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ISSN 0262 7612

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**Enlightenment
and Dissent**

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No. 15 1996

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Editorial

It is an apparent paradox that Enlightenment studies are flourishing more than ever and yet are in a state of crisis. The proliferation of such studies has made it ever more difficult to retain a sense of the particularity of the Enlightenment and a grasp of its synergy. The situation has been long in the making and is associated with the success of the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies and of the *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth-Century*. Some time ago John Lough in an illuminating article made a plea for a return to an older 'history of thought' pattern of study. For all its attractions that would hardly solve the problem of defining Enlightenment and locating it within eighteenth-century culture and society. More recently Robert Darnton has suggested that we return to viewing the Enlightenment as a movement which reached its height in mid eighteenth-century France. In this way, much of what has been masquerading as Enlightenment studies would indeed return to a location within the history of eighteenth-century thought. However, the problems caused by proliferation would not be entirely resolved for if the Enlightenment was a movement neither its origins nor its outcomes were singular. Moreover, seeing the Enlightenment as a movement emphasizes its programmatic content. That might appear to be a neat way of sidestepping the post-modern critique of Enlightenment philosophy, but it also leaves some of the charges against the Enlightenment unanswered. Alongside the study of the Enlightenment as a movement, there therefore remains the need to study related and contributory manifestations, and the major philosophical ideas underlying its programme. Through the development of a rich understanding of Enlightenment thought and practice, the often one-eyed criticisms of the post-modernists may be answered, and the role of Enlightenment in shaping the modern age appraised. We may then reflect on the significance and continuing relevance of

enlightenment style thinking. It is imperative that we should not, in Stephen Toulmin's telling phrase, be 'with eyes lowered ... backing into a new millennium'. Our studies of Enlightenment in all its variety play a role in ensuring that that does not happen.

We are pleased to announce that, in conjunction with the Humanities Research Centre of the Australian National University, Canberra, we shall be publishing the proceedings of the colloquium on 'Enlightenment, Religion and Science in the Long Eighteenth Century', held at the Centre in conjunction with the Research School of Social Sciences, on 4-6 September 1996. The journal containing the proceedings will follow the next number, which is the special issue devoted to Samuel Clarke edited by Professor James Dybikowski. Readers may have noticed that this introduces the welcome prospect of the journal actually being published in its designated year.

M H F
D O T

WOMEN AT WAR: BRITISH WOMEN AND THE DEBATE ON THE WARS AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE IN THE 1790s

Emma Vincent Macleod*

As sailors in a storm throw overboard their more useless lumber, so it is but fit that the Men should be exposed to the dangers and hardships of war, while we remain in safety at home. They are, generally speaking, good for little else but to be our bulwarks.¹

Thus in 1739 'Sophia' sought to justify the masculinity of the military profession, while stating her case for *Woman not inferior to man*. In 1793 war was as imminent a problem for British women as it had been for 'Sophia', and one which kindled similar anxieties about gender and spheres of operation.

After the publication of Richard Price's sermon, *A discourse for the love of our country*, in December 1789, and Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in November 1790, the polarization of British opinions on the French Revolution and its consequences began slowly to crystallize, producing a heated and voluminous pamphlet debate.² Questions were raised of sovereignty

* I should like to thank Harry Dickinson, Frances Dow, Stana Nenadic and Michael Rapport for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

¹ Quoted in Virginia Sapiro, *A vindication of political virtue. The political theory of Mary Wollstonecraft* (Chicago and London, 1992), 261. 'Sophia' has been variously suggested to have been Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (by Sapiro, loc. cit.) and Lady Sarah Fermor (in *Notes and Queries*, 1897), but there is not enough evidence to prove her identity (cf. Janet Todd [ed.], *A dictionary of British and American women writers, 1660-1800* [London, 1984], 292).

² On the Revolution debate in Britain, see H T Dickinson, *British radicalism and the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (Oxford, 1985); Thomas Philip Schofield, 'English Conservative Thought and Opinion in Response to the French Revolution 1789-1796', unpublished PhD thesis (University College, London, 1984); Yang Su Hsien, 'The British Debate on the French Revolution: Edmund Burke and His Critics', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1989); Mark Philip (ed.), *The French Revolution and British popular politics* (Cambridge, 1991); Gregory Claeys, 'The French Revolution Debate and British Political Thought', *History of Political Thought*, xi (1990), 59-80.

and legitimacy, of the civil liberties and the natural rights of men and women, of absolute and relative truths and values, and of the adequacy of the British constitution itself. The debate was not restricted to the governing and literary classes of society: popular societies and clubs sprang up on either side of the ideological divide even before war was declared between France and Austria in April 1792, such as the radical Constitutional Societies and the resurgent conservative Church and King clubs.³ The outbreak of war between Britain and France in February 1793, in its more direct impact upon the British population, heralded the debate of problems of still greater political complexity. It was not merely that another layer of intensity was added to the debate on the French Revolution, but that new questions, concerning the causes of the war and its purposes, nature, conduct and impact upon both Britain and France, inextricably complicated the previous debate on the Revolution. Moreover, the war was to last for twenty-two years except for the truce of Amiens in 1802-1803, and it was to involve a greater proportion of the British population than any previous international conflict had done. It therefore demanded a response of some sort from an even wider cross-section of the nation than had the Revolution.

The conservative writer Laetitia Matilda Hawkins claimed in her *Letters on the female mind* (1793) that most British women knew very little about the Revolution or the war:

The whole world might be at war and yet not the rumor of it reached the ears of an Englishwoman - empires might be lost, and states overthrown, and still she might pursue the peaceful occupations of her home; and her natural lord might change his governor at pleasure, and she feel neither change nor hardship.⁴

Yet the impositions of this war upon the British people in terms of military participation, vulnerability to a French invasion and liability

³ See Philp (ed.), *The French Revolution and British popular politics*, 1-6.

⁴ Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, *Letters on the female mind* (2 vols., London, 1793), ii, 194.

for providing the material resources required to finance the war effort in fact brought the conflict directly into the lives of most British women as well as men. In terms of direct military involvement, however, women could at most be spectators, not actors, in the drama. Eighteenth-century warfare was a fundamentally male-dominated phenomenon. As necessary spectators, therefore, their views hold interest in the context of the war debate. What did women think about the conflict, and how did they express their opinions?

This further raises the question of how women's involvement in the war debate relates to developing notions of 'separate spheres' of influence and activity for men and women in the 1790s. Over the last two decades historians of gender and class have explored the significance of this concept of separate spheres for British men and women from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, and they may be said to have fallen into two similar but distinct camps on the subject. While developments in medical thinking over the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were vital to the theoretical justification of patriarchy in nineteenth-century Britain,⁵ some historians have identified the period from the 1790s to the 1830s as a crucial phase in the development of separate spheres in practice for British men and women. This was partly due to an increasing separation of workplace and home in this period, with the development of industrialization. An increasingly well-off middle class, faced with the choice of women remaining at home or going out to work, could afford the luxury of leisured wives, and wished to be seen to be able to afford it. The growing influence of Evangelical values was also significant. Their role in the anti-slavery campaigns had won the Evangelicals sympathy in public opinion, and it arguably gave greater credibility to their crusade to increase morality in public and private life. An important element in this endeavour was their promotion of the role of wife and mother in creating the home as a safe haven, out of the corrupting influences

⁵ Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, sex and subordination* (New Haven and London, 1995).

of public life. Moreover, the alarm created by the French Revolution, in which French women participated in some of the most radical events of the first four years, together with fears that similar tumultuous social and economic change might overwhelm Britain also, caused conservatives to cling ever more tightly to the 'traditional' social order in which women were subordinate and remained modestly in the background, in the private sphere of life, while men took responsibility for the public sphere of work, politics and leadership.⁶

Others agree that this period witnessed great public anxiety concerning women's involvement in public life, but they argue that the separation of the spheres was more prominent in ideology and rhetoric than in practice and that the public roles of women were at least surviving, if not, indeed, growing in this period.⁷ Linda Colley,

⁶ Catherine Hall, 'The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology', in S Burman (ed.), *Fit work for women* (Oxford, 1979); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family fortunes: men and women of the English middle class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987), *passim.*; Mary Poovey, *The proper lady and the woman writer: ideology as style in the works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen* (Chicago and London, 1984), x-35; Cynthia L White, *Women's magazines, 1693-1968* (London, 1970), 32-41. For a comparative view of the position of women in revolutionary France, see Olwen H Hufton, *Women and the limits of citizenship in the French Revolution* (Toronto, 1992).

⁷ Neil McKendrick, 'Home Demand and Economic Growth: A New View of the Role of Women and Children in the Industrial Revolution', in *Historical perspectives: studies in English thought and society in honour of J H Plumb* (London, 1974), ed. McKendrick, 152-210; Karl von den Steinen, 'The Discovery of Women in Eighteenth-century English Political Life', in Barbara Kanner, ed., *The women of England* (Hamden, Conn., 1979), 229-258; Mitzi Myers, 'Reform or Ruin: "A Revolution in Female Manners"', *Studies in Eighteenth-century Culture*, 11 (1982), 199-216; Rosalind K Marshall, *Virgins and viragos: a history of women in Scotland from 1080 to 1980* (London, 1983), 167-188; Linda Colley, *Britons. Forging the nation 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992), 237-281; Dror Wahrman, 'Middle Class Domesticity Goes Public: Gender, Class and Politics from Queen Caroline to Queen Victoria', *Journal of British Studies*, xxxii (1993), esp. 408-9. See also Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, 'Placing Women's History in History', *New Left Review*, 133 (1982), 5-29; on women in France, see Darline Gay Levy and Harriet B Applewhite, 'Women of the Popular Classes in

for example, has recently argued that the French wars both underlined the perceived functional differences between men and women and yet enlarged the boundaries of women's activities. She suggests that the fund-raising, sock-knitting, banner-sewing activities engaged in by British women during the war were not just a socially acceptable extension of the 'traditional female virtues of charity, nurture and needlework' into the military sphere, but rather 'the thin end of a far more radical wedge', because they demonstrated that these domestic skills possessed 'a public as well as a private relevance'.⁸ The present study examines the evidence of women's contributions to Britain's pamphlet debate on the war, as well as journals and letters written by women, and finds these to underline Colley's conclusion. Not only did women involve themselves in war-related activities to a far greater extent than they had done in previous wars, despite public disquiet, as Colley argues; they also took a serious interest in the issues raised by the conflict, and they ventured to express their opinions in print to a much greater extent than had been the case in previous wars. At the same time, however, anxieties in Britain concerning the proper roles of women seem, if anything, to have been heightened by the experience of the war.

The difficulties of attempting to assess the significance of the written attitude of British women to the wars against revolutionary France are largely concerned with the lack of evidence. Those women who left detailed written records of their opinions on the conflict were usually exceptional people as well as unusual women for their time, and they are few in number. Female readership was restricted by household income and by literacy rates (which were rather lower than male literacy rates).⁹ Furthermore, men wrote

Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1795', in *Women, war and revolution* (New York and London, 1980), eds. Carol R Berkin and Clara M Lovett, 9-35.

⁸ Colley, *Britons*, 261-262.

⁹ James Raven, *Judging new wealth: popular publishing and responses to commerce in England, 1750-1800* (Oxford, 1992), 56-8. Between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, nationwide literacy levels, as measured by ability to sign the marriage register, were raised from about 60% for men and

much of the literature directed at women. *The Lady's Magazine* and other periodicals for women were edited by men and mostly written by men; and, as Stella M Ni Ghallchóir Cottrell points out, while several pamphlets were signed by 'an Englishwoman' or 'Britannia', the text suggests that they were written by men.¹⁰ For these reasons, the following sections rely mostly on texts whose authorships are reasonably certain.

Yet the question of female views on the war is important enough, though generally neglected,¹¹ to be considered seriously on the basis of what evidence there is. Their opinions were naturally often very similar to those of men, but it is arguable that, whatever part of the political or social spectrum they represented, women consistently emphasised certain issues and concerns. Moreover, not only were they trying to answer the questions posed also for men by the war (issues of the grounds and aims of the war, its nature and conduct, and the question of peace) but, in a war which had a direct impact on a very wide cross-section of society over such a long period of time, they also struggled with the question of their own role in a society at war. Their very contribution to the literary debate on the war was therefore questioned for its validity and propriety. In the decade in which Mary Wollstonecraft published her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), this controversy provided an immediate illustration of some of the issues she had raised concerning the nature and rights of women. This article will examine the opinions of female writers on the grounds, nature and conduct of the war and their views on women's involvement in it, and also men's attitudes towards women's participation in the conflict and in the debates surrounding it, in order to set these

about 40% for women to about 66% and 50% respectively. See Thomas Laqueur, 'The Cultural Origins of Popular Literacy in England, 1500-1800', *Oxford Review of Education*, 2:3 (1976), 255; A Digby and P Searby, *Children, schools and society in nineteenth-century England* (London, 1981), 6.

¹⁰ Stella M Ni Ghallchóir Cottrell, 'English views of France and the French, 1789-1815', unpublished D Phil thesis (Oxford, 1991), 97 n.1.

¹¹ Exceptions include Colley, *Britons*, 250-262; Cottrell, 'English Views', 95-146.

female war-time activities and publications in the context of the male-dominated public stage onto which they had ventured.

I

Women were clearly affected by the conflict against revolutionary France both directly and profoundly but, on the whole, they responded practically on the margins of military activity. Where they extended the boundaries of their participation in public life, they nevertheless adhered to socially acceptable 'female' channels of activity, such as sewing, knitting, making presentations and donations, and generally supporting male activity. Their engagement in the pamphlet debate on the war was, however, possibly the most radical wartime activity in which women were involved, no matter how conservative the contents of some of their publications, for not only did they express their views in print to a considerably greater extent than had been the case in any previous war,¹² but this also demonstrated that women were able and willing to discuss a political phenomenon such as war and its issues intelligently and publicly. Publications by women such as Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft were substantial contributions to the war debate and its propaganda,¹³ and other women, such as Fanny Burney, Hester Piozzi, Helen Maria Williams, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Mary Robinson and Amelia Opie, through novels, poetry and overtly political writings, also made serious contributions to the general discussion about the current turbulence of world affairs.

By the late eighteenth century, it was becoming increasingly acceptable, if still far from easy, for women to publish their writings

¹² For instance, Catharine Macaulay's pamphlet, *An address to the people of England, Scotland and Ireland, on the present alarming crisis of affairs* (1775), is the only publication by a woman mentioned by James E Bradley in his *Popular politics and the American Revolution in England: petitions, the crown and public opinion* (Macon, Georgia, 1986).

¹³ Hannah More, *The cheap repository tracts* (London, 1795-98); idem., *Remarks on the speech of M Dupont* (London, 1793); Mary Wollstonecraft, *Letter on the present character of the French nation* (London, 1793); idem., *An historical and moral view of the origin and progress of the French Revolution; and the effect it has produced in Europe* (London, 1794).

on matters of religion, morality and education, as well as novels and poetry.¹⁴ Mary Poovey suggests three factors which advanced their progress: the demise of literary patronage after 1740, which made anonymous publication possible; the appearance of the 'Bluestockings', who included Hannah More among their number, and who became role models, preserving their moral reputations untainted while simultaneously publishing for profit; and the trend towards philosophical empiricism and 'sentimentalism', emphasizing individual feelings, imagery and observation, a style of writing to which women were thought to be particularly suited.¹⁵ The involvement of a small but significant number of women in the printed debate on the war in the 1790s should therefore be seen in the context of an increasing body of female writers in Britain; yet the clear political content of this polemic marks out their participation in it as a more radical step. These women believed themselves to be at liberty to comment publicly on the 'male' question of war and peace. It was also set in the contexts both of increasing political activity among both men and women of the middle classes and of the turbulent climate induced by the war.

Unsurprisingly, most women were convinced that war was, in general, an evil which ought to be avoided if at all possible; they were also, however, generally imbued with the same Francophobia as characterized the average British male in this period. Ward Hellstrom and Warren Roberts have detected a markedly Gallophobic bias in Jane Austen's novels, particularly through her characterization of certain individuals (Wickham in *Pride and prejudice*, the Crawfords in *Mansfield Park* and Frank Churchill in *Emma*, for example) with classic 'French' personality traits, such as frivolity, urbanity, polish, moral carelessness, deviousness and

¹⁴ For women writers in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, some of whom managed to support themselves financially by their writing, see Anne Laurence, *Women in England 1500-1760: a social history* (London, 1994), 172-6.

¹⁵ Poovey, *The proper lady and the woman writer*, 35-8. See also Bridget Hill, *The republican virago: the life and times of Catharine Macaulay, historian* (Oxford, 1992), 130-148.

wilfulness, as opposed to the plain 'English' virtues of her heroes and heroines.¹⁶ *The Lady's Magazine* continued to carry reports on the fashions current in Paris whenever it could, despite the war;¹⁷ but women were part of a population which by and large supported its government in the conflict against the French Republic. Mrs Jane Webb of Plymouth, anxious to prove the loyalty of the great majority of the whole British population, female as well as male, wrote:

...all ranks of people, with a spirit becoming Britons, are arming for our internal defence...may we not say the whole kingdom is the school of Mars; the ladies are zealous, and in many places have presented those newly-raised corps with colours.¹⁸

Hester Piozzi, as so often, colourfully captured the ambivalent attitude of many: 'The Times are sadly out of Joynt indeed, the War ruinous, & Peace a peril that I hope we shall be spared; for as things now stand We have a Right to keep French men from our Island by Alien Bills &c.'¹⁹

Some, such as Hannah More, were quite convinced of the justice of the war. In what war, she asked, 'can the sincere Christian ever

¹⁶ Ward Hellstrom, 'Francophobia in Emma', *Studies in English Literature*, v (1965), 607-17; Warren Roberts, *Jane Austen and the French Revolution* (London and Basingstoke, 1979), 31-42. See also Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the war of ideas* (Oxford, 1974). A particularly explicit example occurs in *Emma* (London, Folio Society, 1975), 122, where Knightley speaks; 'No, Emma, your amiable young man can be amiable only in French, not in English. He may be very "amiable", have very good manners, and be very agreeable; but he can have no English delicacy towards the feelings of other people: nothing really amiable about him.'

¹⁷ See the issues for May and October 1798 (vol.29), June, September, November and December 1799 (vol.30).

¹⁸ Mrs Jane Webb, *A letter to His Grace the Duke of Portland, on the late alarming parties in the country, by Mrs Webb* (Plymouth, 1795), 12-13. I am grateful to David Wilkinson for this reference.

¹⁹ Katherine C Balderstone (ed.), *Thraliana. The diary of Mrs Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs Piozzi) 1776-1809* (2nd edition, 2 vols., Oxford, 1951), ii, 904-5.

have stronger inducements, and more reasonable encouragement to pray for the success of his country, than in this?' It was a war fought not for revenge or conquest, but for the defence of Britain's king, constitution, religion, laws and liberty ('in the sound, sober, and rational sense of that term').²⁰ British aims in the hostilities, according to most pro-war literature, were clearly the protection of British blessings; some women followed a more Burkean, crusading line and were, like More, of the opinion that Britain's best, and perhaps only, security lay in the utter destruction of the Revolution and its doctrines and the restoration of the monarchy in France.²¹

Other women, however, continued to support the French Revolution and therefore opposed the British war against France. Because of the increasing diffusion of the knowledge and understanding of political principles, Mary Wollstonecraft believed that it was possible to be confident of an approaching era of peace and reason, in which war would be abandoned as irrational and brutish.²² The arguments used by female anti-war pamphleteers mirrored those of their male counterparts, although they were more likely to condemn *all* war as futile and immoral, as well as the present war as unjust and unnecessary. Wollstonecraft condemned war as an adventure pursued by the idle rich.²³ The Dissenting writer Mrs Barbauld insisted that the language of 'natural enemies' was absurd, 'as if nature, and not our own broad passions, made us enemies...and yet this language is heard in a Christian country, and these detestable maxims veil themselves under the semblance of virtue and public spirit.' People ought to think less about glorious

²⁰ Hannah More, *Remarks on the speech of M Dupont, with a prefatory address on behalf of the French emigrant clergy* (1793), in *Works* (3 vols. London, 1847), ii, 407.

²¹ See, for example, Mrs Piozzi in Balderston (ed.), *Thraliana*, ii, 932 and Miss Patterson's speech to the Poplar and Blackwell Volunteers as reported by *The Times*, 6 June 1799.

²² Mary Wollstonecraft, *An historical and moral view of the origin and progress of the French Revolution; and the effect it has produced in Europe* (1794), in Janet Todd and Marilyn Butler (eds.), *The works of Mary Wollstonecraft* (7 vols., London, 1989), vi, 17.

²³ *Ibid.*, 23.

heroes returning home and more about the maimed, the bereaved, the orphaned, the mental agonies of war and the ravages it inflicted upon countries (of which Britain, geographically isolated from the Continent, was complacently ignorant).²⁴

In discussing the nature of the war, women writers were often accused of 'emotionalism' in their writing. It is true that they often vented their personal emotional responses to the Revolution itself. They were particularly fixated by French atrocities and the sufferings of individuals; whereas male writers, by and large, wrote about these only for a purpose, chiefly that of inspiring loyalty to the British government through fear, female writers and readers seemed to be genuinely transfixed by them. Many women were deeply affected by the trial and execution of Louis XVI,²⁵ but it was not only the sufferings of royalty which fascinated women, or were thought to fascinate them. *The Lady's Magazine* carried such items as 'The Dying Soldier; a Fragment' and 'Verses from the French; written by a French Prisoner, as he was Preparing to go to the Guillotine'.²⁶

It is not necessary, however, to see all subjective female writing about the Revolution as warm-hearted romanticism. Virginia Sapiro argues that Wollstonecraft's heated style in her *Vindication of the*

²⁴ [Mrs Barbauld], *Sins of government, sins of the nation; or, a discourse for the fast, appointed on April 19, 1793. By a volunteer* (2nd edition, London, 1793), 22-4, 28-30.

²⁵ See, for example, Ralph M Wardle (ed.), *The collected letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York and London, 1979), 227, Wollstonecraft to Joseph Johnston, 26 December 1792; also poems written by Mary Robinson, Charlotte Smith and Eliza Daye for *The European Magazine*, *The Scots Magazine*, *The Universal Magazine* and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, printed in Betty T Bennett (ed.), *British war poetry in the age of romanticism: 1793-1815* (New York and London, 1976), 74-6, 81-2, 91-4. On the general British interest in the trial and execution of Louis XVI, see David Bindman, *The shadow of the guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution* (London, 1989), especially 21-24, 47-54 and plates 88-122.

²⁶ *The Lady's Magazine*, 29 (July 1798), 325, 328. See also Gayle Trusdel Pendleton, 'English Conservative Propaganda During the French Revolution, 1789-1802', unpublished PhD thesis (Emory University), 216.

rights of men (1791) was all part of her response to Edmund Burke, who had himself written in a subjective and often violently colourful style. Wollstonecraft was simply replying in kind or, perhaps, even criticizing his method by parody rather than responding to the substance of his argument.²⁷ Furthermore, when women wrote 'sentimentally' about the Revolution or the war, it was often because, for various reasons, they elevated the private aspects of events over the public. Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the rights of woman* was, on one level, a call for radical political thought to be extended beyond public politics of government institutions into the private politics of the home.²⁸ Women writers acknowledged this female prioritization of the private: the heroine of Helen Maria Williams's little tale, *Madeleine and Auguste* (1792), perceived the chief implication of the Revolution's liberation of all Frenchmen to be that every Frenchman must surely be free to marry the woman he loved. The lady of the house in Charlotte Smith's novel, *The banished man* (1794), was able to talk about politics, but she chose not to be interested in them except insofar as they could advance her own family members.²⁹

A preoccupation with individual public figures was a natural by-product of this concern for the personal in female writing and opinions. Lady Wallace was clearly fascinated by General Dumourier - 'this wonderful little hero' - while Helen Maria Williams was infatuated with Napoleon, 'the benefactor of his race'.³⁰ Other women were more fascinated by what they believed

²⁷ Sapiro, *A vindication of political virtue*, 191-202.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁹ Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France: containing many new anecdotes relative to the French Revolution, and the present state of French manners* (2nd edition: London, 1792), 174-5; Charlotte Smith, *The banished man* (4 vols., London, 1794), ii, 110-1. See also Earl of Bessborough (ed.), *Georgiana. Extracts from the correspondence of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* (London, 1955), 208, the Duchess of Devonshire to her mother, 2 July [1794].

³⁰ Lady Eglantine Wallace, *The conduct of the King of Prussia and General Dumourier investigated by Lady Wallace* (London, 1793), 125; Helen Maria Williams, *A tour in Switzerland, or a view of the present state of the governments*

to be the Corsican general's ferocity and brutality, and with what particulars of his early history and present lifestyle they could glean from the press. Mrs Piozzi was vehement, viewing the name 'Napoleon' as a corrupted form of the word 'Apollyon', which means 'Destroyer': the apocalyptic name for the devil.³¹ The superhero for pro-war writers was Horatio Nelson, particularly after his victory over the French fleet at the Nile in 1798. *The Lady's Magazine* published a biographical sketch of the admiral, together with 'an elegant Engraving' of his ship engaging two larger Spanish ships off Cape St Vincent in 1797.³² He became a focus for the cult of heroism which had grown among women in particular in Britain over the preceding five years, though this was adulation at a distance. Nearer at hand, as Jane Austen noticed, in *Pride and Prejudice*, were those soldiers barracked around the country, parading in their fine uniforms and attracting much female attention - another way, personal and small-scale, in which women could involve themselves in a society at war. Austen did not describe this situation with approval, however - rather, in Lydia Bennet's downfall, she showed what could happen as a result of billeting soldiers among the civilian population.³³

Aside from the personal inclination of some women writers to focus on the private and particular at the expense of the public and the general, this tendency was entirely in keeping with the views of late eighteenth-century society on what women ought to be interested in. It was deliberately encouraged, as Mary Poovey shows, by the male editors and journalists of women's literature. Literature addressed to women laid much less emphasis on reporting facts than

and manners of those Cantons, with comparative sketches of the present state of Paris (2 vols.: London, 1798), ii, 56-7.

³¹ Hester Lynch Piozzi, *Retrospection: or a view of the most striking and important events, characters, situations and their consequences, which the last eighteen hundred years have presented to the view of mankind* (2 vols.: London, 1801), ii, 523-4. See Revelation 9: 11.

³² *The Lady's Magazine*, 29 (November 1798), 483-5.

³³ Colley, *Britons*, 256-7; Roberts, *Jane Austen*, 96. See also BMC 9315, Rowlandson, 'She Will Be a Soldier' (1 May 1798); *ibid.*, 9316, Rowlandson, 'Soldiers Recruiting' (1 August 1798).

that directed to men and was of a much more emotional or moralizing strain. 'The implicit assumption', as Poovey notes, 'is that women's quick passions will be more effectively engaged by such formulations'; they were expected to be more emotionally than intellectually responsive.³⁴ Women were not supposed to be concerned with public affairs, and their emphasis on the personal, private side of public events may well have been the valve they used in order to be able to comment on the war at all.³⁵ Some clearly felt this constraint more than others - radicals such as Wollstonecraft and Williams felt no shame in commenting freely on the war; the conservative Austen and Burney were much more restrained, but this does not mean that they were unaware of the public arena of political events or unable to express opinions about it, as Austen showed in her subtle comment on the government policy creating military barracks.

Women writers also tended to develop moralistic standpoints on the war and on their place in it, again articulating views on a political subject in an acceptably female mode.³⁶ They frequently rejected as arrogant and unjustified the notion that Britain was a favoured nation. Britain was not so pure, wrote Mrs Barbauld austere, that it could afford to see itself as an instrument of divine justice. Its trade in African slaves and its conquests in India were crimes at least as heinous as any France had committed, and it had wilfully encouraged the aggression of the European states towards one another. Fanny Burney agreed. 'We are too apt to consider ourselves rather as a distinct race of beings', she told readers of her *Brief reflections*, recognizing that English chauvinism was a major obstacle to helping the *émigrés*.³⁷ Miss Berry disliked her enforced

³⁴ Poovey, *The proper lady and the woman writer*, 16-19.

³⁵ Roberts, *Jane Austen*, 105.

³⁶ Colley, *Britons*, 277, 280.

³⁷ [Mrs Barbauld], *Reasons for national penitence, recommended for the fast, appointed February XXVIII, 1794* (London, 1794), 16, 4; [idem.], *Sins of government*, 25; Fanny Burney (D'Arblay), *Brief reflections relative to the emigrant French clergy: earnestly submitted to the humane consideration of the ladies of Great Britain* (London, 1793), 12.

wartime restriction to Britain and the insularity of her countrymen: 'All the other cities, and courts, and great men of the world *may* be very good sort of places and of people, for aught we know or care; except they are coming to invade us, we think no more of them than of the inhabitants of another planet.'³⁸

Conservative female writers were particularly anxious about the domestic troubles, potential and actual, created by the war. 'John Bull is a fine Fellow', claimed Mrs Piozzi, 'but if not well *fed* he will *roar*.'³⁹ She disapproved both of measures taken by the rich that were guaranteed to irritate the poor (such as the closure of the London brewhouses in 1795) and measures taken by the poor to redress their grievances against the rich (such as the handbill posted on church doors in Streatham '*demanding, not requesting* Relief for the lower Orders').⁴⁰ Hannah More's pamphlet, *Remarks on the speech of M Dupont* (1793), made the connection between atheism and radical politics: 'it is much to be suspected, that certain opinions in politics have a tendency to lead to certain opinions in religion.'⁴¹ Mrs Piozzi also saw the war in a fundamentally religious light, but hers was a much more apocalyptic vision. Distinguishing first from second causes, she perceived the first, cosmic cause of the French Revolution to have been the turbulence which is the preparation for Antichrist. In May 1795 she noted in her journal:

a complete Famine, and three raging Factions are now devouring Paris, Poland is become a mere Desert deluged with blood, Insurrections in Rome and Naples threat those unhappy States with calling in the French directly, whilst Russia & the Porte prepare for instant war. - And is not

³⁸ Lady Theresa Lewis (ed.), *Extracts of the journals and correspondence of Miss Berry from the year 1783 to 1852* (3 vols., 1865), ii, 70, Miss Berry to Mr Greathead, 2 August 1798.

³⁹ Balderstone (ed.), *Thraliana*, ii, 842.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, ii, 920, 909; Oswald G Knapp (ed.), *The intimate letters of Hester Piozzi and Penelope Pennington 1788-1821* (London, 1914), 180, Mrs Piozzi to Mrs Pennington, 21 August 1799.

⁴¹ More, *Remarks on the speech of M. Dupont*, 402, 405-6.

the End of all to be expected? What other Signs would this adulterous Generation have?⁴²

Female writers, whether conservative or radical, Anglican or Dissenting, agreed in urging moral vigilance on the nation, since they believed that the war ought to be viewed in a religious light; that Britain had no great cause for complacency concerning its own standing with heaven; and above all, that it was highly desirable from the point of view of domestic social order. The reform of political grievances, Hannah More insisted, would be insufficient to render the British 'a happy people'; for that, a reformation of manners would be necessary. Mrs Jane West, in her *Tale of the times* (1799), wrote approvingly of contemporary moral instructors who 'would not ascribe the annihilation of thrones and altars to the arms of France, but to those principles [such as the French sanctioning of divorce] which, by dissolving domestic confidence, and undermining private worth, paved the way for universal confusion.'⁴³ Helen Maria Williams was horrified by tales of atrocities perpetrated by British officers upon Italian patriot prisoners of war, which she felt to be a great stain on British honour.⁴⁴ So depressed was Mrs Piozzi about the moral state of the nation that, in 1800, she told her friend Mrs Pennington that the government 'must leave off appointing such solemnities' as national fasts, since 'the time is over when they did any good.' Mrs Barbauld, whose pamphlets of 1793 and 1794 were written especially for national Fast Days, was also caustic in her denunciation of their use. 'We cannot subsidize the Deity, as we have subsidized his majesty of Sardinia', she warned.⁴⁵

⁴² Balderston (ed.), *Thraliana*, ii, 929.

⁴³ More, *Remarks on the speech of M. Dupont*, 391; West, quoted in Butler, *Jane Austen and the war of ideas*, 105.

⁴⁴ Helen Maria Williams, *Sketches of the state of manners and opinions in the French republic, towards the close of the eighteenth century. In a series of letters* (2 vols., London, 1801), i, 198.

⁴⁵ Knapp (ed.), *Letters to Mrs Pennington*, 188, Mrs Piozzi to Mrs Pennington, [April 1800]; [Barbauld], *Sins of government*, 7-9, 30-3.

Women writers did not often comment on the actual conduct of the war. Mrs Piozzi, Miss Berry and Helen Maria Williams were the most interested in its events and in the conduct of British strategy, but they did not often offer sustained examination of these aspects of the conflict. Miss Berry, who was as well informed, however, as any private individual, male or female, was frequently scathing of the government's strategy in the United Provinces. 'How Holland is now to be saved I do not see', she wrote to Horace Walpole on 28 September 1794; 'and how we are to be safe when it is gone, I as little see; and how and why the D. of York stays to have half his army destroyed, and the other half driven home, I still less see.' 'I have long been perfectly convinced', she later wrote, 'by several circumstances that have come to my knowledge, of the entire and disgraceful ignorance of our Ministers as to foreign politics.'⁴⁶

Fears of invasion, however, were often expressed. Mrs Piozzi wrote a short *Address to the females of Great Britain* and translated General Dumourier's pamphlet, *Tableau spéculatif de l'Europe* (1798), to raise the invasion alarm among the apparently complacent upper ranks of British society: by then, she thought that 'Invasion was a fear no longer fashionable', and when the Irish rebellion erupted later that year, she saw it as a severe mortification of British vanity.⁴⁷ Fanny Burney was not one of those who were sanguine about the prospect of an invasion. Her beloved sister, Susannah, had moved to Ireland with her husband in 1796, and since the threat to Ireland was always greater in the 1790s than that to England, Burney was continually anxious for her sister's safety.⁴⁸

Female writers also suggested ways in which British women could contribute to the war effort. They especially instructed each

⁴⁶ Lewis (ed.), *Berry correspondence*, i, 441, Miss Berry to the Earl of Oxford, 28 September 1794; *ibid.*, ii, 102, Miss Berry to Mrs Cholmeley, 28 October 1799.

⁴⁷ William McCarthy, *Hester Thrale Piozzi: portrait of a literary woman* (Chapel Hill and London, 1985), 229; Piozzi, *Retrospection*, ii, 527.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Joyce M Hemlow (ed.), *The journals and letters of Fanny Burney* (12 vols., Oxford, 1972-1984), iii, 273, Fanny Burney to Mrs Phillips, 10 February [1797].

other to contribute good domestic management and, thus, money to the British war effort. Hannah More's *Remarks on the speech of M. Dupont* was prefaced by an 'Address in Behalf of the French Emigrant Clergy' which was particularly directed at a female audience, urging them to make small retrenchments in their domestic economy and especially in their own fashion expenses in order to be able to give more to this cause. Fanny Burney admitted that charitable giving was not an exclusively female virtue, but she argued that women's demands on their own money were less serious and pressing than those of men, and that their response to her appeal might therefore be swifter and more general.⁴⁹ Neither conservative nor radical female writers, however, advocated the idea of female soldiers. While More wanted to 'prevail on beauty, and rank, and talents, and virtue, confederating their several powers, to exert themselves with a patriotism at once firm and feminine, for the general good', this was intended only in the sense of moral influence, for she immediately went on to insist that she was not 'sounding an alarm for female warriors, or exciting female politicians', for she hardly knew which of the two was 'the most disgusting and unnatural character.' Wollstonecraft might well have wanted to see female politicians - she certainly wanted women to study politics and to have a greater involvement in it - but she insisted that while she wished to see 'the bayonet converted into a pruning-hook', she would not advise women to 'turn their distaff into a musket'.⁵⁰

Colley has suggested that 'in the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, as in so many later conflicts, British women seem....to have been no more markedly pacifist than men', despite the assumptions of history.⁵¹ This may have been true in terms of their practical support for the war, but the expression of a desire for peace was a characteristically female emphasis. Men might stand to

⁴⁹ More, *Remarks on the speech of M. Dupont*, 377-80; Burney, *Brief reflections*, 7.

⁵⁰ More, *Strictures on the modern system of female education* (London, 1799), in *Works* (3 vols., London, 1847), iii, 14; Mary Wollstonecraft, *A vindication of the rights of woman* (1792; London, Everyman, 1985), 160, 162.

⁵¹ Colley, *Britons*, 262.

gain from war - professional soldiers and sailors, armaments manufacturers, cloth and leather manufacturers, shipbuilders and contractors. These interests might benefit women indirectly, too, but female writers seem to have been more influenced by thoughts of the darker side of war and its adverse consequences for individuals and families, or at least to have felt more able than men to admit to such influences. Mrs Piozzi endorsed this view. 'Female politicians', she wrote, 'confide in negotiation. Elizabeth of England, Isabella of Spain, hated war, and took every possible method to avoid it; while Queen Anne's natural ardour to conclude the peace of Utrecht cost her almost her life.'⁵² Hannah More, for all her conviction of the justice of the conflict on Britain's part, was weary of it by 1797: 'I say nothing of war, because I am weary of the word, nor of peace, because I lose all hope of it.'⁵³ Songs and poems lamenting the miseries of war and sighing for peace were common, such as the sonnets to peace and war published in *The Lady's Magazine* of 1799.⁵⁴ These were not always simple diatribes against the horrors of conflict. Amelia Alderson's *Ode, written on the opening of the last campaign* (1795), might be described as a pragmatic cry for peace. Preferring an immediate cessation of hostilities, but recognizing that this call was unlikely to be heard on its own merits, the poem prays not only for immediate peace but also for victory against France in the coming campaign, in the hope that this may hasten peace.⁵⁵

Mrs Piozzi did have doubts about the eventual peace settlement at Amiens. Admitting that, like everyone else in Britain, she was glad of the peace for material reasons, she nevertheless deplored what to her was a peace bought for the indulgence of British avarice and which allowed the French to reorganize the map of Europe and persuaded Britain to abandon its allies to their fates. Georgiana,

⁵² McCarthy, *Hester Thrale Piozzi*, 221.

⁵³ R Brimley Johnson (ed.), *The letters of Hannah More* (London, 1925), 132, Hannah More to Mrs Boscawen, 1797. See also Lewis (ed.), *Berry correspondence*, ii, 110-1, Miss Berry to Mrs Cholmeley, 2 January 1800.

⁵⁴ Vol.30, 40, 88.

⁵⁵ See Bennett (ed.), *British war poetry*, 137-8.

Duchess of Devonshire, was much more sanguine and perhaps more typical: 'Peace! Peace! Peace!...I must rejoice in spite of all the alarmist long faces.'⁵⁶

Female writers of all viewpoints, therefore, stressed the moral, religious, personal and domestic aspects of the conflict, emphases consistent with the accepted private or 'female' sphere of writing. It was the fact that they were discussing the public, political issue of the war, however conformably to the female sphere, which was new and which provoked disapproval from male readers and discomfort among the female writers themselves. In discussing women's role during the conflict, female writers often acquiesced in the notion of separate spheres for men and women, particularly since warfare was such an overwhelmingly male-dominated activity. In this arena above all, a woman's sphere was almost wholly confined to the private, the domestic and the small-scale - the public arena, the acknowledged sphere of the significant and the substantial, was for men. 'Till Amazonian virtue is again the fashion, we shew better in peace than in war, at home, in our closet or our nursery, than in the field of battle', admonished Laetitia Hawkins.⁵⁷

Other female writers struggled more than Hawkins appeared to with the question of their commenting on the war. In the heat of the invasion crisis of 1798, Hester Piozzi's *Address to the females of Great Britain* appealed to women to cease behaving like children and statuettes in such a crisis as the present struggle against France:

Nobody hinders [women] from being wise or strong, Learned or brave; nor does any one ... pretend to like them better for being weak, ignorant or pusillanimous. You are therefore ... called upon, to act rationally, & steadily: & to maintain that Place among reasonable Beings we have so often heard you urge a Claim to.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Balderston (ed.), *Thraliana*, ii, 1030-1; Bessborough (ed.), *Georgiana Corr.*, 248, the Duchess of Devonshire to her mother, [31 March 1802].

⁵⁷ Hawkins, *Letters on the female mind*, i, 118.

⁵⁸ Quoted in McCarthy, *Hester Thrale Piozzi*, 234.

Yet she elsewhere claimed that she was 'no Politician ... nor either think much or care about publick Concerns'. She had learned, as William McCarthy comments, to dissemble her 'unfeminine' interest in politics.⁵⁹ In fact, she worried that she had learned to camouflage it too well: of her *British synonymy* (1794), which used political affairs to illustrate many of its definitions, she wrote, 'I am only afraid the title may prove a millstone round its neck: no one will think of looking for Politics in a volume entitled *British synonymy*.'⁶⁰ It was a typically female way of expressing political opinion - subtly rather than overtly - but the fact remained that to express political opinion publicly was not at all a typically female thing to do.

Fanny Burney protested against a female involvement in public political debate. She told Princess Mary that she had deliberately left political ideas out of her novel, *Camilla* (1796), because 'they were not a *feminine* subject for discussion' as well as because she believed that steering her readers clear of politics altogether was doing them a better service even than inculcating them with her own conservative ideas on the subject. She also thought it necessary to preface her *Reflections on the emigrant French clergy* (1793) with an 'Apology' to justify the entry of a woman into public affairs on the grounds of 'tenderness and humanity'. Yet enter that arena she did: indeed, that very preface went on to argue that while it was generally right for women to remain in the background, on this occasion it was more proper for them to come forward to offer their help to the *émigrés*.⁶¹ Likewise, Hannah More felt compelled to defend her entry into political polemics: at the beginning of her preface to her *Remarks on M. Dupont's speech*, she too justified her boldness by the emergency facing the country. Throughout the pamphlet, however, she claimed not to be 'entering far into any

⁵⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 210.

⁶⁰ Knapp (ed.), *Letters to Mrs Pennington*, 101, Mrs Piozzi to Mrs Pennington, 2 December 1793.

⁶¹ Burney, *Brief reflections*, iv-v; Katharine M Rogers, *Frances Burney. The world of female difficulties* (New York and London, 1990), 4.

political principles'.⁶² It is true that her conservative case was specifically based on religious principles, but it was just as clearly extended to be applied to political submission and loyalty. She also actively encouraged the distribution of conservative propaganda, and she wrote a great many of the famous *Cheap repository tracts* herself. Helen Maria Williams wrote self-deprecatingly of her former ignorance of and lack of interest in public affairs, but explained that she had been stimulated to write by her 'love of the French revolution'.⁶³

All these women were in some way claiming that the extraordinary nature of the present times justified their self-directed extension of the female sphere of influence from the private and the domestic into the public and the political. It was true that it was professedly the extremity of threatened revolution in Britain and actual warfare with France which drew them into public activity and permitted their acceptance in this role by society, and that the implication (doubtless often sincerely meant) was that after the return of peace and domestic order, they would shrink back into their traditional place in the national wallpaper. Yet even though they had dressed their political views in 'feminine' and often apologetic moral and religious clothing, a precedent had been created, an erosion encouraged: in the nineteenth century women continue to debate, campaign and publish their views on social and political issues. They participated, for instance, in the movements for the reformation of manners and the Chartists' aims, and against slavery, Catholic-emancipation and the Corn Laws in the first half of the nineteenth century.

⁶² More, *Remarks on the speech of M. Dupont*, 407.

⁶³ Helen Maria Williams, *Letters written in France, in the Summer of 1790, to a friend in England: containing various anecdotes relative to the French Revolution; and memoirs of Mons. and Madame du F* ___ (3rd edition; London 1792), 108.

II

What did British men think about women's involvement in the wars against revolutionary France? Of those who expressed any opinion at all, some simply used gender to characterize different attitudes to the war and to incite men to particular responses; some saw a passive role for women in the war effort; others were willing to allow them, or even demand from them, a more active participation; and various tactics were employed to steer women towards perceiving their war role in particular ways. To some extent, since war had always been a male-dominated phenomenon, the use of gender identities in war-rhetoric was not new; but because women were participating in and against the war effort and in the war debate to a greater extent than in previous conflicts, gender was used more frequently in public rhetoric on engagement in the war and also discussed more frequently as a current issue.

The concept of woman as weak and helpless, physically, mentally and emotionally, was used to denigrate different responses to the war. Both pro-war and anti-war writers dubbed their opponents' position as effeminate and, by implication, unworthy. Dennis O'Bryen charged the government with a 'feminine' cowardice, in resorting to slander against France rather than relying in a 'manly' way solely on the military force of the nation, pitted against that of France. It boded ill, he pointed out, for the success of peace negotiations that the British government and its hirelings should continue to insult and vilify the power it could not conquer.⁶⁴ It was more usual, however, for war to be represented as virile and peace as effeminate. *Reasons against national despondency* was a pamphlet written in reply to Thomas Erskine's anti-war tract, *A view of the causes and consequences of the present war against France* (1797). Its author scornfully dismissed peace-campaigning

⁶⁴ Dennis O'Bryen, *Utrum Horum? The government; or, the country?* (5th edition; London, 1796), 29-31. See also Vicesimus Knox, 'The Prospect of Perpetual and Universal Peace to be Established on the Principles of Christian Philanthropy' (London, 1793), in *Works* (7 vols., London, 1824), v, 353.

as an 'effeminate and womanish longing'.⁶⁵ Recruitment literature appealed to masculinity, offering ways in which to assert it, such as the physical training and discipline necessary for the work of a soldier or sailor, and providing a reason to undertake the dangers and hardships of battle - the protection of women and children, man's natural role. By implication, not to serve one's country in this way was to leave one's masculinity open to doubt. 'Who can call himself a *Man*', asked Theodore Price, *alias* 'Job Nott', rhetorically, 'who can pretend love for women, who will not prepare or assist in some way to thrust such villains from his Country's shores.'⁶⁶ This taunt was reinforced by unfavourable comparisons of British men both with supposedly effeminate Frenchmen and with British women.⁶⁷

Almost all writing by men that considered the position of women in wartime assumed and reinforced an environment of separate spheres for men and women, but often these were spheres in which there was a contribution of some sort which women could make towards the successful outcome of the conflict. Some writers viewed this contribution as fundamentally passive. As well as providing a reason for men to defend their country, women could be seen as a reward for men who had fought valiantly. Their approval and their safeguarded and faithful chastity were held up as prizes for

⁶⁵ *Reasons against national despondency; in refutation of Mr Erskine's view of the causes and consequences of the present war. With some remarks upon the supposed scarcity of specie* (London, 1797), 104, 167.

⁶⁶ [Theodore Price], *A continuation of my last book, or a back front view of the five headed monster. By Job Nott, buckle-maker* (Birmingham, 1798), 6; see also Arthur Young, *The example of France, a warning to Britain* (4th edition; London, 1794; first published 1793), 144.

⁶⁷ Cottrell, 'English Views', 111-2, 118-120; Michael Duffy, *The Englishman and the foreigner* (Cambridge, 1986), 34-7; Davidoff and Hall, *Family fortunes*, 19; Cottrell, 'English Views', 117; BMC 8435 and 8436, Gillray, 'A Republican Beau' and 'A Republican Belle' (10 March 1794); the *Sun*, 24 September 1793; *The Times*, 1 February 1793 and the *Sun*, 11 February 1794, both reporting births to French soldiers. See also BMC 9314, [Woodward] and Isaac Cruikshanks, ['Female Opinions on Military Tactics'], ([1798/9]); c.f. Lady Elliot's amusement at a friend's enlistment in the Volunteers (Minto (ed.), *Life and letters*, ii, 291-2, Lady Elliot to Sir Gilbert Elliot, 12 June 1794).

military courage and service. In a more abstract sense, they were sometimes seen as goddesses or figureheads, either for the nation, or for particular groups of soldiers, sailors, or Volunteers. This perhaps made it peculiarly appropriate that they produced and presented the banners and flags which were to be carried at the head of regiments and corps of soldiers, which could come to symbolize their benefactors, rather in the manner that ladies' tokens had been worn centuries previously at jousts.⁶⁸ Female figureheads could be either homely or exalted: 'Mrs Bull' (an innovation of the American revolutionary era), or 'Liberty' or 'Britannia'. 'Britannia' symbolized both the country and womanhood, both in need of defence. By never taking part in battle, even in defence, she encapsulated the position of women within the war propaganda. She watched the conflict from the safety of her island or from the heavens, and her weapons appear to be decorative and symbolic rather than for practical use.⁶⁹

Other war commentators were prepared to permit women a more active role in the British war effort. One of the most frequently expounded contributions of this sort was the moral significance of women. In part, this was to be seen as a contribution to military morale, in women's faithfulness to their absent husbands. It was also claimed to be a much more fundamental force in society. For John Bowles, the government war propagandist, as for many others, the most important attribute of a woman was her chastity, and not only that, but its very appearance also, must be jealously guarded. Thus it was that he saw in the current fashion for women to wear lower necklines than he thought modest, 'a much more formidable enemy than Buonoparte himself, with all his power, perfidy and

⁶⁸ See, for example, Col. Parker of Maidstone, as reported in the *Sporting Magazine*, 73 (October 1798), 33-4 (in the Banks Collection of broadsides and cuttings, British Library, catalogue reference LR 301.h.6, f.57).

⁶⁹ Cottrell, 'English Views', 113-6. On the arming of Britannia, see also Marina Warner, *Monuments and maidens: the allegory of the female form* (London, 1985), xix-xx: 'Often the recognition of a difference between the symbolic order, inhabited by ideal, allegorical figures, and the actual order, of judges, statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, inventors, depends on the unlikelihood of women practising the concepts they represent.'

malice', for female modesty was 'the last barrier of civilized society.'⁷⁰

Colley notes that the chastity of women was taken particularly seriously by propagandists in this war against revolutionary France because it was a way of scoring points against the enemy, whose women, it was suggested, were somewhat less than chaste.⁷¹ The role of women as childbearers was naturally exalted in time of war, when the size and health of the population was a particularly significant issue. For centuries, however, anxieties had been voiced concerning the possibility of wives tainting their husbands' lines of inheritance by marital infidelity.⁷² This explains why, in the war-time prints and literature which depicted women as potential victims of Frenchmen, their treatment was highly ambivalent. Some propaganda showed them simply as objects of purity and beauty to be protected and sheltered from the contamination and plundering of the French. Some, however, showed them as unreliable and unscrupulous, revoltingly eager for the attentions of Frenchmen and greedy for the potential material gain involved in these transactions.⁷³ In the second case, the fear was not so much for the violation of women as for the contamination of the British line, and therefore British property and liberty by a French attack.

⁷⁰ John Bowles, 'Remarks on modern female manners, as distinguished by indifference to character, and indecency of dress; extracted from 'Reflections political and moral at the conclusion of the war' (London, 1802), 5, 12.

⁷¹ Colley, *Britons*, 250-3. See, for instance, Desultory Thoughts on the Atrocious Cruelties of the French Nation: with Observations on the Necessity of War, and a Calm Admonitory Address to all English Jacobins. By a loyal subject to the King and Constitution of Great Britain (Bath, 1794), 64-6; 'A Word to the Wise', *The Anti-Gallican Songster*, i (London, 1793), 6; Jacques François Mallet du Pan, *Dangers which threaten Europe. Principal causes of the want of success in the late campaign - faults to be shunned and means to be taken to render the present decisive in favour of the real friends of order and peace* (London, 1794), 53.

⁷² Poovey, *The proper lady and the woman writer*, 5-6; Cottrell, 'English Views', 138. See also Fletcher, *Gender, sex and subordination, passim*.

⁷³ See, for example, BMC 9725, Cruikshank, 'Thoughts on the Invasion!' (27 August 1801).

Suitably feminine contributions were good domestic management, the donation of money and tending the sick and wounded.⁷⁴ Another role admitted to women by even the sternest conservatives was that of encouraging their men to fight for their country. 'Job Nott' suggested that women could be 'stirring up young men to be public spirited protectors of their fair country-women', and, he added, 'you can laugh at those who hang back'.⁷⁵ Arthur Young argued that if the influence of British women were thus extended, he was sure that it would send 'thousands with ardour to the standard'.⁷⁶ Men refused, however, to entertain the idea of yielding their traditional prerogative in the defence of the country to women. 'Chamberpot defence' was the most that was generally allowed to women by the cartoonists - beyond that, it was men's work.⁷⁷ 'A hen is a respectable animal when she is feeding or brooding her chickens', 'Thomas Bull' told his cousin 'John', but in a cockpit she is ridiculous.⁷⁸ In 1803 'The Projector' wrote in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of his genuine concern that women were being wasted as a potential military resource and that, were they suitably trained and educated for the task, women might be equal if not superior to men

⁷⁴ *The Sun*, 27 November 1799; *The Times*, 11 March 1795, quoted in Clive Emsley, *British society and the French wars 1793-1815* (London, 1979), 51-2; [Theodore Price], *Further humble advice from Job Nott* (Birmingham, 1800), 5-6; William Cobbett (ed.), *The parliamentary history of England, from the earliest period to the year 1803* (London, 1806-1820), xxxiii, 1455, William Windham, 24 April 1798.

⁷⁵ [Price], *A back to front view*, 6.

⁷⁶ Arthur Young, *National danger and the means of safety* (London, 1797), 30; also published in idem., (ed.), *The annals of agriculture*, xxviii (1797), 184. See also Robert Farren Cheetham, 'Ode for Her Majesty's Birthday', in idem., *Odes and miscellanies* (London, 1796), 108.

⁷⁷ Cottrell, 'English Views', 107. An exception was BMC 8432, [Nixon], 'French Invasion or Brighton in a Bustle' (1 March 1794), which showed old women among others helping to repel the French; but they were included rather to mock the quality of national defence rather than to applaud female involvement in it.

⁷⁸ *A letter to John Bull, esq., from his second cousin Thomas Bull, author of the first and second letters to his brother John* (London, 1793), 35.

as soldiers; but this, of course, remained a highly controversial claim.⁷⁹

Finally, and particularly so in view of all these concerns, female pamphleteering on the issue of the war was also a questionable activity. Some male writers approved heartily of well-known conservative female writers such as Hannah More: 'MISS HANNAH MORE APPEARS to be another Instrument in the hand of Providence to benefit Mankind, and I hope she will go on in her labour for the public good, and not be diverted from her object by the sneers', wrote 'Job Nott'.⁸⁰ Fanny Burney's *Brief reflections relative to the emigrant French* was favourably reviewed in the *British Critic*, the *Monthly Review*, the *Critical Review* and the *European Magazine*.⁸¹ Men were often doubtful of the value or propriety of women publicly airing their views on political subjects, however. Richard Polwhele thought that it had been just tolerable in the past, when they had been few and far between - then, a female writer had been 'esteemed a Phenomenon in Literature' and sure of a favourable reception among the critics simply because she was a woman. Now he thought there were so many of them that they had grown complacent and bold, and they could no longer charm critics by self-deprecating acknowledgements of their own 'comparative imbecility'.⁸² The *Sun* noted on 24 September 1795: 'The Comedy which Mrs Inchbald has ready, we hope to find devoid of all political allusions; and if so, her Muse, we doubt not, will receive and deserve a liberal patronage.' Readers' of *Lady's Magazine* in October 1799 were left in no doubt as to the impropriety of women either participating in the war or commenting publicly on it:

Women were created to be the companions of man, to please him, to solace him in his miseries, to console him in his sorrows, and not to partake with him the fatigues of

⁷⁹ 'The Projector, XXI', in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, ii (1803), 715, quoted in Cottrell, 'English Views', 109-11.

⁸⁰ [Price], *Further humble advice from Job Nott*, 7.

⁸¹ Hemlow (ed.), *Burney journals and letters*, iii, 40 n.2.

⁸² Richard Polwhele, *The unsex'd females; a poem, addressed to the author of the Pursuits of Literature* (New York, 1800; first published 1798), 19-20 n.

war, of the sciences, and of government. Warlike women, learned women, and women who are politicians, equally abandon the circle which nature and institutions have traced round their sex; they convert themselves into men.⁸³

III

Only a minority of women engaged heavily in patriotic or pacific activism, and an even smaller proportion published their views on the war. These naturally reflected their social class and their era in the attitudes they revealed. As McCarthy remarks of one of them: 'To read through Piozzi's political remarks from the 1790s is to encounter again and again sharable sentiments emphatically expressed.'⁸⁴ Yet it is clear that women's writings also had identifiably characteristic concerns and emphases in the issues they discussed. They were generally more concerned with the personal and the private than with the massed and the public. Female writers were universally horrified by the violence and cruelties of warfare and, while they could be as chauvinistically British as male writers, they also more often noticed and rebuked this attitude than did men. Most did not comment much on the British government's conduct of the war, but some of those who did showed themselves to be as well informed as most male observers. Peace was, if anything, an event still more desired by women than by men, whatever their political stance; none seemed to be war-crusaders of the intensity of a Burke or a Windham, ready to sacrifice all possibility of peace until monarchical government was restored in France, however much they might wish for such an outcome.

It is also true to say that it was a war which offered women a substantially greater opportunity to become involved in its issues and activities than any previous conflict had done. This was partly because it was such a long war and involved such a great proportion of the British population. It had a direct impact on ordinary women as well as on professional male soldiers and sailors. This was also a

⁸³ *The Lady's Magazine*, 30 (October, 1799), 450-1.

⁸⁴ McCarthy, *Hester Thrale Piozzi*, 220.

war in which more emphasis was consciously placed on ideological issues than any since the wars of religion and, since the intervening period had seen an escalation both of the press and of literacy and more recently of professional women writers, there was more place for women to become actively involved. Yet the conflict and the British debate over it also reinforced and validated separate agenda for men and women, since those women who ventured to express their opinions publicly, whether in print or otherwise, tended to articulate their views through developing notions of separate spheres and acknowledged their importance.

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JACOBITISM AND MILLENNIAL ENLIGHTENMENT:

ALEXANDER, LORD FORBES OF PITSLIGO'S 'REMARKS' ON THE MYSTICS

David E Shuttleton

In 1749 the Edinburgh bookseller Thomas Ruddiman, published a small octavo* volume entitled *Discourses concerning the spiritual life*, by Charles Hector Marquis St George de Marsay, a French Protestant, pietist theologian domiciled in Germany.¹ These *Discourses* offer an English translation of extracts from Marsay's extensive commentaries on Christian mysticism which had appeared in French, in five volumes, at Paris between 1738 and 1740. Marsay's unorthodox, markedly Behmenist *Discourses* might seem like an anachronistic text to be appearing from the press in the predominantly Moderate Presbyterian and increasingly rationalist, sceptical climate of early-Enlightenment Edinburgh. The self-consciously defensive tone of the substantial, anonymously printed preface, entitled a 'Letter giving some Account of the Author; with Remarks on other Writers, Commonly called *Mystic* or *Spiritual*...to J. F Esq' suggests this potentially hostile milieu:

...you know what reception such Books have met with...It is a great pity that some well meaning Persons, great Friends to the Letter of Christianity, are Enemies to the Spirit of it, as to fly out against all internal Operations on the Soul; calling them Enthusiasm, Fanaticism and whatever their Spleen and Aversion can suggest! All the Derision and ill-names given to revealed Religion by

* I would like to thank Craig Walton, Murray Pittock and other participants for their valuable comments on this paper at the 'Jacobitism, Scotland and Enlightenment' Conference, Aberdeen 1995.

¹ Marsay, *Discourses on subjects relating to the spiritual life, translated from the French, to which is prefix'd a letter giving some account of the author; with remarks on other works, commonly called mystick or spiritual* (Thomas and Walter Ruddiman, Edinburgh, 1749), i-ii (hereafter cited as 'Discourses' in main text).

Deists and Atheists, are employed by some of the Clergy, and their lay-disciples, against what they call Mysticism, as the worst name they can invent (*Discourses*, pp. 1-2).

The author argues that 'mysticism' is just a 'harmless' word for 'the *hidden Instruction* of the Spirit of God, the Human Spirit being *naturally* incapable of divine Things', and cites the authority of St Paul and the Apostles for the fact that prophetic insight does sometimes take the form of 'divine raptures and extasies [sic]'. It must be accepted that God can 'make impressions on the Human Mind or Spirit...to an Infinite variety,' and it is wrong to reject authentic inspiration because of a few imposters. These 'Remarks' then offer an historical account of increased hostility towards 'internal religion' since the Interregnum, through its associations with purportedly deceptive, hypocritical radical fanatics. The Preface then provides a detailed discussion of a contemporary mystical Christian tradition and Marsay's specific doctrines.

The need to locate this informed defence within more established mid-eighteenth century Scottish cultural formations is now made possible through identification of the author as the Jacobite ideologue, Alexander, Lord Forbes of Pitsligo (1678-1762). Amongst Pitsligo's papers there survives a manuscript entitled 'A Second Letter to J.F. Esquire Concerning Monsieur Marsay', which had been intended to preface a second volume of extracts which never got into print. This tightly written, seventeen-page account rests with three other related manuscripts, all contained in a wrapper which bears the following inscription by Pitsligo's descendent, the banker, William Forbes:

The first letter is prefix'd to the translation of *Marsay's Discourses on the Spiritual Life*, published at Edinburgh in the year 1749 - Both letters are the production of Lord Pitsligo; this Second one is in his handwriting; contains besides an account of Monsr. Marsay's [life?] a curious detail of some of the Opinions of the mystic writers to whom Lord Pitsligo was so warmly attached - The letters are addressed to James Ferguson Esq. of Pitfour (afterwards Lord Pitfour) the intimate friend of the Lord

Pitsligo, and whose opinions on Religious Subjects were genial with his own.²

These items, and manuscript evidence from other related sources, allow us to reconstruct some of the circumstances surrounding the dissemination of Marsay's mystical doctrines in English at Edinburgh in 1749, and consider the significant religious affiliations of a philosophically orientated Jacobite. This project will also expose some superficially incongruous biographical links which in turn betray an often occluded counter-current within what has all-too-often been perceived to be a monolithically rationalist and Lockean Scottish 'Enlightenment'.

I

Lord Forbes of Pitsligo has a firm place in Jacobite mythology as one of the few figures to ride out in both the '15 and '45 Rebellions. Reputedly the model for the figure of Bradwardine in Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), the real Pitsligo was a studious, tolerant man, who, of all the Jacobite leaders, enjoyed uncritical respect from his adherents. He spent much of his life on the Continent, either by choice or in political exile. After the '15 he visited the Court of the Old Pretender, but not being attainted he returned to Scotland in 1720. He was 68 when he rode out with a troop of horse from Aberdeen to join Charles Edward Stuart at Edinburgh in 1745. After Culloden, he went into hiding in his native North-East. Various romantic anecdotes suggest a benign Lear-like figure, haunting the moors dressed as a mendicant. In one incident, he was reputedly asked to hold the lamp for a search party seeking him out in a cave. After his estate was attained in 1748 the pressure decreased and he lived reclusively on his son-in-law's estate.

² National Library Scotland (NLS), Acc 4796 (Fettercairn), Box 103, Item 25: the other three items are: b. single folded sheet in Pitsligo's hand discussing Marsay's views on 'the Modern Spirit of Inspiration' (summarising opinions in Printed letter); c. draft of a letter on Marsay's biography, reproduced at close of Pitsligo's preface (to be discussed); and d. an eight page commentary by Pitsligo on 'The Universal Restoration', dated March 1750, with postscript, May 1750. Citation will hereafter be given to a. as 'Second Letter'.

Pitsligo's principle attributed writings are *Essays, moral and philosophical on several subjects* (1734) and *Thoughts concerning man's condition* (written, 1732; printed 1763). The latter was reissued in the mid-nineteenth century with a biographical preface by Pitsligo's great nephew, Lord Medwyn and then reprinted by Blackwoods in 1854 with a prefatorial review by Sir Walter Scott.³ Whilst both Medwyn and Scott paint sympathetic pictures of Pitsligo's loyalty to the Stuart cause, both are circumspect and defensive about Pitsligo's adherence to unorthodox forms of Continental pietism. Neither gives any very clear account of the precise nature of these concerns, nor how these might have informed Pitsligo's politics. Scott does comment that between the Rebellions, 'Lord Pitsligo maintained, from his remote residence friendly intercourse and exchange of sentiments with persons, who like himself were somewhat impressed with the doctrines of Quietism - a species of transcendental devotion' (xv). But Scott is also able to note that although 'Pitsligo was early impressed with the doctrines of Quietism, we cannot trace them in his thoughts to any Violent degree or extent...he neither displays nor affects any peculiar depth of metaphysical investigation, nor does he drag into the field any contested texts or doubtful doctrines' (xxi). This apologetic desire to down-play the significance of forms of quietist-mysticism in Pitsligo's career casts a potentially distorting shadow over subsequent accounts. But whilst Pitsligo's pietist studies and social connections clearly played a profoundly important role in his published philosophical project, nevertheless Pitsligo was notably cautious of revealing in print the influence of mystically orientated Continental pietists and their scholarly adherents. In fact Pitsligo only chose to discuss these heterodox sources and doctrines to any depth in private letters to religious associates, in unpublished memoranda, and in the two substantial Marsay prefatorial 'Letters'.

³ These are primary biographical sources. See also *The House of Forbes* edited by Alistair and Henrietta Tayler, Third Spalding Society (Aberdeen, 1937) and Murray G.H.Pittock, 'Jacobitism in the North-East: the Pitsligo Papers', in Aberdeen University Library, in *Aberdeen and the Enlightenment*, ed. by J.J.Carter and J.H.Pittock (Aberdeen, 1986), 69-76.

The printed Marsay Preface was a relatively late contribution to a long-standing publishing project undertaken by the influential Scottish circle of pietists, described by G.D. Henderson in 1934 as 'The Mystics of the North East', and for whom Pitsligo had been a leading patron since his youth.⁴ From the 1680s onwards, this informal grouping of scholarly Episcopalians forged close links with a number of pietist sects in England and on the Continent, establishing a social and textual distribution network connecting Scotland, Holland, France, London, and the West Country which continued into the third quarter of the eighteenth-century. Pitsligo had first come into contact with Continental pietism whilst completing his education in France. By the mid 1690s Pitsligo was the patron of the two spiritual leaders of the Episcopalian 'mystics', the Aberdeen Nonjurors, George Garden (1649-1733), and his elder brother James (1645-1726), who both taught divinity at King's College, Aberdeen, in 1685-6.⁵ George Garden was Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Marischal College, alongside Patrick Sibbald, the Professor of Divinity.⁶ All three were disciples of Henry Scougall D.D. (1650-1678), another professor of divinity at King's, whose *Life of God in the soul of man* (1677), is probably the most famous work of Scottish devotional literature.⁷ Scougall defined true Christianity as the 'Union of the Soul with God, real participation in the Divine Nature, the very Image of God drawn upon the Soul, or, in the Apostle's phrase, it is Christ formed within us...a Divine

⁴ G. D. Henderson, *The mystics of the North East*, Third Spalding Society, (Aberdeen, 1934), which centres around the editing of letters which passed between the Aberdonian pietist physician Dr James Keith, resident in London and Pitsligo's religious associate, Lord Deskford, of Cullen House, Banffshire between 1713-23.

⁵ James was elected Professor of Divinity at Kings College Aberdeen in 1681, but deposed as a Nonjuror in 1697. George Garden's unorthodoxies lost him his ministry at the cathedral church of Old Machar, Aberdeen in 1701 (Henderson, 35-36; 61-62).

⁶ *Fasti Academiciae Mariscallanae Aberdonensis: Selections from the records of the University of King's College, Aberdeen*, (Spalding Society, Aberdeen, 1854), 13.

⁷ George Garden's funeral address for Scougall, prefixed to most editions of this work, is the principal account of its author.

Life.'⁸ In placing value upon the experiential aspects of faith and focusing upon psychological interiority rather than outward forms and sectarianism, this represented an Aberdonian version of Cambridge Platonism.⁹

In his defensive 'Remarks' on the Mystics of 1749, Pitsligo directs the reader to the mystical compendiums of the French *philosophe*, Pierre Poiret (1646-1719)¹⁰, noting how Poiret had successfully adapted the modern language of the 'Arts and Sciences', particularly mathematics, in his elucidation of the mystics. Pitsligo's circle had indeed maintained very close personal contact with Poiret, who had rejected Cartesian rationalism and developed an interest in Behmenism and other mystical doctrines which posited a firm distinction between reason and faith. Settling in the tolerant city of Amsterdam and working in collaboration with his protégé, the printer-scholar, Johan Heinrich Wetstein, Poiret published an eclectic body of Pietist and mystical theology, including the work of James Garden, often with his own philosophical commentaries.¹¹

Under the liberal influence of Dutch Arminianism (a movement which gave an important impetus to the early European Enlightenment), Poiret had rejected the Calvinist doctrine of pre-

⁸ Scougall, *Life of God*, 6. For other statements about 'the Divine Life', a phrase taken directly from Henry More, see J. Garden, *Comparative theology*, pp. i-ii (Edinburgh, 1707); G. Garden, *An Apology for M. Bourignon* (1699), 1-13; More's Platonism is usefully discussed in John Hoyles, *Waning of the Renaissance: studies in the poetry of Henry More, John Norris and Isaac Watts* (The Hague, 1971), 7, passim.

⁹ This form of Aberdonian mystical orientation had earlier manifested itself in the *Spiritual exercises* of John Forbes of Corse; private meditations written between 1624 and 1647 and circulated in manuscript, until published in their entirety, in a Latin version by George Garden as *Opera Johannis Forbesii* (2 vols, Amsterdam, 1702-3).

¹⁰ Henderson, 14-20.

¹¹ These included an influential edition of the *Theologia Germanica*, (English translation, London, 6 vols, 1713), a classic text of Protestant mysticism; an anthology *L'oeconomie divine* (Amsterdam, 1687). In 1708 he published James Garden's *Comparative theology* (1701) (*Discursum academicum de theologia comparativa* (1699)), based upon his divinity lectures at King's College, as Part I of *Bibliotheca mysticorum*.

destination and begun to promote the universal salvationism of the iconoclastic Flemish Protestant visionary, Antoinette Bourignon (1616-1680).¹² After her death in 1680, Poiret established a Quietist community based on her principles at Rhijnsburg, near Leyden. By the late 1690s George Garden was promoting Bourignonism in North-East Scotland. His controversial *Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon...* (Edinburgh, 1699), led to his eventual removal from the living of St Nicolas, Aberdeen, but he found refuge in the household of his patron, Lord Forbes of Pitsligo.¹³ By 1708 George Garden was established as the spiritual director of a religious community on Pitsligo's estate at Rosehearty on the Banffshire coast, which was closely modelled on Poiret's Rhinjsburg experiment.

The Rosehearty community prompted some very vitriolic sectarian criticism. Typically, Andrew Honeyman's *Bourignonism display'd*, (Aberdeen, 1710), condemns Garden for making himself 'the Head of a Partie' and retiring 'unto a Corner of the Countrey, where he is flocked unto from all Parts of The Kingdom...there to erect a sort of a mixt Mungrel, Monasterial-Nunery, whence with large commendations he disperses the books of A[ntonia]. B[ourignon]' (p. xxii). When Garden's opponents claimed that Bourignonism was Roman Catholicism in disguise they were blatantly incorrect, (she was openly condemned by the Catholic Church), but their accusations that her Scottish adherents were Jacobites were not so misguided: all were all open Jacobites in 1715.¹⁴ Indeed, as Murray Pittock and others have noted, mystical-

¹² For Arminianism, Rosie Cole *Light and Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1957), Ch. 1. She does not discuss Poiret (noted at p. 105), but her study provides a valuable account of the Dutch intellectual climate to which Forbes was exposed. See also A. R. McEwen, *Antoinette Bourignon: Quietist* (1910), and for the heresy of Universal Salvation, D. P. Walker, *The decline of Hell: Seventeenth-Century discussions of eternal torment* (Chicago and London, 1964), passim.

¹³ In 1701, George Garden was deposed by the General Assembly which was issuing repeated denunciations of the Bourignists heresy between 1695 and 1711 (Henderson, 32-38; McEwen, 5-19).

¹⁴ Garden's critics included his own brother-in-law, Dr John Cockburn (1652-1729), the Episcopalian-Jacobite pastor in Amsterdam, who wrote a number of

millenarianism lent itself to Royalist interpretation within the context of a Stuart ideology of Divine Right and 'manifest destiny'. After the Glorious Revolution, such notions underpinned Jacobite hopes for political and spiritual 'restoration'.¹⁵ More specifically, Bruce Lenman notes that whilst 'neither [of the Garden brothers] had the outward appearance of a political firebrand', the surviving rebellion sermon delivered by James Garden at Aberdeen in 1715 is full of 'rampant chiliastic Jacobitism'. In the same context Lenman quotes Pitsligo's words of command in 1745: 'Oh Lord, Thou knowest our cause is just. Gentlemen, March...' and concludes that 'episcopal spirituality provided the steel in the Jacobite soul. It was only one of a number of factors which explain the risings, but it was an important component of an explosive mixture.'¹⁶

Pitsligo's anonymous 'Remarks' on mysticism in 1749 offer us, therefore, an insight into the survival of such millenarian hopes within pietist Jacobite circles even after the '45, but the specifically Quietist tradition which is being defended indicates a shift away from an extrovert millenarianism, towards a gradualist and introverted millennialist ethos as hopes of an imminent Stuart Restoration became increasingly remote.¹⁷ Here Pitsligo anxiously defends Bourignon against the false charge that she told women to resist marriage and recalls her role as 'the much esteemed', if controversial source for some of Marsay's more unorthodox doctrines regarding Christ's androgyny, elemental Adamic sexual

polemical works including *Bourignonism detected: or the delusions and errors of Antonia Bourignon and her growing sect* (1698); see DNB, IV, 654-47.

¹⁵ Murray G. H. Pittock, *The invention of Scotland: the Stuart myth and the Scottish identity, 1638 to the present* (London, 1991), 30-31.

¹⁶ Bruce Lenman, 'The Scottish Episcopal Clergy and the Ideology of Jacobitism' in *Ideology and conspiracy: aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759* edited by Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh, 1982), 45-6.

¹⁷ Whilst the distinction between these two terms was somewhat loose in the period under discussion, for my argument I am using 'millenarian' to denote a belief in a sudden, immanent and catastrophic upheaval inaugurating the Second Coming; I use 'millennial' to denote a more gradualist, and often psychologically internalised ethos which foresaw a slow process of spiritual restoration at the end of which period Christ would return.

division and the elemental 'Astral Man', which he explains were largely derived from the Silesian mystic, Jacob Boehme (*Discourses*, pp. 20-22).¹⁸ He also defends the obscure sentimental vocabulary of the mystics (such terms as 'Annihilation', 'Abandonment' etc), as necessary to describe unique affective states. In particular he notes that Bourignon was the source for Marsay's approval of the anti-Calvinist, and potentially ecumenical heresy of Universal Salvation or 'Spiritual Restoration'. He suggests that if true, it is 'the most comfortable [doctrine] that can enter the heart of man' and one with a respectable history:

it was espoused by the *Philadelphians* in the last century; Doctor *Thomas Burnet* has asserted it in many Arguments; Mr *Murhalt* says yet more for it; and some other Foreigners have maintained it of late. Long ago it was adopted by Origen..and even Tillotson.¹⁹

By 1706 the remnants of the London-based Philadelphian Society, or the English Behmenists were in close contact with the London-based members of Pitsligo's circle, with whom they shared their gradualist doctrine of 'Universal Salvation' (there was some actual overlapping of membership). In 1749 Pitsligo goes to some lengths to examine the arguments which have been used against 'Universal Salvation', noting that the Scriptures are ambivalent about eternal punishment and ultimate expiation of sin. The personal importance of the doctrine is emphasised by the existence of an additional manuscript, a postscript, in which he takes up this topic at even greater length.

¹⁸ He defensively addresses Bourignon's heretical conception of the Fall and the Trinity in which Christ is born out of a second, 'bisexual' (rather, androgynous) Adam, which clearly shows the influence of Augustine, Thomas a Kempis, and the theosopher Jacob Boehme (*Discourses*, pp. 46-84). Bourignon always maintained that these speculative ideas were only 'accessories' that need not be fully accepted by followers of true religion which is fundamentally the love of God. Pitsligo follows the defensive arguments adopted in George Garden's, *Apology* (1699).

¹⁹ *Discourses*, 29-30. This tradition is in keeping with that discussed in Walker (see note 12).

In all this material it is noticeable that Pitsligo is at pains to depoliticise Marsay who, he assures the reader, is 'far from making Complaints on the present establishment':

He cautions expressly against setting up to reform the World, by joining Societies, or going up and down alone, and drawing Multitudes together; though such things (he grants) may proceed from a good Intention; But that the Season is over, Jesus Christ being to raise up a pure and spiritual Church towards the End of the World, which he thinks is drawing near...the quiet way of living is now the properest for true reformation, whether in ourselves or others; since Men may be convinced for the poor Effects of their Activity (it landing for the most Part in the setting up Dead Forms, and creating bloody Distinctions) that such Bustling and Noise is at best insignificant (*Discourses*, p 23).

This politically quiescent, passive, internalised millennialist ethos seems appropriate to Pitsligo's defeated position after the '15, and is in line with what Murray Pittock has revealed of Pitsligo's apparent accommodations with the terms of the Revolution Settlement between the two Rebellions, such that by 1720, 'almost, it seems, Pitsligo's Jacobitism has become sentimental.'²⁰ Interestingly in his 'Second Letter' Pitsligo addresses a charge that Marsay is in fact too quiescent:

Now its is affirmed that the *Methodists* have made a good deal of Reformation in *England*, that numbers of working people, Soldiers, and Sailors have refrain'd from Drinking and Swearing, and grown much more Devout than usual; that the *Moravians* have produc'd the like good Effects, both in *England* and in foreign Parts; that 'tis therefore wrong to say any thing against such laudable and pious Endeavours ---I can say heartily, I wish all honest Endeavours may be successful; and I hope (with Mr

²⁰ Pittock (1987), 72-5.

Marsay) the Intention of our present Reformers is good. I have no call to speculate further. ('Second Letter', p. 7).

Writing to the non-juring English theologian William Law in August 1741, Pitsligo had been slightly more cautious about Methodist reformers: 'we hear Mr Whitefield has been preaching to great Numbers at and about Edinburgh. There can be no doubt of his sincere Intention of restoring Christianity, but I wish he were more acquainted with some Spiritual Books, such as Mons. De Cambray's & others of an older date.'²¹ This neatly registers both the affinities and differences between the concerns of an established, predominantly Episcopalian-High Church, scholarly, intellectually elite and, in many cases, largely outwardly conformist pietist movement and the more populist and potentially radical evangelicalism being instigated by the Methodists from the 1730s onwards (a distinction which I have discussed elsewhere).²²

Like many in the older, conservative grouping, Pitsligo's scepticism regarding Methodist claims to inspiration had been coloured by earlier exposure to the socially disruptive effects of the enthusiastic mission of the Camisard or French Prophets, who reached Edinburgh, via London in 1708.²³ At the time Pitsligo's own sister became a convert, although her brother remained cautiously open-minded about their claims to divine inspiration. Hillel Schwartz, has carefully mapped a general shift towards introverted quietism within British pietist circles after the first decade of the eighteenth-century which was in part a conservative recoil away from the publicly visible, socially disruptive behavior of the French Prophets and their British converts. In addition, as both Schwartz and G.S.Rousseau have shown, Camisard and other 'Enthusiastic' claims to perform miraculous healings and even resurrect the dead,

²¹ Dr Williams's Library, (London), MSS 186.4 (ii).

²² See present author, 'Methodism and Dr George Cheyne's "More Enlightening Principles"' in *Medicine in the Enlightenment*, *Clio Medica* 29, Wellcome Series in the History of Medicine, edited by Roy Porter (Amsterdam, 1995), 316-335.

²³ Hillel Schwartz, *The French Prophets: the history of a millenarian group in Eighteenth-century England* (Berkeley, California, 1980), Chapter 5, 154-190 for Scottish mission and passim for Camisard Prophets generally.

prompted a widespread debate concerning the authenticity of 'divine inspiration' amongst leading theologians and natural philosophers of various degrees of faith and scepticism. For established pietists, like the Aberdeenshire Bourignonist enclave and the London Behmenists, it was a question of distinguishing between authentic and inauthentic signs of spiritual illumination based ultimately upon subjective feeling. For many of their sceptical and rationalist opponents, it was more a question of exposing such antics as either the product of innocent self-delusion, as symptoms of a verifiable physical illness or as willful, politically or selfishly motivated attempts to mislead the gullible populace. In so far as this issue prompted a concern with the authenticity of bodily signs as registers of inward conviction, such exchanges partly anticipate some of the ethical anxieties surrounding the more secularised cult of sentimentalism of the 1760s to which the moral sense philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment contributed.²⁴

Whilst Schwartz outlines the Camisard mission in Scotland (for which we have some remarkably detailed records, including tracts, verbatim exchanges with opponents, and 'inspired' lyrics), the specifically Jacobite context of this movement demands more research. We might look more closely, for example, at the career of the minor Fifeshire laird, Andrew Cunningham of Barnes, a close associate of the Pitsligo-Garden circle, who converted after attending a Camisard seance held at Edinburgh in 1709, which Pitsligo also witnessed. Convinced that the prophets were indeed divinely inspired, Barnes became their principle Scottish spokesman, for whom their millenarian message and Jacobite activism were inextricably linked. He was to die of goal fever in Chester castle as a rebel prisoner after the defeat of the '15.²⁵ We need to know about how the defeat of the '15 tempered this overtly chiliastic strain in Jacobitism amongst Cunningham's sometime associates.

²⁴ Amongst many discussions see Robert Markley, 'Sentimentality as Performance: Shaftesbury, Sterne, and the Theatrics of Virtue' in *The New Eighteenth Century* edited by Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York and London, 1987), 210-230.

²⁵ Henderson, *Mystics*, 191-8.

Certainly there appears to have been a shift towards a Quietist, psychological introverted, and more overtly sentimentalist interpretation of millennial 'Restoration' amongst the Scottish pietists by the 1720s. This can be traced back to Poiret's later promotion of the less iconoclastic doctrines of 'Naked Faith and Pure Love' and a meditative, psychological technique of 'stilling of the senses', associated with the French mystic, Madame Guyon (1646-1719), and her defender, Francis De Salignac Fénelon, the Archbishop of Cambrai (1651-1715) (to whom Pitsligo is referring in his letter to Law quoted above).²⁶ Pitsligo had personal contact with both Fénelon and Guyon from the 1690s onwards. In 1708, Pitsligo's pietist protégé, Andrew Michael Ramsay (1686?-1743), (later titled the 'Chevalier'), was considering entering into a religious retreat at Roseheart, but was soon settled in France as Fénelon's pupil and as Guyon's translator and literary secretary. Ramsay became a Catholic convert, who at one stage tutored the Old Pretender's children.²⁷ As a consequence, communications between Scottish and French Quietists increased, especially after the '15 Rebellion when Pitsligo, George Garden and others took advantage of their enforced exile to seek spiritual succour from Guyon in person. This network remained active throughout the 1720s and 1730s, and indeed the Marsay edition of 1749 is evidence of its continued survival and shape at mid-century.

²⁶ Poiret first published Guyon's *Moyen court et très facile de faire oraison*, (Paris, 1685), along with other related pieces in an anthology entitled *Recueil de divers traités de théologie mystique qui entrent dans la dispute du Quietism qui s'agit presentement en France* (Cologne, 1699). He later published editions of her individual works, letters, poems etc., such as the *Opuscules spirituels* (Cologne, 1704), all of which were being imported in quantity by Pitsligo's associates for distribution in Britain by 1713. Fénelon's defence of Quietism, the *Explication des maximes des Saints sur la vie interieure* (Paris, 1697), containing his doctrine of 'Pure Love', was frequently translated as a *Dissertation on pure love* (1735). See, J. H. Davis, *Fénelon*, (Boston, 1979), Chapter 4; M. de la Bédoyère, *The Archbishop and the Lady: the story of Fénelon and Madame Guyon*, (1956); and R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm* (Oxford, 1950), Chapter xiv.

²⁷ Henderson, *Mystics*, 51-5, and same author, *Chevalier Ramsay* (London, 1952), *passim*.

Pitsligo's printed Preface closes with an extract from an anonymous letter providing information about Marsay's biography which had originally been addressed to another member of the circle, the Aberdeenshire-born, Bath domiciled physician Dr George Cheyne (1672-1743), an associate of the Pitsligo-Garden circle since at least 1708 when Pitsligo and his sister were with Cheyne at Bath.²⁸ At that time the physician was in the midst of a protracted physical and mental crisis which he was later to describe in clinical detail in his influential account of nervous disorders, *The English malady* (1733). Pitsligo had offered Cheyne the chance to go into religious seclusion at Roseheart, but instead the sociable physician adopted an ascetic regimen and threw himself into the study of Primitive and Mystical Christianity. Rather than become a Quietist recluse, Cheyne became, as G. S. Rousseau has argued, a very successful medical author, promoting ascetic, medico-religious doctrines of physical and spiritual 'Restoration' amongst the Hanoverian *beau monde*. Given Cheyne's influence upon many of the most prominent Augustan *literati*, as both practitioner and author, Rousseau is right to claim that he was one of the most important early-Georgian disseminators of pietism.²⁹

At the time of Cheyne's first breakdown, his patron Pitsligo was circulating an important pietist critique of John Locke by another Continental associate, another Behmenist-influenced scholar, Count Wolf von Metternicht.³⁰ An English translation of Metternicht's *Animadversions* against Locke's empiricist notion of a *tabula rasa* appeared under the title *Faith and reason compared* (London,

²⁸ Cheyne's pietist associations are mapped in G. S. Rousseau 'Mysticism and Millenarianism: "The Immortal Doctor Cheyne"', in *Millenarianism and Messianism in English literature and thought 1650-1800*, Clark Library lectures 1981-1982 edited by Richard H. Popkin (Leiden, New York etc., 1988), 81-126. A more detailed account is offered in the present author's unpublished PhD Thesis, "'My Own Crazy Carcase': The Life and Works of Dr George Cheyne, 1672-1743' (Edinburgh, 1992).

²⁹ Rousseau, 99 fn. 59.

³⁰ Details of Metternicht are given in Stephen Hobhouse, *Fides et Ratio: the book that introduced Jacob Boehme to William Law* (extracted from *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 1939) (Copy in BL).

1713), which bears an anonymous English preface, almost certainly also by Pitsligo. Metternicht's book had a profound influence upon Cheyne's popularisation of a quasi-Newtonian theology based upon an accommodating metaphysical theory of spiritual attraction. Through Cheyne's influence it was also instrumental in turning the career of the English theologian William Law towards Behmenist-theosophy.³¹ Cheyne and Pitsligo remained in close contact for many years. Amongst Pitsligo's papers, for example, there are privately circulated transcripts of Cheyne's metaphysical writings in which the mature physician develops his 'theosophical-Newtonian' theories of 'Spiritual Attraction' and an innate 'Desire' for the good.³²

Although by 1749, when Pitsligo includes the extract from Cheyne's letter in the Marsay preface, the Bath doctor had been dead for six years, attention to Cheyne's earlier role in the Marsay project brings into focus Pitsligo's mature contact with English-domiciled Quietists, many of whom were indeed non-jurors and sentimental Jacobites. We know that shortly before his death Cheyne was writing to friends praising Marsay as 'beyond everything I ever saw', but like Pitsligo he was worried about the misinterpretation of his more unorthodox 'nostrums' and he was cautiously seeking out the opinions of trusted associates, 'acquainted with the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Universal Restoration'.³³ These included the aforementioned theologian William Law with whom Pitsligo was in direct contact by 1741 regarding the translation of French pietist

³¹ As I argue in my thesis, Cheyne's 'mystical' amendments to his popular *Philosophical principles of religion: natural and reveal'd* (1715), show Metternicht's influence. The Behmenist tradition can be traced from Law directly on to William Blake.

³² NLS MSS 4796, Box 103, Folder 23; Pitsligo cites Cheyne in his *Moral and philosophical Essays*, 28; see also 2 undated letters (post 1734), from Cheyne to William, 14th Lord Forbes discussing 'mystical' doctrines etc at SRO GD 52/1435/2.

³³ *Selections from the journals and papers of John Byrom* edited by Henri Talon (1950), 207-8; 211-12.

texts.³⁴ Cheyne also sent copies of Marsay to Law's 'mystical' disciple, the poet and stenographer, Dr John Byrom FRS, who also quietly supported a Stuart restoration. Another reader of Marsay was Byrom's associate, the London-based, High-Church Anglican theologian, 'Mystic' Dr John Heylyn (d. 1759), a key figure in the network, who had earlier translated the writings of the French mystic, Brother Lawrence, as *Devotional tracts concerning the presence of God* (1724), an earlier pietist edition sponsored by this circle.³⁵ It appears to have been Heylyn who was directly responsible for arranging for shipments of the original Marsay volumes, which he ordered from the Amsterdam bookseller Rutger Goyen, and then distributed, sometimes on Cheyne's behalf.³⁶ Heylyn, who appears to have met both Pitsligo and Marsay on a continental tour, was certainly an associate of the Scottish 'mystics' for many years: Walter Scott tells the story of how Heylyn undertook the arduous journey north to visit Pitsligo in the company of Pitsligo's younger neighbour and fellow religionist Lord Deskford, 11th Earl of Seafield (1690-1764), but upon reaching Edinburgh, and finding that he had another two hundred miles to go, he gave up and went home. This story is undated, but one cannot help surmising that Heylyn may have in fact left a manuscript of extracts of Marsay in translation at Edinburgh. Certainly his involvement is confirmed by Cheyne's letter which Pitsligo prints at the close of the 1749 Preface, where Heylyn's, 'friend at Aix', is cited as Cheyne's source for information on Marsay.

At the time of Cheyne's death in 1743, the physician was paying for the translation of extracts from Marsay which he intended to have printed with a 'preface on Physics and Divinity', and

³⁴ In the letter cited above (footnote 20), clearly part of an extended correspondence, Pitsligo discusses plans for translations of Guyon, Fénelon and an unnamed author, quite possibly Marsay.

³⁵ DNB IX, pp. 769-770. Despite his mystical leanings Heylyn held high Anglican posts, including prebendary of St Paul's Cathedral, and chaplain in ordinary to George II.

³⁶ Heylyn to Goyen 16th Feb. 1741 (in French), uncatalogued mss discovered in Heylyn's library of mystical texts, now in Bristol Public Library (Reserve).

distribute gratis.³⁷ To achieve this he had engaged the assistance of his 'nervous' patient and literary agent, the master-printer turned sentimental novelist Samuel Richardson. Recognising Richardson's 'relish for internal religion', Cheyne asked if the novelist knew of 'any person having a taste of Spiritual Religion', who could undertake the translation (LXXIX).³⁸ Richardson commissioned a French Protestant refugee but Cheyne's death in April 1743 appears to have prevented the project seeing fruition on Richardson's own press. If Richardson played a part in the Ruddiman-Marsay edition it remains obscure, but the mention of Cheyne's letter in the preface suggests that the Edinburgh edition was at least an indirect consequence of the doctor's earlier endeavours. Certainly there is evidence that manuscript translations of Marsay's work, alongside similar extracts from Poiret and other contemporary 'mystic' writers were in circulation amongst Pitsligo's circle.³⁹

The immediate circumstances surrounding Ruddiman's printing of Marsay's *Discourses* at Edinburgh in 1749 are obscure. In his unpublished 'Second Letter', Pitsligo implies that his 'Remarks' appeared without his consent: 'I had some Palpitations when I saw it in Print, for I soon found that it wanted certain Adjustments, which did not appear so necessary at first.' But he does not blame anyone, 'being assured of the sincere Friendship of the Publisher who wou'd have been very far from doing a thing he believed might bring either Indignation or Ridicule upon a Friend'.⁴⁰ Ruddiman indeed shared Pitsligo's Jacobitism. Coming from the same North-Eastern, Episcopalian background he emerged in Edinburgh around 1700 as another scholarly protégé of Cheyne's Edinburgh mentor,

³⁷ *The letters of Dr George Cheyne to Samuel Richardson* (1733-1743) The University of Missouri Studies 18 (Columbia, 1943), Letters LXXV and LXXIX.

³⁸ G.S. Rousseau understandably mistakes this as a reference to a work by Poiret but it refers to Marsay's *Temoignage d'un enfant de la vérité et droiture des voyes de l'esprit, ou abrégé de l'essence de la vraie religion Chrétienne par demandes et responces* (Paris, 1740).

³⁹ Many printed books and miscellaneous manuscripts (including Marsay extracts), relating to this pietist group were subsequently collected by Bishop Jolly and now rest in the National Library of Scotland and the SRO.

⁴⁰ NLS, 4797, 103, 25, 'Second Letter', 1.

the Jacobite physician, scholar and wit, Archibald Pitcairne (1652-1713). Throughout the post-Union period, Ruddiman promoted a Scoto-Latinist tradition in what David Daiches has decribed as, 'an inspired...movement of patriotic publishing which at one time looked as though it would represent a major threat to the Union', and contextualised more recently, in specific relation to Samuel Johnson, by J.C.D.Clark.⁴¹ Whilst Ruddiman's biographer, Douglas Duncan lists no pietist texts in his admittedly inconclusive bibliography of imprints (the 1749 Marsay is overlooked), he does note that 'it is certain that Ruddiman was affected by the spirit of this movement [‘the Mystics of the North-East’], since one of the most remarkable features of his private library was its large collection of Quietist literature.'⁴² In fact Ruddiman published an edition of Scougal in 1739, and the Marsay edition is evidence of his occluded pietist affiliations.

Ruddiman may have been trying to raise some funds for the impoverished Pitsligo. 1749 was the fourth year of the Baron's internal exile, and although in November of that year the Edinburgh Court of Session accepted a technical appeal to reverse the 'Attainder' against him, this decision was reversed by the House of Lords the following February. His defence council was his neighbour and son-in-law, James Fergusson, Lord Pitfour, now identified as the addressee of Pitsligo's 1749 Preface. The

⁴¹ *A hotbed of genius: the Scottish Enlightenment 1730-1790*, edited by David Daiches, Peter Jones and Jean Jones (Edinburgh University Press, 1986), 15. Douglas Duncan *Thomas Ruddiman: a study in Scottish scholarship of the early Eighteenth-Century* (Edinburgh and London, 1965), provides a key-source for the recent claims by J. C. D. Clark, that Samuel Johnson should be more firmly placed within the Tory, High-Church, Latinist tradition promoted by Ruddiman: see J.C.D. Clark, *Samuel Johnson: literature, religion and English cultural politics from the Restoration to Romanticism* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), esp. 3-4; 47-49; 129. It is significant that Clark's other key representative of this tradition, the Oxford, Jacobite Latinist, William King, was a close associate of both Pitsligo and Cheyne.

⁴² Ruddiman imprints include Gavin Douglas's translation of the *Aeneid*, Buchanan's *Works* and Allan Ramsay's collections of vernacular ballads. Duncan (p.11), cites the extant catalogues of Ruddiman's library, now NLS. MS-S 764-6.

unpublished 'Second Letter', reveals Pitsligo enjoying his enforced anonymity. Like the Duke in *Measure for measure*, he haunts the Coffee-Houses in disguise:

As my name is little known in that small unfinish'd piece of Work, I get sometimes a little Diversion in hearing the Objections of different Partys; but unless the Charge be very heavy, as for instance That the Writer is a Despiser and Hater of all Churches and Church-men, a Deist in a Mask and the like; in that case I only say 'I believe the man has meant no such thing ('Second Letter', p.1).

Pitsligo sent Pitfour these 'Further Thoughts', aware that the first had come under attack not only from 'freethinkers' and 'Deists' but fellow Christians of all 'Denominations'. Fearing that his preface had been counter-productive, Pitsligo was willing to suppress his 'Remarks' if a second edition was ever called for (which he very much doubted). In fact Pitsligo had hoped to encourage what he believed to be a growing interest in the mystics, an interest inadvertently prompted by Diests 'thinking to have set up a finer religion than Christianity in the great Articles of Disinterestedness, benevolence, moderation and other Virtues, upon which indeed, They have said very fine things'. Acknowledging their 'sincerity', and hoping that even atheists 'have some Humanity and no form'd hatred of all religion', Pitsligo had hoped that his commentary might make 'the Truths of *natural Religion* more impress'd on their Minds than before.'⁴³

These comments suggest Pitsligo's desire to make a bridge between his benevolentist ethics, based upon an unexamined metaphysical notion of innate spiritual tendencies towards the good (for which Cheyne, for one, had suggested a Newtonian framework), and the secularised, sentimental ethics of his academic contemporaries whom we now identify as the founders of the moral sense school, notably Lord Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson. In this context we might consider part of a letter (original untraced),

⁴³ 'Second Letter', 4-5.

quoted in Medwyn's 1854 Preface, from Pitsligo to Pitfour's sister, written around 1748 in which he defends Marsay's claim to write with divine inspiration:

...I shall turn to M. Marsay. I hope he is not to be called positive, in the common acceptation of Positiveness, which is the effect of Pride: if he thinks his Lights are of heaven, there is no help for it, he must speak with an air of Assurance, and, at the same time, may be the humblest man in the World. I shall look again at the account he gives of the modern Inspirations. I remember M. Guion [sic] says, Evitez l'extraordinaire. No limits are indeed to be set to Infinite Wisdom. It may doubtless instruct by means of the outward senses, which may be called canals for Reflection or Reasoning, as Ferer [sic] Laurent was struck with the sight of a Tree in Winter; or it may act immediately, without the intervention of the lower faculties: in short, there must be an internal Teacher, by whose power likewise bad dispositions will be removed; for we can do little else than consent and keep out of the way of hurtful occasions (p. 27).

Whilst the ontological and epistemological immaterialist assumptions of Pitsligo's circle were anathema to a rationalist Enlightenment project, this defence suggests how an engagement with a pietist faculty psychology concerned with the source and authenticity of 'Divine Illuminations', might arrive at a concept oddly close to Adam Smith's later secularised notion of an 'impartial spectator', as published in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759).

In a similar context, we might point to the young David Hume's famous autobiographical draft letter written to an unnamed physician in 1734, in which he describes a bout of severe depression brought on by his intense studies. As John Hill Burton originally surmised in his 1846 biography, this was probably addressed to Pitsligo's associate Dr George Cheyne; more importantly, I would argue that it was certainly modelled upon Cheyne's autobiographical

account of his own breakdown published a year earlier in *The English Malady* (1733).⁴⁴ In his letter Hume remarks:

I have notic'd in the Writings of the French Mysticks, & in those of our fanatics here, that, when they give a History of the Situation of their Souls, they mention a Coldness & Desertions of the Spirit, which frequently returns, & some of them, at the beginning, have been tormented with it for many Years. As this kind of Devotion depends entirely on the Force of Passion, & consequently of the Animal Spirits, I have often thought that their case & mine were pretty parrallel [sic], & that their rapturous Admirations might discompose the Fabric of the Nerves & Brain, as much as profound Reflections, & that warmth or Enthusiasm, which is inseperable from them. However as this may be, I have not come out of the Cloud so well as they commonly tell us they have done, or rather began to despair of ever recovering.⁴⁵

In his unpublished preface, Pitsligo argues that the great contribution of modern French mystics lies in this very matter of empirical, self-observation: 'for their entering more into the Detail of certain Inspirations of the Spirit of God upon their own Souls...It may be said their Writings are a sort of History of their particular Experiences...' ('Second Letter', p. 6). Cheyne's influential 1733 narrative of his own physical and spiritual crisis was certainly modelled on these mystical case 'histories', and represents a

⁴⁴ Burton's supposition is challenged by Ernest C. Mossner in 'Hume's Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot, 1734: the biographical significance', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, VII, 2, (February, 1944), but circumstantial evidence could be rallied to support the original claim for Cheyne as the intended addressee.

⁴⁵ *Letters of David Hume* edited by J. Y.T. Greig, (Oxford, 1932), I, pp. 200-204. Perhaps it is no-coincidence that immediately after writing this revealing letter, Hume went to Bristol where Cheyne had family and influence and that shortly afterwards, he paid his first visit to Paris where his host was none other than Cheyne's close associate Chevalier Andrew Ramsay. Hume later befriended Ramsay's pietist associate, Edinburgh physician Dr John Stevenson, who in 1742 was arranging for Francis Hutcheson to read a manuscript by Ramsay entitled 'Philosophical Dialogues'.

secularised version of spiritual autobiography. Like Cheyne, Hume offers a materialist account of his symptoms, based upon a contemporary iatro-mechanistic theory of nerve function. Unlike Cheyne, however, Hume was sceptical about the providential purpose of such a 'trial'. Where Pitsligo and his associates read illness as providential and sought to reconcile anti-Lockean sentimentalism with Newtonian mechanics, Hume remained highly cynical about his own chances of 'Restoration', physical or otherwise, and went on to demolish the epistemological basis for any such rearguard attempts to offer a modern metaphysical underpinning to revealed religion.

The pietist tradition to which Pitsligo belongs has been deemed peripheral to an established historical grand narrative depicting a triumphant, predominantly Whig so-called 'Enlightenment Project' marked by sceptical empiricism, rational secularisation and modernity. But, I wish to argue that if those whom John Hoyles has usefully described as the upholders of inspirational 'Light' over rational 'Enlightenment' were indeed on the margins, it was nonetheless a margin which impinged very closely upon any purported intellectual Enlightenment high-road. Not all the Scottish 'mystics' became exiled Jacobites. Some remained close to the established institutional centres of the emergent Scottish Enlightenment, figures like Ruddiman or Alexander Bayne of Rives (sometimes 'Logie', d. 1737), who in 1722 became the first professor of Scots Law at Edinburgh University.⁴⁶ And Pitsligo himself, for all his quietism and political marginalisation, did not promote a 'mystical' enlightenment from an position of intellectual isolation. His account of Marsay lies next to a substantial number of other philosophical manuscripts, which reveal his wide reading in the works of contemporary *literati* including significantly Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson.

To trace the evident continued interest in sentimental mysticism amongst a later generation of Scottish and English pietists is clearly

⁴⁶ Henderson *Mystics*, 77; W. Menzies, *Alexander Bayne of Rives, Advocate Juridical Review*, 36, (1924).

beyond the scope of the present essay, although G.S. Rousseau has already suggested some of the biographical and intellectual pathways involved. Certainly the distinctly sentimental flavour of French pietism, and its emphasis upon affecting a childlike state of innocence influenced the literary cult of sensibility (Cowper, for example, loved Guyon's spiritual lyrics). For the present, an interest in Marsay in particular may be traced amongst Pitsligo's younger pietist contemporaries, as witnessed in the survival of a manuscript entitled 'The life of Charles Hector Marquis St George de Marsay; and his Wife the Lady Clara Elizabeth Callenberg, in two parts, written by the Marquis himself', translated from the original German in 1773, 'by a Moravian Preacher at the desire of Sir Henry Brooke Esq.'⁴⁷ The Anglo-Irish poet and dramatist Henry Brooke (1703-83), is best known for his sentimental novel *The fool of quality* (1765-70), which, as John Dwyer has recently noted, was very popular in Enlightenment Edinburgh.⁴⁸ As with Richardson, the vocabulary of Brooke's sentimental fiction betrays exposure to the mystical-pietist tradition in which the heart is foregrounded as having a capacity to form moral judgement and ascertain spiritual authenticity.⁴⁹ When Dwyer describes Brooke's *The Fool of Quality* as promoting a 'programme of sentimental education [which] relied on the recognition of conflict in the immature youth's soul between diabolical force of selfishness and the divine light of benevolence', we detect a distinctly Behmenist notion of an innate struggle between light and dark forces at the root of fallen nature; a theosophical underpinning which surfaces more overtly in Brooke's notion of sexual division, in which, as Dwyer again quotes, 'Man is the rough and crude element of earth, unmollified by the fluidity of

⁴⁷ Dr Williams's Library, London, MS 1. I. 44

⁴⁸ John Dwyer, 'Enlightened Spectators and Classical Moralists: Sympathetic Relations in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', in John Dwyer and Richard B. Sher eds., *Sociability and society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1993), 96-118.

⁴⁹ For theosophical influences in Richardson's novels resulting from his contact with Cheyne, Heylyn, Law etc., see Rosemary Bechler "'Triall by what is contrary": Samuel Richardson and Christian Dialectic' in *Samuel Richardson: Passion and Prudence* edited by Valerie Grosvenor Myer (1986).

water and light', for whom 'Heaven...sent Woman, gentle, bright, and beauteous woman, to sooth, form and illumine the rudeness of his mass.' The distinctly eclectic form of sentimental pietism promoted by Pitsligo and his circle not only provided an enduring theological and psychological underpinning for Jacobite-Episcopalian hopes of a spiritual and political 'Restoration', it also encouraged the importation of significantly counter-rationalist, sentimentalist notions of enlightenment into eighteenth-century Scotland, and Britain as a whole.

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I

Much recent writing on the eighteenth century has focussed on the nature of its politics. A significant aspect of current interest concerns the relationship between religious and political dissent, including such questions as how the natural Dissenting commitment to toleration found political expression and whether there was a natural connection between Dissent and radicalism.¹ Much of the recent literature has been concerned with the period after about 1770 when a significant proportion of the Dissenters could be said, in one sense or another, to be radical. By this stage the Feather's Tavern Petition to modify the terms of subscription for Anglican clergy had been thrown out and some of the clergy from what one may call the Peterhouse group noted at the time for its radical stance, had left the church. However, while political radicals had grown more sharply critical of the conduct of the government both during the Wilkes affairs and the rebellion of the American Colonies, not all Dissenters were so completely alienated. Many Dissenters were prepared to accept at least in part government assurances and co-operation from the government in their attempts to modify the form of Dissenting subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles.

The question of how far Dissenters ought to be content with a larger measure of informal than formal toleration through co-operation with the government was a long standing one. Politicians for their part were aware of the value of the Dissenting interest. While few had any intention of conceding the major Dissenting claims, notably the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, they were anxious to ensure that Dissenters were protected from petty oppression at the local level and that they had a real sense that they were recipients of paternalist protection. Perhaps the most notable

¹ These issues are explored in two important works by James Bradley: *Popular politics and the American Revolution in England: petitions, the crown and public opinion* (Macon, Ga., c.1986); *Religion, revolution and English radicalism: Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century politics and society* (Cambridge, 1990).

eighteenth-century cultivator of the Dissenting interest was Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle, who sucked leading Dissenters into his web of patronage. Most of the evidence in this article derives from his own papers. The article focuses on the *Regium Donum* which is the most important example of successive government's attempts to signal to Dissenters that they were under their protection.

The *Regium Donum* bounty for poor Dissenting ministers and their widows was founded in 1722.² It was administered in great secrecy by a Committee of London Dissenting Ministers one of whom received the payout from Royal Warrant (the Warrant Trustee), though the actual Warrant was as a rule made out to a layman, normally the Chairman of the Protestant Dissenting Deputies. In 1763 the running of this charity was taken over by Samuel Chandler. Dissenting mythology ascribed this to the evil influence of Lord Bute who in forming a ministry that year had displaced that of the Duke of Newcastle and his supporters. This 'massacre of the Pelhamite innocents', so the mythology goes, had included the cleaning out of the *Regium Donum* Administrators. The truth was much less dramatic and the mythology based on a highly tendentious reading of events, as I propose to demonstrate.

Samuel Chandler was born in 1693 and was educated at the academy of Samuel Jones at Gloucester where his fellow pupils included two future eminent Anglicans Joseph Butler and Thomas Secker. After a chequered start, not helped by the loss of his wife's fortune in the South Sea Bubble, he became minister of the Presbyterian Meeting House at the Old Jewry. He published extensively, thought of himself as a 'moderate calvinist', and was elected F.S.A and F.R.S. His only fall from grace was his Sermon on the death of George II comparing him to King David, which led to some satire in the light of the King's Hittite activities. As a

² For the *Regium Donum* in general, see Thomas Rees, *A sketch of the history of the Regium Donum* (London, 1834), which does not mention the Chandler interlude, and K R M Short. 'The English Regium Donum', *English Historical Review* (1969), 59-77. Short does not cite the material presented here.

minister, Chandler was one of the most powerful in London and apparently incorruptible: that this could not always be said of his contemporaries can be assumed to be a counterpoint to the evidence here put forward. Chandler had translated Limborch's book on toleration, had written extensively on theological topics and appears to have been a man to stand on principle come what may. He died in 1766.

To the events then of 1763. The only contemporary published account of these appears in the *London Magazine* of 1774 and were written by Henry Mayo.³ His account was written in the context of the Dissenter's attempt in the years 1772-1779 to obtain relaxation of the requirement for their ministers, schoolmasters and tutors to subscribe to the doctrinal articles of the Thirty-nine Articles. Mayo was a radical in the sense that he thought that there was no virtue in attempting to negotiate with the government: he thought the politicians were, in crude terms, trying to string the Dissenters along. Born in 1733, he was educated at the Mile End Road Academy and after a time at Northampton came to the Independent congregation at Nightingale Lane, Wapping, in 1762. As a newly arrived London minister, one can question whether he had an intimate knowledge of what Chandler and his friends were up to. All the same, he was an unflinching proponent of the right of toleration and had a serious disagreement on the topic with Samuel Johnson in 1773. He was also a friend of Boswell (a part owner of the *London Magazine*).

Mayo's case was that the application to Parliament in 1772 has failed because the *Regium Donum* Administrators had been got at by the government, as they had been ever since the days of Walpole. His account goes as follows:

³ Mayo's authorship of the *London Magazine* article is known from George Dyer, *Memorials of Robert Robinson* (London, 1790), 237. For documentation of this and the connection with the debates about subscription, see John Stephens, 'The London Ministers and Subscription 1772-1779', *Enlightenment and Dissent*, no.1 (1982), 43-73, esp. 48-52 and notes.

Lord Bute thought proper, in the year 1762, to displace the then set of almoners, and conferred the honour on Dr. Ch- - - -r, with an unlimited power of disposal, and the choice of associates. This gentleman had for years constantly inveighed against the regium donum and the receivers of it, and had publicly moved as above, against both thing and persons: but he fell, like other brethren, before the Treasury idol, forsook his old friends, and even employed his talents against them in party elections &c.&c....

To this gentleman's praise however be it remarked, he put the *regium donum* on a better footing than it ever had been - he associated with him six ministers and nine lay gentlemen - and at their first meeting they made the following standing rule - 'That this charity shall be extended for the relief of poor ministers, the widows of such ministers, such of their children as are excluded from the widow's fund, students for the ministry, and the building and repair of meeting houses'. They ordered also, that receipts should be taken by the almoners expressing that the money given was *charity* entrusted to their disposal, and that these receipts should be produced and the disbursement audited annually... However, on Lord Bute's withdrawing, the old set struggled hard to obtain again the *purse*, with which they well knew (by years experience) was connected with the seat of preeminence, and the throne of power among their brethren. They succeeded - the Rockingham administration reinstated them, and Dr. Ch- - - - r had the mortification to hear his plan of administration censured, at the time he was boasting of its superiority to the other.⁴

This account, or at least its main implications has passed into the literature. If one looks at it from Mayo's point of view, it is clear

⁴ *London Magazine* (1774), 548-9.

that he approved of what Chandler did when he got control even if not of the way he supposed him to have done so. His hatred of the 'old set' is doubtless in part to be explained by his hatred of their successors in 1774, whom he thought, not totally without reason, were up to their tricks again. However, the main objection to Mayo's account, which as far as Chandler's administration of the *Regium Donum* is substantially accurate, is that it underestimates his long-standing connection with Newcastle.⁵ Their connection certainly goes back to 1749, when Chandler wrote to the Duke requesting his help in getting his son, also Samuel, the post of surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital.⁶ Chandler had long been connected with the Royal Bounty, that to German Protestants in Pennsylvania, which he had administered since its foundation in 1753.⁷ There are, in addition, requests for places, for example for Roger Flexman, the Dissenting minister, and also assurances of Dissenting support on Chandler's part: there is the same pattern in the surviving correspondence between Newcastle and Chandler's predecessor Joseph Stennett and successor, Samuel Stennett.⁸

Besides evidence of co-operation and a client - patron style relationship between Chandler and Newcastle, there is also evidence of Chandler's long-standing interest in the running of the *Regium Donum*. It seems likely that he first protested in 1736 against the

⁵ For Newcastle's sympathy with Dissent, see Reed Brownlow, *The Duke of Newcastle* (Yale, 1975), 75, 186.

⁶ British Library, Add. MSS 32719, f.28.

⁷ The earliest letter, on the Pennsylvanian refugees is dated 2 February 1753. (Add. MSS 32731 f.137). It appears that the first payment was made early in 1754. *The Reverend Samuel Davies abroad ... 1753-5* (Urbana, 1967), 58.

⁸ For example, Chandler recommends Roger Flexman for the post of Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in 1759 (Add. MSS. 32898, f.241), seeks a place at the British Museum for Francis Webb in 1760 (Add. MSS 32915 f.390), assures Newcastle of the support of the Dissenting interest in Lewes in the run up to the 1761 election (Add. MSS 32921, f.450). Joseph Stennett makes a similar request in seeking preferment for a Lt. Fraser in 1756 (Add. MSS 32875 f.244) or seeking a place for William Penny at the Stamp Office in 1757 (Add. MSS 32875, f.454).

way the bounty was administered.⁹ Oblique evidence suggests that he did so again in 1758. On 7 February of that year, Joseph Stennett, for long the Warrant Trustee, died. Later in the year, on 27 November, Chandler wrote to Newcastle requesting an interview for himself and Benjamin Avery 'in reference to an affair of some importance'.¹⁰ Since Chandler always specifically mentions the German Protestants when he wished to discuss them, it seems likely that, on this occasion, he wished to discuss something else. His reference to Avery suggests that this was the *Regium Donum*, since he was the chairman of the Lay Dissenting Deputies and hence the person who actually received the Warrant. However, nothing seems to have happened, and someone else seems to have taken over the administration of the fund. So little is known of the *Regium Donum* that every suggestion must be speculative but one distinct possibility is that it was George Benson. He was a member of the Presbyterian Board and hence had the necessary status for a *Regium Donum* distributor. Conveniently for my argument, he died on 5 April 1762.¹¹ This was just before Chandler's next approach to Newcastle on 15 April, when he wrote:

I have the honour to lay before your Grace the names of the Ministers and Gentlemen proposed to distribute his Majesties Royal yearly bounty to the Dissenting Protestants, in obedience to your Grace's commands, and in hope of yr approbation, Viz.

⁹ Short, 'The English Regium Donum', cites J. Iveney, *A history of the English Baptists* (London, 1830), III, 175n., stating that Chandler protested at the way the *Regium Donum* was run at a meeting at Salters Hall in 1736. The Minutes of the General Body of Dissenting Ministers (Dr. Williams's Library, MS 38.105) records such a discussion taking place on 6 April without connecting it with Chandler but the minutes never record individual opinions.

¹⁰ BL Add. MSS 35886 f.39.

¹¹ Short, 'English Regium Donum', makes the point that the Presbyterian Trustees were more likely to be found amongst the members of the Presbyterian Fund or of Dr. Williams's Trust. Benson qualifies on both counts. Cf. W.D. Jeremy, *The Presbyterian Fund and Dr. Williams's Trust* (London, 1885), 145-7.

For the Presbyterians	Congregational	Baptists
Dr Harris	Dr Jennings	Mr Stennett
Dr Chandler	Mr Toller	Mr Bulkeley
Mr Pope		
Mr John Dunn	Mr Crisp	Mr Stinton
Mr Thos Holwell	John Winter esq	Mr Steed

Dr Earle, Dr Jennings and Mr Stennett were some of the Ministers who received the money before. Mr Dunn, Mr Holwell, Mr Stinton, Mr Steed are the treasurers of their respective denominations, and all of ye persons named of reputation & character. it is proposed to receive and distribute it openly, as his Majesties bounty, and keep regular accounts, that everyone may inspect who pleases. When I told some of our Principal gentlemen & Ministers of yr Grace's goodness in allowing this method of distribution, they were exceedingly pleased and thankful and they thought it more worthy of the Royal Bounty, and much more likely to be universally useful.¹²

In fact, this was more tentative than it seemed: Newcastle clearly wanted more information. On 22 April, at the end of a letter on a different topic, Chandler writes, 'Yr Grace will permit me to wait upon you next week, to receive your commands about the Regium Donum to the Dissenting Ministers'.¹³ Presumably this meeting led to Chandler's preparing the following memorandum, 'The Case of the Royal Bounty to the Dissenting Ministers':

In the beginning of the reign of his Majesty King George I, two protestant dissenting ministers, Mr. Tongue and Mr. Smith, received a considerable sum from that excellent person, to be distributed as the circumstances of any poor ministers, or distressed widows did require it. These ministers took in two more Dr. Evans and Dr. Harris.

¹² Add. MSS 32937 f.136.

¹³ Ibid., f.314.

This royal bounty was intended to be kept a great secret, among the distributors, but however, soon came to be publicly known and as the distribution was quite private, created great uneasiness amongst the body of the dissenters.

The method of distribution, which continues to this day, was this. When the money was received, each gentleman took his Dividend of it, & either kept it or part of it himself, or gave it to others just as he pleased, without being accountable to each other, without keeping any regular accounts themselves, at least most of them, or having their accounts audited by any common friends: and tho' Mr. Chandler some years ago [in 1758?] offered never to disturb them in the receiving or distributing the money if they would once a year have their accounts audited by any two Gentlemen & two ministers they themselves should choose it was absolutely refused, and they would be accountable to none.

This conduct created suspicion both in ministers and people, that the distribution was not so fair and impartial as it could have been wished: and therefore 'tis humbly proposed, that the royal bounty to the dissenters be known to them, & received as the gift of his Majesty's Royal favour, and henceforward distributed by a Committee of the principal Gentlemen and Ministers in this city and the account of every year regularly kept & balanced: a circumstance that will be honourable to the distributors, & greatly oblige the dissenting interest in general.¹⁴

These proposals were accepted. Shortly afterwards, on 2 June, Chandler wrote to Newcastle to thank him for the order of £800 payable to Avery:

This last instance of yr Grace's care is one of the most acceptable ones, that was ever shewn, to the whole body

¹⁴ Add. MSS 33053, endorsed 'April 29 1762'.

of the Dissenters, who tho' thankful for his Majesties bounty, were greatly offended with the clandestine manner of its distribution. Your Grace hath made us all easy, as the future distributions will be more open and honourable.

This must have been one of Newcastle's last acts in office since Bute had taken over the Treasury on 29 May. This doubtless led Chandler to add a final sentence to the effect that the Dissenters 'will always retain the most honourable remembrance of yr Grace and feel very sensibly for a late resignation'.¹⁵

It is this coincidence of timing that explains the assumption that Chandler was protégé of Bute. In fact the evidence of the correspondence during the next few years suggests that Chandler's contact with the ministry was through Charles Jenkinson, secretary to the Treasury, a rather lower level connection than before.¹⁶

II

The next evidence dates from 1765 when Newcastle was back in office. He received a letter from Samuel Stennett and Thomas Toller in the following terms:

Agreeably to your Grace's discretion we send you a particular account as drawn from the books, of the distribution of the King's bounty to the dissenters in England and Wales rec'd at the close of your Grace's administration. Your Grace has here our account only. The other Gentlemen who were in the country when we waited on your grace, and still are, will we doubt not upon their return be ready to wait on your Grace, with theirs.

¹⁵ Add. MSS 32939 f.171. The Treasury Warrant seems always to have been payable to a layman. Calamy records that the Warrant in the time of Daniel Burgess, the first warrant trustee, was made payable to 'Mr. Ellis, the surgeon'. E. Calamy, *An historical account of my own life* (London, 1829), II, 465.

¹⁶ Add. MSS 38202, f.76, Chandler to Jenkinson, 2 February 1764. This letter is concerned with the Irish *Regium Donum*. Chandler, apparently on behalf of the Irish distributors, requests early payment.

We have gone no further back than the last distribution, but the accounts of the former shall be laid before your Grace, if your Grace will be pleased to peruse them.

That His Majesties Bounty, was, as we are informed, from the beginning distributed by eight ministers. At the time your Grace quitted the administration these Ministers were Dr. Earle, Dr. Miles, Dr. Jennings, Dr. Langford, Mr. Hunt, Dr. Gibbons, Dr. Stennett and Mr. Toller. When Lord Bute came to the head of the Treasury they were all dismiss'd from any further concern in it, because as they and the Dissenters in general apprehend, they were honour'd with your Grace's favour. two of the above gentlemen are since dead,; and if your Grace approves of the antient mode of distribution we submit it to your Grace, whether the Vacancies should not be fill'd up. Or if it would appear to your Grace more eligible that the vacancies should be disposed of by a large number, or by persons appointed by the Whole body of Ministers of the three denominations, we shall, as we question not our brethren also will, readily acquiesce in your Grace's pleasure.¹⁷

This is disingenuous to say no more. As has been shown, it was Newcastle not Bute who was responsible for Chandler's appointment in 1763 though it clearly suited Stennett's case to overlook the fact. Nine, not eight ministers regularly distributed the bounty and far from all the distributors being turned out in 1763, three, including Stennett himself, remained in place.¹⁸ It is not at all clear what was going on.

Certainly in the course of 1765 Stennett and his friends were canvassing support in government circles seemingly in connection with the *Regium Donum*. In his diary, Thomas Gibbons notes a

¹⁷ Add. MSS 32968 f.206, 23 July 1765.

¹⁸ Calamy refers to nine ministers and this number seems to have been kept up. Stennett's listing of eight only makes sense if one assumes that there was a vacancy.

visit to George Onslow, a Lord of the Treasury, on 5 July, which preceded dinner with Langford, Toller and Stennett.¹⁹ The same quartet went to see Onslow again at the Commons on the 13th.²⁰ The following day Gibbons 'went with a number of brethren to the Marquis of Rockingham's'. By 21 August he 'spent the morning with Messrs Toller & Stennett about examining our account' and noted on the 14th, that he had 'employed this week in great measure in preparing and settling and having examined by Messrs Cliffe and Pewtress my own account and the account of my Brethren'. Gibbons and Stennett saw Onslow again on 20 September. He saw Onslow again, apparently alone, on 10 February and met Rockingham in the company of Langford, Stennett and Toller the same day. The ministers met again on the 11th and on the 12th they 'spent the afternoon and evening with those about business'. Finally, on 31 March Gibbons 'visited Dr. Stennett and received the R.D. the Friday before'. Even allowing for the possibility that not all of the entries refer to the *Regium Donum*, it is clear that sufficient of them do to establish the fact that this group of ministers had been in negotiation for some time.

It is possible that Mayo was right in supposing that these activities amounted to a *coup*, but this assumption would seem to be incompatible with the fact that Chandler himself was consulted

¹⁹ The manuscript of this is in the Congregational Library, now housed at Dr. Williams's Library. Extensive extracts, selected by W.H. Summers, were printed in the *Congregational Historical Society Transactions* I (1904), 313-29, 380-97; II (1905), 22-38. Of the citations given here, Summers has only printed that for 31 March, 1766.

²⁰ It can only be a matter of conjecture as to whether the Dissenters' attentions were welcome at this time. George Onslow of Imber Court was an influential supporter of Newcastle who argued against his joining a coalition with Rockingham unless Pitt was also brought in. This was the view of a majority of key Newcastle supporters at a meeting on 30 June at Claremont, Newcastle's Surrey seat. Newcastle persevered against such advice and became Lord Privy Seal in Rockingham's administration formed early in July. Newcastle was also given a free hand in ecclesiastical matters. George Onslow joined the government as a Lord of the Treasury and remained in office until 1777. For the negotiations leading to the formation of the government, see P. Langford, *The First Rockingham Administration 1765-1766* (Oxford, 1973), esp. 4-39.

whilst the new distributors were appointed. Gibbons records on 1 April that he 'dined with Messrs Stennett, Earle ... & Toller called on Dr. Chandler in the evening'. They 'called again on Dr. Chandler. Dined with Messrs Earle, Spilsbury, Hodges, Pope & Langford of the Presbyterian denomination. Messrs Toller and Webb of the Independents, & Dr. Stennett of the Baptists, the present distributors of the R.D.'. Four of these had not been the distributors in the pre-Chandler period. In terms of reconstructing the body of distributors as it stood it would appear that there were three perhaps four vacancies, two on account of the deaths of David Jennings and Henry Miles, and one Hunt who seems to have resigned. One of these vacancies was for an Independent and was filled by Webb, the other three were Presbyterian filled by Spilsbury and Hodges and Michael Pope, originally a Chandler appointee. The purchase of all these is that it seems to have been determined that Chandler's reforms should be continued and also that Chandler himself had decided to give up his association with the *Regium Donum*. Chandler was not a well man at the time and died shortly after. In the sermon he preached at the funeral of Thomas Amory, he stated that 'it pleased God, during the last year of his life, to visit him with frequent returns of a most painful disorder and he grew more visibly more *disengaged* from temporal things.²¹

It is difficult to say how far the criticisms of the running of the *Regium Donum* were justified. The accounts that Stennett sent Newcastle in 1765 showing that the distributions made by Thomas Toller and himself for the year 1762 give some slight idea of what happened. Toller received £109.4s.10½d. and spent £109.5s.0d. Apart from expenses of £5.6s.0d, he lists 26 'exhibitions'. 5 ministers received help (two of them twice) in sums ranging from £10.10s.0d. to £1.11s.6d. whilst 17 widows received sums ranging from 10/6d. to £6.6s.0d., in addition to two people who received help on the nomination of Stennett and Gibbons. Stennett received the same sum together with £19.7s.8½d. at the close of the account. Of this total of £128.12s.7d., he over-spent slightly, spending

²¹ *Thomas Amory dying in faith explained* (London, 1766), 24.

£128.17s.0d. He made distributions consisting of 46 to ministers, 11 to widows, 3 persons recommended by others as well as £2.2s.0d. to Bewdley Meeting House. His 'exhibitions' were obviously smaller than Toller's ranging from £5.5s.0d. to 10s.6d. Most of them received a guinea or two though the 'widow Stennett' and 'M. Stennett', evidently Joseph Stennett's widow, appears as the recipient of two sums of four guineas. This implies at least that Chandler's criticisms of the standard of accounting, if justified, had been noted.²²

III

For Dissenters in the late eighteenth century, the very existence of the *Regium Donum* had become problematical. Although it could be argued that it originated in a genuine and perhaps not wholly cynical attempt to help the Dissenting interest, it had, by the later eighteenth century become for many a symbol of the way in which Dissenters had allowed themselves to be in thrall to the system. What this small piece of evidence shows is how it operated and with what amounts of largesse. Chandler was doubtlessly sincere in his attempts to regularise the conduct of a badly run institution. For someone like Henry Mayo, from whom until now so much of the eighteenth-century evidence derived, *any* truck with the government was a betrayal of the principles of Dissent, as his often lone stance in the debates in the General Body demonstrates. Since there is so little documentation, this evidence is especially precious. The Dissenting ministers met in their coffee houses; a Dissenting Boswell, doubtless would have revealed much. Without such a

²² The accounts are Add. MSS 32068, ff.208-9. The extent to which the Stennett family benefitted from the *Regium Donum* is a matter for speculation, a point made by Short, 'The English *Regium Donum*' (p.62), on the evidence of the 'List of Ministers c.1785' printed in the *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, XVII (1954), 92-99. The fact that Stennett received the surplus at the end of the year may explain the allegation, made by Henry Mayo, that he received a double share. Cf. Henry Mayo, *Remarks on the postscript to the Case of the Dissenting Ministers* (London, 1772), 11. Stennett was subsequently much more rigorous in requesting receipts. See his letter on 26 August 1782 to Robert Robinson, printed in Dyer's *Memoirs*, 236.

figure, the best we have is a list of dates and meetings and the occasional note of significance as in Gibbon's diary. The evidence we have here would appear to be indicative of the relatively lowly scale of the assistance involved, and of the nature of the political/governmental patronage. For the rest, without further detailed evidence, we can only conjecture about the continued administration of the *Regium Donum* in the later eighteenth century, and as to what most Dissenters thought of it.²³

Oxford.

²³ See Stephens, 'London Ministers...', *passim*.

BENJAMIN HOADLY: THE ETHICS OF SINCERITY

D O Thomas

In his own lifetime Benjamin Hoadly was both adored and reviled. As Edward Gibbon noted, he was the object of Whig idolatry and Tory abhorrence¹ and while he was regarded by Rational Dissenters as a hero, by High Churchmen he was feared as one who sought the destruction of the Church of England.

Since his death interest in Hoadly has steadily declined and his many works are now ignored rather than read. What interest there is lies in the part he played in the most bitter theological controversy of the eighteenth century - the Bangorian controversy - which he provoked and which took its name from the diocese he represented as Bishop.² Relatively little interest has been taken in recent years in his teaching on ethical questions, and for that reason his contribution to the development of liberal attitudes in moral philosophy has been largely ignored.

Benjamin Hoadly became Bishop of Bangor in 1716 at the age of forty. His career, like that of many clerics in the eighteenth century, illustrates the importance of patronage, especially royal patronage. Long before his elevation to the Sacred Bench he had won a reputation as a keen controversialist in debate with Edmund Calamy and Francis Atterbury. He espoused Latitudinarian and Erastian causes, was a staunch defender of the Glorious Revolution, attacking the theory of the Divine Right of Kings and absolute monarchy, and the doctrines of non-resistance and passive obedience. Such was his success in these fields that in 1709 the House of Commons petitioned the Queen, praying her to 'bestow some dignity in the Church on Mr Hoadly for his eminent services both to Church and State, but the Queen was not sufficiently impressed.³ Things improved, however, with the accession of

¹ Edward Gibbon, *Memoirs of my life*, ed. Georges Bonnard (New York, 1966), 22.

² J C D Clark, *English society, 1688-1832* (Cambridge, 1985), 302.

³ *Enc. Britt.*, 11th edn. (1910), XIII, 542.

George I and it was not long before Hoadly began his career in the Lords, first as Bishop of Bangor, and then, successively, as Bishop of Hereford in 1721, of Salisbury in 1723 and of Winchester in 1734.

According to Leslie Stephen, Hoadly was the best hated clergyman of his century amongst his own order.⁴ It is true that his enemies pursued him with a virulence that makes the typical sketch of *Spitting Images* mildly complimentary and even affectionate. He was condemned as a glutton, a cuckold, a time-server and even his physical disabilities were lampooned. According to Basil Williams, the portrait by Hogarth presents him as well fed and smug.⁵ He was heavily criticized for being a political bishop, for not attending in his dioceses - it is said that he only went to Bangor once and that he never visited Hereford. He was criticized for finding livings and prebendal stalls for members of his family and close associates.⁶ Above all, he was condemned for being wordy and lacking, or seeming to lack, all spiritual gifts. The antipathy has prevailed among some of the clergy over the centuries. Thus, in an essay published in 1969, G V Bennett wrote:

Among the Whig controversialists the most sour and tenacious was Benjamin Hoadly, the crippled little rector of St Peter-le-Poer in the City of London.⁷

Since Hoadly was so well disliked by members of his own order, and since he played a pivotal role in the Bangorian controversy, it is perhaps surprising that he has not received more attention from historians. There is not, as far as I know, a full length biography of

⁴ Leslie Stephen, *English thought in the eighteenth century* (2 vols., London, 1881), II, 152.

⁵ Geoffrey Holmes, *The trial of Doctor Sachervell* (1973), 31; and Basil Williams, *The Whig supremacy* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1965), 81.

⁶ Hoadly's son, John, became Chancellor of Winchester. His disciple, John Balguy, became a prebend at Salisbury. A A Sykes and Thomas Pyle also became prebends. See John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the age of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1988), 125.

⁷ G V Bennett, 'Conflict in the Church' in *Britain after the Glorious Revolution, 1689-1714*, ed. Geoffrey Holmes (London, 1969), 169.

him, and with the exception of Norman Sykes he has not received much attention from ecclesiastical historians. In a revealing moment of candour, J C D Clark explains that historians have been dissuaded from giving an account of the Bangorian controversy by the extent of the literature generated by it,⁸ - in the three months following the sermon, no fewer than seventy-four pamphlets appeared⁹ - and it is not unlikely that similar considerations have dissuaded them from a study of the protagonist on the Whig side, the then Bishop of Bangor himself. Hoadly's collected works, edited by his son, John, who was Chancellor of Winchester, ran to three massive folios¹⁰ - a work which is now rare and very difficult to obtain. And if historians have been reluctant to study Hoadly, philosophers and, especially the historians and anthologists of moral philosophy have been even less enthusiastic. Anthologists like Selby-Bigge and D D Raphael tend to pass him by. There is, I suggest, a special reason for this. For a long time now, many moral philosophers and the historians of moral philosophy have preferred to concentrate attention on those who subscribed in one form or another to the doctrine of the autonomy of ethics, and have, consequently, been reluctant to take much interest in those whose moral philosophy is deeply embedded in and dependent upon theology, Christology and eschatology.

Hoadly has also been heavily criticized by literary critics. Leslie Stephen, for example, writes that Hoadly's 'style is the style of a bore; he is slovenly, awkward, intensely pertinacious, often indistinct, and, apparently at least, evasive ... We owe, however, a vast debt of gratitude to the bores who have defended good causes and in his pachydermatous fashion Hoadly did some service by helping to trample down certain relics of the old spirit of bigotry'.¹¹

⁸ Clark, 302n.

⁹ See Philagnotes Criticus, *An account of all the considerable pamphlets that have been published on either side in the present controversy between the Bishop of Bangor and others* (1719), 13.

¹⁰ 1773.

¹¹ Stephen, II, 153.

But not all the critics have been hostile either in the eighteenth century or since. In his own day, J L Mosheim, ecclesiastical historian and Chancellor of the University of Göttingen, gave him a warm commendation - 'a prelate eminently distinguished by the accuracy of his judgment and the purity of his flowing and manly eloquence'.¹² Likewise, the dissenting historian, William Belsham, who wrote:

It is scarcely to be imagined, in these times, with what degree of furious and malignant rancour these plain, simple and rational principles were attacked by the zealots and champions of the church.¹³

Hoadly was especially lauded by the Dissenters because he had been explicit in defence of religious toleration and eloquent in support of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.¹⁴ In his *Observations on the importance of the American Revolution*, Richard Price endorsed Hoadly's account of Christ's kingdom and his attack on Church establishments,

The excellent Hoadly has shewn, that these claims [i.e. of church establishments] turn Christ out of the government of his own kingdom and place usurpers on his throne.¹⁵

Price presented sets of his collected works to Harvard and Dickinson College,¹⁶ and when at Benjamin Franklin's request he

¹² J L Mosheim, *An ecclesiastical history, ancient and modern from the birth of Christ to the beginning of the Eighteenth Century*, trans. A Maclaine (6 vols., 1825), VI, 34.

¹³ William Belsham, *History of Great Britain, from the Revolution 1688, to the conclusion of the Treaty of Amiens, 1802* (12 vols. 1805), III, 121.

¹⁴ On 1 Jan. 1783 Price wrote to Benjamin Rush, 'You will know how much the cause of civil and religious liberty has been indebted to Bishop Hoadly', *The correspondence of Richard Price*, Vol. II, 162. See also Samuel Chandler, *The history of persecution* (1736), 390-392. On the acceptance of Hoadly's sermon by the Dissenters, see C Gordon Bolam et al. *The English Presbyterians* (1968), 153-4.

¹⁵ Richard Price, *Political writings* (Cambridge, 1991), 134. See also *ibid.*, 174, 182.

¹⁶ *Corr.*, II, 163, 212.

drew up a list of books that could form the basis of a parochial library, for the edification of yeomen farmers, Hoadly's works appeared on the list together with those of John Locke and Samuel Clarke. (The township of Franklin had asked Benjamin, when they named their township after him, to finance a bell for the church steeple, Franklin has replied that he preferred to fund a library - sense being better than sound).¹⁷ But lest I should give the impression that Hoadly's admirers were confined to the Dissenters, I had better briefly mention that Henry Fielding, who thought Hoadly 'an exemplary divine', put into the mouth of Parson Adams the thought that *A plain account of the nature and end of the sacrament of the Lord's supper* was written 'with the pen of an angel'¹⁸, that William Paley wrote of 'the excellent Hoadly'¹⁹, and that Richard Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, confessed,

I have ... had satisfaction in finding, that my thoughts on many points, both religious and civil, were in perfect coincidence with those of Bishop Hoadly; and I glory in this, notwithstanding the abuse that eminent prelate experienced in his own time, and notwithstanding he has been in our time sarcastically called, and what is worse, injuriously called by Bishop Horsley, a *republican bishop*.²⁰

In examining some aspects of Hoadly's moral philosophy I want to focus on three of his main themes, stated rather summarily and I hope not too baldly. The first is that the main concern of religion is the quest for salvation, and a future life of perfect happiness:

¹⁷ See *Corr.*, II, 266, 282.

¹⁸ See Henry Fielding *Of true greatness*, cited in Martin Bassetin's edition of *The history of Tom Jones* (2 vols., Oxford, 1974), I, 105n.; *Joseph Andrews* (Everyman's edn.), p.55.

¹⁹ See Gascoigne, 241.

²⁰ *Anecdotes of the life of Richard Watson, Bishop of Landaff*, (2nd edn., 2 vols., 1818), I, 70.

The great end of His Kingdom was to guide men to happiness ... in a future state which had no relation to this world.²¹

On this he is in substantial agreement with one of his chief opponents, Thomas Sherlock, Bishop of London,²² the second is the claim that the qualification for eternal life lies in the practice of virtue,²³ and the third is that the virtue which commends us to God's favour is sincerity of heart and mind.²⁴

Much has been said in recent years of the crucial importance of studying the work of a thinker in its historical and cultural context, and of paying attention to the problems that the work was intended to solve, or, at least, to make a contribution to their solution. It is also important to study the claims that a thinker makes in the light of his thought as a whole. For example, the claim that Hoadly was a utilitarian can be very misleading if we do not bear in mind the framework in which his ethical doctrine was set. Bentham's attention in putting forward his utilitarian formula was focused on the consequences of action in this world as a criterion of right conduct. Hoadly's thought, on the other hand, is focused on action as a preparation for and a qualification for life in the next world.²⁵ Again, the claim that Hoadly is an individualist who believes that every person who ought and has the right to act upon his own judgement can be misleading if we do not bear in mind that his passionate plea for freedom of conscience was made by one who believed that every individual must submit his will to the Divine Will, and that freedom of conscience for the Christian is freedom to follow Christ.²⁶

²¹ Benjamin Hoadly, *Sermons* (1754), 296.

²² Thomas Sherlock, *Practical discourses preached at the Temple Church* (1754), 19, 21.

²³ Benjamin Hoadly, *Sermons* (1754), 297.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 151.

²⁵ Stephen, II, 155.

²⁶ Harold J Laski, *Political thought in England* (1948), 78. 'Hoadly is no more entitled to assume the infallibility of private belief than he is to deny the infallibility of the Church's teaching.' Hoadly neither assumes nor does he need

By way of introduction to his thought I want to examine the argument of his famous sermon - the sermon that triggered the Bangorian controversy - preached before the King at the Royal Chapel in St James's on 31 March 1717 on the text 'Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not of this world'.²⁷ Hoadly gave the sermon the title, 'The nature of the Kingdom, or Church of Christ'. The title itself should have warned his audience of what to expect. That Hoadly is prepared to identify the Church and the Kingdom of Christ should have alerted the congregation to expect that something they might not relish was on the way. For the Whigs in their attacks upon the Stuarts and in defence of the Glorious Revolution, had been anxious to deny that anyone on earth had been given the gift of authority directly from God. In describing the Church as a Kingdom, Hoadly was preparing his audience for a similar claim that no person or body of persons in the Church had been given authority to act as a vice-regent of God. What Hoadly was saying was that no person or body of persons in the Church has supernatural guidance in discharging the offices of the Church other than that available in the Bible. William Law claimed that the result of this teaching would have been to reduce the Church to one among many secular institutions.²⁸ Bolingbroke put it crisply. For Hoadly, a clergyman was just 'a layman with a crook in his hand'.²⁹

The first position he takes up in this sermon is that the Church is constituted by and made up of all those who accept Christ as their Messiah:

The notion of the Church of Christ, which, at first, was only the number, small or great, of those who believed

to assume the infallibility of private belief. On the contrary, he holds that the individual may often be mistaken ... Nonetheless, the individual is justified when mistaken, if his belief is sincerely held and he has done his best to inform his judgement.

²⁷ John xviii, 36.

²⁸ William Law, *Three letters to the Bishop of Bangor* (1717) included in *Works* (9 vols., Brockenhurst, 1892), I, 3-23.

²⁹ Stephen, II, 160.

Him to be the Messiah; or of those who subjected themselves to Him as their King.³⁰

That the Church of Christ is made up of those who accept Christ as their Messiah, or King, seems, on the face of it, to be completely acceptable. For, surely, no one could quarrel with it, at least, until it is realized that Hoadly is saying that very little else is required to constitute the Church of Christ. Hoadly is very sensitive to the use of language, and particularly to the changes in the use of words through time. The changes in the use of the term, the church, betrayed the changes that had taken place in the development of the institution. In Hoadly's opinion most of them had been for the worse and there was an urgent need to return to the use of the word (or, rather, to its equivalent in other languages), that prevailed in the early Church, and by the same token, to the institutions that prevailed at that time. Both in language and in the institution, men needed to return to the simplicity and purity of the early Christians. There was a great deal that could be dispensed with, including the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession, the right of the clergy to determine true doctrine and to punish heresy, the power of excommunication and the power of absolution.³¹ Little wonder that many of those who heard the sermon thought that Hoadly was betraying what they had come to regard as essential to the practice of their faith. William Law complained, 'You have taken the main support of our religion away. You have neither left us Priests, nor Sacraments, nor Church'.³² And little wonder that Convocation proceeded to investigate Hoadly's performance with a view to censuring him, from the threat of which he was rescued by the King proroguing Convocation. Except for one occasion, and then only formally, Convocation did not meet to transact business again until 1852.³³

³⁰ Hoadly, *Sermons* (1754), 289-290.

³¹ See Norman Sykes, *William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1957), II, 161-165.

³² William Law, *Works*, I, 9.

³³ *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F L Cross, art. Convocation.

The next step in his exposition is to claim that Christ is the only lawgiver to the Christian.

As the Church of Christ is the kingdom of Christ, He Himself is King: and in this it is implied, that He is Himself the sole law-giver to his subjects and Himself the sole judge of their behaviour, in the affairs of conscience and eternal salvation.³⁴

We need to remember here that Hoadly is preaching a sermon and that he finds it convenient to use the device of capturing the attention of the congregation by saying something extremely startling, even outrageous, but which he is prepared to qualify at a later stage. What Hoadly is saying is not that the only person who can formulate rules or laws to bind Christians is Christ himself, but that Christ is the only person who can place his followers under an absolute obligation.³⁵ If Hoadly had really meant that only Christ could be the source of rules or laws, he could not consistently have held that government is empowered to legislate by the social compact, indeed he could not have allowed that the Church was empowered to legislate in any form for its members. What Hoadly was saying is that Christ is the only one who can create a law that binds his followers unconditionally - He is the only source of a categorical imperative. It follows from these claims that the laws of other organizations, whether in church or state, can only be binding if they do not conflict with obedience to Christ's laws.

It is important to recognize that for Hoadly, as for many Christian thinkers, Christ's laws are given to us in the form of commandments, and, therefore, morality for the Christian is embedded in a structure of authority. If one has a regard to the content of the two great commandments in the New Testament it would appear that the dominant Christian virtue is loving-kindness: we are commanded to love God, and to love our neighbour, but if one has regard to the form in which the laws are presented, the

³⁴ Hoadly, *Sermons* (1754), 290-291.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 291.

dominant virtue would seem to be obedience. But what if the claims of love and the claims of obedience diverge? It might be answered that conflict cannot happen because to the right-thinking person what love requires is always what obedience requires. But what if the perception that what one requires conflicts with the perception of what the other requires? This problem is investigated quite tenaciously by Grahame Greene in *The heart of the matter*.³⁶ The central character, Scobie, is continually led by compassion to break the rules: the rules of fidelity to his marriage, of loyalty to his employer, the rule of his church that he must not take the sacrament without confessing his sins, that he must not take his own life. Scobie is driven by his inability to tolerate the suffering of another (he is not the only Grahame Greene character to be so driven) and this leads him to break the rules that bind him in the various stations of life. Of course, it can be argued that Scobie is mistaken either as to the inflexibility of the rules or as to the claims of compassion. Where no such error occurs there are no conflicts between the claims of charity (love, benevolence, compassion) and submission to the will of God. It might be argued that Scobie mistakenly believes that moral rules or laws are inflexible. Sometimes the rules can be broken if breaking them avoids or relieves great suffering. A parent may steal to prevent a child dying from starvation. On the other hand, it may be claimed against Scobie that he does not appreciate that some rules may never be broken even from compassion: it can never be morally permissible to kill a patient in order to put an end to his or her suffering. There are some circumstances in which the relief of suffering must be left to God's Providence - a hard doctrine. And it may be claimed that conscience can always resolve an apparent conflict between love and obedience by showing how and when a moral rule or law is defeasible. However this may be, in Christian ethics the duty to submit to the will of God, the duty to obey a higher will, lays considerable restrictions on the ways in which the individual conscience can be said to be autonomous. And it lays

³⁶ Grahame Greene, *The heart of the matter* (Geneva, 1981).

restrictions upon the ways in which Hoadly can be interpreted as an individualist.

It is true, nonetheless, that Hoadly does hold that every person has a direct access through the New Testament to Christ's law. In fact, there is a dual access to what God requires of us: through reason and through revelation, and both of these are available to the individual. On those things that are crucial to his salvation, the individual is sufficient to himself in the sense that he does not depend upon any human organization to teach him what his duties and obligations are. It is for this reason that Hoadly incurred the hostility of those who believed that all individuals need the help of the clergy to teach them where their duties lie. But while it is true that there is a dual access to moral principles - either through revelation or through the exercise of reason, the fact that an action or a disposition is commanded by God is what makes it binding upon men. The obligatoriness of an action derives from its being commanded by God. Nowhere, I believe - although it is as imprudent as it is difficult to argue a negative - does Hoadly establish that the obligatoriness of an action lies solely in its rationality or in its reasonableness.

Like Thomas Sherlock, Hoadly believed that the chief principles of morals are simple and easily accessible, perspicuous to the intelligence of the average individual.

In all your civil concerns, the publick good, the peace, the happiness, of that society to which you belong will easily, and safely conduct you, both to know and to do the will of God. In all your religious concerns, that affect your eternal salvation, and your title to God's favour, your rule is plain and evident. Christ is your sole lawgiver, and your sole judge, as to those points.³⁷

But Hoadly did not believe that the conscience of the individual is infallible: on the contrary, we all can make mistakes in determining

³⁷ Benjamin Hoadly, *A preservative against the principles and practices of the non-jurors in church and state* (1716), 100.

what our duties are. Although the Christian has direct access to the Divine Will through the New Testament, this does not mean that conscience is continuously illuminated by supernatural grace. Hoadly does not divest the clergy of supernatural gifts in order to transfer them to the individual. The fact that our consciences may be mistaken, that our moral judgements are fallible, does not, however, absolve us from the duty to act in accordance with conscience. We cannot justify inactivity on the ground that we cannot be absolutely certain that what we think is our duty really is our duty. This has given rise to a well known paradox - that we may have a duty to do what it is not our duty to do. This difficulty can be dealt with by distinguishing the objectively right action, the action that a fully and correctly informed agent would see it to be his duty to perform, from the subjectively right action, the action which an agent actually thinks it is his duty to perform. What Hoadly is saying is that it is the agent's duty to perform the subjectively right action.³⁸ This may seem to some a hard doctrine - that we may be obliged to do what is in fact wrong, and that in doing it we may incur the wrath of God. The gloom is lightened, however, by what Hoadly has to say about sincerity. Our mistakes do not of necessity imperil our prospects of salvation, provided only that we sincerely believe that what we do is in accordance with God's will.

Every one may find it, in his own conduct, to be true that his title to God's favour cannot depend upon his actually being, or continuing, in any particular method; but upon his *real sincerity* in the conduct of his conscience, and of his own actions, under it.³⁹

To achieve salvation, several conditions must be met. Hoadly sets these forward in a work entitled *Several discourses concerning the terms of acceptance with God* (1711):

(a) a person must repent of his sins;

³⁸ For the development of a position on the fallibility of conscience similar to that of Hoadly's, see Richard Price, *A review of the principal questions in morals*, ed. D D Raphael (Oxford, 1948, rev. imp. 1974), 177-199.

³⁹ Hoadly, *Preservative*, 90.

- (b) he must forgive others for unless he does so, he will not be forgiven;
- (c) he must make restitution to others for the wrongs he has done them;
- (d) he must 'sincerely and with perseverance practise the virtues'.⁴⁰

Provided that a man sincerely strives to do God's will his mistakes will be forgiven him and God will look favourably upon him. Of course, the doctrine that actions come from (or in) some forms of ignorance are excusable can be found in the natural law philosophers and in the divines who inherited it from the scholastics. Pufendorf, for example, holds that invincible ignorance of particular facts is not culpable, as does Jeremy Taylor⁴¹ and this view can be traced back to Aristotle's *Nicomachean ethics*.⁴²

What is distinctive about Hoadly's position is that action done in error, provided it is done sincerely, and provided that the principle of candour has been satisfied, is not just innocent, it is also morally praiseworthy. If an action is morally praiseworthy it commends us to God's mercy, and this it may do even though the belief that the action was the agent's duty was mistaken.⁴³

Hoadly is not saying that an action is morally praiseworthy where the person just happens to think that it is his duty. To be morally praiseworthy the agent must satisfy the principle of candour. Candour is a complex virtue. The candid man must (a) never say what he believes to be false; (b) he must always strive to say and be guided in what he says by what he believes to be the case; (c) he must strive to find out, to the best of his ability what is the case, and what he ought to do; and (d) he must in conversation with others, particularly if he wishes to change their opinions, appeal to the respect for truth and refrain from stimulating the passions that run

⁴⁰ Op. cit., 42, 70. Cf. p.89 where the phrase 'holiness and virtue' is used.

⁴¹ Samuel Pufendorf, *On the duty of man and citizen*, ed. James Tully, trans. M Silverthorne (Cambridge, 1991), 9,24; Jeremy Taylor, *Doctor Dubitantium* (3rd edn., London, 1676), Bk., ch.iii, 82-83.

⁴² Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, Bk.III, sect.1.

⁴³ Hoadly (1754), 301,302.

contrary to it. Now, if we hold that candour, involving as it does a determination to seek the truth, is essential to sincerity, we can see that for Hoadly being sincere is not just happening to believe that something is the case.

Enquiry, thoughtfulness, comparing of things together, studying the *New Testament*, endeavouring to find out the will of God and the laws of Christ, and all the like dispositions and habitudes.⁴⁴

The idea that sincerity understood as acting simply as one thinks fit is thought to be enough, has misled commentators from William Law⁴⁵ to Harold Laski. Laski writes,

If sincerity alone is to count as the test, then there cannot, for the existing world, be any such thing as objective religious truth.⁴⁶

As a comment on Hoadly this is unsatisfactory. Laski confuses the condition that must be satisfied for the agent to be morally praiseworthy with the criterion for determining the rightness of an action. What sincerity does is absolve the agent from moral guilt in the eyes of God, it does not make his action the right action. The fact that a man may be both mistaken and sincere shows that sincerity is not the test for the rightness of an action. Sincerity does not determine objectivity, but neither does it exclude it. Of course, whether there are universally valid objective moral principles is a crucially important question, but the answer to it cannot be found by maintaining or by denying that sincerity is an essential precondition of moral praiseworthiness. There is another component in Hoadly's conception of sincerity that we must not lose sight of - that is, the need for commitment. If we were told that someone sincerely believed that something was the case, or that he sincerely believed that he had a duty to do something, but never allowed these beliefs

⁴⁴ Benjamin Hoadly, *The common rights of subjects defended and the nature of the sacramental test considered* (1719), 102.

⁴⁵ William Law, *Works*, I, 9.

⁴⁶ Laski, 77.

to influence his action, we should be seriously puzzled as to whether he could be said to be sincere in what he professed. Of course, a person may be prevented by a variety of factors from doing what he believes to be his duty, but these though varied are limited, and as a matter of course we expect a person to do what he sincerely believes he ought to do.

The need for commitment arises in two different though related ways: first, there is the need to devote one's whole life to being the servant of God and obeying his commandments; secondly, in addition to this general commitment, there is a need to devote oneself in particular instances to searching out what duty requires and doing one's utmost to discharge it.

Hoadly's admission that conscience is fallible serves to distinguish him from thinkers like Joseph Butler and Immanuel Kant who hold that conscience does not err. His belief that actions done in error may be morally praiseworthy serves to distinguish him from thinkers like Robert Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln, who follow the scholastic tradition of holding that the virtuous action must be both formally and materially correct, and that good intentions cannot by themselves constitute virtue,⁴⁷ and dissenting preachers like David Jennings who hold that failure to do the objectively right action is culpable however right seeking the intention. 'Moral honesty alone will not exempt us from the wrath of God.'⁴⁸

Conclusion

I want to conclude by raising some questions about the acceptability of Hoadly's treatment of sincerity. Whether the concern of the

⁴⁷ Robert Sanderson, *A preservative against schism and rebellion*, 3 vols., 1722, II, 85. 'Since therefore no action can justly be said to be morally good, unless the matter be lawful, the intention right, and the circumstances proper, it is evident, that a good intention alone is insufficient; and consequently no action can be done with a safe conscience, whatsoever the intention be, that is either unlawful in the object, or defective in the circumstance.'

⁴⁸ *Faith and practice ... Sermons on the principal heads of the Christian religion, preached at Berry-Street, 1733* (2 vols., 1735), II, 553.

religious is redemption and salvation is a large question which I have only just touched upon; similarly, whether the quest for salvation should focus on the practice of virtue and whether Edmund Gibson's complaint that 'the men of latitude' had reduced religion to little more than a system of morality,⁴⁹ are also large questions that I have only referred to. My main aim has been to set out Hoadly's claim that the practice of virtue centres on sincerity, that what commends us to God is the wholehearted submission of our wills to His and a determination to obey his commandments to the best of our ability and diligence, and that given this disposition to serve, not only will the agent be forgiven his mistakes but he will find favour with God.

The strongest argument in favour of Hoadly's position, I believe, is that it sets out all that can be reasonably expected of a person: what can he do more, and what more should be expected of him, than that he should strive to do his fallible best to do God's will. To punish a person for failing to do the objectively right act, even though he was doing his best to discharge his duty, would seem to be cruelty that could have no place in the Divine mind.

But there are difficulties. The elevation of conscientiousness, to be paramount among the virtues, encounters the difficulty of believing that all apparent instances of conscientiousness are morally praiseworthy. For example, consider the case of Karl Adolf Eichmann, the fanatical Nazi who devoted a career to the extermination of unwanted people in fulfilment of what he believed was his duty to his leader, Adolf Hitler. Even if he really believed that what he did was his duty, and if he did it for the sake of duty, if he satisfied the conditions of candour and commitment, can we say that his action was both innocent and praiseworthy. Unfortunately, Eichmann's case is far from being unique in the history of persecution. One only has to turn the pages of H R Trevor-Roper's *The European witch craze in the 16th and 17th centuries* to find hideous parallels. We might attempt to remove the difficulty by

⁴⁹ See Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London* (1926), 264 cited by Gascoigne, 123.

holding that it is impossible for a person to be fully aware of the nature of his actions and still believe that genocide can be a duty. We may be driven by this and similar examples to stipulate that there are material limits to what can be considered as morally permissible. But to maintain this is to concede that a simple appeal to 'sincerity of heart and mind', even if the agent satisfies the requirements of candour and commitment, is not sufficient to justify the attribution of moral praiseworthiness. Hoadly's tacit identification of conscience and Christian conscience obscures the needs to set limits.

Consideration of this difficulty leads to others. Hoadly's account of the nature and value of conscientiousness is made plausible because of the assumptions that are built into his moral system. He held that the demands of obedience to God's will and the claims of charity are compatible; he held that there is a dual access to the moral law, both through revelation and through the exercise of reason, and that both are in harmony; he held that the demands of the moral law are simple, plain, and accessible to the understanding of the average individual; and he held that to speak of conscience is to speak of Christian conscience.

At the end of the seventeenth century and in the first half of the eighteenth, there were many who were ready and eager to make the assumptions that underpinned the optimism of the Enlightenment in Britain. But now that optimism has faded. We are not so ready to believe that morality is plain and simple, that there is an objective moral law determinable by the exercise of reason, that reason and revelation are in harmony, and that an understanding of the New Testament is accessible to the untutored mind. We find it difficult to hold that all conscience is Christian conscience. We are less ready to believe that everyone may be indulged in the liberty to act in accordance with conscience. But if what the thinkers of the Enlightenment thought are certainties are no longer held to be certainties, where are we to turn for the foundations of the social cohesion that makes freedom to act in accordance with conscience socially feasible? If the light of reason fails and the authority of revelation fades, we may find that we have to place greater reliance

than Hoadly was prepared to do upon the non-rational ways of securing order, upon maintaining the cake of custom, upon tradition, upon morally neutral decision procedures, upon manipulation by advertising and propaganda, and upon the manufacture of loyalties, and upon coercion. We may yet have cause to regret the passing of the optimism of Benjamin Hoadly.

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*An earlier version of this paper was read at the Centre for the Study of British Christian Theology at Aberystwyth on 21 May 1995. I am grateful to the members of the seminar for the contributions to the discussion and to Dr D A Rees and Dr Brian Porter for their comments on an early draft.

PRIESTLEY'S PLAN FOR A 'CONTINUALLY IMPROVING' TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE¹

Marilyn Brooks

It seems that the idea for a new translation of the Bible evolved in 1781 out of a suggestion made by Priestley's friend, Joseph Bretland but, although interested, Priestley felt that 'the undertaking would be too laborious' for him at the time, arguing instead that Bretland was better able to 'do it justice'.² However, by 1787, Priestley's contributions to a new edition of the Baskerville Bible had given him 'such a taste for the work' that he 'could almost resolve to publish a corrected translation of the whole Bible'.³ Theophilus Lindsey shared Priestley's enthusiasm but may have questioned his estimation that 'it does not appear [...] to be a very formidable undertaking' and 'may be done very well' within three years.⁴ Despite this tight time-scale Priestley preferred to share the task only with Lindsey who would 'do' the New Testament, reserving the Old for himself, possibly with the help of Michael Dodson who later 'came into it very willingly'.⁵

¹ This article developed out of my work on the William Frend archive at Jesus College, Cambridge and especially out of the appended letter from Priestley to Frend in August 1790 which is now housed in Cambridge University Library (C.U.L.). Although it is contained in *Life and Correspondence of Dr Priestley* in J.T. Rutt, *The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Priestley*, 25 vols (London: 1817-31), there are some omissions and few explanatory notes. Rutt's inaccuracies have already been noted in *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 14 (1995), 90. I am indebted to Mr E.F. Mills, former archivist of Jesus College for assistance with the Frend archive. I am grateful to Dr Zutski, Keeper of Manuscripts, (C.U.L.) and to Mr John Creasey, Dr Williams's Library (D.W.L.) for permission to reproduce materials in their collections.

² Priestley to Bretland, 19 March 1781 (Rutt, 1, pt 1, 351). Unless I specify differently all sources are in Rutt.

³ Priestley to Lindsey, 28 October 1787 (Rutt, 1, pt 1, 419).

⁴ Priestley to Lindsey, 27 November 1787 (Rutt, I, pt 1, 421).

⁵ Lindsey to Frend, 10 August 1789 (C.U.L.). Dodson (1732-99) was a lawyer and member of Essex Street chapel who devoted himself to biblical studies. In

Priestley felt his plans were manageable, entailing a correction of the present version 'by introducing such improvements as the approved remarks of others would supply materials for'.⁶ Gilbert Wakefield's translations of the New Testament were of a similar order being 'only those parts [...] which are wrongly translated in our common version'.⁷ Priestley was very clear about his reasons for the project. In 1784 his 'A Proposal for Correcting the English Translation of the Scriptures' had appeared in the *Theological Repository*.⁸ It was to advance 'the cause of truth'.⁹ The deficiencies of the orthodox version were clear and painful to many; Lindsey having a friend who 'wished to slit out St John's preface with a pair of scissors' whilst another acquaintance maintained that 'all the writings of the New Testament are spurious and adulterated, and very improperly called the Word of God'.¹⁰ One of the group had 'no absolute confidence in the Translation given of the beginning of Johns gospel, and shall be most glad to see another made out, which may satisfy the common Christian that Jesus Christ is not the logos [...]'.¹¹ In October 1790 George Dyer's *Inquiry into the Nature of Subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles* was reviewed in the *Analytical Review* and his defence of a new translation given prominence:

It must be added, that the ill-judged policy of the early Christians, the ignorance of the monkish ages, the pious frauds of interested ecclesiastics, the imperfect reformation that was made from very gross corruptions,

1790 he published the controversial *A New Translation of Isaiah, with Notes Supplementary to those of Dr Louth, late Bishop of London. By a Layman.*

⁶ Priestley to Lindsey, 27 November 1787 (Rutt, I, pt 1, 421).

⁷ Rutt, I, pt 2, 21, note. Lindsey considered Wakefield's translation of the New Testament to be 'the most improved version that is extant' (Lindsey to Friend, 14 January 1790 (C.U.L.)).

⁸ Priestley was editor of the *Theological Repository; consisting of original essays, hints, queries, &c. calculated to promote religious knowledge* which was published irregularly between 1770 and 1788.

⁹ See *Plan* in the Appendix.

¹⁰ Lindsey to Friend, 14 July 1790 (C.U.L.).

¹¹ Garnham to Friend, 31 May 1790 (C.U.L.).

the tendency which the bulk of mankind are wont to have to the marvellous and incomprehensible, have laid the foundation of popular errors; so that the most learned investigators of sacred theology bear a joint testimony, that a NEW TRANSLATION of the holy scriptures is what many important discoveries, and our great improvements, most loudly call for.¹²

The translation Priestley proposed was to be a translation by 'learned friends of free inquiry', needed because no 'steps are taken by authority to correct it, or to make a new one'.¹³ Its distinguishing feature was that it should 'always be in a state of improvement'¹⁴ rather than being definitively 'improved', Priestley preferring to follow William Heberden's advice to acknowledge ambiguities,¹⁵ and to avoid pedantry as 'the language of these things must be popular'.¹⁶ Although secrecy was later decided on, the initial proposal was in favour of openness and free contribution: 'We shall be thankful to any person who shall take the trouble to collect from other versions, and other works, whatever of this kind they shall find to be useful'.¹⁷

The initial plan was that Priestley would take responsibility for the Hagiographa or Sacred Writings (Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles); Michael Dodson was engaged for the Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) and the 12 Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Malachi); Theophilus Lindsey for the New Testament and William Friend for 'the historical books' (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings). These four would

¹² *Analytical Review*, 1790, VIII, 203-9 (p. 203).

¹³ See *Proposal* in the Appendix.

¹⁴ See *Plan*.

¹⁵ Dr William Heberden (1767-1845), medical doctor whose 'biblical criticisms and translations seem to have been chiefly for the use of his friends' (D.N.B.). See Priestley to Lindsey, 13 July 1790, (Rutt, I, pt 2, 74).

¹⁶ Priestley to Bretland, 10 November 1789 (Rutt, I, pt 2, 40).

¹⁷ See *Proposal* in the Appendix.

oversee the contributions of selected and cooperative acquaintances: Joshua Toulmin,¹⁸ Mr Turner¹⁹ Thomas Belsham,²⁰ Thomas Fyshe Palmer,²¹ Richard Garnham,²² Robert Tyrwhitt,²³ Mr Moore,²⁴ Newcome Cappe.²⁵

Bretland fought off requests to take on specific parts committing himself to assistance only. One glaring omission was that of Gilbert Wakefield. Despite Lindsey's view that he was 'an ingenious, well-principled, bold and ardent lover of truth and the gospel',²⁶ he was also difficult to work with, and several, including Lindsey and Priestley, were relieved that he did not wish to join them. As Priestley said it was 'better to take another year than embarrass ourselves with intractable people'.²⁷ Nevertheless, Priestley felt 'a little awkwardly to leave him out',²⁸ and requested Thomas Belsham to 'sound him out on the subject' of taking on Jeremiah or Ezekiel.

¹⁸ Joshua Toulmin (1740-1815) minister of Mary Street General Baptist Chapel, Taunton between 1765 and 1804.

¹⁹ Probably William Turner of Newcastle (1761-1859) who was in frequent communication with Lindsey.

²⁰ Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), Unitarian minister and resident tutor at Hackney College from 1789. He took over Priestley's position as minister of the Gravel Pit Chapel, Hackney on Priestley's departure for America. He published *Memoirs of Theophilus Lindsey* in 1812.

²¹ A Unitarian minister from Dundee, greatly admired by Priestley following William Christie's introduction.

²² Richard Edward Garnham (1753-1802), Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and minister from Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

²³ Robert Tyrwhitt was a founder of the London Unitarian Society. Fellow and Hebrew scholar of Jesus College he became a close friend of Frend.

²⁴ Probably the John Moore (1729-1802) noted by Rutt as being 'Of Leskiard, Cornwall, author of "Remarks upon Selected Passages of the Old Testament, "in "Commentaries and Essays"' (Rutt, I, pt 2, 24).

²⁵ Newcome Cappe (1733-1800) sole minister of the dissenting chapel at St Saviourgate, York from 1756 till his death. In 1786 he had published *An Alphabetical Explication of some Terms and Phrases in Scripture. Critical Remarks on many Important Passages of Scripture*, 2 vols, was published in 1802. He had a reputation of being 'a pretty good Hebreician' (Priestley to Lindsey, 29 November 1789, (Rutt, I, pt 2, 46))

²⁶ Lindsey to Frend, 14 January 1790 (C.U.L.).

²⁷ Priestley to Lindsey, 21 September 1789 (D.W.L.).

²⁸ Priestley to Lindsey, 18 October 1790 (Rutt, I, pt 2, 93-4).

Although he declined, Frend needed reassurance about his exclusion, which Lindsey could give by confirming that he chose 'rather to act by himself'.²⁹ However, this did not prevent him contributing obliquely as he was used as a sounding board by Garnham and Frend, the latter reproachfully thanking him 'for the frank and open manner in which you have expressed your surprise that I did not benefit by the remarks you have made on the disputed text in Romans'.³⁰

When Priestley informed Bretland that he 'had settled' with Lindsey and Dodson a plan for a new translation 'in which we would be glad of your assistance', he warned him that 'we wish it not to be much talked of'.³¹ Cautious Lindsey was adamant that 'absolute secrecy in this business' was necessary whilst practical Priestley considered this impossible, going so far as to think that 'more good than harm will accrue' from any 'reports as may be expected to get abroad on the subject'.³² He did agree that no names were to appear in the plans in order to minimize 'any man's power to frustrate the scheme'.³³ Consequently the group soon took on the proportions of a secret cabal which, at least one of it enjoyed. Writing conspiratorially to Frend, Garnham obliquely refers to being 'closely engaged in a *private* work in which I am exceedingly happy to understand you take a share' continuing 'I am fully convinced of the necessity of secrecy in the business, and shd by no means have alluded to it on this occasion, had it not been to a gentleman whom I am happy & proud to call fellow-labourer'.³⁴ Later he refers to 'daily seeing the utility of' *secrecy* 'to the extent that he had been nicknamed 'the Mole' by John Disney.³⁵ Mr Tyrwhitt refers to his

²⁹ Lindsey to Frend, 22 April 1790 (C.U.L.).

³⁰ Frend to Wakefield, 15 January 1789 (C.U.L.).

³¹ Priestley to Bretland, 7 May 1789 (D.W.L.).

³² *ibid.*

³³ Priestley to Lindsey, 14 May 1789 (D.W.L.).

³⁴ Garnham to Frend, 13 January 1790 (C.U.L.).

³⁵ Garnham to Frend, 22 April 1790 (C.U.L.).

discovery of their plan as a 'conclave secret'³⁶ and Lindsey considered Dodson 'an excellent coadjutor in *our design*'.³⁷

William Frend had his own reasons for secrecy. In 1790 his position at Jesus College was already ambiguous. He had been removed already from his office as tutor in 1788 because of his *Address to the Inhabitants of Cambridge* in which he supported the abolition of the Thirty-nine Articles. Dr Thomas Kipling was to be instrumental in the persecution of Frend, particularly in his expulsion in 1793, and had been expected to become the new Master there in 1789. He was known to have 'certainly harangued away against any new translation of the Bible; perhaps having got scent of a certain design'.³⁸ As we shall see in the letter to follow, Frend was very wary about being associated with any project which might signal further his antipathy to authority.

Priestley's role was often to support flagging spirits and to deflect complaints. Frend seems to have been particularly querulous to elicit this response from Priestley: 'I cannot help smiling at all you say, of the difficulties in your province of the translation. I would very thankfully exchange with you. I am sure I might complain with as much eloquence, and as much truth as you do on the subject of my insufficiency'.³⁹ Sometimes his irritation comes through, such as when he testily reminds Frend that 'tho your part be the longest, it is unquestionably by much the easiest, the difficult passages not occurring almost every other verse, as with the rest of the Old Testament'.⁴⁰

Throughout the late 1780s Frend had been studying Hebrew becoming so proficient to be considered 'by learned Jews' to be 'better versed in that language than any English Christian of his day'.⁴¹ Nonetheless, he was painstaking and highly self-critical

³⁶ Garnham to Frend, undated (C.U.L.).

³⁷ Lindsey to Frend, 10 August 1789 (C.U.L.).

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ Priestley to Frend, 2 November 1790, (Rutt, I, pt 2, 94).

⁴⁰ Priestley to Frend, 12 September 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁴¹ DNB.

becoming anxious about his 'insufficiency' and needing reassurance from Priestley that 'all we profess is an improved and an improvable version', Priestley adding that this combined 'with the helps that we all have, or may procure, a little plain good sense, with a general knowledge of the subject, is of more consequence than all the rest' and advising him that 'the fewer [changes] the better' would be appropriate for the present translation.

In August 1789 Priestley was writing excitedly to Lindsey that 'I have the translation much at heart, and doubt not we shall have a very good one',⁴² and that he had it 'at heart more than any thing I ever undertook',⁴³ having been spurred on by Garnham's reply to the Bishop of Norwich's claim that a new translation of the scriptures to be 'unnecessary'.⁴⁴

All concurred that the task could be eased by the incorporation of other translations such as Blayney's⁴⁵ and Newcome's⁴⁶ although by 1790 Priestley had decided against reprinting both of these because 'we must keep much nearer to the phraseology of the present version than they do. We must content ourselves with departing from it, only for the sake of some real improvement'.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, Garnham was 'looking into' Wakefield's *Silva Critica* and *Enquiry*⁴⁸ but was

⁴² Priestley to Lindsey, 31 August 1789 (D.W.L.).

⁴³ Priestley to Lindsey, 21 September 1789 (D.W.L.).

⁴⁴ Garnham's *Letter to the Bishop of Norwich* although, according to Priestley, being 'in some places, rather obscure', was intended to make the bishop 'very miserable, as he deserves to be', *ibid.* Priestley considered the bishop to be 'a dealer in pious frauds' (Lindsey to Frend, 14 November 1789 (C.U.L.)).

⁴⁵ Benjamin Blayney had translated the 'Oxford Standard' Bible in 1769 closely following Dr Paris's 'Cambridge' edition of 1762. In 1784 his *Jeremiah and Lamentations. A new translation* was published in 1784.

⁴⁶ William Newcome's *Attempt towards an Improved Version, a Metrical Arrangement, and an Explanation of the twelve Minor Prophets* was published in 1785; *An Attempt towards an Improved Version ... of Ezekiel* was published in 1788.

⁴⁷ Priestley to Lindsey, 22 July 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁴⁸ *Silva Critica* was published in three parts in 1789, 1793 and 1795. Its design was 'the union of theological and classical learning; the illustration of the Scriptures by light borrowed from the philology of Greece and Rome' (D.N.B.). Garnham considered that 'he has undoubtedly given many corrections that will be

unconvinced about some of his decisions. Garnham was also recommending to Frend 'Kennicott's 2 Dissertations, and his Posthumous Remarks'.⁴⁹ Frend was instructed by Priestley to procure the recently reviewed *An Exposition of the New Testament* by William Gilpin⁵⁰ if he thought it useful for 'the joint concern'.⁵¹ Wakefield's New Testament translation was consulted with reservations and the Michaelis translation was ordered for Priestley although Frend lacked enthusiasm for it.⁵² Numerous dissenters, including Priestley, Price, Kippis, and Lindsey, were amongst the subscribers to the Catholic Dr Geddes's new translation, which came out in instalments during 1790 and 1791, proposed in 1790, Priestley offering advice as well as a subscription 'if he is disposed to listen to me'.⁵³ Other translations they referred to were by Bishop Law,⁵⁴ James Merrick⁵⁵ and John Symonds.⁵⁶ Priestley urged Frend

universally approved' (Garnham to Frend, undated, C.U.L.). *An Enquiry into the Expediency and Propriety of Public or Social Worship* (Deighton, 1791) produced a vociferous pamphlet debate.

⁴⁹ *The State of the printed Hebrew Text of the Old Testament considered, a Dissertation* was published in 1753 and 1759; *Remarks on select passages in the Old Testament* was published after his death in 1787.

⁵⁰ *An Exposition of the New Testament; intended as an Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures, by pointing out the leading Sense, and Connection of the Sacred Writers* (Blamire, 1790). The review Priestley referred to was *Analytical Review*, VII, 426-9 and 524-30, where the reviewer concludes that 'this book recommends itself to readers of almost every class; but particularly young divines' (530).

⁵¹ Priestley to Frend, 12 September 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁵² In 1773 a Greek translation had been published with a preface by Johann David Michaelis which became known as the Michaelis Bible.

⁵³ Priestley to Lindsey, 29 September 1788 (Rutt, I, pt 2, 11). Lindsey pointed out to Frend that a third 'tome' was expected at Easter which 'will carry him thro' your department and you will be glad to see it' (Lindsey to Frend, 10 November 1790 (C.U.L.)).

⁵⁴ Probably Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle, who had published in 1745 *Considerations on the State of the World with regard to the Theory of Religion* which was subsequently enlarged with an *Appendix concerning the use of the words Soul and Spirit in the Holy Scripture*.

⁵⁵ His *Annotations on the Psalms* had been published in 1768.

⁵⁶ *Observations upon the expediency of Revising the present English version of the Four Gospels and of the Acts of the Apostles* was published in 1789.

to consult Calasio by Romaine as an 'inestimable work'.⁵⁷ Priestley's sources were very wide-ranging and included popular travelogues such as Bruce's *Travels*⁵⁸ and Niebuhr's *Travels*⁵⁹ for which he felt Lindsey would 'think me extravagant'.⁶⁰

Priestley had suggested initially to Lindsey that a year would see the project's completion, although in December 1789 he confessed that 'I did not really expect that it would be dispatched so soon' and that 'another year will do very well'.⁶¹ By August 1790 he expected 'all the parts' were to be 'ready before the next April' and hoped this would 'not be very difficult'.⁶² Nevertheless, like others, Garnham was somewhat daunted by the task: 'my portion is all the Epistles; an undertaking which I own is greater than I at first conceived it to be; but I hope to get through tolerably well, in time & with application'.⁶³

What emerges from the correspondence is a great sense of camaraderie enhanced by the need for secrecy. Garnham communicated very frequently and extensively with Frend, sending him specimens of his work; Tyrwhitt with Garnham; Belsham with Wakefield; Lindsey with Frend, Garnham, Cappe and Dodson; Priestley with most. Garnham was seeking help from Tyrwhitt and Frend whilst simultaneously advising the latter on 'some better rendering' of difficult phrases and advising that 'it must [...] be left to the acuteness of the English reader' to decide on nuances of

⁵⁷ Priestley to Frend, 2 November 1790, (Rutt, I, pt 2, 94). William Romaine, *Concordantiae Sacrorum Biblioum Hebraicorum ... Auctore ... F. Mario de Calasio*. I have not been able to see a copy to establish details of publication.

⁵⁸ James Bruce, *Travels to discover the source of the Nile in the years 1768-1773* (Edinburgh: 1790).

⁵⁹ Karsten Niebuhr, *Travels through Arabia, and other countries in the East* was translated by R. Heron in 1790.

⁶⁰ Priestley to Lindsey, 22 July 1790, (Rutt, I, pt 2, 75).

⁶¹ Priestley to Lindsey, 10 December 1789 (D.W.L.).

⁶² See the following letter.

⁶³ Garnham to Frend, 13 January 1790 (C.U.L.).

meaning.⁶⁴ Despite this, he was extremely demanding of Frend, seeking his adjudication over the minutiae of possible meanings.

The project was a huge commitment requiring regular blocks of time to be set aside. In October 1789 Priestley was 'now sitting down to the business of translating and shall stick to it all the winter',⁶⁵ whilst Belsham was not expected to have made much progress 'on account of his many engagements'.⁶⁶ Most of them echoed Priestley's moan that 'there is rather more to do than I expected',⁶⁷ and that it was a 'very laborious business'.⁶⁸ Spring and summer 1790 was a busy time, Priestley now putting more pressure on his contributors, wanting to know how individuals such as Dodson 'goes on with his translation of the Prophets',⁶⁹ and planning to 'see Mr B., and talk to him about his part',⁷⁰ whilst writing to 'Mr F., [...to] give him any help that he may want'.⁷¹ His practical advice was to 'paste paper to the margin of a quarto Bible, and make the alterations there. This I think better, on every account, than to write the whole, and especially much easier to those who examine it'.⁷² By now Priestley was anxious that 'we must make a point of despatching the whole this year'.⁷³ Consequently, Frend had 'buckled to the work for the summer'⁷⁴ and by mid-summer Priestley was doing 'a certain quantity per day',⁷⁵ having already 'gone once through' the Psalms and Proverbs. He was looking forward to taking on Daniel and the Minor Prophets but hoping that Dodson would work on Jeremiah and Ezekiel, otherwise Priestley would take on the

⁶⁴ Garnham to Frend, undated, (C.U.L.).

⁶⁵ Priestley to Bretland, 24 October 1789 (Rutt, I, pt 2, p. 39).

⁶⁶ Priestley to Lindsey, 27 May 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁶⁷ Priestley to Lindsey, 29 November 1789 (Rutt, I, pt 2, p. 46).

⁶⁸ Priestley to Frend 12 September 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁶⁹ Priestley to Lindsey, 24 June 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁷⁰ Probably Mr Belsham who, according to Lindsey had by then 'gone into Job' (Lindsey to Frend, 23 April 1791 (C.U.L.)).

⁷¹ Priestley to Lindsey, 24 June 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Lindsey to Frend, 26 July 1790 (C.U.L.).

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

whole over the following six months. However, Dodson's hope that they would merely reprint either Blayney or Bishop Newcome had to be quelled as it would 'by no means do [...] as we must keep much nearer to the phraseology of the present version than they do. We must content ourselves with departing from it only for the sake of some real improvement'.⁷⁶ Priestley was also worried about Dodson's style, fearing some 'quaintness' which they 'must avoid [...] as we shall be laughed at'.

In July he had finished 'the first rough copy', to enable himself 'to determine the general sense' of the original.⁷⁷ By October, Priestley had almost finished his 'proper part' and was about to 'undertake' Jeremiah and Ezekiel, at the same time speculating whether Wakefield might, after all, be persuaded to help with these. Belsham was again given the diplomatic task to 'sound him out on the subject, and let him know how I feel about it'.⁷⁸

By the time of the Birmingham riots in July 1791 the translation was overdue but very near completion, only to be finally thwarted by those who sought to impede the spirit of free enquiry which had engendered it. Priestley had almost finished the Hagiographa yet, whilst bemoaning his lost manuscript, especially his notes on the New Testament which 'I wanted only 5 days of getting all transcribed', he felt able to add 'but, I doubt not, all will be for good'.⁷⁹ Some months later he received '14 out of 64 leaves of my translation' which 'tho torn and trampled upon, [...] will be useful to me'.⁸⁰ He left for America in June 1794 with his vision unrealised but having published the 'plan' so that 'if there be any merit in it, it may be resumed by others in more favourable circumstances'.⁸¹ As Jenny Graham has shown, the translation continued to occupy him during this year,⁸² and even in 1801 he wrote to Lindsey that 'I do

⁷⁶ Priestley to Lindsey, 22 July 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁷⁷ Priestley to Lindsey, 13 July 1790 (Rutt, I, pt 2, 73).

⁷⁸ Priestley to Belsham, 17 October 1790 (D.W.L.).

⁷⁹ Priestley to Lindsey, 15 July 1791 (D.W.L.).

⁸⁰ Priestley to Bretland, 27 October 1791 (D.W.L.).

⁸¹ Rutt, XVII, 135.

⁸² *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 14, (1995), 88-104 (p. 104).

not think I can spend a few years to better purpose than in completing [...] the *Notes on the books of Scripture*,⁸³ which suggests that he was still pursuing his dream of producing a complete translation.

Postscript. In 1808 the Unitarians issued anonymously an 'Improved Version upon the basis of Archbishop Newcome's New Translation'. The adaptations of Newcome for a sectarian purpose were mainly the work of the principal editor, Thomas Belsham, who had been one of the minor contributors to Priestley's dream.

Open University, East Anglian Region

APPENDIX

Joseph Priestley to William Frend,
Jesus College, Cambridge

Bir'm. Aug^t 12. 1790

Dear Sir

Your account of the University at Cambridge has given me great satisfaction and has rectified some mistakes that I was under on the subject. You own, however that much *reformation* is wanted and certainly 50-000 per An- might be better appropriated for the purpose of education, and the promotion of literature, tho it must be owned that the same sum in private hands is in general not employed near so well. I see in it no such provision for teaching *Theology* as there is for teaching *Mathematics* [etc], and certainly the advantages of the University, whatever they are, ought to be open to all the country, and not confined to the members of the church [of] England. You must excuse our railing a little at what we cannot come at.⁸⁴

⁸³ Priestley to Lindsey, 11 June 1801 (D.W.L.); Priestley's *Notes on all the books of scripture, for the use of the pulpit and private families* was published in Northumberland in 1803.

⁸⁴ A clear reference to the barring of Dissenters from the Universities.

I am sticking pretty closely to our *translation*, as I hope you do. Besides my proper part *Psalms, Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, I fancy I shall have something to do with the *prophecies*, except *Isaiah*, which Mr Dodson will take care of. He thinks it will be sufficient if we take the versions of *Blayney* and *Newcome*⁸⁵ for the rest; but I am of a different opinion. We must not depart so far as they do from the present translation. It must not, according to our rules, be altered except for the sake of some *real improvement*.

Shall you find time to divide this task with me, so as to take *Jeremiah, Ezekiel* & the *minor prophets with Daniel*. If you can take your choice, and I will take some of the other parts. Perhaps Mr Garnham, or some other of your friends, will not object to a part. Please to consult him, and let me know in time. We must have all the parts ready before the next April, and this I hope will not be very difficult.

I thank you for *Mr Rogers's Sermon*, which I admire much.⁸⁶ I hope the number of such men is increasing. Dr Edwards⁸⁷ last Sermon is evidently the production of an unbeliever.⁸⁸ Mr Garnham's Papers in the *Repository* supply an easy answer to all his difficulties.⁸⁹ Our Saviour declared that he did not know the time

⁸⁵ Newcome resembles Murciani which Frida Knight repeats in *University Rebel: The life of William Frend (1757-1841)* (London: 1971), 101.

⁸⁶ George Rogers a clergyman of Sproughton, Suffolk and, according to Rutt a member of the Society for Promoting the Knowledge of the Scriptures, formed in 1783. In 1790 his sermon 'The Scripture idea of heresy' was published in London by Johnson. The handwriting is very difficult to decipher and it was tempting to read this as Toulmin, especially as Frend had been sent a sermon of his by Lindsey on 14 July 1790 (C.U.L). However, I think Rutt is probably correct in his attribution.

⁸⁷ The name is crossed through and dashes added above it in different ink. Rutt omits the name although it is clearly visible.

⁸⁸ Thomas Edwards, *The predictions of the Apostles concerning the end of the world. A sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, on Sunday, May 23, 1790* (London: 1790). Priestley and Edwards had already entered into debate about the miraculous conception.

⁸⁹ Four papers in the *Repository* have been attributed to Garnham: 'Observations on Isaiah vii. 10-23; viii. 5-19'; 'An Illustration of various Texts of Scripture'; 'On the Oblation of Isaac, as Figurative of the Death of Christ'; 'An Inquiry into the time at which the Kingdom of Heaven will commence'. The latter is probably the rebuttal referred to in the letter. On 22 April 1790 Garnham wrote to Frend

of his second coming, and therefore whatever he said on that subject, must have been [his] *conjecture*, in which he might be, and I doubt not [was] mistaken.

We had a melancholy scene in the death of Mr Robinson.⁹⁰ The son forgot a pamphlet I gave him for you. However we are reprinting all the *Familiar Letters* and I will then send you a complete copy.⁹¹ We are also going to reprint *Collins on Necessity* which has been long out of print, and much wanted.⁹² I have sent Mr Lindsey some copies of our *New Collection of Psalms and Hymns*.⁹³ He will

that he had 'procured' Dr Edwards's Sermon (Garnham to Frend, (C.U.L.)). Lindsey also commented to Frend that 'I am told that Dr Edwards has openly declared himself in his last sermon, to have a better opinion of Jove than of Jehovah' (14 July 1790, C.U.L.).

⁹⁰ Robinson had left his home at Chesterton, Cambridge to preach charity sermons at Birmingham, two of which he preached on 5 June, but on 9 June was found dead in bed whilst staying with Priestley's friend, William Russell at Showell Green. He was buried in the graveyard of the Old Meeting at Birmingham and the funeral sermon was preached by Priestley.

⁹¹ Joseph Priestley *Familiar letters, addressed to the inhabitants of the town of Birmingham, in refutation of several charges, advanced against the Dissenters, by Mr Madan, in his sermon, entitled, 'The principal claims of the Dissenters considered'* (Birmingham: 1790). This 'explosive' publication is thought to have played a contributory role in arousing the hostility subsequently directed against Priestley and his family in the Birmingham Riots, July 1791.

⁹² Anthony Collins, *A Philosophical inquiry concerning human liberty* was first published in 1715. It was republished with a preface by Priestley (Birmingham, 1790). In the November Thomas Lindsey reminded Frend that 'Dr P some time since wished to have some tract from you on the necessarian doctrine, which you had recommended as a proper Appendix to Collins on the subject whom he was republishing, and had nearly printed off, and intended to write to you for it. I hope you have sent it' (Lindsey to Frend, 2 November 1790, C.U.L.). However, Frend refused for fear of being called 'atheist' and Lindsey offered to 'acquit' him 'intirely of holding forth this hobgoblin in terrorem to satisfy him about not sending' it. 'I really think that you have made it out to be more prudent and proper for him to republish Collins by himself, and I have no doubt of its so appearing to the Doctor from your representation which I shall make known to him' (Lindsey to Frend, 10 November 1790, C.U.L.).

⁹³ In 1790 Priestley and William Hawkes of Manchester edited a collection of psalms and hymns which, according to DNB, were 'grievously altered from their originals'.

send you one of them. I have desired Mr Johnson to get if he can Michaelis's new translation of the Bible.⁹⁴

I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely J. Priestley

A Proposal for Correcting the English translation of the Scriptures⁹⁵

As the attention that has been given to the Scriptures, especially of late years, has discovered many errors and imperfections in the present English translation of both the Old and New Testaments, and it does not appear that any steps are taken by authority to correct it, or to make a new one, it cannot but be a desirable object to all the friends of revealed religion, to procure, without farther delay, the best translation that can be made. And perhaps no better method can be taken to succeed in a work of this kind, than by engaging the assistance of the learned friends of free enquiry, and requesting them to transmit to this work, whatever corrections of the present version of the Scriptures, may have occurred to them; that other learned men may have an opportunity of seeing, and considering them. We shall therefore reserve a part of this work for this purpose; and we hope that every future Number of it, for some years to come, will contain some useful materials for it.

Most persons, we doubt not, will agree with us in thinking it more adviseable to correct the present translation, than to make an entirely *new one*; and whenever it shall appear that a sufficient number of corrections are procured, a new edition will be published. But, as it will be an easier task to correct the translation of the New Testament, than that of the Old, it will probably be accomplished some time before the other.

⁹⁴ In 1773 a Greek translation had been published with a preface by Johann David Michaelis. Frend must have replied negatively making Priestley 'repent of the order' (Priestley to Frend, 12 September 1790, D.W.L.).

⁹⁵ *Theological Repository*, IV, 187-88. Included in Rutt, XVII, as Appendix V, 531.

It is not expected that our correspondents should confine themselves to such improvements as have occurred to themselves. We shall be thankful to any person who shall take the trouble to collect from other versions, and other works, whatever of this kind they shall find to be useful.

We should also take this opportunity of observing, that though one object of this work is to procure *original Illustrations of the Scriptures*, we shall think ourselves obliged to any persons who shall transmit to us any observations of real value, from *foreign publications*, and even though they should not confine themselves to works of recent date; because to our English readers, they will give as much satisfaction as communications that are properly original.

*A Plan to Procure a Continually Improving
Translation of the Scriptures.*⁹⁶

I. Let three persons, of similar principles and views, procure the assistance of a number of their learned friends, and let each of them undertake the translation of a portion of the whole Bible, engaging to produce it in the space of a year.

II. Let each of the translations be carefully perused by some other person than the translator himself; and especially let each of the three principals peruse the whole, and communicate their remarks to the translators.

III. Let the three principals have the power of making what alterations they please. But if the proper translator prefer his own version, let the three principals, when they print the work, insert his version in the notes, or margin, distinguished by his signature.

IV. If any one of the three differ in opinion from the other two, let his version be also annexed with his signature.

V. Let the whole be printed in one volume, without any *Notes*, except as few as possible, relating to the version, or the phraseology.

⁹⁶ Rutt , XVII, Appendix VI, 532-33.

VI. Let the translators, and especially the three principals, give constant attention to all other new translations of the Scriptures, and all other sources of information, that they may avail themselves of them in all subsequent editions, so that this version may always be in a state of improvement.

VII. Let the three principals agree upon certain *Rules of Translating*, to be observed by all the rest.

VIII. On the death of any of the three principals, let the survivors make choice of another to supply his place.

IX. Let all the profits of the publication be disposed of by the three principals to some Public Institution in England, or any other part of the world; or in any other manner that they shall think most subservient to the cause of truth.

Rules of Translating

I. Let the translators insert in the text whatever they think it most probable that the authors really wrote, if it has the authority of any ancient version or MS.; but if it differ from the present Hebrew or Greek copies, let the version of the present copies be inserted in the margin.

II. If the translators give the preference to any emendation of the text not authorized by any MS. or ancient version, let such conjectural emendation be inserted in the margin only.

III. Let the additions in the Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch be inserted in the text, but distinguished from the rest.

IV. Let not the present English version be changed, except for the sake of some improvement.

V. In the Old Testament let the word Jehovah be rendered by Jehovah, and also the word Kurios in the New, in passages in which there is an allusion to the Old, or where it may be proper to distinguish God from Christ.

VI. Let the present division of chapters be adhered to, with as little variation as possible, and the whole be divided into paragraphs, not

exceeding about twenty of the present verses; but let all the present divisions of chapters and verses be noted in the margin.

VII. To each chapter let there be prefixed a summary of the contents, as in the common version.

Jenny Graham, *Revolutionary in exile: the emigration of Joseph Priestley to America, 1794-1804*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Volume 85, Part 2, 1995, pp.i-xii, 1-213.

Despite the growing body of literature on transatlantic radicalism, surprisingly little has been written about Joseph Priestley's American career. In part, this is because Priestley himself repeatedly insisted that he took little or no interest in American politics. Other English radicals, such as Joseph Gales and Thomas Cooper, played a much more conspicuous role in the Jeffersonian movement, and attracted a correspondingly greater degree of attention; in contrast, Priestley's final ten years in America appear as a footnote to his life as a political and religious radical in England. And yet, as Jenny Graham points out, Priestley's political disclaimers should not be taken at face value. As an admirer of Thomas Jefferson, he made sporadic but significant interventions in the Republican campaign against the Federalists during the late 1790s, and welcomed the 'revolution of 1800' on both political and personal grounds. Even had he not involved himself in American affairs, the very act of crossing the Atlantic meant that politics would be thrust on him. Priestley became a symbol of the contrast between Old World bigotry and New World liberty; the philosopher who had been driven out by the philistines was now in a country where his formidable talents were recognized and revered.

To a large extent Graham accepts such symbolism. It is worth remembering, however, that Priestley was not really an exile in the strict sense of the word: exiles are forced to leave their country; Priestley went voluntarily. He had, of course, good reasons for going. Shaken by the attack on his house and laboratory by a church-and-king crowd in 1791, increasingly isolated during the loyalist reaction of 1792-93, and horrified by the long sentences imposed on his fellow radicals Thomas Muir and Thomas Fyssh Palmer in 1793, Priestley found the prospect of emigration increasingly attractive. Initially, he planned to leave for France rather than America. But the outbreak of war ruled that out, and his sons had already crossed the Atlantic with plans to establish a community for democrats and Unitarians on the banks of the

Susquehannah. Its name, appropriately enough, was to be 'ASYLUM'. But by the time Priestley set out to join them, the plans had fallen through. Instead, after receiving a hero's welcome in New York, he made his way to the relative isolation of Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

Drawing on a wide variety of primary sources, Graham describes in richly-textured detail Priestley's subsequent political career. She shows that his general adherence to democratic principles gradually drew him into practical politics; in this sense, too, he was thinking less like an exile and more like an immigrant. By 1797 he had become sufficiently Americanized to own a slave (something that is only mentioned briefly in a footnote) and to start attending July 4th dinners. In February 1798, he wrote his first political article for the American press, the *Maxims of political arithmetic*; it embraced the central tenets of Jeffersonian political economy, and in Graham's view almost certainly influenced Thomas Cooper's better-known *Essays on political arithmetic* (1799). Priestley's major contribution to American politics, however, was his *Letters to the inhabitants of Northumberland*, which became part of the Republican counter-attack against the Federalists in 1799. After boasting about his long experience and wide knowledge of politics, he argued that France and America were united by a common commitment to democracy, condemned the Adams administration for deviating from the republican path, and advocated a series of constitutional changes that were designed to prevent power from encroaching on liberty. Jefferson was suitably impressed; he distributed copies among his allies in Virginia, and described the political writings of both Priestley and Cooper as 'the most precious gifts that can be made to us'.

After the Republican victory of 1800, Priestley continued to correspond with Jefferson, praised his policies and felt increasingly at home in the United States. 'It is now only', he told the President in 1802, 'that I can say I see nothing to fear from the hand of power, the government under which I live being for the first time truly favourable to me.' Graham's useful account of Priestley's final years in Northumberland would have been stronger still had she

drawn on the material in the *Recollections of the life of John Binns* (Philadelphia, 1854). An Irish radical who had been on the cutting edge of the revolutionary democratic movement in London, Binns moved to Northumberland in 1801, and became part of the radical coterie that grouped itself around Priestley. His *Recollections* provide a sympathetic and sometimes amusing account of Priestley's daily life, and of the town's vibrant transatlantic community. Although Binns was one of many transplanted Irishmen who admired Priestley, the Irish dimension receives little attention in Graham's book. Indeed, she mistakenly quotes a source about Irish immigration as evidence for radical immigrants from Britain, and appears to share the common but inaccurate assumption that English rather than Irish democrats were the dominant group within the transatlantic radical movement.

More seriously, Graham's obvious sympathy for Priestley militates against a critical evaluation of his ideas. Like most biographers, she is attracted to her subject, and is all too willing to defend him from his detractors. Thus William Cobbett's attack on Priestley in 1794 - in the pamphlet that launched Cobbett's career as an American Tory - is dismissed as being written 'in language as slanderous and philistine as it was tasteless and provocative'. But what of Cobbett's central argument that Priestley had a double standard on the issue of violence in politics? It is quite clear that Priestley was prepared to accept large-scale violence, as long as it was applied to other people and in the name of liberty. He supported the French Revolution through the Terror, and even contemplated the advantages that could accrue from an American civil war against the putative 'pro-English' party in the country. 'Many lives, no doubt, will be lost in war, civil or foreign', he wrote, 'but men must die; and if the destruction of one generation be the means of producing another which shall be wiser and better, the good will exceed the evil, great as it may be, and greatly to be deplored, as all evils ought to be.' Meanwhile, he described the Federalists' relatively mild campaign against internal dissidents - a campaign that threatened to affect him personally - as constituting nothing less than an American '*reign of terror*'. Cobbett, it seems, had a point.

At times, Graham herself falls into the same trap. In discussing the political atmosphere in Britain in 1793, for example, she writes of the 'savage suppression' of reformers in Scotland, and of Muir and Palmer's 'barbarous deportation to Botany Bay'. But when considering the much greater degree of governmental violence in France, her language becomes more abstract and less emotive; France is in 'an increasingly distracted state', although she also writes that the country eventually descended into 'anarchy and dictatorship'. Both the author and the subject are far removed from the immediate consequences of revolutionary violence; the spotlight is fixed on principles, while the rough stuff occurs in the shadows offstage. Priestley, as his friend Benjamin Vaughan pointed out, was very much a 'speculative scholar', who lacked practical experience. He believed that his own political maxims were 'as plain as that 2 and 2 make 4', and found it 'extraordinary' that even in America they 'should not be understood and acted upon'. The implications are clear: only fools or knaves would reject Priestley's political philosophy.

When combined with the notion that the ends justify the means, such a perspective contains considerable potential for disaster. Graham recognizes that Priestley's *Letters to the inhabitants of Northumberland* not only demonstrates his 'unswerving, naive, even ruthless idealism', but also provides 'evidence of a revolutionary mind prepared to accept if not condone much in order to obtain the desired end'. However, the totalitarian implications of this position are never considered; we are invited instead to place such views in their context, and to 'realise the extent to which Priestley himself had suffered from the abuse of executive power under Adams'. But in arguing that Adams had actually abused the executive power, Graham is simply repeating Republican propaganda from the 1790s. And the notion that Priestley had suffered extensively from any such abuse is hardly sustainable, on Graham's own evidence.

In considering Priestley's view of the relationship between ends and means, it is important to keep his millenarianism in mind - something that Graham underplays, but which keeps coming to the surface of his writing. Believing that liberty was indeed a holy

cause, and convinced that the French Revolution was preparing the way for the millennium, Priestley could easily regard terror, war and conquest as regrettable but necessary costs incurred on the road to perfectibility. It is probably no coincidence that he was able to follow a similar distinction between means and ends in his own political dealings. To her credit, Graham is abundantly clear about what she calls the 'disingenuous' aspects of Priestley's career. In 1799, Priestley wrote that any attempt to deport him to France would have been especially 'cruel and unjust', given his old age and the difficulties of travelling; what he did not say, however, was that he had actually been thinking of moving to France of his own volition, with no apparent regard to the question of age or the transatlantic crossing. Or again, when Cobbett in 1798 published intercepted letters from John Hurford Stone in Paris to Priestley that fully supported French expansionism, Priestley initially disassociated himself from its contents. A year later, however, he acknowledged that Stone's comments had given him 'great pleasure', and agreed with its sentiments. This kind of elasticity also characterized many of his opinions about American politics. When the Federalists were in power, he criticized the constitution and argued that strict limits should be placed on the presidential term of office; when the Republicans were in control, Priestley dropped most of his criticisms of the constitution, and hoped that Jefferson would remain President for as long as possible.

Graham clearly regards such expediency, duplicity, 'ruthless idealism' and willingness 'to condone much in order to obtain the desired end' as being relatively minor when set against Priestley's 'fundamental democratic vision' and his philosophical commitment to political and religious liberty. '[I]t has been a privilege', she writes in the preface, 'to have spent time with Joseph Priestley'. Other readers, however, might find that his company is conducive to more than a few shudders.

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John Marshall, *John Locke. Resistance, religion and responsibility*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, xvi + 485pp. £55.00 (hardback), £22.95 (paperback).

It is a pleasure to welcome this substantial, meticulously-researched account of the historical context of Locke's thought concerning three prominent, intertwined and conveniently alliterative themes, by an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Denver. John Marshall's objectives are (1) to provide an 'historical explanation of the composition and intended meaning of the Second Treatise [of Government]' (xvii); (2) to depict the socio-political context in which Locke worked, and to specify the kind of English society he sought - especially its ethical desiderata; and (3) to demonstrate the formative influence of, and not simply to recognize the importance of Locke's religious views in the development of his thought. It is a bold plan - especially considering the intricacies of dating some of Locke's writings - but the author proceeds confidently and achieves a considerable measure of success.

The Locke of the *Two tracts upon government* is revealed as a legalist and a voluntarist, albeit with theistic undergirding: 'without law there would be no moral good or evil. Without God there would be no law' (15). The civil magistrate has absolute and arbitrary power even over things indifferent, otherwise society would disintegrate. At this early period the spectre of anarchy haunts Locke, who appears as thoroughly conservative. By 1667/8 however, the Locke of the 'Essay on Toleration' takes a significantly modified approach to the questions of power, authority and the civil magistrate. The monarchy is no longer deemed *de jure divino*, the magistrate's powers are limited to securing the public good (which, even the Latitudinarians notwithstanding, does not entail enforcing true religion), and the passive resistance of rulers who exceed their authority is justified. Marshall rightly observes that parts of this programme were as unwelcome to those nonconformists who did not object to the enforcement by magistrates of *their* favoured religious order as they were to the Anglicans: on both sides of the ecclesiastical divide the advocacy of undue liberty of conscience was perceived as a threat. It is in the *Second treatise of government* that

Locke carefully distinguishes between religion and morality. People are under a primary obligation, and are at liberty, to do those things which they believe will lead to eternal felicity; force should not be applied in connection with such *beliefs*, and if it were it would not be effective, for such beliefs cannot be changed at will. The disruption of peaceful religious activities by hostile civil powers should be resisted peacefully only, otherwise anarchy and strife will ensue. On the other hand, there is moral *knowledge* which is available to magistrates as to every moral agent; and liberty according to knowledge is an implicate of human rationality. Accordingly, magistrates may utilize force to coerce the will of citizens when public order is at stake, for what is then required is not the consent, but the obedience of the citizen. In the church people must consent only so far as they deem it in accord with God's will, and they are at liberty to leave any church which does not adequately serve their religious interests.

For the politically conservative Locke of 1660, the civil magistrates are concerned with both the temporal and spiritual good of the citizens, and 'There is no sense that freely-chosen worship was seen...as a rewarding form of religious experience for anyone' (16). However, in the course of his diplomatic mission to Cleves in 1665 Locke discovered that Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists managed to live together in peace, though he still lamented priestly domination of the faithful; and in the 'Essay on Toleration' he argues that short of the onset of civil disturbance, there *should* be toleration of such speculative matters as appropriate forms of worship and differing moral views, and that civil magistrates are to preserve societal peace. Although he remained disinclined to accord toleration to Roman Catholics on the ground that they honoured an alien power and were thus potential traitors, Locke's increasing acquaintance with and respect for Dissenters from 1679 onwards, and his own hesitations concerning the Trinity, are said to have fuelled his support for toleration in the 1690s. (Though in an uncharacteristic lapse, Marshall, when referring to tolerable speculative opinions, both refers to Locke's 'doubts about or actual disbelief in the Trinity' at the end of his life, and says 'he

did not disbelieve any of these doctrines' in consecutive sentences, p.64). By that time he had, in the *Letter concerning toleration* (1685), argued that toleration was incumbent upon Christians. The underlying ethical motifs are Locke's ideal (which he himself sought to realize) of the vocation of a Gentleman, and the Ciceronian ethical principle that it is legitimate to pursue one's own ends provided this be done justly, recognizing the right of others to one's beneficence. Not that Locke supposed that all could be sweetness and light here below: hence to immortality, heaven as our 'great interest and business', and doctrine.

'Between the 1660s and the early 1690s [Locke] changed from being a trinitarian who very probably held a strong view of the Fall and of original sin...to becoming at the least heterodox in his expressions about the Trinity and original sin and very probably in private an unitarian heretic' (xv). This judgment, however, is properly tempered by the realization that 'Locke's intellectual commitment to eclecticism throughout his life invalidates any simple description of Locke as Socinian in a systematic, dogmatic sense' (xx; cf. 426). The fact remains that by 1684 the exiled Locke who, in his 'Essay on Infallibility' (1661/2) had professed belief in the Trinity whilst confessing that he could not understand how it was true, was delving into the works of the Dutch Arminians, a number of whom - notably Limborch - were his friends. His hesitations concerning the doctrine of the Trinity; his denial of inherited guilt, deemed by so many to be an implicate of the traditional doctrine of original sin - a doctrine with which Locke became increasingly less enamoured as his view of humanity moved from regarding people as 'beasts' to 'sheep' to 'potentially rational' beings (64); and his reflections upon personal identity as residing not in continuity of substance but in consciousness - with their implications for the doctrine of immortality and the resurrection of the 'same' body: all of these were factors in the progression of Locke's doctrinal thoughts.

From one point of view Marshall's work may be read as an extended commentary upon one of his footnotes: 'There is an important sense in which many of Locke's commitments and

changes of views were very significantly influenced by his friendships with individuals who helped him to question his received views' (78). Latitudinarians, Arminians, Shaftesbury, Firmin and the Unitarians - these and others flit in and out of the story, leaving their marks upon Locke's developing positions. Nor should Locke's antagonists be overlooked. Marshall is as even-handed in his treatment of Stillingfleet, Filmer and Proast, for example, as he is when criticizing such a present-day Locke scholar as Ashcraft, whose work he values, but to some aspects of which he takes detailed exception. But Locke's Bible was equally, if not more, important to him than his friends. Marshall is to be complimented on showing (not least by reference to Locke's notes and fragmentary manuscripts) the degree to which Locke's thought was saturated by Scripture.

It would be surprising if, when considering so vast and complicated an undertaking, the attentive reviewer did not raise an eyebrow from time to time. More might have been made of the significance (if largely for subsequent theology) of Locke's increasing interest in faith as *fiducia* (128; cf. 454), and not merely as intellectual assent to non-demonstrable propositions. While Marshall does well to emphasize the fact that 'Locke's political and religious individualism was not based on social or ethical egoism' (294), there is a social strand in Locke's ecclesiology which to some extent tempers the individualism, and of which more might have been made. Theologies usually being better than their polemical points, it is as odd to call the Remonstrants' five points of disagreement with the Calvinists the 'essence' of Arminian theology (333), as it would be to suppose that the Calvinists' five-point riposte is the essence of Calvinism. And John Owen is an unfortunate choice of Calvinist to illustrate hostility to a working faith (429), for he contended that 'Our universal obedience and good works are indispensably necessary, from the sovereign appointment and will of God; Father, Son and Holy Ghost', and stoutly declared that 'no Protestant ever opposed *the Christian doctrine of good works*' (*Works*, II, 182; XIV, 200).

John Marshall has had to deal with Locke's intellectual antecedents, his socio-political context, the dating of his works, and divergent current scholarly opinion on all of these matters. Overall he has been remarkably successful and, rooted as it is in original sources, *au fait* with Locke's entire extant corpus, and abreast of much of the relevant secondary literature, his work will stand as a bench mark for years to come.

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Peter N Miller (ed.), *Joseph Priestley: political writings*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, xxxix +147pp, £10.95.

This volume belongs to the Cambridge series on the history of political thought. It is in standard series format with introduction, chronology, biographical and bibliographical guides and index. Its centerpiece is the second edition of Priestley's *Essay on the first principles of government* (1771), but it also includes *The present state of liberty in Great Britain and her colonies* (1769), a brief piece in question-answer form.

Priestley's *Essay*, first published in 1768, is his most significant contribution to political philosophy. Its appearance is to be warmly applauded. In the second edition, apart from some reorganization, additional extracts from other works, elaborations and qualifications, Priestley included extended passages incorporating 'animadversions' on writers like Thomas Balguy and William Warburton on church establishments. He also hoped to include contributions on catholic toleration from his friends Archdeacon Blackburne and Theophilus Lindsey, but they did not materialize (Martin Fitzpatrick, 'Joseph Priestley and the cause of universal toleration', *Price-Priestley Newsletter* i (1977), 12; J T Rutt (ed.), *Theological and miscellaneous works*, I, pt.1, 108).

The original inspiration for the *Essay* - the importance of which Miller stresses (xvii) - is Priestley's attack on Dr John Brown's political and educational theory which he had originally included as an appendix to his *Essay on a course of liberal education* (1765). Friends encouraged him to develop his view 'without any immediate view to the Doctor's work' (p.3). Priestley added: 'they thought I had placed the foundation of some of the most valuable interests of mankind on a broader and firmer basis than Mr Locke and others who had formerly written upon this subject.' (p.3)

The first edition of the *Essay* is written with warmth and passion, and its argument, developed with clarity, economy and force. Notwithstanding some organizational infelicities, it arguably shows off Priestley to greater advantage than the second. The second weakens the force of the first through clumsy additions and lengthy

and tedious 'animadversions'. Priestley, by reshaping the *Essay* in accordance with his bent as an irrepressible controversialist, departed from the excellent advice his friends had originally prevailed on him to follow. Miller does not comment on his choice of editions (although twice he relies on formulations unique to the first (xviii; xxvii), but indicates by square brackets material introduced in the second. Unfortunately his use of the convention is not reliable. Several unbracketed passages are new and several bracketed passages appeared in the first edition.

In *Thoughts on civil liberty, on licentiousness and faction* (1765) Brown argues that in a pre-socialized condition of natural liberty individuals indulge their appetites without restraint. Civil society replaces natural liberty with civil liberty which requires them to restrain their desires in accordance with equal laws in the interest of the common good. Restraining persons in accordance with these principles does not diminish their liberty; it only curbs their licentiousness.

The law's coercive force, however, is inadequate to support civil liberty by itself. It needs assistance from the habits, manners and principles of the people which can only be established through the support of religion and a uniform code of public education impressed on the infant mind. While Brown conceded that many features of Spartan education were not transferable to the circumstances of eighteenth-century Britain, he praised Sparta and its institutions as a model preferable by far to Athens or even Rome.

Brown also argued that the need to curb licentiousness justified restrictions on the press when it attacked religion and morals. Those who threatened the community's religion and morals - Brown identified free-thinkers as special targets - were enemies of their country. These curbs, once more, do not limit the freedom of the press, only its licentiousness. For Brown, these reforms, especially of education, were essential to complete the revolution of 1688. Otherwise its admirable reform of political institutions would be left unsecured.

Brown's views, being diametrically opposed to Priestley's, served him as a convenient stalking horse. While Priestley agreed with Brown about the importance of education and the need to reform it, he disagreed about its proper purpose and denied that the state was the proper instrument for achieving it. (In *Lectures on history, and general policy*, (Birmingham, 1788), p.276, he sketched his view of the limits of the state's positive role in education.) For him, the end of education is not 'the tranquillity of the state, but the forming of wise and virtuous men' (p.42).

According to Priestley, to realize this end, it is essential to grasp that advances in knowledge, achieved through our intellectual powers, make possible indefinitely great improvements in human happiness: 'whatever was the beginning of this world, the end will be glorious and paradisaical, beyond what our imaginations can now conceive' (p.10). Such advances are not possible, however, without the *unbounded* liberty to think and to express one's thoughts as one pleases, or unrestricted intellectual liberty. Miller rightly emphasizes that the defence of intellectual liberty is the *Essay's* centrepiece (xviii; xxvii). Its defense, together with Priestley's comprehensive dismantling of Locke's limitations on the toleration of religious opinions, is a *tour de force* of his skills in political philosophy at their inspirational best.

Although Dr Johnson, Bishop Berkeley and Jonathan Swift, among others, largely succeeded in making the expression 'free-thinker' a term of contempt, identifying it with libertinism and atheism, Priestley proudly accepted the title (p.122). He once remarked that he preferred to be 'the *hunted deer*, shunned by his companions, than the leader of the peaceful herd' ('A Letter of advice to those Dissenters who conduct the application to Parliament for relief from certain penal laws', *Theological and miscellaneous works*, XXII, 458). Brown's enforced intellectual uniformity was for him 'narrow and illiberal, unworthy of human nature' (p.123). Such views presupposed that human knowledge is already in a perfected state, whereas what was needed then and for a considerable time to come was scope for "experiments" - one of Priestley's favorite words, but which Miller disparagingly

characterizes as an expression of his "crude version of empiricism" (xxi).

Priestley's defence of intellectual liberty, from which he derived his doctrine of universal toleration, is embedded in his own theory of civil liberty. For him, civil liberty is 'the right ... to be exempt from the control of the society, or its agents; that is, the power [a person] has of providing for his own advantage and happiness' (p.12). He was keen to distinguish it from political liberty - 'the power ... of arriving at the public offices, or, at least, of having votes in the nomination of those who fill them' - with which he believed that it was frequently confused (p.12). As he saw it, civil liberty requires the retention of as many of our natural liberties as possible and stands in a contingent relation to political liberty. Political liberty *can* be enjoyed to a high degree without civil liberty and, correspondingly, civil liberty *can* be enjoyed to a high degree without political liberty, although he immediately conceded that its enjoyment in such circumstances would be highly insecure. As we shall see, Priestley used his account of these concepts to attack Brown's tendentious use of the contrast between liberty and licentiousness. For him, Brown's proposed reforms, far from defending civil and religious liberty, comprehensively undermined it, enchainning the human mind instead of liberating it.

Miller's introduction sets Priestley's thought in the context of other late eighteenth-century thinkers - he mentions James Burgh, Richard Price and Major John Cartwright - who advocated the reform of parliamentary representation and wider religious toleration. Indeed, Price and Priestley consistently advocated the separation of church and state. According to Miller, the group's corporate achievement was to establish 'the conceptual foundations of, and set the agenda for, the parliamentary reform movement of the next half-century' (xiv). If this is a basis for inclusion, it is questionable whether Priestley belongs. His contribution to political theory is significant, but its originality lies elsewhere. On parliamentary reform, aside from the conceptual clarification he contributed through his distinction between civil and political liberty, he is better viewed, for reasons Miller adumbrates, as a

fellow-traveller. His contributions to the theory of intellectual liberty, toleration and church establishments are far more significant than to parliamentary representation.

What interests Miller more than any community of interest between Priestley and the others, however, is his distinctiveness. He fixes on three features of his thought. The first is the range of his intellectual interests and, one might add, the energy and intellectual bravado with which he pursued them. According to Miller, the closest comparison is Benjamin Franklin (xv). Since Miller presents this as a point about Priestley rather than the special character of his political theory, I leave it to one side.

For Miller, a more consequential feature of Priestley's thought is its transformation in the 1770s - that is, *after* the works in the volume were published. Miller argues that Priestley started with a natural philosophy and a view of God's nature and human liberty which reflected, as with Price, Samuel Clarke's Newtonian metaphysics (xv-xvi; xxvii). In the 1770s, Miller continues, Priestley rejected this outlook with the result that "liberty was *vitiating* by a materialist reading of Hartley's associationism even more deterministic than Hartley's own" (xvi; my emphasis). The major consequence for his political theory was that Priestley "could no longer campaign for philosophical or intellectual liberty on the grounds of its correlation with actual human liberty. Liberty could be advocated only as part of a project to bring about the perfection of God's world, one in which the fulfilment of the divine plan, rather than human action, was important" (xvi). It also meant that 'Priestley's language of natural rights has less and less in common with the conventional usage; this marks a parting of the ways between Priestley and his fellow-travellers of the late 1760s and earlier 1770s' (xvi).

This account is flawed. It is at odds with Priestley's story of his own development. Although he remarks in *Doctrine of philosophical necessity* (1771) and his memoirs that he initially accepted the doctrine of philosophical liberty, he observes that he changed his mind while still a student at Daventry (*Doctrine*, xxx-

xxx; *Autobiography of Joseph Priestley* (Bath, 1970, 74-76). The cause of this reversal was Anthony Collins's *Philosophical inquiry concerning human liberty*, which Miller does not mention.

Priestley lavished high praise on Collins's work because it was 'concise and methodical, and is, in my opinion, sufficient to give intire satisfaction to every unprejudiced person. I wish this small tract was reprinted, and more generally known and read. It will, however, remain, and do the greatest honour to the author's memory, when all the quibbling answers to it shall be forgotten' (*Doctrine*, xxx). The most famous of those 'quibbling answers' was Clarke's. Tayleur, in a letter to Theophilus Lindsey dated February 11, 1778, noted that Priestley 'commends so highly Collins's tract, that I wonder he takes no notice of Dr Clarke's answer to it' (*Theological and miscellaneous works*, I, pt.1, 315). In 1790 Priestley reprinted Collins's essay and added an introduction of his own where he once again praised its virtues (*Theological and miscellaneous works*, IV, 257-63). In *Doctrine*, xxx, he noted that he was not only convinced of Collins's position, but it enabled him 'to see the fallacy of most of the arguments in favour of philosophical liberty.' His study of Hartley confirmed him in his view.

For Priestley, the doctrine of philosophical necessity is a matter of deep and settled conviction. In *Examination of Dr Reid's Inquiry* (1774), 169, he wrote: 'There is no truth of which I have less doubt, and of the grounds of which I am more fully satisfied.' While he maintained that the doctrine followed from his materialism, he accepted its truth independently of that view (*Disquisitions relating to matter and spirit*, (1777), 356: 'But whether man be wholly material or not, I apprehend that proof enough is advanced that every human volition is subject to certain fixed laws, and that the pretended *self-determining power* is altogether imaginary and impossible.') He noted how pleasantly surprised he was to discover that his fellow tutors at Warrington Academy were, like him, "zealous Necessarians" (*Autobiography*, 91; my emphasis). Unlike his views about the soul, where he conceded that he reverted for a time to a pre-philosophical dualism (*Disquisitions*, xi), his

conversion to the doctrine of philosophical necessity came early and was complete.

Priestley's argument in the *Essay* is compatible with Collins's view. Like Collins and the other 'necessarians' he admired, Priestley was a *compatibilist*. To be free is not to be exempt from necessity, but only to have the power to act as one pleases, unconstrained by *external impediment*. As Priestley put it: 'The ... doctrine of *free will*, in the only sense of the words in which mankind generally use them, viz. *the power of doing what we please, or will*, ... is what the philosophical doctrine of necessity supposes; and farther than this no man does, or need [sic] to look, in the common conduct of life, or of religion' (*Examination*, xv). His definitions of civil and political liberty in the *Essay* are fully consistent with this position.

For Miller, determinism diminishes the significance of human action. If it is true, what matters is only the fulfilment of God's plan. But Collins is clear that the contrast on which such an inference depends is bogus. How, after all, is God's plan accomplished except through human action? On the contrary, the necessity of human action is the condition of its real significance. Thus Collins remarks (*Philosophical inquiry* (1717), 115): 'And is it not a great perfection in man to be able, in relation both to his thoughts and actions, to do as he wills or pleases in all those cases of pleasure and interest? Nay, can a greater and more beneficial power in man be conceiv'd, than to be able to do as he wills, or pleases? And can any other *liberty* be conceiv'd beneficial to him? Had he this power or *liberty* in all things, he would be omnipotent!' The philosophical consequences Miller infers from Priestley's conversion to determinism illustrate the very fallacies against which Priestley, like other compatibilists, seeks to guard us. With this Miller's argument about changes to Priestley's conception of natural rights collapses.

In his account of the third difference between Priestley and his contemporaries, Miller is on sounder ground, although he overstates his claim. As he sees it, politics matters less for Priestley than for

the others. In this vein, to be sure, Priestley wrote Shelburne in the mid-1770s: 'I endeavour to think as little as I possibly can (*which, however, is not a very little*) of Politicks, and apply myself to pursuits in which I meet with less cause of chagrin, and in which I hope I am not uselessly employed. But your Lordship's business is with men, who are more intractable than the elements of earth, air, water etc. with which I have to do. However, the greater difficulty, the greater honour' (Bodleian Library, Shelburne Papers, Priestley to Shelburne, 11 Sept., 1776; my emphasis on Priestley's significant qualification). Recollecting his time in Leeds where he was when he published both editions of his *Essay*, he commented: '... nothing of a nature foreign to the duties of my profession engaged my attention while I was at Leeds so much as my prosecution of my experiments relating to electricity, and especially the doctrine of air' (*Autobiography*, 94). But Miller also makes the stronger claim that Priestley had 'a fundamental lack of interest in active political life' (xxiv). And this seems too strong. If it were so, Priestley would scarcely have devoted as much creative energy as he did in designing a plan of liberal education for students to assist them in assuming roles in active public life; he would not have written many of his pamphlets; and he would not have entered the proviso he included in his letter to Shelburne.

Miller's real point, however, is not about Priestley's interests or psychology, but about the marked priority he assigned to civil over political liberty in his political theory. Priestley argued that political liberty is 'comparatively of small consequence' relative to civil liberty which he characterized as 'a matter of the last importance', although in the same paragraph he added significant provisos which could not be satisfied without a fair degree of political liberty and which considerably enhanced its value (28). That value is 'principally' derived from the security it provides for civil liberty (32; *Lectures on history, and general policy*, 282, claims that political liberty is 'chiefly valuable on that account' (my emphasis)). Miller mis-states Priestley's point. The claim he attributes to Priestley is that 'political liberty was valuable *simply* as "the only sure guard of civil liberty"' (xxv; my emphasis). He compounds

this error by claiming that it follows 'therefore [that] the extent to which "persons in common ranks of life" could partake of political liberty was an insignificant issue.'

Miller cites Priestley's *Lectures on history, and general policy* in support of this claim. There, however, Priestley writes: 'It may appear, at first sight, to be *of little consequence* whether persons in common ranks of life enjoy any share of political liberty or not' (282; my emphasis). But it is only 'at first sight' that this appears so. For Priestley argues: 'But without this [i.e. political liberty] there cannot be that persuasion of security and independence, which alone can encourage a man to make great exertions. ... He will be afraid of attracting the notice of his superiors, and must feel himself a mean and degraded being. But a sense of liberty, and a knowledge of the laws by which his conduct must be governed, with some degree of controul over those who make and administer the laws, gives him a constant feeling of his own importance, and leads him to indulge a free and manly turn of thinking, which will make him greatly superior to what he would have been under an arbitrary form of government.' (282-83) In the *Essay*, 35-36, Priestley develops similar themes. The proposition Priestley rejects, then, is the one Miller attributes to him. Priestley may have been prepared to accept a smaller measure of political liberty than the principles of his argument allow as practically adequate for the common person, but his argument for political liberty makes it patent that whether one enjoys political liberty is anything but insignificant.

Miller contrasts Priestley's view and Brown's which is characterized, as he puts it, by 'the political centrality of some notion of the "common" or "public" good'. (xviii) Miller argues: 'Priestley did *not reject* the concept of a "public" or "common" good *altogether*, nor did he deny that it was *in some sense* a measure of policy, but he did differ from Brown and the bulk of his contemporaries in his way of defining the content of that good, and he set *narrow limits* to the area within which it could claim pre-eminence. In particular, actions by the civil ruler that were incompatible with the satisfaction of the real needs of individuals, even when such actions were

ostensibly directed to the pursuit of the common good, could rarely, Priestley thought, be justified' (xviii-xix; my emphases).

Miller's formulation, however, fails to do Priestley justice. His qualifications cast doubt on Priestley's commitment to the 'common' or 'public' good as a criterion for how government ought to act. Priestley, however, consistently made it a rule that action by government must be justified by its contribution to the happiness of the whole community (31: 'That the happiness of the whole community is the ultimate end of government can never be doubted, and all claims of individuals inconsistent with the public good are absolutely null and void'; *Letters to the right honourable Edmund Burke* (1791), 23: 'To make the *public good* the standard of right or wrong, in whatever relates to society and government, besides being the most natural and rational of all rules, has the farther recommendation of being the easiest of application.') The rule, to be sure, refers to the public good, not what *ostensibly* is thought to promote it, and emphatically not the continued existence of a particular government, whose overthrow its application might well sanction. From this rule, however, there was no backsliding; on the contrary, there was a determined insistence on applying it.

Miller is on firmer ground when he notes that Priestley differed from Brown on what constitutes the public good. For Priestley's quarrel with Brown is fundamentally on the nature and value of liberty. As D O Thomas persuasively argues in 'Progress, liberty and utility: the political philosophy of Joseph Priestley', R G W Anderson and Christopher Lawrence (eds.), *Science, medicine and dissent: Joseph Priestley (1733-1804)*, (London, 1987), 77, a central feature of Priestley's concept of liberty, contrary to Brown's, or, for that matter, Locke's and Montesquieu's, is that its scope is not limited by the moral law.

Brown's view allows him to claim that restrictions on the press may not limit its liberty, only its power to be licentious. For Priestley, this is nonsense. Even when liberty is rightly restricted, its restriction must be weighed against the considerations which justify it. Why? Because the presumption in favour of liberty as a good

must be outweighed by those contrary considerations. As Priestley remarks: 'If it be probable that the business, whatever it be, will be conducted better, that is, more to the advantage of society, in [the magistrate's] hands, than in those of individuals, the right [to interfere with the conduct of those individuals] will be allowed' (p.39). If, however, the business is better conducted by leaving individuals to their own devices, then this policy is itself required by consideration of the public good (p.31; 39; 56). Priestley's argument is not that the scope for applying the public good is restricted, but that the public good is often better served by non-interference. Even where there is *some* reason to interfere, the public good *may*, on balance, be better served by leaving individuals to their own devices. It is in such reflections on the logic of liberty and how it intersects with that of the public good, together with his defense of unrestricted intellectual liberty and toleration, that Priestley lived up to his promise of improving on Locke, a promise Miller rightly emphasizes against those who maintain that Priestley's political philosophy is simply a gloss on Locke's.

In sum, Miller's book is to be welcomed, although his observations sometimes fail to do full justice to its subject.

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Peter Benedict Nockles, *The Oxford movement in context. Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760-1857*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, xvi + 342pp.

Dr Nockles of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester has delved deeply into a large number of neglected printed and manuscript sources, and has adjusted himself to scholarly opinion, with a view to demonstrating that the nineteenth-century Tractarian revival within the Church of England had its harbingers in those who, during the preceding seventy years, had worked for the restoration of the High Church tradition. His temporal boundaries are the High Church revival of the 1760s, which coincided with the accession of George III and the end of the 'Whig ascendancy', and the late 1850s (thereby accommodating both the Tractarians and the Gorham and Denison controversies). Within the general continuity of High Churchmanship there were differing views on many matters, and the author elucidates these with considerable skill.

We are first offered a substantial 'Historographical introduction' to Tractarianism, which reveals that the primary focus, whether of friendly or hostile writers, has been on the leaders of the movement: Newman, Froude, Keble and Pusey. Evangelicals and Broad Churchmen have had their expositors too, but less attention has been paid to the older High Churchmen. Justification is provided for Mark Pattison's mid-nineteenth-century judgement that the Tractarians themselves conceived High Church history as jumping from Waterland and Brett to 1833. There was thus fostered nostalgia for a Caroline age deemed golden. Nockles redresses the balance by resurrecting the Hutchinsonians, named after an opponent of Newton's scientific theories, whose number included the influential George Home (1730-92); and the 'Hackney Phalanx', an amorphous group including John James Watson, which was active during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. These groups were linked not only by theology and churchmanship, but by friendship (Oxford University being a key factor), family ties and ecclesiastical patronage. There were in addition such custodians of the tradition as John Oxlee, who were more freelance, so to speak;

while such contemporaries of the Tractarians as William Mascall manifested indebtedness to both the Tractarians and the older High Churchmen, and 'might best be described as advanced old High Churchmen' (39). Relationships were further cemented by membership of such organizations as the SPG, the SPCK, the National Society and the Church Building Society.

The older High Church tradition did not flow directly into Tractarianism, but existed alongside it. Its representatives were those whom Hurrell Froude designated the 'Z's', as distinct from the 'Y's' (the Tractarians) and the 'X's' or 'Peculiar' (the Evangelicals). The older High Churchmen held a doctrine of apostolic succession; and they maintained the supremacy of Scripture, and the value of the creeds, Prayer Book and catechism. They appreciated the writings of the early Fathers, upheld in a qualified way the primacy of dogma, and emphasized sacramental grace (normally stopping short of the Roman Catholic principle of *ex opere operato*). Their spirituality was practical, and they were suspicious of subjectivism and enthusiasm. Loyal to the establishment, they expected the state, as divinely ordained, to protect and promote the interests of the Church of England.

Dr Nockles proceeds to disentangle the complex relationships, both ideological and personal between the Tractarians and their High Church forebears and contemporaries. He does this *via* well-documented and judicious discussions of the politics of Church and state; antiquity and the rule of faith; the apostolic paradigm; spirituality, liturgy and worship; and the sacraments and justification. A chapter summarizing the historical relations of the old High Churchmen and the Tractarians leads him to his conclusion, namely, that 'The Tractarians sharpened a sense of High Church party identity in the Church, but they did not and could not create it' (307). He further observes that 'Ironically, it was the liberal Protestant comprehensiveness of the Church of England against which the Oxford Movement reacted, which ultimately ensured for Anglo-Catholics the freedom to protest and advance their views' (319).

What accounts for the impact of the Tractarians? Dr Nockles adverts to 'A unique combination of moral strength and religious dynamism, imbued with the spirit of Romanticism' (325). Though initially partisan and disruptive, the Oxford Movement's spiritual influence 'overrode its increasing tendency towards a churchy sectarianism' (327), with the result that the opposition of some Broad Churchmen and Evangelicals was softened.

Dr Nockles excels in explicating the provenance and slipperiness of key terms. He reminds us, for example, that 'An Evangelical in the pre-Tractarian era was not a Low Churchman' (32). He points out that since many Tractarians had been reared in Evangelicalism, they had a deeper appreciation of Evangelical spirituality than did some pre-Tractarian High Churchmen of the period 1805-30 (318). He shows that whereas 'Anti-Roman Catholicism was intrinsic to traditional High Church ecclesiology (164), 'The emergence of a genuinely 'Romanising' wing to the Movement in the early 1840s... marked an ideological watershed' (143). However, the Tractarians were not directly responsible either for the interest in church architecture and furnishings, or for ritualism (213-14). The following is among many *mots*: 'The key to Newman's ultimate loss of faith in Anglicanism lay in his attempt to erect a coherent dogmatic edifice on a structure never designed to support it' (129). Examiners will readily interpolate the words 'Discuss this statement'.

The bibliography is too 'select', but the notes are full. Ecclesiastical and intellectual historians of the period will ignore Dr Nockles's first rate study at their peril.

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Alan P F Sell, *Philosophical idealism and Christian belief*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1995, [x]+338pp., hardback, £35.

This is an important study, both scholarly and critical, of a significant group of thinkers too much neglected. It is both thorough and illuminating. Sell's knowledge of the literature is comprehensive. Very reasonably laying on one side the two major exponents of Absolute Idealism in this country, Bradley and Bosanquet, who form a large subject in themselves, have been (Bradley especially) extensively studied, and were unsympathetic to Christianity, he has picked out seven thinkers for special consideration, T H Green as the father of all, Edward Caird, J R Illingworth, Sir Henry Jones, A S Pringle-Pattison, C C J Webb and A E Taylor. In his introductory chapter he points out (p.4) that the idealist movement continued into more recent times, and instances T M Knox, J H Paton, A C Ewing and C A Campbell. He might have added G R G Mure, Errol Harris and, across the Atlantic, Brand Blanshard; on the other hand, Paton is at best marginal, and Ewing should not have been included (see his *Idealism: a critical survey* (1934), and the introduction to his volume of selections, *The idealist tradition from Berkeley to Blanshard* (1957)). Of the philosophers specially singled out, the inclusion of A E Taylor is questionable, despite his early idealist phase; on the other hand one may regret the omission of Hastings Rashdall, in view of the final part of his *Theory of good and evil* (1907), his *Philosophy and religion* (1909), and his essay on 'Personality, Human and Divine' in the collection of essays edited by Henry Sturt entitled *Personal idealism* (1902).

Chapter 2 gives general accounts of the life and work of Sell's seven authors, with quotations that are both illuminating and judiciously chosen. Of Caird, the present reviewer recalls his old teacher, E F Carritt, saying that he never delivered a lecture without introducing the words 'in Whom we live and move and have our being'. The quotations from Sir Henry Jones convey the full flavour of that outstanding personality, but, if I am correct, omit his memorable declaration that 'the universe is homeward bound'. In this chapter the listings of the authors' works are in general confined

to those with direct religious relevance; in Caird's case this leads to the unfortunate exclusion of his massive *Critical philosophy of Kant* (2 vols., 1889), though it is mentioned later (p.276). Sell very reasonably excuses himself from speaking of A E Taylor's work in the field of Greek philosophy; his stimulus and contribution to the study of Plato were and remain massive, but on the other hand his theory of Plato's development and of his relation to Socrates, though shared by his colleague John Burnet, was never widely accepted and has not stood the test of time.

Among the thinkers he has chosen Sell draws a distinction between the three belonging to the absolutist tradition (Green, Caird and Jones) and those whose idealism should properly be called absolute but personal. He sets against both groups criticisms by religious thinkers (largely Scottish) among their contemporaries who argued that neither absolute nor personal idealism could properly be reconciled with strict Christian orthodoxy, and agrees with the justice of such attacks. It would be hard to deny the large element of validity in some of these cases. Central issues on which he focuses attention are divine transcendence and the creator-creature distinction, immortality, the historical particularity embedded in the doctrine of the Incarnation, and the conception of a distinctively Christian position in the field of ethics as based on revelation and centred about the concepts of sin, atonement and grace. Personal idealism, he concludes, while rejecting the all-embracing Absolute, attempted a harmonization but failed.

Perhaps the clearest of the examples Sell gives is Pringle-Pattison. On the other hand the relevance of history, and the tensions between universality and historical particularity, come most clearly to the fore in C C J Webb; it was in Hegel that history had come prominently into the realm of philosophy, there however to be taken up in the march of the Absolute Mind. In general, it would seem that, the further Sell's group of thinkers moved away from the original idealism, the more easily they could accommodate Christian orthodoxy, as may perhaps be seen most clearly in the cases of Illingworth and Taylor.

The background to the general movement of personal idealism is set out in a work which Sell does not mention, namely the preface by Henry Sturt to the volume which he edited, entitled *Personal idealism: philosophical essays by eight members of the University of Oxford* (1902). The views there set out were, Sturt explains, those of writers opposed on the one hand to naturalism, seeing human beings as transitory resultants of physical forces, and on the other to that philosophy which saw them as unreal appearances of the Absolute: 'Naturalism and absolutism, antagonistic as they seem to be, combine in assuring us that personality is an illusion.' Naturalism, as so understood, must deny the reality of human freedom, while Absolutism absorbed individuals into its Absolute Whole. (Sturt himself, in his *Idola theatri* (1906), a work which Sell mentions, went on, in support of a position he termed 'voluntarism', to reject Absolute Idealism *in toto* as characterized by intellectualism, absolutism and subjectivism). The personal idealists in Sell's group (especially Webb) recognized the enduring importance of Kant's ethics; their own main contribution to philosophy lay largely in their focusing of attention on the concept of personality.

Chapter 4 is entitled "Ethics, Society and Idealists". If we look at the general historical context, both on the social and on the religious side, there was a certain affinity in trends which turned away from an individualism dominant in the early 19th century. Sell notices the social aims and activities of Green and his followers. Green's own 'Lecture on Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract' (1881) illustrates the movement from non-interventionist to interventionist liberalism, aimed at promoting the possibilities of self-development in the population at large. A V Dicey, in his *Lectures on the relation between law and public opinion in England during the nineteenth century* (1905), distinguished a phase of Benthamism or Individualism (1825-70) from what he termed collectivism (1865-1900), while Herbert Spencer raised a protest in his *Man versus the state* (1884). On the religious side one may perhaps see a parallel in the movement in Anglican theology signalled by *Lux mundi: a series of studies in the religion of the Incarnation* (1889), edited by

Charles Gore and including two essays by Illingworth, which marked a shift of emphasis from the Crucifixion and Atonement towards the Incarnation (perhaps one might say, from St Paul to St John). Dicey drew a parallel between the political side and the religious (ib., 399-409), seeing Benthamism and Evangelicalism as each centred on the individual's concern with his own salvation, the one in this world and the other in the next (402-3); he goes on then to say: "Nor is it a far-fetched idea that ... the attacks made by Professor T H Green and other impressive teachers on the assumptions of utilitarianism and individualism may have facilitated the combination, not unnatural in itself, of church doctrine with socialistic sympathies" (409).

Sell's last chapter illustrates the significant differences within the idealist movement.

At p.45, 1.1 for 'appointed' read 'elected'. At p.130, 1.23, 'holy transcendent' should be 'wholly transcendent'.

All in all, Sell has placed his readers, philosophical and theological, under a very large debt.

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Books Received:

We have received the following books, some of which will be reviewed in future numbers:

Annable S Brett, *Liberty, right and nature. Individual rights in later scholastic thought*, Ideas in Context, Cambridge University Press, 1997, xii + 254pp.

Michael Broers, *Europe under Napoleon 1799-1815*, Arnold, London, New York, Sydney, Auckland, 1996, xii + 291pp., available in hdk & pbk.

John Dunn, *The history of political theory and other essays*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, xiii + 235pp, available in hdbk and pbk. A reprinting of essays and articles from the early 1990s, covering a remarkable range of issues, including an important discussion of freedom of conscience .

Douglas M Jesseph, *Berkeley's philosophy of mathematics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1993, xii + 322, pbk.

Shelley Lockwood ed., *Sir John Fortescue. On the laws and governance of England*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought, Cambridge University Press, 1997, liv + 156pp, available in hdk & pbk.

Anthony J Parel, *Gandhi Hind Swaraj and other writings*, Cambridge Texts in Modern Politics, Cambridge University Press, 1997, lxxvii + 208pp, available in hdbk & pbk.

Manfred B Steger, *The quest for evolutionary socialism. Edouard Bernstein and social democracy*, Cambridge University Press, 1997, xiv + 287pp.

Isser Woloch ed., *Revolution and the meanings of freedom in the nineteenth century*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1996, viii + 447pp; in the series R.W. Davis gen. ed., *The Making of Modern Freedom*..

John W Yolton, *Perception and reality. A history from Descartes to Kant*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1996, xi + 240pp.