hill 1988, 432–5).

TEMPLE, William (1628–99), diplomat, was educated at Cambridge and made a successful career in diplomacy in the Restoration period. After the Revolution of 1688, he did not accept any office. Temple also wrote on international affairs (Hill 1988, 304).

TENISON, Edward (1673–1735), an Anglican divine and bishop, came from a family of several priests and studied at Cambridge, abandoning law in favour of theology. Some of his sermons were published (DNB, Vol. XIX, 536).

TILLOTSON, John (1630–94), Archbishop of Canterbury, was the son of a wealthy Puritan clothworker. He quitted Calvinism in his Cambridge years, and, in the reign of Charles II, he became a well-known preacher who underlined the role of reason in religion. After the Revolution of 1688, Tillotson supported the Toleration Act and the less successful proposal for the comprehension of Dissenters in the Church of England. This Low Churchman became Archbishop in 1691 (Hill 1988, 385).

TINDAL, Matthew (1657–1733), deist, was educated at Oxford to the status of a fellow. In the reign of James II, he converted briefly to Catholicism. It was only in the mid-1700s that he became subject to severe criticism at Oxford and among other traditionalist circles due to his attacks on High-Church values. A book of his was ordered to be burnt in 1710. In his *Christianity Old as Creation* (1730), he implicitly questioned the special status of Christianity and emphasised the role of reason, thus giving fuel to the deist controversy. Tindal defended toleration and natural religion and was seen as a major promoter of freethinking (Robbins 1959, 96; BCE 1991, 526; Treasure 1992, 21–2).

TOLAND, John (1670–1722), Irish writer, converted to Protestantism and thereafter studied at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leiden and Oxford. Starting with the publication of his *Christianity not Mysterior* (1696), which set reason above revelation, caused much controversy and was ordered to be burnt, he later became an antireligious writer. This deist founded a pantheistic sect and published radical political views, including those of earlier republicans and the third Earl of Shaftesbury. Toland attacked churchmen, Tories, Jacobites and the authority of the Bible. Having the reputation of an irreligious person, Toland made his living through hack-writing and spying, occasionally enjoying the protection of Shaftesbury, another radical thinker (Sambrook 1986, 30–2, 277; *BCE* 1991, 526).

TRAPP, Joseph (1679–1747), poet and pamphleteer, was son of a priest. He studied at both Oxford and Cambridge. As a student, he wrote poems, and, from 1708 to 1718, he was the first professor of poetry at Oxford. This appointment was approved by Thomas Hearne, which is not surprising when the Tory and High-Church principles of Trapp are taken into consideration. Trapp assisted Sacheverell during his trial, wrote the anonymous pamphlet *The true genuine Tory Address and the true genuine Whig Address set one against another* (1710), and contributed to *The Examiner*. He held various ecclesiastical posts, and his career does not seem to have suffered as a consequence of the Hanoverian Succession (*DNB*, Vol. XIX, 1082–5).

TRENCHARD, John (1662–1723), wealthy landowner and political writer, studied law in London and became a Whig and Commonwealthman who, under William III, opposed a standing army. Together with Thomas Gordon, he wrote numerous periodical essays in the early 1720s, advocating Country values and criticising corruption, High-Church opinions and the handling of the South Sea Bubble crisis. He was briefly a MP in 1722–3 (Robbins 1959, 112, 115; *BCE* 1991, 529).

TRUSLER, John (1735–1820), eccentric divine, literary compiler and medical practitioner, was the son of a London tradesman. He studied at Westminster and Cambridge, taking holy orders, and later continued with medicine at Leiden. He compiled *The Difference, Between Words, esteemed Synonymous, in the English Language; and the proper choice of them determined* (1766) (*DNB*, Vol. XIX, 1195).

TUFTON, Sackville (d. 1721), colonel, sat in Parliament in the early 1680s (Ferguson/*BBA* 1098/111–12).

WALPOLE, Horace (1717–91), writer, diarist and wit, was son of the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, received his education at Eton and Cambridge, and lived a privileged life. He received sinecures, was elected a MP in 1741, but is best known for his literary works and correspondence that contains some references to politics (*BCE* 1991, 547; *Treasure* 1992, 241).

WARBURTON, William (1698–1779), theologian, philosopher and writer, was educated to become an attorney but was also ordained in 1723. He later became chaplain to the Prince of Wales (1738) and finally, in 1760, a bishop. He wrote in favour of limited religious toleration in his *Alliance between Church and State* (1736) but got involved in religious controversies with deists and Methodists whom, among many others, he attacked. Warburton's writings defending the Anglican Church have been characterised as intemperate and often paradoxical (*BCE* 1991, 548; *Treasure* 1992, 123–4).

WARD, Edward (1667–1731), humorist, had little education and made a living by keeping pubs in London, frequented by the supporters of the High Church. In 1705, he was prosecuted for attacking the government in his writings. His texts are often coarse but revealing about their period of writing. These include *Fair Shell, but a Rotten Kernel* (1705) (*DNB*, Vol. XX, 769–71).

WARREN, Langhorn (1710/11–1763), minister of Hampstead and rector of Charlton. No further information has been found.

WESLEY, John (1703–91), priest, evangelist and founder of Methodism, son of a High-Church clergyman, was educated at Oxford and ordained an Anglican clergyman, though he early became a major figure in a group of enthusiastic High-Church Christians. After a conversion in 1738, Wesley started to preach outdoors. His well-organised evangelical movement won popular support but was severely criticised by the Establishment. Gradually, Wesley's movement started to distance itself from the established Church (*BCE* 1991, 551; *Treasure* 1992, 125–9). It was probably the same John Wesley who compiled a dictionary first published in 1753. The High-Church attitude of a number of entries also point that way.

WHISTON, William (1667–1752), mathematician, studied and became priest at Cambridge, following Newton as professor in mathematics. He applied Newtonian learning to the defence of the Bible. Whiston had to leave his position in 1710 on account of accusations of Arianism, but he himself was a fierce critic of deists such as Anthony Collins (*BCE* 1991, 551).

WILLIAMSON, Adam (1736–98), lieutenant-general, was at first deputy-lieutenant of the Tower of London. His diary concentrates on military rather than political affairs (*The Official Diary of Lieutenant-General Adam Williamson*, 1912).

YONGE, James (1647–1721), Plymouth surgeon, traveller and medical writer. Towards the end of his career, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Politically, he was a Royalist and Tory (*DNB*, Vol. XXI, 1241).

■ Appendix B

PARTY WORD COMBINATIONS 1700–1750

Party word combinations and their users in early eighteenth-century English political discourse are presented in chronological order estimated on the basis of the first found appearance of the term. The words are listed with a hyphen to demonstrate their combination characters. Contemporary users wrote them variably either with or without a hyphen.

Word combination ¹	Users
Party-distinction	Toland 1696, Place c. 1710; Anon. 1710; Smith 1715; Shuttleworth 1716; Anon. 1727; Anon. 1733; Anon. 1736; Anon. 1736; Acherley 1741; Anon. 1744; Gilpin 1747
Party-broker	Anon. 1701
Party-man	Anon. 1702; Anon. 1705; Hearne 1707; Naish 1707; Place c. 1710; Whiston 1717; Oldmixon 1714; Defoe 1715; Ryder 1715; Mandeville 1724; Anon. 1734; Anon. 1736; Anon. 1740; Gilpin 1747
Party-making	Mather 1702; Defoe 1709
Party-pamphleteer	Anon. 1703
Party-virtue	King 1705
Party-quarrel	Stanhope 1705; Griffin 1720; Bolingbroke s.a.
Party-cause	Hearne 1705; Addison 1708; Bolingbroke 1735
Party-author	Anon. 1707; Addison 1712
Party-question	Swift 1708
Party-struggle	Addison 1709
Party-feud	Defoe 1709
Party-tyranny	Defoe 1709
Party-project	Defoe 1709
Party-trick	Defoe 1709
Party-pique	Defoe 1709; Place c. 1710; Anon. 1715
Party-dispute	Steele 1709; Anon. 1718; Anon. 1727

Party-agent	Bolingbroke 1710; Place 1710
Party-heat	Hamilton 1710; Place c. 1710; Anon. 1715
Party pocketbook	Place c. 1710
Party-judgement	Place c. 1710
Party-name	Place c. 1710; Anon. 1710; Anon. 1713; Laurence 1717; Anon. 1728; Anon. 1729; Anon. 1733; Anon. 1739
Party-nickname	Place c. 1710
Party-scale	Place c. 1710
Party-shelter	Place c. 1710
Party-design	Anon. 1710
Party-writer	Swift 1710; Addison 1714
Party-coloured	Anon. 1710; Addison 1712
Party-driving	Anon. 1710
Party-air	Swift 1711
Party-rage	Addison 1711; Smith 1715; Anon. 1720; Bolingbroke s.a.; Warren 1745; Gilpin 1747
Party-humour	Addison 1711
Party-spirit	Addison 1711; Balguy 1727; Anon. 1728; Bolingbroke 1735; Anon. 1736; Gilpin 1747
Party-zeal	Addison 1711; Anon. 1722; Anon. 1736; Anon. 1739
Party-woman	Addison 1711
Party-notion	Addison 1711; Anon. 1727
Party-animosity	Defoe 1711; Trenchard 1722; Anon. 1736
Party-end	Defoe 1711
Party-lie	Addison 1712
Party-lying	Addison 1712
Party-story	Addison 1712
Party-offender	Addison 1712
Party-spleen	Addison 1712; Anon. 1733
Party-relation	Steele 1712
Party-mad	Swift 1712

Party-leader	Swift 1712; Smith 1715; Rowe 1718; Trenchard 1721
Party-bigot	Anon. 1712
Party-concern	Addison 1713
Party-matter	Hughes 1713; Anon. 1722
Party-taking	Anon. 1713
Party-word	Sacheverell 1713; Toland 1717
Party-term	Anon. 1713
Party-scribbler	Lockhart 1714
Party-business	Billingsley 1714; Defoe 1715
Party-difference	Billingsley 1714; Atterbury 1714; Warren 1745
Party-arms	Defoe 1715
Party-strife	Smith 1715; Balguy 1727
Party-agitation	Smith 1715
Party-bigotry	Smith 1715
Party-merit	Smith 1715; Bolingbroke 1735
Party-bias	Smith 1715
Party-division	Defoe 1715; Anon. 1718; Bolingbroke 1735
Party-principle	Anon. 1716; Anon. 1739
Party-account	Ryder 1716; Bolingbroke 1735
Party-measure	Whiston 1717; Anon. 1730
Party-justice	Bolingbroke 1717; Bolingbroke 1735
Party-interest	Bolingbroke 1717; Gordon 1721; Bolingbroke s.a.
Party-fury	Blackmore 1718; Bolingbroke 1735
Party-zealot	Pope 1718; Anon. 1722
Party-deserter	Anon. 1718
Party-depravation [sic]	Anon. 1718
Party-disposition	Anon. 1718
Party-prejudice	Anon. 1718; Anon. 1722; Anon. 1733; Anon. 1739
Party-opposition	Anon. 1718; Trenchard 1722
Party-passion	Anon. 1718

Party-breach	Tindal 1718
Party-kindness	Anon. 1719
Party-taking	Anon. 1719
Party-champion	Griffin 1720
Party-hostility	Gordon 1720
Party-writing	Gordon 1720
Party-combination	Trenchard 1721
Party watchword	Trenchard 1722
Party-puncto	Trenchard 1722
Party-regard	Anon. 1722
Party-scuffle	Mandeville 1723
Party-slavery	Byrom 1727
Party-resentment	Stevenson 1728
Party-denomination	Anon. 1728
Party-badge	Anon. 1728
Party-madness	Anon. 1729
Party-song	Anon. 1729
Party-play	Anon. 1729
Party-consideration	Anon. 1733
Party-dream	Anon. 1733
Party-darkness	Bolingbroke 1735
Party-view	Bolingbroke 1735; Anon. 1736
Party-administration	Bolingbroke 1735
Party-king	Bolingbroke 1735
Party-system	Bolingbroke 1735
Party-cunning	Bolingbroke 1735
Party-conduct	Bolingbroke 1735
Party-guide	Anon. 1736
Party-dislike	Story 1737

Party-paper	Poppe 1739
Party-adherence	Anon. 1739
Party-reign	Anon. 1740
Party-debate	Anon. 1740
Party-opinion	Gilpin 1747

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- 1 OED: party; [Toland], *Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696, xxviii; *The Whigs Thirty Two Queries*, 1701, 8; *The Modern Whig Dictator*, 1702, preface; *A View of the Present Controversy*, 1703; [Defoe], *The Ballance*, 1705, preface, 26, 29; *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 2 August 1705, Vol. I, 22, and 8 May 1707, Vol. II, 12; King, *The Advantages of Education, Religious and Political*, 1706, 27; *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, 24 November 1707, 59; [Leslie], *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherds Cloathing*, 1707, 25; Swift to Archbishop King, 5 February 1708, *Correspondence*, Vol. I, 69; Addison to Charles Montagu, Earl of Manchester (Venice), 2 March 1708, *The Letters*, 96; Addison to Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (London), Dublin Castle, 20 June 1709, *The Letters*, 155; Defoe, R6/17, 12 May 1709, R6/52, 2 August 1709, R6/81, 11 October 1709, R6/90, 1 November 1709, R6/94, 10 November 1709; Steele, T114, 31 December 1709, S521, 28 October 1712; [Bolingbroke], *A Letter to the Examiner*, 1710; *The Diary of Sir David Hamilton*, 22 May 1710, 10; Place, *The Arbitration*, [1710], 3, 6, 10, 12-16, 28; Trapp, *Most Faults on One Side*, 1710, 3, 15, 17, 21; Swift to the Earl of Peterborough, [19] February 1711, *The Correspondence*, vol. I, 211; Addison, S57, 5 May 1711, S125, 24 July, 1711, S126, 25 July 1711, S265, 3 January 1712; [Defoe], *An Essay on the History of Parties*, 1711, 26, 43; [Swift], *Some Advice Humbly Offer'd to the Members of the October Club*, 1712, 77; Swift, *Journal to Stella*, 18 December 1712, Vol. II, 589; [Addison], S547, 27 November 1712; [Whiston], *Scripture Politicks*, 1717, 143, 145; *The Humble Confession*, 1712, 13; [Addison and Zachary Pearce], G121, 30 July 1713; John Hughes to Addison, 6 October 1713, *The Letters*, 488; *Honour Retriv'd from Faction*, 1713, 10; Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government*, 1713, 15; [Defoe], *Whigs turn'd Tories*, 1713, 10-11; [Oldmixon], *The False Steps of the Ministry*, 1714, 18; [Defoe], *Whigs and Tories United*, 1714, 30; COPC: Lockhart, *Memoirs*, 1714; [Billingsley], *A Brief Discourse of Schism*, 1714, 8; [Atterbury], *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, [1714], 4; COPC: Defoe, *An Appeal to Honour and Justice*, 1715; *Protestant Advice to the Whigs and Tories of Great-Britain With Relation to the Present Civil-War*, 1715, 6, 13; Smith, *The Olive Branch*, 1715, 5, 8; [Defoe], *The Political Sow-Gelder*, 1715, 11, 14, 21, 32; *The Diary of Dudley Ryder*, 19 July 1715, 58, 13 February 1716, 181; *The Religion of the Wits At Button's Refuted*, 1716, 49; Shuttleworth, *A Perswasive to Union*, 1716, preface; COPC: Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham*, 1717; [Toland], *The State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, 1717, preface; Laurence, *Christian Religion the best Friend to Civil Government*, 1717, 31; *A Sure Way to Orthodoxy*, 1718, 9, 18, 20, 42, 60-1, 70, 77-8; Tindal, *An Account of a Manuscript*, 1718, 4; *The Church of England Man's Memorial*, 1719, introduction and 13; Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, 1720, 7, 11, 28; [Trenchard and Gordon], IW22, 15 June 1720; Gordon, Dedication for *Cato's Letters*, c. 1720, xix; [Trenchard], CL20, 11 February 1721, CL61, 13 January 1722, CL69, 10 March 1722, CL80, 9 June 1722, CL81, 16 June 1722; [Gordon], CL56, 9 December 1721; *A Memorial of the Present State of the British Nation*, 1722, v, vii, 19; Mandeville, 'An Essay on Charity, and Charity Schools' (1723) and 'A Vindication of the Book' (1724) in *The Fable of the Bees*, 313, 396; John Byrom to Mrs. Byrom, Trinity College, 2 July 1727, in *Selections from the Journals and Papers of John Byrom*, 99; C29, 13 March 1727; C36, 10 April 1727; C57, 5 August 1727; Balguy, *The Duty of Benevolence*, 1727, 18-19; Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation*, 1728, 32; *An Essay on the Christian Name*, 1728, title and 3, 48, 50-1; Bramston, *The Art of Politicks*, 1729, 9, 26; C172, 18 October 1729; C213, 1 August 1730; C343, 27 January 1733; C348, 3 March 1733; C355, 3 March 1733; C359, 19 May 1733; *The Free-Briton*, 26 July 1733, in GM, Vol. III, July 1733, Reel 134; *An Essay on Faction*, 1733, 16; *London Journal*, No. 760, 19 January 1734, in GM, Vol. IV, January 1734, Reel 134; Bolingbroke, *Dissertation upon Parties*, 1735, 23, 33, 52, 56, 72, 83, 98, 156-7, 167, 169; *The Present Necessity of distinguishing Publick Spirit from Party*, 1736, 4, 8, 14, 17, 22; *A Dissuasive from Party and Religious*

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