A reassessment of the significance of the life and work of George Savile 1st Marquis of Halifax, 1633-95

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ABSTRACT (Short)

This thesis studies the career and political writings of George Savile, 1st Marquis of Halifax (1633-1695). Halifax played a significant role in the politics of Restoration England. An opposition politician who broke with the earl of Shaftesbury over the issue of Exclusion, he helped to ensure James II succeeded to the throne in 1685. After decisively intervening in the Revolution he proffered the Crown to William and Mary, under whom he served as Lord Privy Seal. His interventions in the politics of the period, though sporadic, were decisive, and helped to avert the three interlinked catastrophes he truly feared: renewed civil war, the destruction of European Protestantism, and the collapse of England into tyranny. An active politician he also wrote widely: seven of his pamphlets were published during his life, and he left a variety of unpublished notes and maxims. Known in subsequent centuries as 'The Trimmer' he has been depicted as an advocate of moderation. Despite his importance the only significant biography of him dates from 1898 and although a magisterial edition of his works was published in 1989 he has subsequently received comparatively little attention.

The thesis makes three arguments. First that Halifax was committed to comprehending Presbyterians within the Church of England, and therefore sits within an element of mainstream religious thought in Restoration England. Deeply concerned about the fate of Reformed Christians in continental Europe, his religious sentiments influenced his views on foreign policy. Second, that situating his writings within contemporary discourses on republicanism shows his sympathy with such ideas. His 1680 Limitations proposal would have effectively reduced the English monarch to a 'Duke of Venice'. Third, that his

disillusionment with the aftermath of the 1688 Revolution demonstrates his concern that the power of the nobility was being eclipsed by economic and military changes.

ABSTRACT (Long)

This thesis studies the career and political writings of George Savile, 1st Marquis of Halifax (1633-1695). Halifax played a significant role in the politics of Restoration England. An opposition politician who broke with the earl of Shaftesbury over the issue of Exclusion, he helped to ensure James II succeeded to the throne in 1685. After decisively intervening in the Revolution he proffered the Crown to William III and Mary, under whom he served as Lord Privy Seal. His interventions in the politics of the period, though sporadic, were decisive, and helped to avert the three interlinked catastrophes he truly feared: a second civil war, the destruction of European Protestantism, and the collapse of England into tyranny. An active politician he also wrote widely: seven of his pamphlets were published during his life, and he left a variety of unpublished notes and maxims. Known in subsequent centuries as 'The Trimmer' he has been depicted as an advocate of moderation. Yet despite his importance the only significant biography of him dates from 1898 and although a magisterial edition of his works was published in 1989 he has subsequently received comparatively little attention. This thesis makes three main arguments. First that Halifax's career and writings need to be viewed through the lens of the continued importance and relevance of religious ideas and ideology in the Restoration era. Secondly, that his writings should be situated within contemporary discourses on republicanism and thirdly that, however, 'republican' he may have been he was also convinced of the need for aristocratic dominance in the political sphere. The thesis is organised in a broadly chronological sequence with consideration of Halifax's individual works concentrated in the relevant chapters.

The introduction discusses historical assessments of Halifax, the sources used and his early life. The first chapter looks at Halifax's religious politics and argues against the view that

religious belief declined in importance after the Restoration. Instead, echoing more recent historiography, Halifax is depicted as neither secular nor a pure Erastian but as a devout Protestant who set his Protestantism clearly within a European context and whose religious beliefs shaped his foreign policy objectives.

Halifax was a contradictory figure, most notably in his tendency to publish pamphlets decrying the spread of political pamphlets. Dislike of the organisation of Restoration politics, particularly under Danby, led Halifax to support opposition politics in the 1670s. Hostile to the role and political advancement of bishops, and to the conduct of Charles II and his chief minister towards Parliament, Halifax allied with Holles and Shaftesbury. However, as chapter 2 shows, the issue of Exclusion split the opposition to the Court. In particular Halifax disliked Shaftesbury's tactic of 'taking politics out of doors', through encouraging popular petitioning, and pamphlets which promoted the legitimisation of Charles II's son Monmouth and his succession in preference to James. Halifax's stance during the late 1670s could be regarded as pure opportunism and desire for advancement. Subject to at times vitriolic attacks in the House of Commons and the press, one work claimed of him that 'for Empire he has an Itch'. Another interpretation would see him as representing a sensible middle way seeking compromise between the absolutist anti-parliamentarianism of the Tories and the extremist extra-parliamentarianism of the Whigs. This was the assessment of John Dryden, who remembered in 1691, his 'wholesome councels … wisely administered and as well executed, were the means of preventing a civil war'.

An alternative interpretation of Halifax's behaviour is advanced in the third chapter. While he could rhetorically 'court the moderates', his preferred alternative to exclusion, sweeping limitations on the power of a future Catholic King, was more attractive to some republicans than to either the Whigs or Tories. Various historians have briefly noted the similarities between *Plato Redivivus* written by republican Henry Neville in 1680 and Halifax's

limitations proposals, with some suggesting this may have been due to the latter's 'Republican inclinations'. Yet although contemporaries attributed Halifax's *Character of a Trimmer* – initially published anonymously – to Neville, there has not been significant exploration of Halifax's republican leanings. Chapter 3 fills this gap, arguing that Halifax's links to figures like Neville and Algernon Sidney, his political goals, and much of his written output show him to be more radical, and republican, than has previously been thought. As studies of various republican thinkers under the later Stuarts have demonstrated, many republicans did not explicitly call for the abolition of Kings, rather they attacked patriarchal theory, and were opposed to the tyrannical exercise of prerogative powers. In 1680 Halifax sought to convince republicans, with some success, to support Limitations over Exclusion for this reason.

The event of greatest consequence for Halifax was the Revolution of 1688. Yet for much of James II's reign he played a passive role, believing that a Dutch invasion was unnecessary to prevent James from repealing the Test Acts and re-establishing Catholicism. Chapter four argues first that Halifax did not support William's invasion because he regarded it as risky, and likely to result in a prolonged civil war. Secondly that he became a full supporter of William in 1689 from what he regarded as necessity - having been warned against seeking to impose a regency, the need to avoid an absence of government became compelling. Thirdly the chapter explores his thoughts on allegiance to the new regime. Analysis of *Anatomy of an Equivalent* and *Letter to a Dissenter* suggests that Halifax's writing and political actions were designed to rehabilitate himself with Protestant dissenters, disgusted by his actions from 1680. This goal explains his abandonment of James once it became apparent that William would land successfully. Halifax, it is argued, entered into the Hungerford negotiations willing, if not intending, to abandon James. Moreover, his belief that monarchs were

dispensable figureheads, who could and should be removed if they proved tyrannical, is key to explaining his actions during the crisis.

The eldest son of a baronet, much of Halifax's early adulthood was spent attempting to secure a peerage, but he was concerned that his prize was of ever decreasing value. Falls in income derived from land, the trend of nobles to relocate from the county to the capital, and the expansion in paid positions in the state undermined traditional ideals of the role and position of the nobility. Aware that economic and political developments were destabilising the dominance of the independent and landed, who were being marginalised in favour of the monied and bribed, Halifax's politics, financial decisions, and written works were influenced by his unease at these changes. Chapter five describes how he invested in the London property market, used financial innovations such as annuities, and sought to obtain lucrative patronage for family and allies. Yet his political stances, especially his criticisms of Danby and William's post-1690 government, were clearly shaped by a desire to rescue an independent landed class from the threats he felt it faced. His aristocratic conservatism provides a key case-study in how the English grappled with the role and perceived decline of the peerage, and the threat posed by the expansion in the press and public sphere.

Halifax's concern with the power of France made him initially an enthusiastic supporter of William's war with Louis XIV. Yet like many Englishmen he held profound misconceptions about both the ability of English military forces quickly to force a resolution, and the cost that combat with France would require. Chapter six shows that much of Halifax's discontent with, and eventual opposition to, the regime he helped to install in 1689 was motivated by a Country ideology which disliked the transformative consequences the Revolution had unwittingly released: the emergence of a professional military which was tied to a monied interest that would empower a monarch to bypass the traditional landed rulers of England. When he lamented the loss of virtue and growth of corruption in the English, he was also

lamenting the factors which both caused, and were exacerbated by, the growing fiscal-military state. Naval setbacks in the war with France prompted fierce debate over the cause and remedies, and led to Halifax writing *Rough Draught of a New Model at Sea*. Arguing against the removal of gentry and noble officers, Halifax hoped to continue his ideal of a landed elite which attained virtue through military service. He feared an alternative reform would create a navy outside of the control of England's traditional elite, while further corrupting the nobility. The chapter argues that Halifax's opposition to William in the 1690s was partly based on his fear that having defeated an effort to create Catholic absolutism in 1688, the emergence of a professional military would allow the creation of Protestant absolutism.

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List of Abbreviations

Add MS	British Library, London: Additional Manuscripts.
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford.
Brown	Mark N. Brown (ed.), *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax,* (3 vols, Oxford, 1989).
BIHR	*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research.*
Burnet, 'Manuscript History'	British Library, London, Add MS 63057B, Gilbert Burnet, 'The History of my Own Life and of the Most Remarkable Things That I Have Known and Observed in the World' (1683-c.1695).
Burnet, *History*	Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time,* ed. M. J. Routh (6 vols, Oxford, 1833).
Burnet, *Reformation*	Gilbert Burnet, *The History of the*

	Reformation of the Church of England. The First Part, of the Progress Made in It During the Reign of K. Henry the VIII (London, 1679).
CUL	Cambridge University Library.
Chatsworth	Devonshire Collection Archives, Chatsworth.
Chesterfield	Philip Stanhope, 2nd earl of Chesterfield, *Letters to Several Celebrated Individuals of the Time of Charles II, James II, William III and Queen Anne with Some of Their Replies* (London, 1829).
Clarendon	Henry Hyde, 2nd earl of Clarendon, *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, and of His Brother, Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; with the Diary of Lord Clarendon from 1687 to 1690 and the Diary of Lord Rochester in 1676*, ed. S. W. Singer (2 vols, London, 1828).

CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series.*
EHR	*English Historical Review*.
EconHR	*Economic History Review*.
Foxcroft, *Life*	H. C. Foxcroft, *The Life and Letters of Sir George Savile, Bart., First Marquis of Halifax &c*, (2 vols, London, 1898).
Foxcroft, *Character*	H.C. Foxcroft, *The Character of a Trimmer Being a Short Life of the First Marquis of Halifax* (Cambridge, 1946).
Grey, *Debates*	Anchitell Grey, *Debates of the House of Commons: From the Year 1667 to the Year 1694* (10 vols, London, 1763).
Hayton	David Hayton, Stuart Handley, and Eveline Cruickshanks (eds), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1690-1715* (5 vols, Cambridge, 2002).
HJ	*Historical Journal.*
Henning	B. D. Henning (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1660-1690* (3 vols, London, 1983).

HistPolT	*History of Political Thought.*
HLQ	*Huntington Library Quarterly.*
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HMC *Lords*	Historical Manuscripts Commission, 11th Report, *The Manuscripts of the House of Lords, 1678-1688* (London, 1887).
IHR	Institute of Historical Research.
JBS	*Journal of British Studies*.
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History.*
JMH	*Journal of Modern History*.
Kenyon	J. P. Kenyon (ed.), *Halifax. Complete Works* (Aylesbury, 1969).
Kent Archives	Kent Archives, Stanhope of Chevening Manuscripts.
Littleton, 'Savile, George'	Charles Littleton, 'Savile, George (1633-1695)', in Ruth Paley (ed.), *The House of Lords 1660-1715* (5 vols, Cambridge, 2016), IV, pp. 318-61.
Morrice	Roger Morrice, *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, ed. Mark Goldie, John Spurr, Tim Harris, Stephen Taylor, Mark

	Knights and Jason McElligott (7 vols, Woodbridge, 2007–9).
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).
Paley	Ruth Paley (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Lords, 1660-1715* (5 vols, Cambridge, 2016).
PH	*Parliamentary History.*
P&P	*Past and Present.*
Pincus, *1688*	Steven Pincus, *1688*: *The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, 2009).
PHSL	*Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London.*
Reresby	*Memoirs of Sir John Reresby,* ed. Andrew Browning, 2nd edition with a new preface by Mary K Geiter and W.A. Speck (London, 1991).
'Savile Correspondence'	*Savile Correspondence: Letters to and from Henry Savile, Esq., Envoy at Paris, and Vice-chamberlain to Charles II. and James II.: Including Letters from His Brother George, Marquess of Halifax,*

	ed. William Durrant Cooper, Camden Society, Old Series, lxxi (London, 1858).
‘Saviliana’	British Library, London, Add MS 75366 Alexander Sion, ‘Saviliana Or The Works Of George Savile Late Marquis of Halifax’ (c.1695-1700).
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*.
WYAS	West Yorkshire Archive Service.
YAJ	*Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*.

All places of publication London unless otherwise noted.

Introduction

William of Orange's patience was nearly exhausted. After successfully landing an invasion force at Torbay on 5 November 1688, the flight of his father-in-law James II to France offered him more than he had previously dared hope for. Yet a band of resolutely loyalist peers, led by the earl of Rochester, was determined to block any move to give him the Crown, convinced their Anglican faith forbade the deposing of Kings. Twice, on 31 January and 4 February 1689, the House of Lords had refused to agree with the Commons' resolution that James had 'abdicated' the throne, which – now 'vacant' – should be filled by William and Mary.[1] Having considered leaving England or simply declaring himself King without parliamentary sanction, William instead played his recently acquired trump card. George Savile was, by his own admission ugly[2], mistrusted by his fellow peers[3], and had a cutting wit which frequently left those who heard it 'highly provoked'[4]. Yet he had the advantage of being a high ranking, politically influential noble, and was named speaker of the House of Lords. Ironically his marquessate – given as reward for his role in ensuring the defeat of an earlier effort to prevent James becoming King – meant he outranked the chief loyalist peers, and enabled him to push through the parliamentary removal of James. Though not originally a supporter of William's invasion, Halifax's defection in late-1688 was a catastrophic blow to the King's cause. 'So unfair he was in the chair, that he would do nothing but what himself had a mind to', complained the Tory Earl of Clarendon.[5] On 6 February Halifax 'was at the head of the prevailing party, and drove furiously'. 'Necessity' he argued, not constitutional

[1] Henry Horwitz, *Parliament, Policy, and Politics in the Reign of William III* (Manchester, 1977), pp. 9-10.
[2] Brown, I, 99.
[3] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 358.
[4] Burnet, *History*, II, 464.
[5] Clarendon, II, 259

concerns, was the only issue of importance. Though his 'weak arguments' as Clarendon saw them, were easily answered, the King's party was badly weakened by the absence, 'under some pretence or other', of seven loyalist peers. Two of them, Weymouth and Chesterfield, were close to Halifax, related by blood and marriage respectively. Their absence, combined with the strategic arrival of four Williamites: Lincoln ('half mad'); Carlisle ('brought in on his crutches'); Lexinton ('who came into England but three days ago'); and the Bishop of Durham (making only his third appearance in fourteen years as part of a Vicar of Bray-like effort to curry favour with the imminent new regime) ensured the Lords finally agreed with the Commons. For Clarendon it 'was the most dismal day of my life'; for Halifax it was a triumph of parliamentary management that would propel him to the zenith of his power in domestic and international affairs.[6]

George Savile, 1st Marquis of Halifax (1633-1695) played a significant role in the politics of Restoration England. As an opposition politician who broke with Shaftesbury over the issue of Exclusion he helped to ensure James II succeeded to the throne in 1685. After decisively intervening in the Revolution he proffered the Crown to William and Mary, under whom he served as Lord Privy Seal. He also wrote widely: seven of his pamphlets were published during his life, and he left various unpublished notes and maxims, some of which were published posthumously. Known in subsequent centuries as 'The Trimmer' he has been depicted as an advocate of moderation. Yet despite his importance in the period, he has received relatively little historical attention.

Halifax's life might be viewed as a failure – he lacked ministerial staying power, was unable to cultivate a large political support base, and was disappointed with every monarch or politician he supported.[7] This study hopes to complicate that perception, and to portray a man

[6] Clarendon, II, 261-262.
[7] Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 353.

whose contribution to Restoration history was far greater than merely writing *The Character of a Trimmer*, the work for which he was most famous and from which his characterisation as a 'trimmer' in politics derived. Halifax's interventions in politics, though sporadic, were decisive, and helped to avert the three interlinked catastrophes he truly feared: a second civil war, the destruction of European Protestantism, and the collapse of England into tyranny.

This thesis will make significant contributions to the historiography of the Restoration period. First, it will set Halifax's religious beliefs and commitments within current work on the continuing importance of religion to and for individuals and its imbrication in the political struggles of the period. Halifax, it will be suggested, was deeply religious. He was connected to mainstream Protestantism both in England and in Europe and was sympathetic to Presbyterians. He was in favour of comprehension and had what would later be described as latitudinarian views. As a consequence he sought the adoption of a strongly pro-Protestant foreign policy. Second, the thesis will analyse recent work on the circulation of republican ideas in the later Stuart period and use Halifax's writings and his political actions to argue that he also evinced republican sympathies, which influenced both his writing and his politics. It will look at Halifax's reputation as a 'moderate' and 'a trimmer' and argue that such characterisations are neither useful, informative nor accurate as descriptors. Third, it will consider how Halifax's concerns about changes in the organisation of the military and of finance, particularly in the post revolution period, affected his belief in the importance of noble dominance over politics and demonstrate that in these respects he displayed a strong aristocratic conservatism.

Historical assessments of Halifax

The battle to control Halifax's legacy began almost immediately after his death. His former friend Burnet was excluded from Halifax's deathbed possibly because Halifax did not want

Burnet to publish an account of his repentance as the bishop had done with John Wilmot, earl of Rochester. But Burnet got his revenge with the publication of his *History of his Own Time* in which he depicted Halifax as unreliable, irresolute, and possibly atheist, concluding, 'I hope, he died a better man, than he lived'.[8] The success of Burnet, and the failure of Halifax's chaplain, Alexander Sion, to publish his biographical sketch which emphasised Halifax's religiosity, contributed to the sense Halifax was irreligious. Meanwhile, figures in the Country Party of the 1690s were outraged when, after the marquessate became extinct with the death of the second marquis in 1700, the title was recreated for Whig Junto member Charles Montagu. Paley suggests he 'perhaps was keen to use it because of the intellectual and political distinction of the first marquess'.[9] A furious correspondent complained to Robert Harley, 'I do not envy Mr Montagu his peerage but I cannot help bedgrudging him the title of our poor friend Halifax'.[10]

Halifax himself never identified as a Trimmer, and there is no substantial evidence he was regarded as a Trimmer by many, if any, contemporaries. During the eighteenth century the term 'Trimmer' was one of opprobrium rather than praise, something which impacted some early assessments of Halifax. Hume, as well as hinting that Halifax was a deist considered that:

> This man, who possessed the finest genius and most extensive capacity, of all employed in public affairs during the present reign [i.e. that of Charles II], affected a species of neutrality between the parties, and was esteemed the head of that small body, known by the denomination of Trimmers. This conduct, which is more natural to men of integrity than of ambition, could not however procure him the former character; and he was always, with reason, regarded as an intriguer rather than a patriot.[11]

[8] T. E. S. Clarke and H. C. Foxcroft, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury* (Cambridge, 1907), p. 212; Burnet, *History*, IV, 367.
[9] Paley, I, 60.
[10] Francis Gwyn to Robert Harley, 9 Dec. 1700, in HMC, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland* (10 vols, 1897), III, 637.
[11] David Hume, *The History of Great Britain, Containing the Commonwealth, and the Reigns of Charles II and James II* (2 vols, 1756), II, 48.

Macaulay first discussed Halifax in his essay on *Sir William Temple* published in October 1838. He considered him to be, like Shaftesbury, 'deeply tainted with the vices common to the English statesmen of that age, but unrivalled in talents, address and influence'. Unlike Shaftesbury, however, Halifax 'was emphatically a trimmer; a trimmer both by intellect and by constitution'. He disliked extremes and had a forgiving and compassionate nature so that his public life 'has as few great stains… as… any'. In his writings there is 'no acrimony, nothing inflammatory, nothing personal'. He was 'in speculation, a strong republican, and did not conceal it'.[12] In the later *History of England* Macaulay thought Halifax:

> in temper was what, in our time, is called a Conservative. In theory he was a Republican. Even when his dread of anarchy and his disdain for vulgar delusions led him to side for a time with the defenders of arbitrary power, his intellect was always with Locke and Milton.[13]

The ambiguity over Halifax's historical reputation extended to his written work, which was adapted to suit a variety of political causes. The most influential of his pamphlets were reissued sporadically after his death, and adapted to specific circumstances. The *Anatomy of an Equivalent* was repurposed by Scots opposed to Union with England, although the pamphlet acknowledged Halifax's authorship.[14] Similarly *Some Cautions*, an election address which warned against corruption and, somewhat ironically, the proliferation of election addresses, written to aid Robert Harley, was published in the 1695 elections, and again in 1702.[15] More interestingly, the work was published by Irish patriots during the 1761 election in Dublin. Given the circumstances, various alterations of Halifax's original draft needed to be made. Thus, the work's peroration 'Chuse Englishmen, and when I have said that, to deal honestly, I will not undertake that they are very easy to bee found', became an instruction to

[12] T. B. Macaulay, 'Sir William Temple', *Critical and Historical Essays* (3 vols, 1911), II, 195-272.
[13] T. B. Macaulay, *History of England from the Accession of James II* (5 vols, 1848), I, 191.
[14] *The Anatomy of an Equivalent by the Marquess of Halifax, Adapted to the Equivalent in the Present Articles, 1706* (Edinburgh, 1706). See also William Derringer, *Calculated Values. Finance, Politics, and the Quantitative Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 2018), pp. 79-114.
[15] Joseph Hone, *Literature and Party Politics at the Accession of Queen Anne* (Oxford, 2017), pp. 130-66.

choose ‘men of sense, probity, and fortune’.[16] While Halifax inserted ‘a Caveat, against men tyed to a Party’, the Irish version caveated the caveat by ‘distinguish[ing]; I don’t call it a party where the majority of a nation is united in opinion, the minority is then the party, and to defeat them is laudable’.[17] In relation to the Revolution of 1688, the English version warned ‘Pretenders to exorbitant Meritt in the late Revolution, are not without objections to them, when they stand to serve in Parliament’, while in Dublin it was merely ‘Pretenders to exorbitant Merit’ who were to be distrusted. Moreover, the Irish version omitted references to ‘passionate lovers of the Protestant religion’ entirely.[18] The work would have unmistakably been that of Halifax, yet much of his religious language was removed. In the middle of the eighteenth century, sections of *Character of a Trimmer* were reprinted in the hope of rebutting ‘those, whose Interest it is that honest Men of all Parties should not agree. The Marquis of *Hallifax* describes such men very well in his *Character of a Trimmer*’.[19] Copies of the work reached America, where amongst others John Adams talked with friends about reading it.[20] More broadly Halifax’s political writing was praised by the authors of works such as *The Independent Whig*, and *Cato’s Letters*, both of which regarded his attacks on anticlerical writings and comments as ‘wise’.[21]

Halifax’s religious writing had an enduring capacity to appeal to Protestant paranoia. In 1909 *Letter to a Dissenter* was reprinted with an introduction by the Anglican theologian and ecclesiastical historian Henry Melvill Gwatkin. Gwatkin argued James II ‘intended to secure

[16] Brown, I, 341; George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, James Hunter of Sycamore Alley, *Some Cautions Offered to the Consideration of those who are to Chuse Members to Serve in the Ensuing Parliament* (Dublin, 1761), p. 32.
[17] Brown, I, 331; Halifax and Hunter, *Some Cautions*, p. 24.
[18] Brown, I, 334; Halifax and Hunter, *Some Cautions*, p. 28.
[19] John Pine (ed.), *The London Magazine: or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer*, Feb. 1734, p. 79.
[20] John Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, edited by L. H. Butterfield (6 vols, Cambridge, Mass., 1961), I, 40.
[21] John Trenchard, Thomas Gordon (eds), *The Independent Whig* (1721), p. 116. And see Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthmen: Studies in the Transmission, Development and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II until the War with the Thirteen Colonies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), p. 118.

toleration (and supremacy) for Catholics', and failing to secure the support of the Church of England, 'changed tactics', and sought 'to carry out this liberal policy' of a prerogative-driven Declaration of Indulgence.[22] Whether Gwatkin intended the tract as a 'warning from history' in the context of Liberal efforts to secure Welsh disestablishment and Irish Home Rule is unclear, but the Tory *Spectator* regarded the work as providing that function. During the January 1910 election which saw the Liberals become reliant on Irish Nationalist support, a positive review of the *Letter* thundered:

> Lord Halifax asked the Dissenters of 1687: Will you help the King against the Church? … So now some one might ask them: Will you purchase the destruction of Church schools by helping forward the separation of Ireland and the establishment of a hostile kingdom, or more probably a republic, within twenty miles of the British shore?[23]

Regarded as a great orator, Halifax has been little quoted in Parliamentary debates, although it is plain that 'trimming' was generally regarded as undesirable. The then Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, in reflecting on the death of Winston Churchill in 1965 considered him 'A great Parliamentarian, but never a tame one – they misjudge him who could even begin to think of him as a party operator, or a manipulator, or a trimmer, or a party hack.'[24] Churchill himself said (in a debate on defence in 1936 and in connection with George Lansbury) 'I have much more respect for a politician who pleads faithfully for complete pacifism than I have for a trimmer who meddles in these affairs.'[25] If the idea of trimming has somewhat fallen out of fashion in recent British political discourse, it recurs in an American context, with similar disreputable associations. In 2015 Barack Obama presented his budget with the

[22] Henry Melvill Gwatkin, 'Introductory Note', in Gwatkin, (ed.), *A Letter to a Dissenter, Upon Occasion of his Majesty's Late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence* (Cambridge, 1909), pp. v-vi.
[23] *The Spectator*, 104:4257 (29 Jan. 1910), p. 161.
[24] *Hansard*, HC, 25 Jan. 1965.
[25] *Hansard*, HC, 10 Mar. 1936.

admonition ‘my job is not to trim my sails and not tell the American people what we should be doing’.[26]

The key moment in terms of historical assessment of Halifax was the work of Helen Foxcroft, whose assembling of archival material meant her interpretation of Halifax dominated the field for almost a century, and continues to influence present-day historiography.[27] Foxcroft’s work was immensely important but it had significant limitations, particularly her portrayal of Halifax as a moderate Gladstonian, emblematic of the common sense of the English people. However, her vision dominated the historiography so that during the 1930s two notable summative histories dealt with Halifax in a similar way. Sir George Clark referred to him as ‘great’ and considered him to be ‘a believer in constitutional monarchy, in political moderation, in toleration with precautions for the safety of the state and in efficient naval defence.’[28] David Ogg considered his statesmanship ‘somewhat ineffective’ but praised his ‘mellow wisdom and personal detachment’. He did not think him cynical but a patriot with the English characteristic of good nature enabling ‘men to cooperate harmoniously in the life of the well-ordered state.’[29] Foxcroft’s interpretation of Halifax as the first in a long line of moderate freedom-loving Englishmen was enhanced during the Second World War. In 1941, the year after Christopher Hill’s *English Revolution* exhorted readers that from Winstanley ‘we still have much to learn from the seventeenth century’, the indefatigable Foxcroft urged instead the adoption of Halifax’s example as someone who fought ‘the menace which the new autocracy opposed both to European liberty and European peace’.[30] The strengths, and limitations, of Foxcroft’s approach were demonstrated with the publication of her single

[26] *Washington Post*, ‘President Obama flinches from an easy decision on the gas tax’ (2 Feb. 2015), https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/president-obama-flinches-from-an-easy-decision-on-the-gas-tax/2015/02/02/fc91fe18-ab23-11e4-9c91-e9d2f9fde644_story.html (8 Feb. 2023).
[27] Foxcroft, *Life*.
[28] G. N. Clark, *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714* (Oxford, 1934; reprint 1965), p. 377.
[29] David Ogg, *England in the Reign of Charles II* (Oxford; 1934; reprint 1972), pp. 749-52.
[30] Christopher Hill, *The English Revolution* (1941), 82; H. C. Foxcroft, ‘New Light on George Savile, First Marquis of Halifax, “The Trimmer”’, *History*, 26:103 (1941), 185.

volume edition of Halifax's life in 1946, which provided a more accessible account for the general reader. *A Character of the Trimmer* continued to portray Halifax as an emblem of moderation, and at times Foxcroft amended her account to keep up with changes in current affairs rather than historiographical trends. Louis XIV was thus described as holding a '"totalitarian" hatred of the Protestant, [which] rivals Hitler's hatred of the Jew'.[31]

With the work of J.P. Kenyon there came a significant change in Halifax's reputation. In his 1958 biography of Sunderland Kenyon was scathing of Halifax. He was 'fussy, precise, rather doctrinaire', 'his opinions were obscure, not least to himself', 'sensitive and egotistical' he lacked powers of leadership.[32] In 1969 Kenyon brought out an edition of Halifax's writings in the Pelican classics series. By this time his view of him seems to have somewhat softened. Thus he considered him to be 'one of those intellectuals who found the practice of politics odious and uncomfortable… [but who] always returned… for further punishment'. [33]

In 1989 Mark N. Brown published an authoritative three volume collection of Halifax's works, but this, rather than generating new interest, proved to be the end of historical attention to Halifax. While magnificent in its discussion of the manuscripts it lacks a broad synthesis of Halifax. De Krey, for example, noted the lack of a new interpretation, and Seaward criticised Brown's failure fully to engage with the speculative, moral, and religious elements of Halifax's works.[34] Moreover since the publication of Brown's work the later Stuart period has been subject to significant reinterpretation and this underlines the need for a new, updated interpretation of Halifax.

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[31] Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 20.
[32] J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland. 1641-1702* (1958), pp. 29, 55, 67.
[33] Kenyon, pp. 7–39.
[34] Gary S. De Krey, 'Review: The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax by George Savile and Mark N. Brown', *Albion*, 22:4 (1990), 677-8; Paul Seaward, 'Review: The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax by Mark N. Brown and George Savile', *EHR*, 108:426 (1993), 203.

Consideration of Halifax's life and work can illuminate Restoration historiographical debates on periodization and partisanship. Traditional interpretations saw the later seventeenth century as either a disappointing afterthought to the potentialities of the civil wars and Interregnum, or instead as an entirely novel period of history, where religious divides became minor concerns.[35] These assumptions were powerfully challenged by Jonathan Scott, whose work on Algernon Sidney argued that political strife after the Restoration was caused by the same fears of popery and arbitrary government which had destabilised the nation before the civil war: there were 'similar causes and together they formed a connected sequence of instability'. Scott argued against the idea of a unique 'Exclusion Crisis' in 1680, and contends that England experienced a century of instability, punctuated by three connected crises over popery in 1638-42, 1678-83, and 1687-1689.[36] Similarly, Goldie's work on Roger Morrice argues that there were deep similarities between the politics of the two halves of the century. He, however, argues the most important group amongst the opposition were not the republican-minded figures Scott discusses, but rather 'Puritan Whigs', who were motivated by religious, anti-republican concerns.[37] Goldie has argued that the traditional view of 1660 marking the end of 'puritan politics' is false, and highlights the enduring importance of the Puritan Whigs under the later Stuarts.[38] Sowerby too, argues that the fall of James II was another episode in the waxing and waning anti-popery that dominated English politics.[39] While some historians, notably Steven Pincus, have argued that by 1688 the sectarian nature of English politics had been replaced by debates between Francophile and Francophobic

[35] For the former view, see Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714* (2002), p. 306; for the latter, see J. R. Jones (ed.), *The Restored Monarchy, 1660-1688* (1979); J. H. Plumb, *The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725* (1967). And see the discussion in Tim Harris, 'Review: From Rage of Party to Age of Oligarchy? Rethinking the Later Stuart and Early Hanoverian Period', *JMH*, 64:1 (1992), 700-20.
[36] Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 5.
[37] Mark Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan Whigs* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 149.
[38] In contrast to, for example, Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and some Contemporaries* (1984). See Goldie, *Puritan Whigs*, pp. 148-50.
[39] Scott Sowerby, *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 2013), p. 249.

modes of development, this thesis argues that Halifax is an example of someone who retained a confessionally-based view of foreign affairs well into the 1690s.[40] Certainly Halifax's hostility to France and frequent irreverence about religion have led some to regard him as emblematic of a post-sectarian politics. However, his Francophobia and support for a Grand Alliance with Catholic powers (notably Spain) had a strong religious element. While his arguments in favour of England acting as a balance would be framed as secular by later generations, he fits within a tradition of Protestant concern over universal monarchy that stretched back, and saw the Reformation as under real threat of 'extirpation'. Moreover, much of his anticlericalism centred around a concern that excessively 'heated' preaching on non-resistance would provoke a reaction similar to that of the Civil War. A new interpretation of Halifax, one that connects his life with the new understanding of the Restoration era, is therefore required.

Halifax and trimming

Known as 'The Trimmer', Halifax himself never embraced the label. Even in his best known work, *Character of a Trimmer* he never adopts the term for himself, but merely defends a fictional character: 'Our Trimmer is not ashamed of his Name'.[41] Brown regards Trimmer as being a description applied to moderate Tories, but rarely if ever directed at Halifax specifically. It was an abusive epithet utilised by Tories such as L'Estrange to denigrate those they considered insufficiently committed to policies they supported. As one typical edition of L'Estrange's paper, *Observator* put it the Trimmer, while claiming loyalty to the King, and talking of a hope to reconcile Protestants, was merely masking his disloyalty and fanaticism:

> He says nothing at all … of *Sedition* and *Schism*: But he is Incomparably Good at finding out Matter of *Conscience*, in the very *Core* and *Mass* of the most *Complicated*

[40] Pincus, *1688*, p. 307.
[41] Brown, I, 243.

> *Faction:* He says not a Word, on the Other side neither, of all the *Felicities* we Enjoy, in a *Lawfull, Prudent, Tender* and *Gracious Prince*.[42]

Certainly, rebutting L'Estrange's caricature in the *Observator* was a prime motivation for Halifax in writing the pamphlet, but Halifax was merely using the label Trimmer to structure his work, rather than proactively embracing it as a concept. Moreover, Trimmer could also be used as a term of abuse by Whigs against those they deemed insufficiently sympathetic to Dissent, or could be merely a marker of a disreputable character. The Presbyterian diarist Roger Morrice first used the characterisation in relation to the collapse of negotiations between the Puritan Whig Denzil Holles and Charles II for reform of the Church in 1679. After the King 'to the inexpressible grief of all the persons concerned', did not follow through on the plan, Morrice considered 'the delight he took in and a constant [protection] of acting the part of a trimmer'.[43] Although he was aware of Tories using the term as abuse, for example when Judge Jeffries introduced someone to James II with the recommendation 'that he assured him he offered to him a very honest man and one that was no Trimmer', Morrice used it predominantly to express his fears that Anglicans would yet again betray Dissenters.[44] In the paranoid chaos of the Revolution, Morrice wrote of the risks that Anglican promises to extend comprehension to Presbyterians would be abandoned as

> Many are thought to be playing the Trimmers, and to be laying a foundation upon a narrow bottom for Torisme againe to the Exclusion of the true Reformed interest in the Kingdome, and for restoring the Hierarchy to its Zenith.[45]

But in spite of his willingness to attack Halifax in his *Entring Book*, Morrice never referred to him as a 'Trimmer'. Halifax's reluctance to embrace the label stemmed in part from the fact that Trimmers were generally perceived to be self-serving, rather than sincere in their desire to achieve compromise. The broadside '*A Trimmer Practicall'* depicted a man half-Jesuit and

[42] Roger L'Estrange, *The Observator*, no. 241, (15 Nov. 1682).
[43] Morrice, II, 95-8
[44] Morrice, III, 167.
[45] Morrice, IV, 367.

half-Presbyterian. ‘Mark these Monsters, who serve their own bellyes’ it warned. The Trimmers were ‘Fleecers not Feeders’, and ‘Turn-Coat[s] in Every age for Interest’.[46] Halifax’s aim in writing *Character of a Trimmer* was, claimed his chaplain ‘not so much to vindicate a name, as to convey under a seeming trifle the best counsel that could be given to the King, and to the well-meaning part of the Nation’.[47]

There was no meaningful ‘Trimmer’ party, but did Halifax head a ‘moderate’ party instead? Moderation was a prized virtue after the Civil Wars. Many, including Halifax sought to construct a government with a broad base of support (particularly after 1689), and at times he did indeed claim to be acting moderately. Yet as Southcombe has noted many writers of the period claimed to be acting moderately, and, of course, by choosing two poles, almost any position could be categorised as moderate, which ‘led authors to make polemical claims while seeking to maintain that they occupied a moderate position’.[48] Halifax’s moderation in the 1680s was often as much about ‘curing the frenzy’ of the heated popular rhetoric unleashed by Shaftesbury as it was about finding common ground. In this context his actions can be seen as more similar to the coercive early modern moderation Shagan describes, which sought vigorously to expunge political behaviours considered unacceptable, rather than to find a peaceful compromise.[49]

Moreover, Halifax at times explicitly rejected moderation. He sought to convince some republicans that his expedients of Limitations in 1680 were preferable as they were more radical than Exclusion, and in 1689 he was one of the few who contemplated crowning William as a sole monarch, rather than joining the ‘Maryite’ moderate compromisers around

[46] Mark N. Brown, ‘Trimmers and Moderates in the Reign of Charles II’, *HLQ*, 37:4 (1974), 315.
[47] ‘Saviliana’.
[48] George Southcombe, ‘The Polemics of Moderation in Late Seventeenth-Century England’, in Almut Suerbaum, George Southcombe, Benjamin Thompson (eds), *Polemic: Language as Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Discourse* (Farnham, 2015), p. 237.
[49] Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2011), ch. 1.

the earl of Danby. Rather than seeking a balance between parties, Halifax here sought to overcome partisanship, which he still regarded as dangerous, and undermining to a conception of the 'publick interest'. When *Letter to a Dissenter* implored its audience 'Remember that the other day those of the Church of England were Trimmers for enduring you' he was not defending the notion of trimming but regretting that low-Church Anglicans had been unfairly smeared with the label.[50] Some former allies of Shaftesbury opposed Exclusion, not from a moderate desire to find compromise, but because they believed it to be correct. Moreover many, including Halifax, saw Limitations as more radical than Exclusion, not a pragmatic compromise.

Rejection of the 'moderate' interpretation of Halifax could be linked with the suggestion that he had no principles, and was merely an ambitious dilettante, simultaneously desperate for office but unwilling to tolerate the burdens of it. Again this thesis will challenge such an interpretation arguing that Halifax sought power in order to further ends which were determined by his political and religious views. It will also suggest that Halifax's politics and writings demonstrate a form of aristocratic conservatism that was concerned about the role to be attributed to an aristocracy in an increasingly commercial and bureaucratised society, where the press and wider participation in the public sphere threatened the traditional role of the peers.

Early and family life

Savile's early life is not well documented, and there is little to add to the accounts given by Foxcroft and Brown.[51] His father, Sir William, had been born in 1612 and succeeded to the title on the death of his elder brother, George, in 1626. His uncle was Sir Thomas Wentworth,

[50] Brown, I, 262.
[51] See Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 7-19 and Brown, I, xix-xliii.

later to become Earl of Strafford who interested himself in protecting his nephew's inheritance including the house at Thornhill in Yorkshire which had been in the family for over 200 years. Wentworth was also instrumental in arranging William Savile's marriage in 1629 to Anne Coventry, eldest daughter of Lord Keeper, Thomas Coventry. George Savile was born on 11 November 1633 at Thornhill Hall, near Dewsbury. William Savile was elected for Yorkshire in the Short Parliament of 1640, where he spoke against Ship Money. By 1642, however, he was a supporter of Charles I, being with him at Nottingham in August of that year. He assisted the Earl of Newcastle in the campaign in Yorkshire and was appointed governor of Sheffield Castle, until he died in January 1644. His widow remained at Sheffield Castle and only surrendered to the Parliamentary forces in August 1644. George Savile had a brief spell as a pupil at a private school in Amersham run by Charles Croke in 1641 and, following his father's death, another at Shrewsbury School. Thereafter he possibly lived at Rufford, the other major estate and hunting seat inherited by his father when his mother moved there after the siege of Sheffield Castle. Lord Wharton was granted wardship of the young Sir George but his mother effectively retained control of his education and marriage. In July 1648 the garrison of royalist troops lodged at Thornhill Hall was besieged by Parliamentary forces when, according to a contemporary report 'the enemy by accident fired their powder… and blew up part of the house, which afterwards took fire, and burnt the house down to the ground.'[52]

By 1647 George Savile was travelling in France, under the tutelage of Scottish Presbyterian George Anderson and Eleazar Duncon an enthusiastic supporter of Archbishop Laud's policies in the 1630s who obtained preferment through the patronage of Neile and Cosin. He was sequestrated in 1644, went abroad and in the early 1650s was associated with the exiled

[52] Sir Henry Cholmeley to Speaker of the House of Commons, 22 July 1648, quoted in Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 21.

court in Paris.[53] Savile also travelled at this time in Italy and the Netherlands and in July 1647 his grandmother, Elizabeth Coventry wrote to him

> my earnest desire to you is to be still derected by [your governor] and not to harken to younger counsel where is littell but vanytye to be got. Set God allwayes in your sight, and remember his commandements to obaye them, and then you will not forget the preseptes of your mother which maketh hir studye to preserve you. I have writ to my sonne William Coventrye to come to you, and least he plead he canne not finde you, I pray send him word where you are. He was at the academe in Parrise this month when I writ last to him.[54]

By the end of the year Savile was in Angers, as noted by Sir Thomas Hanmer

> [w]ee passe the tyme but indifferently well here though wee want not good wine and victualls, finding not such conversation as yours Sr Wm Davenants and Mr Cowleys, yet wee haue the comfort of som countreymen as Mr Couentry, Doctor Duncombe (a very honest man certainly) Sr Richard Percy, and some of the yonger straine as Sr George Sauile, Sr John Armytage, and others.[55]

By the next year Savile was in Paris at a military academy run by a Huguenot, Foubert, who relocated to England in 1679.[56] There his grandmother wrote to him again:

> it is a very great cordyall to me to heere how sivilly and with so much iudgment you goe one in all things the Doctor counseleth you to and if you keepe you to his rules with the rest of your future I make noe question but you will be a hapie man as well for the next world as for this, and it will ad much comfort to your careful mother and many ether your frendes and none more then my selfe whose prayers atend you.[57]

In the early 1650s Savile had been living at Westwood in Worcestershire, the home of his aunt, Dorothy Pakington. There at the same time, having been given refuge, would have been Henry Hammond. Hammond was considered to be a part of the 'hard core of obdurate Anglican clergy' by Spurr and a strong defender of episcopalian government.[58] But Hammond was also strongly in favour of personal amendment and often regarded as a 'godly

[53] Jason McElligott, 'Duncon, Eleazar', *ODNB*.
[54] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/212/36/1, Elizabeth Coventry to Sir George Savile, 16 July 1647.
[55] E. E. Phare, 'Note on George Savile, First Marquis of Halifax', *The Review of English Studies*, 9:33 (1933) 62–3.
[56] Paley, I, 78.
[57] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/212/36/2, Elizabeth Coventry to Sir George Savile, 20 May 1648.
[58] John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (Yale, 1991), p. 37

minister'.[59] Spurr notes that *The Whole Duty of Man* (with a preface by Hammond) one of the most popular texts of the seventeenth century (though not a book that Halifax owned) is essentially a 'commonsensical, non-controversial brand of theology'.[60] There were rumours that the author of *The Whole Duty* was Dorothy Pakington which Halifax seems to be aware of though without asserting her authorship.[61] In his character of her he gives some suggestion of his dislike for religious zealots when he praises her because:

> Shee played no tricks at Church, no devout convulsions, to distinguish her selfe from the rest of the congregation. Still and calme, all her 'outward' earnestnesse reserved for her closet, where shee might without witnesses enjoy God Almighty in her prayers.[62]

Pakington's example, Halifax argued, was one which should be copied, as 'Religion doth not ly in making devout mouths, answering loud at the Letany, or looking melancholy upon Sundayes'.[63] His Huguenot education had a lasting impact on Halifax who ensured his children received similar experiences, and gave him a point of connection with his uncle Algernon Sidney, who had lived in the Huguenot south of France.[64] Thus, his eldest son, Henry visited and explored France and Italy with a Huguenot divine (Pierre du Moulin) in 1676, while his younger sons, William and George, studied under Jean-Robert Chouet, Rector of the Academie de Geneve around 1680.[65] Halifax's brother Henry, who was English ambassador to France, promised in relation to his namesake that 'as for his inward man, I intend to examine him very strictly'.[66] Hayton notes that William was one of the few members of the post-1689 House of Commons to have received a substantial portion of their education abroad.[67] This was done explicitly to ensure that Halifax's children would improve their Protestantism through exposure to, and sympathy with, Reformed churches in Europe. Their uncle Henry offered advice on the best Protestant academies in France, and expressed the hope that in Geneva 'the good capons and trouts will make them proper men, and the

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[59] Andrew Foster, 'The Clerical Estate Revitalised' in Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (1993), p. 155.
[60] Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 284.
[61] Brown, II, 48, 59.
[62] Ibid., 469.
[63] Ibid., 474. This sentence is a restored deletion, which Brown notes is paraphrased in *Advice to a Daughter*. Ibid., 364-5.
[64] Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic, 1623–1677* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 217.
[65] Mr Marquis to Halifax, 4 May 1680, Chatsworth, CS1/21/54.
[66] Henry Savile to Halifax, 16 Sept. 1676, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 41.
[67] Hayton, I, 283; Stuart Handley, 'Savile, William, Ld. Eland', in Hayton, V, 373.

spiritual food of the successours of John Calvin will as well nourish their souls'.[68] Halifax himself was clear on the religious purpose of his choice of education. While his children were in Geneva, he wrote to Henry 'I hope the King of France will let them alone, and not force such a couple of hopefull Protestants to take sanctuary for their religion in England'.[69]

What George Savile studied is not known but his brother, Henry, some ten years younger, was in Orleans, already noted for its law faculty, in 1659, from whence he left a notebook that detailed some of his studies under his 'maistre du droit', Bonsergent. Henry lists the texts he was looking at: Justinian's *Institutes,* and then commentaries on them including Everardus Bronchorst's *In titulum digestorum,* Theophilus *Inst Juris Civilis,* Antonio Perez *Institutiones imperials,* Arnoldus Corvinus *Enchiridium seu institutiones imperials,* and Duck's *De usu et authoritate* several of which were also in Halifax's library. He begins with a rhetorical flourish asking 'Quis est qui negat ius civile caelitus descendisse et munus plane esse divinum?' and then goes on to set out a history of the civil law. He considers the different titles in Justinian and quotes both from Justinian and from the commentators.[70] The use of Duck is of interest. In general a supporter of Laud, he was prepared to give opinions contrary to Laud's wishes. Moreover, this work, published in 1653 and really a history of the civil law, was only partially translated into English and that not until 1724. It emphasised the subordination of the English church to the crown and emphasised the need for consent in government.[71] George Savile had returned to England by 1652 and spent some time with Pakington in Worcestershire. He then appears to have been involved with a Royalist plot against the Cromwellian regime that also involved his uncle, Sir John Pakington and his

[68] Henry Savile to Halifax, 1 Oct. 1678, 'Savile Correspondence', pp. 72-4.
[69] Halifax to Henry Savile, 10 Apr. 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 80.
[70] Chatsworth, HX/G/2.2.
[71] Peter Stein, 'Arthur Duck', *ODNB*; Daniel Coquilette, *The Civilian Writers of Doctors Commons, London* (Berlin, 1988), pp. 161-6.

cousin William Coventry. Although Cromwell apparently wrote that George Savile should be arrested for his involvement he was not and no action was taken against him.[72]

In December 1656 he married Dorothy Spencer, the daughter of the 1st Earl of Sunderland and granddaughter of the 2nd Earl of Leicester, who wrote to Savile 'if the power had bin given to me of chusing whom I would of all this nation for her who now is yours, I should quickly have resolved on you.'[73] Dorothy Spencer brought a dowry of some £10,000 and they had three sons who survived childhood, Henry born 1661 and died 1687, William born 1665, who succeeded as the 2nd marquis of Halifax in 1695 and George born 1667 and died 1689, and a daughter, Anne who married the 3rd Earl of Carbery and died in 1689. Dorothy Savile died in December 1670 and in 1672 Halifax married Gertrude Pierrepoint by whom he had one daughter Elizabeth born in 1675 who married Philip Stanhope in 1692.

His political career is discussed in detail throughout the thesis but a brief summary is given here: Sir George Savile was elected MP for Pontefract in 1660 and initially had as patron the 2nd Duke of Buckingham whom he followed in and out of office in 1667. He was elevated to the peerage as Viscount Halifax in 1668, became a member of the Privy Council in 1672 and was dismissed from it in 1676. In 1679, despite the opposition of Charles II, Halifax was included in Temple's scheme for a privy council of thirty and worked in a triumvirate with the Earls of Essex and Sunderland. In July 1679 he was created Earl of Halifax, but later that year withdrew from the government and from London. He returned in autumn 1680, and in mid to late 1682 was promoted to a marquessate, became Lord Privy Seal and remained in government (though latterly as Lord President) until dismissed in October 1685 by James II. From October 1688 he was involved with the negotiations that finally led to the departure of James and accession of William and Mary to whom Halifax, as speaker of the House of

[72] Mark Brown, 'Savile, George, First Marquess of Halifax,', *ODNB.*
[73] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/212/36/4, Earl of Leicester to Sir George Savile, 19 Jan. 1657.

Lords, offered the crown in January 1689. Lord Privy Seal again until 1690 he thereafter attended the Privy Council until dismissed in June 1692. He died on 31 March 1695 and was succeeded in the title by his son, William.[74]

Sources and structure

The dominant biographical study of Halifax remains Helen Foxcroft's *Life and Letters* (1898). But her exceptional compilation of source material is not matched by her interpretation of Halifax as a seventeenth-century equivalent of Gladstone. In 1969 J. P. Kenyon's partial collection of the writings of a man he described as 'intellectually … head and shoulders above most contemporary statesmen', argued that Halifax, being both an active politician and political thinker, provided a unique subject to study. [75] In 1989, the literary scholar, Mark Brown published an authoritative collection of Halifax's works.

In terms of primary information, Foxcroft's work is still essential, if rather obtusely arranged. Where possible, and for ease of reference, Halifax's correspondence is quoted as it is printed in her book. On some occasions, minor errors or gaps mean archival material is used. Halifax's correspondence is deeply frustrating. Large gaps occasionally occur, most notably during the 1688 Revolution, the result of accidental and partly intentional destruction of material. Certainly Halifax was concerned about the privacy of his correspondence – he told Sir William Trumbull that 'you may write securely' by his son and he also destroyed letters – as he confirmed to Sir William Trumbull 'I do as you bid me, burn after reading'[76]. Likewise, while a number of obsequious letters Halifax wrote to Robert Harley seeking to arrange

[74] Brown, 'Savile, George', *ODNB*.
[75] Kenyon, p. 8, and see Kenyon's influential *Earl of Sunderland*.
[76] HMC, *The Manuscripts of the Marquess of Downshire Preserved at Easthampstead Park, Berkshire* (10 vols, London 1924), I, 136.

meetings in the 1690s survive, neither Harley's replies, nor the substantive accounts of their meetings do, requiring a degree of speculation.

For Halifax's written works, both published and unpublished, Mark Brown's edition has been used both for quotation and as an (almost) definitive guide to the Halifax canon. One important exception concerns *Observations upon a Late Libel* (1681). Although Brown attributes the work to Halifax, Kenyon earlier did not: 'In my opinion this is not Halifax's work, and on any unbiased assessment the verdict must be "not proven"'.[77] When the work was first suggested to be by Halifax in 1940 a bitter debate ensued, arguing that its style was not so distinctive as to make Halifax the author, while its arguments were at odds with his politics.[78] During work on the thesis I have increasingly come to the view that Brown was wrong to attribute the work to Halifax. This conclusion is the same as that reached by Seaward, whose review stated '*Late Libel*['s] … attribution is uncertain (and remains so despite Brown's strenuous attempts to pin it on Halifax)'.[79] The reasons for this are that the vehemently Tory arguments contained in the pamphlet are at odds with the policies Halifax sought to pursue after the Oxford Parliament of 1681 and the fact that he did not claim authorship later, even when speaking to figures who would sympathise with the work.

Foxcroft used materials then at Devonshire House and in the Spencer collection. The Devonshire House material is now at Chatsworth House and is fully catalogued. Much of this, essentially the political writings and some correspondence, had been well used by Foxcroft and I have also made substantial use of this. I have also utilized material not referred to by Foxcroft or Brown such as Halifax's notes in connection with the East India Company. The Spencer collection material is now in the British Library as Althorp MSS and was again

[77] Kenyon, p. 344.
[78] See B. Behrens, 'Pseudo-Halifax', *The Cambridge Review*, 62 (1940), 107-8.
[79] Paul Seaward, 'Review: The Works of George Savile', *EHR*, 108 (1993), 204.

well utilized by Foxcroft. I have also used material in the Nottinghamshire archives, much of which relates to the properties owned by Halifax including household accounts for various periods, but which also includes some correspondence not used by Foxcroft. It also holds newsletters written by 'L Champion' to both Halifax and his wife between April 1680 to June 1681. There is little information about Champion but in 1675 a Louis Champion wrote to Secretary Williamson, '[a]ssuring him of his obedience… hoping… to acquit himself better and better in the employment confided to him… the mistakes in his *Gazettes* being only printer's errors'.[80] It is possible that Champion was one of the many writers employed by Williamson in the dissemination of official material through the London Gazette a view that might be strengthened by an entry in the accounts of Henry Guy of a payment in 1681 to L Champion.[81] More certainly, in the 1690s Halifax was connected to a Champion family, evidenced by his correspondence with Alexander Stanhope, the English Envoy extraordinary to Spain. Halifax had recommended Stanhope employ a man named Champion as a secretary or clerk, however the arrangement was unsuccessful and Champion was sacked in 1693. Halifax wrote, 'I must bee sorry that hee hath given you the occasion for it, since I recommended him to you upon the beleefe I had hee would do everything that might deserve your favour'.[82] Champion did not return to England, however, as the following year Halifax wrote: 'I am sorry for the death of poor Champion, whose widow here desireth your charitable assistance if any thing hee hath left may bee preserved for her and her child'.[83] This may explain why a Nathaniel Champion was a witness to the codicil to Halifax's will in 1693 and was left £10 per year in another codicil of 1695.[84] The Stanhope material in the Kent archives was also of interest in showing the relationships Halifax had with members of

[80] *CSPD*, 4 Nov. 1673.
[81] *Monies Received and Paid for Secret Services of Charles II and James II, 1679-1688*, ed. John Yonge Akerman, Camden Society Old Series, lii (1852), p. 34.
[82] Kent Archives, U1590/C7/27, Halifax to Alexander Stanhope, 9 May 1693.
[83] Same to same, 29 Aug. 1694, U1590/C7/27.
[84] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 266.

the Stanhope family wider than just the Earl of Chesterfield and his son, Philip, who married Halifax's daughter.

Halifax's library

The thesis makes extensive use of the catalogues of Halifax's library. Unfortunately the books themselves seem to have been dispersed and it is therefore not possible to see whether or how Halifax annotated them. As Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton have suggested the '"activity of reading" characteristically envisaged some other outcome of reading beyond accumulation of information'[85], though the idea of the distinction to be drawn between the goal oriented and the recreational reader has been challenged by Fred Schurink.[86] Moreover, Kevin Killeen has argued that the emphasis on the reading of classical texts has obscured the importance of how biblical texts were read and used.[87] From looking at his notes it is possible to see how Halifax made specific references to books and knew how quotations could be used to buttress contrary arguments. For example, looking at *Prerogatives,* Halifax notes:

> Texts are so wrested: as of one side for Kinges – "by mee Kings reigne" – so on the other the Commonwealth's men, alleadge, that Christ sayeth, that every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down and cast into the fire.[88]

The first quotation is from Proverbs 8:15, the second a slight misquotation (at least from the Authorized Version) from Matthew 3:10. He makes reference to pages from Prynne's Records; has a page headed 'Jenkins' again with page references, and refers to 'Vol. 7. Pa:82' meaning the volumes of pamphlets in the library.[89] It is probable therefore that Halifax had a

[85] Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, '"Studied for Action": How Gabriel Harvey Read his Livy', *P&P,* 129 (1990), 31.
[86] Fred Schurink, 'Manuscript Commonplace Books, Literature, and Reading in Early Modern England', *HLQ,* 73:3 (2010), 453-69.
[87] Kevin Killeen, 'Chastising with Scorpions: Reading the Old Testament in Early Modern England', *HLQ,* 73:3 (2010), 491-506.
[88] Brown, II, 32
[89] Brown, II, 26-71.

commonplace book in which he made notes from the books he had read but if he did it has not survived.

The four volumes cataloguing books from Halifax's library are in the Cambridge University Library. Three of them formed part of the library of John Moore, Bishop of Ely, which was purchased by George I on his death and presented to Cambridge in 1715 where it is known as 'The Royal Library'[90]. Bookplates were inserted in these three volumes at a later date. The other catalogue (MS Oo.6.108) has no book plate and no accession record but it is possible that it also formed part of Moore's library and was omitted when the bookplates were inserted. That volume actually consists of two catalogues both for London: one for 1683 and one for 1684. The two later volumes cataloguing the books at Rufford in 1693 and at London in 1692 are in the same hand and record a title, sometimes an author and usually a date and/or a place of publication.[91] However, Cambridge University Library does not appear to have the actual books that were in Halifax's library. In his will dated 16 August 1695 William, the 2nd Marquis of Halifax stated that '[a]s to the furniture of my houses… [they] shall belong to such persons to whom my houses shall descend'. Thus Rufford, together with the contents of the library acquired by the 1st Marquis, would have come into the possession of the second Marquis's heir, Sir George Savile, the 7th baronet, and his descendants.[92] In 1938 those descendants sold Rufford Abbey and its contents by auction. A copy of the sale catalogue makes it possible to identify a number of items that were in the earlier catalogues but the volumes themselves have proved impossible to locate.[93] Accordingly although it can be stated that Halifax owned a particular book it is not possible to prove that he had read it let

[90] CUL. MS Dd. IX. 51, Dd.2.14 and Dd.9.30
[91] The catalogues are as follows: Dd-9-30 (London 1679); Oo.6.108 (London 1683); Oo.6.108 (London 1684); Mss Dd.2.14 (London 1692); MS Dd.9.51 (Rufford 1693).
[92] J. W. Clay, 'The Savile Family' *YAJ*, 25 (1920), 30.
[93] Knight, Frank & Rutley, *Catalogue of The Rufford Collection Including Treasures Acquired by the Ancestors of the Savile Family During Three Centuries* (Nottingham, 1938).

alone what he thought of it. However, it is plain, as illustrated earlier, that many of the volumes were read and quoted from.

The Savile family's principal seat at Thornhill Hall was destroyed by fire in 1648 and they thereafter moved to what had been previously used as a hunting lodge at Rufford Abbey. Any family books would presumably have been destroyed in 1648 and thus we can infer that the books in Halifax's library were acquired by him personally. Over 95% of the books can be identified. Some are noted as being with other individuals. In 1679 *Witty Apothogems of King James* has a note by it 'this book Mr Hastings hath' and it and two others were still with him in 1683. Other individuals who are noted as having books include Sir Leoline Jenkins; Sir William Coventry, Sir William Temple and Dr Johnson.[94] Members of the family also used the books. Mackenzie's *Moral Gallantry* is noted as 'my Ld has it'.[95] Lady Halifax is noted as having Sammes' *The Antiquities of Britain,*[96] while Lord George has William Cavendish's *A New Method to Dress Horses* and Lady Betty has Cowley's *Poems.*[97]

Items were acquired on a regular basis thus while the 1679 lists 688 items, that for 1683 lists 749 and that for 1684 912. By 1692/3 two catalogues exist, the one for London in 1692 has 1155 items; the one for Rufford for 1693 742. A number of items appear in an earlier catalogue but not in the 1692 one. In particular the 1684 catalogue contains over 400 books that appear in no other. The reason for the large number of books appearing in the 1684 catalogue but not subsequently is probably that by 1684 Halifax House already had two rooms used as libraries. The 1692 catalogue is said to be of the books in the lower library and it is probable that the 1684 books missing from the 1692 catalogue were housed in the upper library for which no inventory was taken in 1692. Assuming that to be correct there were then

[94] All 1684 and all apparently returned as the names have been crossed out.
[95] 1692 catalogue.
[96] Ibid.
[97] 1683 catalogue; 1684 catalogue.

some 1900 items in the London libraries and an additional 742 at Rufford making a total library holding of 2,672 items. I have been careful to describe these as items rather than books as there are, for example, in London 7 'books of cutts' including *Oxonia illustrata.* The 1692 London catalogue also includes what seem to be thirty eight volumes of pamphlets of which the compiler of the catalogue notes 'every one of these volumes has a catalogue of the contents at ye head of it'. Two hundred and fifteen of the books in the Rufford catalogue are marked with a cross indicating that they are to be sent to London. Of those sixty nine are actually included in the 1692 London catalogue. Presumably they had been in London, were sent to Rufford and then needed to be returned to London. It may be that these are the most read or the most significant for Halifax: they certainly contain political works such as Neville's *Plato Redivivus* and Harrington's *Oceana* but they also contain *Bucaniers of America* by Exquemelin and *L'Afrique* by Marmol y Carvajal.

Halifax seems therefore to have had over 2,500 printed books in his libraries at Rufford and London. The 1692 catalogue also notes of a couple of books that they are 'at Acton' though that remark is crossed out. Nevertheless it raises the possibility that Halifax had another library at his house in Acton and certainly 2,500 books did not constitute a particularly large private library for the late seventeenth century. David Pearson suggests that whereas at the start of the seventeenth century a library of 3,000 volumes would be large 'by the middle of the century something nearer ten thousand volumes would be needed to stand out', while the average size of known libraries for the 1670s and 80s was about 3,000 volumes. Moreover, Halifax does not have many of the books most common in Pearson's sample.[98]

About 42% of the books are in English with French and Latin each accounting for about 25%, Italian make up about 6% and Spanish 2%. This seems to be a similar proportion of

[98] David Pearson, 'The English Private Library in the Seventeenth Century', *The Library*, 7th series 13:4 (2012), pp. 380-1.

English works as in many collections of the time. John Locke, for example, had a library of about 3,500 volumes of which 39% were in English. However, whereas Halifax's library had about 25% of volumes in Latin, Locke had 37%. The place of publication is given in the catalogue for about 2,200 volumes. Of those just over a thousand or about half were published in London. The next best represented place is Paris where 372 books were published. British towns outside London hardly feature.

All the books, other than those in Italian, in the 1690 catalogues are categorised. The categorisations in the catalogues are not consistent so that, for example, Burnet's *History of the Rights of Princes* of 1682 is categorised as 'government politics' in the Rufford catalogue but as 'church clergy divinity' in the London one. The largest number of books (400) are described as 'miscellanys'; 'varii' or 'oeuvres diverses'. Politics and government make up 380 volumes; history 345; law 233 and religion or divinity 182. Not surprisingly the numbers of books published in later decades increases. The language make up changes noticeably so that of 57 books published pre 1599 13 (23%) are in English whereas of 61 books published 1690-4 46 (75%) are in English.

The thesis is organised in a broadly chronological sequence but analysis of Halifax's writings is concentrated in different chapters roughly reflecting the dates of writing of the pamphlets. Thus all his pamphlets are considered in some detail with the exception of *Advice to a Daughter*. This was possibly Halifax's most popular work with regular reprintings during the eighteenth century. However, it adds little to any discussion of his political thought. This method allows the bringing together an analysis of the works and to relate that to his political actions in a way that broadens understanding of both.

Conclusion

Halifax was a man distrusted by his contemporaries, and prone to deluding himself, particularly over whether Whigs would forgive him for defeating Exclusion, and the ease with which English intervention could swing the balance of power in Europe. While acknowledging that politicians are frequently more inconsistent and ruthless in serving their political or personal goals than most people can believe nevertheless the thesis hopes to show that Halifax was a man who held consistent beliefs and that they can be used to account for his writings and his political actions. For his writing and political actions were neither irrationally lazy, nor cravenly self-serving. While accounting for the change in his views and attitudes, the thesis will show the underlying motivations, and at times striking radicalism, of his career. It hopes to depict a man neither an amoral cynic nor the embodiment of timeless English pragmatism and moderation, but rather the life of a politician and writer definitively of his turbulent time.

CHAPTER 1

Halifax's Religion

'Remember that the other day those of the Church of *England* were *Trimmers* for enduring you'[1]

In the furious aftermath of the defeat of the Bill of Exclusion by the House of Lords in 1680, Whig members of the Commons began to accuse Halifax of being a secret Catholic. One of his allies requested the impeccably Protestant Gilbert Burnet be called to testify the rumours were false. Remembering the event over twenty years later, Burnet added to his contemporaneous notes: 'I wish I could have said as much to have persuaded them that he was a good Christian as that he was no papist'.[2] Many of Halifax's contemporaries equated his wit and frequent cynicism with immorality and atheism but this thesis argues that his religious convictions have been badly misunderstood. Brown, in his major edition of Halifax's works, accepted that he was in some ways religious, but Seaward criticised Brown's failure fully to engage with the speculative, moral, and religious elements of Halifax's works.[3] Indeed, Brown tends drastically to simplify Halifax's attitudes towards religion: his anti-Catholicism is depicted as strongly motivated by a fear of the loss of former abbey lands such as Halifax's family seat at Rufford Abbey and he is portrayed as a very crude Erastian, who 'could despise the Church of England for religious reasons and sincerely

[1] Brown, I, 262.
[2] Burnet, *History*, II, 253-4. However, the manuscript version does not include this statement and Burnet's earlier notes record that he 'found… that he had deeper impressions of religion on him than those who knew the rest of his life would have thought', quoted in T. E. S. Clarke and H. C. Foxcroft, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury* (Cambridge, 1907), p. 158.
[3] Paul Seaward, 'Review: The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax by Mark N. Brown and George Savile', *EHR*, 108:426 (1993), 203.

support it for political ones'.[4] Since the publication of *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England* in 1990, which called for a shift in focus onto popular politics and religious dispute, and eventually transformed studies of the period, such a characterisation can be seen as simplistic.

This chapter argues that Halifax's thought on religion needs to be re-integrated into the mainstream of current Restoration religious history. First, it will explore Halifax's wider religious circle. Sometimes regarded as idiosyncratic and isolated, this thesis will argue that in fact Halifax maintained significant links to a large group of politicians and divines who shared his religious sentiments. Secondly, it will focus on the best-known element of his religious beliefs – anticlericalism. Halifax was often scathing about the limitations and abuses of the Restoration clergy. However, the chapter will demonstrate that this hostility was derived from a desire to reform the Church of England. Halifax was even more hostile to dissenters who he felt were at least equally responsible for religious divisions among English Protestants. Thirdly, the chapter will contend that the main divide within Restoration religious politics was amongst Anglicans, and related to the question of Protestant nonconformity. While one group sought to remove schism and what its critics claimed was its consequent radical republicanism from the English church, another hoped to use moderation and comprehension to achieve Protestant unity. Halifax emphatically aligned himself with the latter movement within the Church of England, and many key moments in his career should be seen in this light. The most important argument made in the chapter relates to Halifax's deep commitment to European Protestantism and the chapter particularly emphasises this aspect. Restoration Anglicanism was divided over the extent to which Reformed churches on the continent were genuinely allied to the Church of England, or were, like popery, another

[4] Brown, II, 254-7.

external enemy of the Church which needed to be combatted. Halifax felt that Anglicanism was one part of a broader European Protestant movement, and throughout his career took steps to aid those he regarded as his co-confessionalists.

1) Halifax's religious circle

Halifax was not isolated from those leading religious debates in Restoration England. In addition to his personal religious convictions, he had close ties to a number of secular figures and religious divines who broadly shared his outlook. One of Halifax's closest political allies was his cousin Thomas Thynne, for whom he used his connections to help secure the title of Viscount Weymouth in 1682.[5] In both the Commons and Lords Thynne followed a similar religious policy to his more famous relative; supporting comprehension, advocating expedients over Exclusion, and opposing James II's efforts to repeal the Test Acts.[6] Thynne was also given detailed instructions on how to disrupt an effort by Whig peers to use a joint committee investigating the 'murders' of Russell, Sidney, and Essex to discredit Halifax as Lord Privy Seal.[7] But arguably Thynne's greatest contribution to Halifax's religious circle was connecting him to another cousin, Daniel Finch, earl of Nottingham.[8] Nottingham had similar religious views to Halifax, particularly on the question of comprehension, and Horwitz regards the connection between the two as a key reason for his appointment as Secretary of State under William.[9] Nottingham introduced a comprehension bill in the House of Lords which made some controversial parts of the liturgy, such as kneeling at the

[5] Ruth Paley and Paul Seaward (eds), *Honour, Interest and Power: An Illustrated History of the House of Lords* (Woodbridge, 2010), p. 313.
[6] Henry Lancaster, 'Thynne, Thomas, First Viscount Weymouth', *ODNB.*
[7] IHR, XR 71/41, Thynne Papers vol. 76 – Public, Political and General Documents (Vol. II). 1558-1707, Halifax, 'Notes on Procedure in Parliament, 1689', f. 53.
[8] Henry Horwitz, *Revolution Politicks: The Career of Daniel Finch, Second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730* (1968), p. 23.
[9] Ibid., p. 84; *Idem*, 'Finch, Daniel, Second Earl of Nottingham', *ODNB.*

sacrament, optional.[10] The changes made would have horrified those such as John Evans, who in 1682 (preaching before the Tory Lord Mayor of London, Sir John Moore) painted a highly derogatory portrait of a 'moderate minister … [who] Give[s] the Sacrament Kneeling or Sitting or Standing'.[11] While Nottingham and Halifax were unable to see comprehension passed, Nottingham's clerical allies, who included Tillotson, were highly favoured in the Williamite episcopal settlement.[12] The alliance between the two men was still strong at Halifax's death in 1695, when the future second Marquis, William Savile, married Nottingham's daughter Mary Finch.[13]

Halifax was also very close to the key Puritan Whig leader Denzil Holles, having regularly attended his house in the 1670s to discuss tactics for the House of Lords.[14] Indeed, the replacement of both men by bishops on the Privy Council in 1676 was considered symbolic of Danby's imposition of 'prelatical' supremacy.[15] Holles was more sympathetic to dissent than Halifax – he attended nonconformist meetings and employed Presbyterians as chaplains – but he personally conformed to the Church of England. He also attempted to secure preferment for conformist clergy, most notably Halifax's friend Gilbert Burnet.[16]

The future bishop of Salisbury, Burnet received funding from Halifax for his work on the *History of the English Reformation*, which argued for a reconciliatory religious policy.[17] In 1680 Halifax attempted to secure a position for Burnet at St Martin-in-the Fields, which had

[10] John Spurr, 'The Church of England, Comprehension, and the Toleration Act of 1689', *EHR*, CIV:413, (1989), 938.
[11] John Evans, *Moderation Stated* (1682), p. 40.
[12] Horwitz, *Revolution Politicks*, p. 128.
[13] Ibid., p. 154.
[14] Charles Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 323.
[15] Mark Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan Whigs*, (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 179.
[16] Patricia Crawford, *Denzil Holles 1598-1680. A Study of his Political Career* (1979), pp. 208-9.
[17] Justin Champion, The *Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: the Church of England and its Enemies, 1660-1730* (Cambridge, 2014), p. 78.

been vacated by William Lloyd.[18] There is little doubt that Burnet and Halifax were close in the 1670s and early 1680s – when Halifax was ill Burnet wrote that 'for a fortnight together, I was once a day with him'.[19] Halifax also sought to reconcile the contentious Scottish divine with Charles II's court, in an attempt to combat the influence of High Anglican Tories. Burnet would have been a valuable ally to Halifax at court, had he accepted the latter's offer of preferment in 1680.[20] Was the relationship merely based on the mutual benefit of patron and client, or did they share religious views? From the late-1670s until Halifax's drift into the opposition to William in the 1690s they shared a similar diagnosis of the problems of the Church of England, and a desire for moral reform. Describing Burnet in an unpublished 'Character' written between 1681 and 1684, Halifax highlighted Burnet's 'unprelaticall Qualities', particularly his relative poverty and focus on pastoral care.[21] Halifax depicted Burnet, a committed Anglican, as the ideal of a Reformed Low-Churchman:

> let him be never so Orthodox in other things, in these he is a Dissenter. These Vertues are so many Heresies in the opinion of Those Divines who have softned the primitive Injunctions so as to make them suite better with the present frailty of Mankind. No wonder then if they are angry since it is in Their own defence, or that from the principle of Self preservation They should endeavour to suppress a Man whose parts are a shame, and whose life is a Scandal to Them …[22]

Halifax's anti-clericalism was directed against what he saw as corruption, immorality, and meddling in politics rather than the ideal of a national Church, or the legitimacy of a ministry, and he agreed with Burnet over the need for the Church of England to reform itself.

In addition to his support of Burnet, evidence connects Halifax to other members of a group in the Church of England which can in some ways be seen as 'latitudinarian' – Edward

[18] Dorothy Lane Poole, 'Some Unpublished Letters of George Savile, Lord Halifax, to Gilbert Burnet', *EHR*, 26:103 (1911), 537.
[19] Clarke and Foxcroft, *Life of Burnet*, p. 158
[20] Burnet, *History*, II, 294-5.
[21] For details on the date of composition, see Brown, II, 426.
[22] Ibid., p. 452.

Fowler, Edward Stillingfleet, and John Tillotson.[23] Fowler, who became bishop of Gloucester after the Revolution, advocated drastic reforms of the Book of Common Prayer and Thirty-Nine Articles that were objectionable to Dissenters in an attempt to achieve comprehension in 1689. As a bishop he was involved with the movement for the reformation of manners, and 'explicitly framed this reform movement within the context of an international struggle against the antichristian forces of Rome and France'.[24] During the Tory Reaction, Fowler's alleged protection of Protestant dissenters led to a group of his parishioners prosecuting him in the ecclesiastical courts.[25] As part of efforts to promote Protestant reconciliation through moral reform, Fowler, along with Stillingfleet and Tillotson, served alongside dissenters as stewards of the Welsh Trust, which published religious works in Welsh.[26] In 1688 Morrice reported that:

> it is most certain that he [Halifax] has been Treating with, and offering Bishopricks and preferments to some of the moderate Clergymen of the greatest note in the Church of England and Dr. Fuller [Fowler] himself told me he was now offered a Bishoprick, but would not accept it.[27]

Morrice's opinion of Halifax was unfavourable so the report needs to be treated carefully – indeed Morrice followed this with a diatribe against the 'selfishness' of him and Danby. However, given Fowler shared Halifax's religious politics, and Halifax had previously attempted to offer patronage, the possibility should not be discounted.

Halifax's connections with Tillotson are far more certain, and indeed Tillotson defended Halifax to Morrice as being 'very upright for the common advantage of the Kingdome, though others of his persuasion and principles are of another mind'.[28] When Henry Savile

[23] John Spurr, '"Latitudinarianism" and the Restoration Church', *HJ*, 31:1 (1988), 69.
[24] John Spurr, 'Fowler, Edward', *ODNB*.
[25] Mark Goldie and John Spurr, 'Politics and the Restoration Parish: Edward Fowler and the Struggle for St Giles Cripplegate', *EHR*, 109 (1994), 572–96.
[26] Brent Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (2014), p. 31.
[27] Morrice, IV, 259.
[28] Ibid., p. 422.

was in Paris his brother told him: 'I am desired by my very good friend the Dean of Canterbury [Tillotson] to recommend this gentleman Mr Nelson your kind reception'.[29] And in May 1681 Tillotson, writing to Halifax, acknowledged Henry Savile's 'great favors to my friend Mr Nelson upon your L[or]d[shi]ps recommendation'.[30] The ties between the two went beyond social connections. Halifax's most notable contribution to the Commission for Ecclesiastical Promotions was probably his effort to veto the appointment of George Hickes. Hickes himself bitterly complained to Sancroft that this had been caused by Halifax 'having been underhand set against him by Dr Tillotson & Dr Burnet … by whom his Lordship had been always too much influenc'd'.[31]

While it is difficult to assess precisely how much influence Halifax had over the commission, there were some who regarded him as important to its work. A letter from Thomas Camel to Halifax in 1681 warned against translating the Bishop of Raphoe to the vacant see of Londonderry, explaining:

> he is a sermon reader who is not content to cast his eye now and then on his notes but reades every line, & by his ill example hath taught many of his clergy to doe so too; so yt tradesmen dispise him, & when they have read one of Sandersons sermons to their family on Sunday night they laugh at the Bishop & boast yt they have done as much as ye Bishop himself …

Camel implored Halifax to ensure a different person was promoted, as 'if sermon-readers were denied high preferments ye Clergy would take more paines than they now doe'. Furthermore a putative vacancy in Raphoe ought not to be filled by the Dean of Down, as 'Colonel Cromwel can witness what a wicked man he is'. Whether Halifax did as requested – 'I beseech yr Lor[dshi]p (as you wish ye publick good) to communicate this letter to the other

[29] Halifax to Henry Savile, 15 Nov. 1680, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 168.
[30] Add MS 75366, unfoliated, John Tillotson to Halifax, 3 May 1681.
[31] Robert Beddard, 'The Commission for Ecclesiastical Promotions 1681-84: An Instrument of Tory Reaction', *HJ*, 10:1 (1967), 37.

Lords Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Preferments' – is unclear.[32] However, Camel was to be disappointed. Ezekiel Hopkins was translated from Raphoe to Londonderry, and though William Sheridan, the Dean of Down, did not replace him in Raphoe, he was made Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh the following year. It is possible the letter was motivated more by religious factions within the church with Camel contacting Halifax because he was known as the most sympathetic to Presbyterianism among the commissioners. Hopkins 'kept a sharp eye out for the discovery of presbyterian plotting' as bishop, and no other complaints of his preaching style exist, while Sheridan became a non-juror after 1689.[33] Nevertheless the failure of his request and the fact that it is unclear whether the Commission had any authority in Ireland means Halifax's influence should not be overstated.[34]

We can therefore clearly see a pattern of Halifax associating with, and patronising figures both religious and secular, who could promote the vision of Anglicanism he supported. Burnet, seeking to dissuade Halifax from openly opposing the Bill of Exclusion in the Lords, reported: 'both Dr Tillotson and I used all ye Credit we had with Halifax to divert him from opposing it as he did'.[35] Tillotson appears to have acted as a supporter of Halifax among the Whigs. Shortly after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament he wrote to Halifax:

> Last Saturday I had some discourse with a friend at Gray's Inn concerning yr Lordship towards whom I found him much more calme than he hath been since I saw your Lordship. I am, as I have great reason, most heartily concerned for yr Lordship & sorry to heare anything said to yr disadvantage, though yr retirement hath in good measure silenced that sort of talke.[36]

In early 1681, Tillotson wrote to Halifax (who had left for Rufford), apologising that ill-health prevented him from waiting on Halifax. After giving an account of political

[32] Bodl. MS Tanner 36, fol. 139, Tho. Camel to Geo. Savile, earl of Halifax, 15 Oct. 1681.
[33] Sean Kelsey, 'Hopkins, Ezekiel', *ODNB*; Richard Bagwell, revised by James McGuire, 'Sheridan, William', *ODNB*.
[34] For the situation in Ireland, see Grant Tapsell, 'Charles II's Commission for Ecclesiastical Promotions, 1681-1684: A Reconsideration', *JEH*, 66:4 (2015), 748.
[35] Burnet, 'Manuscript History', fol. 50.
[36] Add MS 75366, unfoliated, John Tillotson to Halifax, 3 May 1681.

developments, Tillotson wrote that 'The Dean of St Paul's desired me to present his humble service to yr Lordship'.[37] This was Edward Stillingfleet. The two men were regarded as sufficiently close ideologically that one of Halifax's correspondents confused the two, writing 'I had sent yr L[or]d[shi]p; Dr ~~Stillingf~~ Tillotsons sermon preacht before the King, but I know you had it from another hand there are reflections on som perticular passages in it, and some of his friends wish he had left them oute'.[38] Given the timing of the letter the controversial sermon by Tillotson was likely *The protestant religion vindicated from the charge of singularity and novelty*, whose strident condemnation of those who refused to conform to the national Church attracted charges of Hobbism. When one nonconformist minister, John Howe, read the sermon, 'he expostulated with Tillotson that he had used a sermon against popery to plead the popish cause, and he reduced him to tears'.[39] Halifax owned (among several others) Stillingfleet's most notable work – *The Unreasonableness of Separation*, which condemned Dissenters for dividing from the Church of England, while nonetheless conceding the desirability of some reforms. Stillingfleet was close enough to Halifax for the latter to ask him in 1683 to summarise arguments made by resistance theorists who cited Henri de Bracton and Fleta.[40]

Halifax was therefore close to moderate Anglican divines, but there is little to suggest significant contact between Halifax and other prominent religious figures. Though he sent supportive letters to Henry Compton, Bishop of London, after his suspension in 1686 for refusing to crack down on anti-Catholic preaching, there is scant evidence Halifax engaged with him outside this. Similarly, while he supported Sancroft during the Trial of the Seven Bishops, the only politically significant correspondence that exists between the two concerns

[37] Add MS 75366, unfoliated, John Tillotson to Halifax, 19 Feb. 1681.
[38] Add MS 75360, unfoliated, Sir William Hickman to Halifax, 29 Apr. 1680.
[39] Isabel Rivers, 'Tillotson, John', *ODNB*.
[40] Bodl. MS Tanner 34, fol. 102, Stillingfleet to Halifax, 8 Aug. 1683.

Halifax criticising the archbishop for failing to attend the House of Lords during the Revolution.[41] That the bulk of Halifax's correspondence with religious figures connects him to those attacked as 'Church-Trimmers' could be coincidental – the result of the destruction or decay of evidence. However, it offers another evidential point in favour of his sympathy with the latitudinarian wing of the Church.

The evidence around Halifax's personal use of ecclesiastical patronage is less clear. Halifax was frequently asked to use his influence to secure lucrative appointments in the church. However, his client, Sir John Reresby, an assiduous seeker of preferment for his brother, Yarbrough, who might be supposed to know Halifax's interests, only ever asked Halifax to use his influence at court, rather than give preferments he directly controlled. For example in August 1681 Reresby's wife told him that Halifax had spoken to the Chancellor about the 'Medlam living', which was a royal peculiar.[42] Halifax indeed appears to have had little personal patronage in the church. From the CCEd it is possible to see that Halifax and/or the Savile family were patrons at some time or another of Thornhill (the parish for their house at Thornhill Hall) and for the neighbouring Yorkshire parish of Emley. They were also patrons of Barrowby in Lincolnshire to which Alexander Sion, a Huguenot refugee, was appointed and which had been part of Henry Savile's inheritance, only returning to Halifax on his brother's death. So far as Eakring, the parish in which Rufford was situated, is concerned, the CCEd shows the Earl of Newcastle appointing in 1630, the Marquis of Dorchester in 1709 and not until 1722 did Sir George Savile make an appointment.

2) Anticlericalism

[41] Bodl. MS Tanner 28/2, fol. 332, Halifax to Sancroft, 27 Jan. 1689.
[42] WYAS, MX 19/19/13.

Halifax had a reputation among contemporaries as a free thinker – almost an atheist. However, the term 'atheist' was both broad and diffuse. As Leif Dixon has noted in discussing the sixteenth-century divine, William Perkins (a popular writer but not one whose works were in Halifax's library) 'the use of this label became more frequent, but its meaning was hard to pin down. [It] was aggressively elastic, a byword for personal enmity, cultural nonconformity, or political protest'.[43] Burnet, for example, said of Halifax that 'he let his wit run much on matters of religion: So that he passed for a bold and determined Atheist'.[44] Halifax was indeed frequently irreverent and his acid tongue and writings hindered his political career. According to the earl of Ailesbury he was a man with 'a vast share of wit and life, but made a jest of all, and often spared not what was sacred'.[45] A mocking imputation that Danby would prostitute his wife partly contributed to Halifax's dismissal from the Council in 1676, while Clarendon had earlier blocked a peerage for Halifax, whom he suspected of immorality as well as the patronage of Buckingham.[46]

Although Halifax's thinking was defined by a profound anti-clericalism he was not just cynical. Goldie notes that he often participated in sharp attacks against the persecutory instincts, corruption, and political interference of the episcopacy.[47] Halifax attempted to ensure Sancroft's protégé George Hickes resign his other livings as part of an (ultimately unsuccessful) effort to derail his elevation to the deanery of Worcester in 1683.[48] Similarly, works such as *To a Pluralist* (c.1690-95) reveal disgust for clerical abuses: 'This Spirituall Polygamy. These Ecclesiasticall Strayings, are more substantiall sinnes, than those of your

[43] Leif Dixon, 'William Perkins, "Atheisme" and the Crises of England's Long Reformation', *Journal of British Studies*, (2011), 50:4, 791 and see discussions in John Redwood, *Reason, Ridicule and Religion*: *The Age of Enlightenment in England 1660–1750* (1976).
[44] Burnet, *History*, I, 491.
[45] Brown, III, 3.
[46] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 325; Brown, I, 4.
[47] Mark Goldie, 'Danby, the Bishops and the Whigs', in T. Harris, P. Seaward, M. Goldie (eds), *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 80-1.
[48] Beddard, 'The Commission for Ecclesiastical Promotions', 37.

Parishioners'.[49] When discussing corruption in church and state he observed that once a man's credit was 'really lost; [it] can no more bee recovered than a Woman's, &c. Though J[esus] bid the Woman go sinne no more, Yet hee would not have recommended her for a Wife, &c.'.[50] However, while Henry Hammond wrote to Sheldon in 1654 to express his concern at the influence of Hobbes's 'heathen principles' on the then Sir George Savile, Halifax was neither a Hobbist nor an atheist.[51] Halifax expressed great pleasure at John Wilmot, earl of Rochester's deathbed reconciliation with the Church of England, writing:

> If, my Ld Rochester is dead, there is so much due to him, as to acknowledge, hee had at least as much wit as any man in England that is left behind him: much less than hee had must keep him from being an Atheist, for which it is very hard if not impossible for any man to be fool enough. If hee made use of the same heights of fancy which might tempt him to commit faults, and applyed it towards his end to quicken his repentance, it may have made him full amends for all the errours it hath ever betrayed him to.[52]

Moreover, Halifax received literature highly critical of Hobbes from his friend and (before disagreements after 1688) political ally, Burnet.[53] In his 1681 sermon on the anniversary of King Charles I's martyrdom, preached before the Lord Mayor, Patience Ward, a neighbour and possible friend of Burnet,[54] the Scottish preacher lamented that the civil wars had led many to abandon religion, particularly 'being wrought on by so great an Agent of Hell, as the Author of *Leviathan* was'.[55] Halifax replied that 'the sermon … is a very acceptable present to mee, and I made haste to read it, though I had heard one in the morning'.[56]

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[49] Brown, II, 260.
[50] Brown, II, 216.
[51] Jon Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan. The Reception of the Political and Religious Ideas of Thomas Hobbes in England 1640-1700* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 133.
[52] Halifax to Burnet, 26-31 July 1680, in Poole, 'Some Unpublished Letters', 537.
[53] H. C. Foxcroft, 'Some Unpublished Letters of Gilbert Burnet the Historian. Edited from an Eighteenth-Century Transcript in the Possession of Earl Spencer', *Camden Miscellany*, II (1907), pp. 5-45.
[54] Gary S de Krey, 'Ward, Sir Patience', *ODNB*.
[55] Gilbert Burnet, *A Sermon Preached Before the Aldermen* (1681), p. 6.
[56] Halifax to Burnet, 21 Feb. 1681, in Poole, 'Some Unpublished Letters', 539.

Halifax's anticlericalism meant that he levelled a number of significant charges against the officials of the Church of England. First was a hostility to sermons that interfered in political controversies. Even when this took place during his time in government, Halifax was extremely reluctant to defend the practice. In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament in 1681 an anonymous Whig pamphlet criticised the government for ordering Charles II's *Declaration* read in churches: 'our officious Clergy-men will prove publishers of false news, and invectives against a third Estate of the Kingdom'.[57] Both Tapsell and Kenyon note clergy received harsh criticism for political preaching, such as blame attached to clerical advocacy of divine right theory for encouraging the actions of James II.[58] The prelates, Lady Harvey noted when High Anglicans began to express concerns about the king's increasingly Catholic policies, had 'made a turd pye, seasoned it with passive obedience, and now you must eat it your Selves'.[59] One of Halifax's most pessimistic works, the unpublished piece of political speculation 'Prerogative', was probably written exclusively during James's reign and expresses similar sentiments.[60] At a time when many Anglicans were still serving the king, despite Halifax having departed for refusing to support pro-Catholic policies, his words suggest bitterness at the consequences of High Church doctrine:

> It will be Necessary to make the Supream Magistrate, more than a man, to entitle him to such an unlimited Prerogative. Therefore the Ancient flatterers were more skilfull in order to make good the unreasonable attributes they gave, and to justify the throwing such incense, they deifyed their Emperours, and that reconciled the matter, and silenced all dispute.[61]

By interfering in political controversies and putting forward a theological claim that the monarch had absolute authority, High Anglicans had effectively created a situation where

[57] Anon, *A Letter From a Person of Quality* (1681), p. 1.
[58] J. P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles. The Politics of Party, 1689-1720* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 84; Grant Tapsell, 'Pastors, Preachers and Politicians: The Clergy of the Later Stuart Church', in Grant Tapsell (ed.), *The Later Stuart Church, 1660-1714* (Manchester, 2012), p. 82.
[59] Quoted in Grant Tapsell, '"Weepe Over the Ejected Practice of Religion": Roger Morrice and the Restoration Twilight of Puritan Politics', *PH*, 28:2 (2009), 281.
[60] Brown, II, 4
[61] Brown, II, 31.

James might successfully impose Catholicism on England. The fall of the Roman republic – where virtue was displaced by tyranny due partially to the efforts, intentional or misguided, of religious 'flatterers' – is a constant concern of Halifax's writings. His chaplain recorded him reproaching a divine:

> If you Clergymen minded nothing but to lead good lives yourselves and to preach good lives to others, your power would be so great by being grounded on virtue, that you could easily prevent misadministrations in Kingdoms, you would be a terror to ill princes, and the support of good ones; But your meddling with politicks, and changing opinions to serve your turn, brings a scandal upon your profession, and Religion itself is a sufferer by it.[62]

However, while criticising the clergy of the Church of England, Halifax did not sympathise with those radical dissenters who sought to exist permanently outside the Anglican church. Anglican preaching might lead to destructive consequences, but his objection was to the delivery of overly political sermons, regardless of which denomination or church faction they supported. His anticlericalism was caused by his aristocratic prejudice that commoners were 'less capable of receaving light [from religion] … take in heat in stead of it … subject to the Zealous heat of Superstition'.[63] Without a moderate and restrained form of religion, the people might be excited to acts of violence and enthusiasm, and consequently Halifax favoured a limited role for preaching. Other analysts of the causes and length of the Civil Wars blamed fiery rhetoric in the pulpit. John Locke, for example, claimed 'Those flames that have made such havoc and desolation … have been at first kindled with coals from the altar'.[64] It should be noted that in this respect Halifax's views were shared by many Restoration English Protestants. A resolute royalist anti-Puritan such as Lancelot Addison attacked 'sermonists' who prioritised preaching over activities such as catechism and

[62] 'Saviliana'.
[63] Brown, II, 149.
[64] John Locke, *Two Tracts on Government*, ed. Phillip Abrams (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 160-61.

communion – actions which had contributed to the Civil Wars.[65] Halifax, again according to his chaplain, required some exegesis in sermons and would 'complain of the too great number of undigested declamations in the pulpit, and that velvit cushions too often served for woollen sermons, as his Lordship was pleased merrily to express himself'.[66] Thus his dislike for preachers was similar to Puritan Whig hostility to 'unlettered "mechanic" preachers'.[67] Halifax wished 'that those who are in possession of the Pulpit would quote at least as often the authority of the Scriptures as they do that of the state'.[68] Halifax's vision of a clergy which sought to impart morality to the people also contained concerns that those preaching divine right were in a mutually supporting pact with those advocating royal absolutism.

We can therefore see that much of Halifax's religious thought, rather than being heterodox and looking forward to freethinkers and deists, was in fact located well within the English mainstream, and influenced by an effort to avoid the repetition of the past. Indeed, its longer-term influence is more likely to be seen in the 'element of latitudinarian anticlericalism within tory ranks' that Taylor detected in efforts in the 1730s to curtail the activities of ecclesiastical courts.[69]

While the clergy were criticised for endangering peace with ill-advised and inflammatory sermons, Halifax also attacked them for being politically self-interested. Marvell spoke for many when he attacked the 'Politick would-be's of the Clergy'.[70] Some of the worst figures in English history were over-ambitious churchmen. One of the greatest villains of Burnet's

[65] William J. Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment. Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and its Empire, 1648-1715* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 169-71.
[66] 'Saviliana'.
[67] Mark Goldie, 'Review Article: Voluntary Anglicans', *HJ*, 46:4 (2003), 981.
[68] Brown, I, 206.
[69] Stephen Taylor, 'Whigs, Tories and Anticlericalism: Ecclesiastical Courts Legislation in 1733', *PH*, 19:3 (2000), 332-343. Taylor also argues that the greatest impetus for anticlericalism was provided by those whose 'anticlericalism was grounded in the Anglican latitudinarian tradition', rather than the more radical figures identified in Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken*.
[70] Grant Tapsell, 'Introduction: The Later Stuart Church in context', in Tapsell (ed.), *Later Stuart Church*, p. 3.

History of the Reformation after 1529 was Bishop Gardiner, that 'crafty and politick man'.[71] Similarly, having dissolved the King's 'mind into pleasures, and puffed him up with Flattery and servile Compliances', Cardinal Wolsey had almost been able to prevent a Reformation.[72] Certainly the goals of the clergy were seen to be the expansion of their own power and wealth. As Halifax warned the later Stuart monarchs 'Your Father suffered for the church [and] not the church for [your Father]'.[73] Even when seeking to appeal to a Tory-Anglican audience in *Character of a Trimmer* he attacked 'a too great eagerness to extend the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, which … is so very unlike the Apostolicall Zeal'.[74] Though stressing that his Trimmer's opposition to such measures was mainly due to the risk that enemies of the church would mischaracterise them, in private Halifax was scathing of the secular ambitions of prelates. The clergy were not permitted to be elected to secular office and all save Anglicans were prevented from holding municipal office. James's Declaration said he wanted the 'benefit of the Service of all Our Loving Subjects' and in his writings on prerogative during James's reign Halifax mocked this as something outrageous 'The service of all his subjects. An Archbishop or Jew Lord Mayor'.[75] Halifax's distaste for excessive clerical involvement in government was widely shared. Many attacks on government policy in the Restoration period were frequently proxy conflicts for broader objections to the excessive power of the bishops, such as the 1675 effort to impose a 'no alteration' oath on MPs.[76] Halifax's speech in the House of Lords opposing the bill was particularly praised by Baxter for having 'set the tongues of men at so much liberty, that the common talk was against the bishops'.[77] Indeed, even a 1677 proposal from Danby to limit a Catholic monarch

[71] Burnet, *Reformation*, p. 172.
[72] Ibid., preface.
[73] Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 245.
[74] Brown, I, 204.
[75] Brown, II, 44.
[76] Goldie, 'Danby, the Bishops, and the Whigs', 82.
[77] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 324.

by granting the bishops power to appoint their successors was regarded as an unacceptable effort to promote ecclesiastical supremacy.[78] It is notable that when Halifax had influence over government offers of expedients as an alternative to Exclusion no similar role was suggested for the clergy. Charles II's *Declaration of reasons for dissolving the Oxford Parliament* stated the government was 'ready to hearken to any Expedient, by which the Religion Establish'd might be Preserv'd, and the Monarchy not Destroy'd'.[79] Burnet recalled that Halifax and Seymour backed an expedient proposal which would safeguard Protestantism under James not by granting powers to the bishops, but to the Prince of Orange.[80]

Thus, the characterization of Halifax as an atheist opposed to religion is far from being the truth. Certainly, he exhibited a strong strain of anti-clericalism objecting to forms of political preaching, to the self-aggrandisement of the higher clergy, and to abuses in the church such as pluralism. However, these objections were informed less by a dislike of religion as such and more by his commitment to a moderate religion that would ensure both that the populace remained quiescent and that any Catholic tendencies of the monarchy would be restrained.

3) Moderate Anglicanism

The religious settlement of 1662 can be seen as a decisive turning point in English religious history. Though many Puritans were ejected from the Church of England by the Clarendon Code, they intended and expected to be able to return. While in 1660 Milton spat at those who had betrayed republicanism 'nor let the new royaliz'd presbyterians perswade themselves that their old doings, though now recanted, will be forgotten', recent research has

[78] Goldie, 'Danby, the Bishops, and the Whigs', 85; Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 32.
[79] Charles II, *His Majesties Declaration* (1681), p. 6.
[80] Burnet, *History*, II, 276.

shown that many did not believe him.[81] The work of Fincham and Taylor has shown that approximately a quarter of ministers ordained during the 1640s and 1650s were able to conform with the 1662 Act of Uniformity and remained in the Church of England. There they acted as a counter force to the hardline Laudians who were traditionally understood to have returned and retaken the church.[82] Those Presbyterians who did not conform neither embraced schism nor expected it to be permanent. Ejected ministers objected to the Act of Uniformity more because of its historical demands – requiring re-ordination and a renunciation of the Solemn League and Covenant – than its religious ones. As Spurr notes, many 'would have been prepared to pursue their vocations under an episcopal church government, but not to repudiate their own ordinations and past ministries'.[83] Their response to the Restoration religious settlement, was partial, not occasional conformity. The latter practice, of sparingly going to an Anglican service in order to comply with the Test Act's requirements for office-holding, grew as a phenomenon after 1689.[84] Partial conformity, on the other hand, involved limited but regular participation in Church of England services, in the hope and expectation of eventual re-union. Thus, many Puritans emphasised that while they attended separate services, they held them at different times to Anglican ones, and were not intending to compete with the national church.[85]

For civil war Episcopalians, a similarly nuanced picture exists. While it is correct that the key to understanding the outlook and behaviour of Restoration clergy was their fear of the 1640s

[81] Tapsell, 'Roger Morrice', 294.
[82] Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor, 'Ordination, Re-ordination, Conformity and The Restoration of the Church of England 1660-1662' in Grant Tapsell and Stephen Taylor (eds), *The Nature of the English Revolution Revisited: Essays in Honour of John Morrill* (Woodbridge, 2013), p. 228; R. S. Bosher, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians, 1649-1662* (1951).
[83] Spurr, 'The Church of England, Comprehension and the Toleration Act', 928-31.
[84] Goldie, *Puritan Whigs*, p. 246
[85] John D. Ramsbottom, 'Presbyterians and "Partial Conformity" in the Restoration Church of England', *JEH*, 43:2 (1992), 249-55.

and 1650s repeating themselves, different conclusions were drawn from the past.[86] On the one hand were those who practised 'principled nonconformity' during the Interregnum, and had broadly supported pre-war Laudian policies.[87] Recent scholarship has emphasised the extent to which many of these members of the Restoration Church of England felt that Protestantism was under threat, partly from fellow Anglicans who were importing innovative practices into the Church. For Spurr, the Restoration clergy were not united in outlook or goals and 'there are grounds to believe' that in the years leading up to 1689 the leadership of the Church became narrower, with the High Church faction gaining ground.[88] Concerned that they had an unreliable partner in the monarch, and believing that tolerating dangerous doctrines had contributed to the growth of schism and rebellion, they sought to strengthen the powers of the clergy and of ecclesiastical institutions, and to embark on a broad programme of reform in order to win back both dissenters and Catholics to the true church.[89] Crucially, much of this effort was directed against fellow Anglicans, who were blamed for encouraging dissenters to separate from the Church, and pollute it with their ideas.[90]

However, many Episcopalians (potentially almost 75%) reluctantly conformed to the Interregnum regime and sought to preserve Protestant unity before and after 1660. For this group, 'very different lessons' were to be learned from the trauma of the civil war, and they advocated a moderate Anglicanism, which could comprehend the partial conformists.[91] Additionally they hoped to reform elements of the Church, particularly moving away from an

[86] Jeremy Gregory, *Restoration, Reformation, and Reform, 1660-1828: Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese* (Oxford, 2000), p. 44.
[87] Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor, 'Episcopalian Conformity and Nonconformity, 1646-60', in Jason McElligott and David L. Smith (eds), *Royalists and Royalism During the Interregnum* (Manchester, 2010), p. 21
[88] John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (1991), p. 82.
[89] Tapsell, 'Introduction', p. 9; Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester, 2006), p. 43.
[90] Goldie and Spurr, 'Politics and the Restoration Parish', 572-96.
[91] Fincham and Taylor, 'Episcopalian Conformity and Nonconformity', 21-37; *Idem.*, 'Episcopalian Identity, 1640-1662', in Anthony Milton (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume 1: Reformation and Identity, c. 1520-1662* (Oxford, 2017), p. 459.

overly rigid and (they believed) divisive Calvinist soteriology.[92] To be a true Protestant, Gilbert Burnet preached, meant seeking peace and unity, 'as far as possibly we can, we may live peaceably with all men'. Dividing the Reformed through disputes over *adiaphora* was counterproductive – the history of the Great Schism showed how the enemies of Christendom benefited from squabbles over matters of 'so little consequence'.[93] Supporting reform and comprehension to win separatists back to the Church of England was not mutually exclusive with royalism, and Halifax aligned with this group.

A division within Anglicanism over attitudes to dissent was key to the politics of religion, and can be seen on a local level, amongst prominent divines, and in the realm of high politics. Barry's study of Restoration Bristol found a group of ministers who were particularly reluctant to persecute Presbyterians, with whom they hoped to reconcile.[94] In the capital, the nonconformist news writer Roger Morrice left money to seven Anglican ministers he regarded as being on the pro-dissent wing of the Church of England, including three bishops.[95] Meanwhile, Knights' study of the Exclusion Crisis argues that those who conformed but sympathised with dissent 'compromised the bulk of "anglican" supporters of the [Exclusion] bill though a minority … such as Halifax, Anglesey and Buckingham in the Lords, or Sir Richard Temple and Finch in the Commons, opposed it or were unenthusiastic'.[96]

Halifax's personal sympathies with the dissenters were evident and well-known throughout his career. As early as 1664, Henry Hyde, future earl of Clarendon, joked to him 'perhaps your friends the Presbiters will allow an early dispensation to all the flames the Fair sex can

[92] Spurr, 'Latitudinarianism" and the Restoration Church', 82; Goldie, *Puritan Whigs,* pp. 257-259.
[93] Burnet, *A Sermon Preached Before the Aldermen,* pp. 16-17
[94] Jonathan Barry, 'The Politics of Religion in Restoration Bristol', in Harris, Seaward, Goldie (eds), *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England*, (Oxford, 1990), p. 171.
[95] Goldie, *Puritan Whigs,* p. 63.
[96] Knights, *Politics and Opinion,* p. 141.

raise in me as more agreeable to their own temper, than the homage I pay you'.[97] Swatland's study of the House of Lords characterised him as a pro-Presbyterian, opposed to 'rigid Anglicans' in his desire to broaden the Church of England.[98] This sympathy was evident in both his personal relations and political actions. In November 1672 he married Gertrude, daughter of the former Presbyterian leader 'wise' William Pierrepont.[99] Halifax consistently used his pamphleteering to attempt to improve the position of the Puritans. At the height of the Tory reaction of the 1680s, he sought to convince Anglicans to reject persecution: 'an argument for gentlenes, besides that it is the likelyest way to make these men ashamed of their separation, whilst the pressing them too hard tendeth rather to make them proud of it'.[100] Recognising that advocating comprehension would be pointless given Charles's commitment to the Tory-Anglican alliance, Halifax nonetheless sought to persuade High Anglicans to use persuasion, rather than coercion, to secure the return of Presbyterians to the Church.[101] In *Character of a Trimmer* the ecclesiological trimmers were depicted as the true inheritors of the mantle of the primitive Christians. It was the excessively harsh approach of Anglicans which meant that 'the devout fire of mutuall Charity with which the primitive Christians were inflamed, is long since extinguished, and instead of it a devouring fire of anger and persecution breaketh out in the world'.[102] Halifax opposed such persecution but also rejected the claim that the differences between Anglicans and nonconformists were sufficient to justify their separation. The dissenters, he urged, should be 'ashamed of their separation', and by breaking the national laws they were acting like a 'disease that hath seized upon their minds, very troublesome to themselves as well as dangerous by the Consequences it may

[97] Add MS 75376, fols. 6-7, Lord Cornbury to Sir George Savile, 1664.
[98] Andrew Swatland, 'The Role of Privy Councillors in the House of Lords, 1660-1681', in Clyve Jones (ed.), *A Pillar of the Constitution. The House of Lords in British Politics, 1640-1784* (1989), p. 76.
[99] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 322; George Yerby, 'Pierrepont, William', *ODNB*.
[100] Brown, I, 204.
[101] For an account of the 'persuasion over persecution' approach, see Mary Clapinson, *Bishop Fell and Non-conformity: Visitation Documents from the Oxford Diocese, 1682-83* (Oxford, 1980).
[102] Brown, I, 205.

produce'.[103] Brown argues that the criticism of dissenters was a rhetorical device to convince Anglicans to move towards comprehension, but Halifax's language reflects that of prominent latitudinarians towards the end of Charles's reign. While an adiaphoristic conception of certain doctrinal and ecclesiological practices and an abhorrence of persecution led them to support measures to ease the return of dissenters to the Church, those who separated were as guilty for dividing the nation as the 'prelates'. Edward Stillingfleet, for example, rejected the notion that 'a bare difference of opinion as to some circumstances of Worship and the best Constitution of Churches will be sufficient ground to break Communion and set up … an infinite Divisibility in Churches'.[104] This approach was attacked by critics as 'Hobbist', and Mulgrave's reply to *Character of a Trimmer* made a similar assertion about Halifax, claiming that he wished to reduce religion to a 'meer engine of government'.[105]

When the political climate was more favourable, however, Halifax sought to secure the legislative goals of nonconformists. In early-1673, cooperating with the Puritan leader Denzil Holles, he was the parliamentary manager of a bill to give relief to Protestant dissenters.[106] After the Revolution, he sought to promote a bill of comprehension. Morrice reported that in March 1689, after a delegation of Anglican divines had kissed the hands of the new monarchs, Halifax made contact with Presbyterian minister John Howe. Advising him 'that he thought it expedient that the Non:Conformable Divines should do the like', Halifax arranged for Howe to lead 100 ministers (the same number as the Anglican delegation) to meet the king.[107] It was particularly necessary for moderate Puritans to make a clear statement of loyalty to the new regime, and remove any hint of collaboration with the

[103] Ibid., pp. 202-4.
[104] John Marshall, 'The Ecclesiology of the Latitude-Men, 1660-1689: Stillingfleet, Tillotson, and "Hobbism"', *JEH*, 36:3 (1985), 416.
[105] John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, 'Character of a Tory', in, *The Works of John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, Marquis of Normanby, and Duke of Buckingham* (2 vols, 1729), II, 67.
[106] Littleton, 'Savile, George', pp. 323-4.
[107] Morrice, V, 29.

previous one. Anti-dissent Anglicans were at that time attempting to characterise the history of James's reign as a time when nonconformists 'warm[ed] under his influence; to see those Dissenters so liberally offering up their incense to the court, which was then labouring to enslave us to the pope'.[108] Howe's address attributed William's success to divine providence, and asked the monarchs 'by your Wisdom and Goodness, to compose the Differences between your Protestant Subjects, in Things of less moment concerning Religion … consent to the Terms of Union wherein all the Reformed Churches agree'.[109] The failure to achieve a speedy union left Halifax furious, and the new Lord Privy Seal told Reresby he blamed 'the Church of England party', and 'said they hated the Dutch, and had rather turn papists then take in the Presbuterians amongst them'.[110] He regarded the arguments against reconciling moderate dissenters as utterly facile. When discussing a rumour that Lord Daincourt would stand for election at Newark, whose electors the Saviles held in contempt, Halifax remarked that the candidate's reluctance to spend money would hinder his candidacy. 'I doubt your noble friends there will not much approve a dry election', he told his brother, 'as a thing of ill example, and tending to introduce presbytery, by the way of small beer'.[111]

Despite Halifax's personal sympathy for the dissenters, his political actions, particularly over Exclusion, meant that a large number did not trust him as exemplified by the hatred Morrice felt for him. Morrice made it clear that he blamed Halifax for the misfortunes suffered by the dissenters, 'he has been the principall in all mischief, and particularly in advising … Prorogueing the two good Parliaments … and in the taking away of the Charters'.[112] Nevertheless, Morrice's hostility to Halifax's character did somewhat limit his ability accurately to provide news about him. For example, in February 1690, after Halifax resigned

[108] Mark Goldie, 'John Locke's Circle and James II', *HJ*, 35:3 (1992), 582-3.
[109] *An Address of the Dissenting Ministers* (1689), p. 7.
[110] Reresby, p. 572.
[111] Halifax to Henry Savile, 11 Aug. 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 118.
[112] Morrice, IV, 205.

as Privy Seal, the *Entring Book* commented: 'it has also been Credibly reported that he has said he would go off himself, but I believe he is not put out, and it is most certaine he never did, nor will voluntarily put himselfe out'.[113] In many ways, the example of Morrice's continued distrust of Halifax, even after he was removed by James II for opposing repeal of the Test Acts, had promoted William's coronation, and attempted to pass comprehension, illustrates the difficulty of his political position. Trapped by his own history, Halifax was unable to command the support of those whose interests he wished to promote, and William was correct to judge that he 'had proved too little of a practical politician'.[114]

While Halifax was in favour of expanding the religious freedoms of Protestant dissenters, he did not support toleration for Catholics, even when, in 1689, William did. Burnet made it clear that unlike with dissenters, compromise was pointless, 'it is a foolish endeavour to convince them …who make this the fundamental Article of their Religion, that their Church cannot err'.[115] Halifax opposed the Pope not only for political reasons, but because he objected to Catholicism as a religion, regarding it as a perversion of primitive Christianity, which the Reformation had swept away: 'The first and purest Ages knew nothing of Monkery; not the first 3 Centuries'.[116] There might have been some justifications for early monasticism, to protect Christians from persecution, but the spread of Christianity meant it was no longer needed: 'the first Monks lived in caves and dens to hide themselves from the persecution of the world not to renounce the pleasure of it'.[117] According to his chaplain, Halifax believed the growing wealth of monasteries 'had enervated the primitive virtue, for which the Apostles and their immediate successors were so venerable'.[118] Halifax saw the

[113] Morrice, V, 96.
[114] Andrew Browning, *Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds, 1632-1712* (3 vols, Glasgow, 1944), I, 509.
[115] Burnet, *A Sermon Preached Before the Aldermen*, p. 18.
[116] Brown, II, 265.
[117] Ibid., p. 277.
[118] 'Saviliana'.

centuries before the Reformation as a time of growing Church corruption, which both relied on, and reinforced, ignorance and poverty. Catholic claims of charity were, he argued, a sham,

> the poor are more rob'd by their buildings, ornaments, &c. than they are assisted by their Almes … these excellent members of the Commonwealth, have made the richest countries in the world poor, whilst the poorest countries in the world are rich by excluding them.[119]

Halifax thought that in the Catholic Church heresy trials were required to maintain the ignorance necessary to perpetuate the corruption and wealth of the church: 'the Monks decryed learning, and said it would bring in heresie, and they were in the right'.[120] Finally, he argued that Catholicism was closely connected to tyrannical government, 'the Church of Rome being arbitrary, and not depending upon the good will of the people, must have garrisons'.[121]

Removing popery was also a personal objective. Writing to Henry while in retreat at Rufford Abbey, Halifax noted that the family seat had been improved since 'when it was so mixt with the old ruins of the abby that it look'd like medley of superstition and sacriledge … [Rufford has] none of the rags of Rome remaining'.[122] Halifax's hostility to Catholicism, particularly its French variety was recognised. After his dismissal by James II, Louis XIV wrote to Barillon on 'the disgrace of the Marquis of Halifax'. The King noted that 'it cannot but be very advantageous to my interests that a Minister so devoted to Spain and so inimical to the Catholic religion, has been removed'.[123] Halifax was not a fanatical bigot; he served as Chancellor to Catherine of Braganza, and his son George was wounded fighting with the

[119] Brown, II, 267.
[120] Ibid., p. 313.
[121] Ibid., p. 217.
[122] Halifax to Henry Savile, 2 Feb. 1680, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 137.
[123] Foxcroft, *Character,* p. 218.

Austrians against the Ottomans at Budapest in 1686.[124] However, he was willing to appeal to crude anti-Catholic sentiment when he felt it necessary. A significant part of *A Letter to a Dissenter* argued that Catholics could not truly grant liberty of conscience, and was happy to refer readers 'to Mr. Coleman's Letters, and to the Journals of Parliament, where you may be convinced'.[125] This was despite the fact that he did not believe in the veracity of the Popish Plot. Halifax had doubted it from an early stage, but in one of the more chilling comments about the scare had argued in 1679 'that the Plot must be handled as if it were true, whether it were so or not'.[126] Halifax would have been aware of the depth of anti-Catholic fury the Plot had unleashed. For example, at the trial of five Jesuit priests in December 1678, the presiding judge Sir William Scroggs screamed religious invective at the jury: 'They eat their God, they kill their King, and saint the murderer!'. When the guilty verdict was handed down he noted approvingly 'you have done, gentlemen, like very good Christians; that is to say, very good Protestants'.[127]

4) European Protestantism

Central to Halifax's views was his deep commitment to the Reformed churches on the Continent. Kenyon highlights the 'Englishness – some would call it insularity – of Halifax's thought'.[128] Similarly Foxcroft's essentially Victorian account did not depict a politician who saw himself as having close connections to Europe, for her 'no one ever entertained a stronger infusion of the national character, interests, and destiny; no one ever evinced a stronger infusion of that saving common-sense which is the heritage of the race'.[129] This

[124] Elliot Lydon, 'Catholics and the Court of Catherine of Braganza', (MPhil thesis, University of Cambridge, 2017), p. 34; 'Savile Correspondence', p. 296.
[125] Brown, I, 251.
[126] Sir William Temple, *Memoirs, from the Peace Concluded 1679, to the Time of the Author's Retirement from Publick Business* (1709), p. 48.
[127] J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (1972), p. 126.
[128] Kenyon, p. 38.
[129] Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 339

chapter, however, will show that Halifax's religious thought had a profoundly European dimension – his concern over foreign events, his understanding of the Reformation, his anti-French foreign policy and his support for Protestant refugees.

The English were in agreement that they needed to protect themselves from European Catholic efforts to destroy Protestantism at home. The site of some of Halifax's greatest triumphs – the tall, narrow queen's chamber of the Palace of Westminster where the Restoration House of Lords sat – was dominated by 10 vast tapestries by Hendrick Cornelisz Vroom which commemorated the defeat of the Armada in 1588.[130] But while the Lords celebrated Protestantism's triumph over the Spanish, whether Vroom, as a Dutch Calvinist, should be welcomed as part of the Church of England was a far more contentious question in the chamber. There was a fierce debate within the Church of England over the nature of correct Reformation, and consequently England's place within European Protestantism and obligations to European Protestants, both at home and abroad.

Initially, the English viewed differences in church structure and ceremony between themselves and European Protestants as *adiaphora* – indifferent things. This consensus broadly held, though Gwynn suggests Edward VI or his advisors may have sought to use new '"stranger" churches' founded in London as 'a blueprint for the future Church of England'.[131] However, as part of deepening divisions over the liturgy and ecclesiology of the Church of England in the 1620s, puritans increasingly began citing the need for the English to reform further, using continental models. The resultant backlash led to 'the first manifestations of a sense of critical distance from foreign Protestantism', with figures such as Lancelot

[130] Paley and Seaward (eds), *Honour, Interest and Power,* p. 201.
[131] Robin Gwynn, 'Government Policy Towards Huguenot Immigration and Settlement in England and Ireland', in C. J. Caldicott, H. Gough, J.-P. Pittion (eds), *The Huguenots and Ireland: Anatomy of an Emigration* (Dublin, 1987), pp. 207-208.

Andrewes arguing that episcopacy was not only acceptable but required.[132] The High Church wing of the Church of England was neither xenophobic nor insular. Charles II used the Huguenot Jean Durel as a polemicist to argue that Anglicanism and episcopacy were admired and desired abroad. Similarly in debates over comprehension after 1689, opponents of modifying the Church's liturgy to allow the return of some nonconformists argued such changes would dismay Protestants in continental Europe.[133] Both sides in this Anglican debate thus embraced 'competing internationalisms', with the Laudian interpretation seeing most Reformed churches as having (unlike the English) gone too far in their reformation, and established a third, new form of Christianity, rather than returning to the model from antiquity.[134] By the Restoration followers of this position viewed the Church of England as unique in conforming to the practices of the primitive Church, and therefore truly Reformed.[135] Foreign Protestants needed to reform themselves to follow the Church of England's example, and not the other way around. For example, in addition to xenophobia and complaints that new arrivals were lowering wages and taking jobs, some anti-Huguenot sentiment in England was that they were following and spreading a seditious Protestant doctrine.[136] An example of this concern was found in Sir Robert Wiseman, Dean of the Arches from 1672, who railed against the efforts of 'stupendious and blasphemous Fanaticks', who, 'with inflamed Zeal, labour'd to bring in the Presbyteriall Discipline of the Church of Geneva, into the Church of England'.[137] This theological debate affected policy positions, with those who were sceptical about foreign Calvinism being less willing to

[132] Anthony Milton, 'Attitudes Towards the Protestant and Catholic Churches', in *idem.* (ed.) *History of Anglicanism,* pp. 338-9.
[133] Tony Claydon, 'The Church of England and the Churches of Europe', in Jeremy Gregory (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume II: Establishment and Empire, 1662 -1829* (Oxford, 2017), pp. 320-1.
[134] Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660-1760* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 93-103.
[135] Jean-Louis Quantin, 'Perceptions of Christian Antiquity', *History of Anglicanism*, I, p. 296; Tapsell, 'The Later Stuart Church in Context', p. 8.
[136] Malcolm R. Thorp, 'The Anti-Huguenot Undercurrent in Late-Seventeenth-Century England', *PHSL,* 12:6 (1970-76), pp. 569-80.
[137] Sir Robert Wiseman, *Touching the Oath Ex Officio* (1664), pp. 2-3.

support intervention in European politics, and allow Huguenot refugees who would not conform to the Church of England.[138]

Though some opposing this view wanted to remodel the Church of England along continental lines, most favoured a return to what some historians consider a Jacobean consensus, where 'on the whole, the crown and its advisers operated responsibly to cool passions, and to perpetuate the Church of England's well recognized *via media*'.[139] Regardless of the accuracy of this interpretation[140], many in Restoration England used the rhetorical device of calling for a return to earlier religious policies, which sought domestic reconciliation, the adiaphoristic understanding of differences between the Reformed churches, coupled with a resolutely pro-Protestant foreign policy. Halifax resolutely backed this view, which was elucidated in a book he supported financially, and which described him as 'if I reckon among the greatest Persons this Age has produced, I am sure all that know him will allow, that I speak modestly of him'.[141] Burnet's *History of the Reformation* described a process of progress under several monarchs, and urged the King to follow 'what remains to compleat and perpetuate this Blessing, the composing of our differences at home, the establishing a closer correspondence with the Reformed Churches abroad'.[142]

Halifax had, however, shown his sympathies for foreign Protestantism long before Burnet published in 1679. As we have seen, he did not attend Oxford or Cambridge, but rather was educated at Huguenot academies in Angers, Orleans, and Paris.[143] His foreign education

[138] Anthony Milton, 'Unsettled Reformations, 1603-1662', in *idem* (ed.), *History of Anglicanism,* p.68; John Miller, 'The Immediate Impact of the Revocation in England', in Caldicott, Gough, Pittion (eds), *The Huguenots and Ireland*, p. 162.
[139] Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 312.
[140] See for example the criticisms in Nicholas Tyacke, 'Anglican Attitudes: Some Recent Writings on English Religious History, from the Reformation to the Civil War', *JBS*, 35:2 (1996), 139-67.
[141] Burnet, *Reformation*, preface.
[142] Ibid., 'Epistle Dedicatory'.
[143] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 319.

would influence him throughout his career, and additionally he made sure to expose his children to it. Far from seeing Protestant ideas from Europe as a threat to the authority and stability of the Church of England, Halifax viewed himself and his family as existing as part of a continent-wide community of the Reformed.

Halifax's sympathy for European Protestantism was not limited to his choice of family tutors, but also to his preferred state policy. A key turning point in pushing Halifax towards opposition in the 1670s was his frustration with the failure of the government to protect the interests of Protestants in Europe.[144] As part of a diplomatic mission during the 3rd Anglo-Dutch War, he sought to convince the king to eschew a pro-French foreign policy. This was explicitly framed as being done to help the interests of Protestants. Writing to Arlington in 1672, when the English navy was cooperating with the French army to seek to dismember the Dutch Republic, he urged that:

> being here [Zeeland] very Zealous Protestants, & universally so without any mixture of Roman Catholiques. I could wish in this & other places that if anything should be attempted upon this Island it might be done by English alone for in a good conjuncture halfe force, & halfe treaty the Kings business might perhaps be better done by a small number of his own subjects, than by a greater force made upp of French[145]

This request was not heeded, and indeed, Halifax would frequently complain at the existence of a strong pro-French interest which hindered his plans when in government.[146] In the *Character of a Trimmer* he criticised those (most likely James, Rochester, and Sunderland), who he felt failed to recognise the danger France posed.

In *Character of a Trimmer* Halifax uses the language of interest[147] to provide apocalyptic warnings of the fate of English and European Protestantism. The 'creed' of the pro-French

[144] Brown, I, 5-6.
[145] Add MS 72578, fols. 22-3, Halifax to Arlington 5 July 1672.
[146] Burnet, *History*, II, 402.
[147] This is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

courtiers was such that, 'if we can be prevailed with to digest these smaller mistakes, we may at last make our stomachs strong enough for that of Transubstantiation'.[148] *Character of a Trimmer* alleged that Catholic statesmen were trying to impose a royal policy different from that which was in the interest of the English nation. Moreover, even if those pursuing a pro-French foreign policy were not themselves seeking to advance Catholicism, by failing to uphold the balance of power they would do just that.

Halifax dated the start of Europe's troubles to the foreign policy of the Commonwealth for having allowed France to grow too powerful.

> *Cromwell*, who for a separate Interest of his own, had sacrificed that of the nation by joyning with the stronger side, to suppresse the power of *Spaine*, which he ought to have supported. Such a method was naturall enough to an Usurper, and shewed he was not the lawfull Father of the people[149]

Halifax here was making a similar critique of Cromwell's failure to uphold the Protestant interest as the Whig politician Slingsby Bethel. Bethel's 1668 excoriation of the Anglo-Spanish war mocked Cromwell's claim that 'he had nothing in his eye, but the advancement of the Protestant Cause … his pretences, were either fraudulent, or he was ignorant in Foreign affairs'.[150] Bethel condemned the selfishness of the foreign policy of the Protector: 'Cromwell had he aimed at the publick, as much as his own private Interest', would have not been antagonistic towards Spain, 'but not doing that, he cast the Ballance of Dominion on the side of the *French*, to the irreparable loss of Christendom'.[151] Why, though, would the victory of one Catholic power over another harm Christendom?

Like Halifax, Bethel argued that failing to uphold an international balance had harmed the interests of European Protestants. For Bethel, as for Halifax, the position of a Catholic

[148] Brown, I, 235.
[149] Brown, I, 224.
[150] Slingsby Bethel, *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell*, (1668), p. 3.
[151] Idem, *The Interest of Princes and States* (1680), p. 186.

monarch constrained by an even balance of power was different from that of a Catholic monarch who led or believed he led a universal monarchy. 'Whilst the *French* were in fear of *Spain,* they sought Alliance against him, with the Protestant Princes and States, indulging their Reformed Subjects'. However, mistakes in English foreign policy meant that 'since they have been freed from all danger thence, looking upon their Interest as changed, they have changed their Maxims, from those that were for preservation only, to such as are for increase also'. A France which sought militant expansion would be one which sought to lead Catholic Europe:

> pretending so much zeal for the Romish Religion, as may render their King Protector of that party, (and as Cruelty against Dissenters, in matters of belief, is by all false Religions more approved of than Devotion, so) by evidencing their sincerity, in a persecution of their Reformed Subjects.[152]

The way in which Louis XIV was doing everything 'by which the universall monarchy may be obtained', was, claimed Halifax, closely connected to the persecution of the 'poor Protestants in *France*'.[153] Louis, as an overwhelmingly mighty King, had no interest in being a genuine ally to England. While scholars such as Castellin see Halifax's discussions of international affairs as evidence he 'showed a best understanding of England's international interests', such an approach neglects the religious dimension.[154] That this was a religious obligation can be seen through Burnet's praise of monarchs who pursued 'that great Maxime of Princes, of Holding the Balance'.[155] L'Estrange assaulted trimmers in the *Observator* far more for their religious opinions – moderate Anglicanism, and sympathy to dissent and foreign Protestants – than their stance on foreign affairs.[156] As problematic as the idea of

[152] Ibid., p. 188.
[153] Brown, I, 233.
[154] Luca G. Castellin 'The International Character of a Trimmer: Interest, Reason of State, and Balance of Power in Halifax's Political Thought', *The International History Review*, 38:4, (2016), 621-35. Castellin also conflates Halifax supporting European Protestants with a 'Pro-Dutch politics' he often opposed.
[155] Burnet, *Reformation*, p. 3
[156] Thomas C. Faulkner, 'Halifax's "The Character of a Trimmer" and L'Estrange's Attack on Trimmers in "The Observator"', *HLQ*, 37:1 (1973), 74.

'trimming' is, it was at heart a religious concept, and to 'trim' in foreign policy was to seek Protestant unity in Europe, after having secured it in England.

Halifax's use of religiously-motivated ideas to justify his preferred foreign policy is evident also in his correspondence on diplomatic issues which shows him clearly fitting Claydon's dual conception of 'Christendom'.[157] His youngest son George had enlisted in imperial forces at Buda and, he welcomed Ottoman defeats at the hands of the Habsburgs. In September 1683 William Coventry wrote to him

> I give yr L[or]d[shi]p my most humble thanks for sending mee the good newes of the releife of Vienna though it is not very fashionable, yett I cannot helpe being soe much a Christian as to be glad the Turkes are beaten, & am not wth out hope that it may conduce to the quiet of other parts of Xtendome besides Austria & Germany'[158].

On the other hand, he was concerned for the fate of Protestant Europe, which was in his view most imperilled by the emergence of France as the dominant Catholic power in Europe. Thus a few weeks after the Austrian victory at the Battle of Mohács in 1687 Halifax wrote to the Prince of Orange that 'we are full of the news from Hungary, which is not equally welcome to the several Princes of Christendom'.[159] This claim was an understatement. With Emperor Leopold no longer threatened by Ottoman forces, he would soon be able to direct his troops west against France.[160] Moreover, in a relatively prescient prediction, Halifax continued that 'we think it may have a considerable influence upon this part of the world, and if the season was not too far advanced, we are apt to believe France might this very year give some trouble to its neighbours'.[161] French concern over their eastern frontier, combined with the belief that they had a narrow window before imperial troops could be moved westwards, contributed to

[157] Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England,* p. 7.
[158] Add MS 75362, unfoliated, Coventry to Halifax, 21 Sept. 1683.
[159] Halifax to the Prince of Orange, 25 Aug. 1687, in John Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland: From the Dissolution of the Last Parliament of Charles II till the Capture of the French and Spanish Fleets at Vigo (*3 vols, 1771-3), II, 207.
[160] Wout Troost, 'Leopold I, Louis XIV, William III and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', *History*, 103:357 (2018), 557.
[161] Halifax to Prince of Orange, 25 Aug. 1687, Dalrymple, *Memoirs,* II, 207.

Louis's decision a year later to launch an attack against the fortress at Phillipsburg.[162] We can thus see that in the run up to 1688 Halifax was concerned with more than the impact of James II's domestic policies, but also used correspondence with William to highlight his concern for the fate of Reformed Europe.

After the revolution Halifax's correspondence with Alexander Stanhope, uncle of the second earl of Chesterfield and English envoy in Madrid between 1690 and 1699 demonstrates how his religiously-inspired foreign policy outlook continued. Though their relationship was initially familial (Halifax's daughter Elizabeth married the earl's son Philip in 1692) it quickly developed into one of patron and client.[163] The two men remained close despite Chesterfield and Halifax's spectacular falling out in 1694 where the former,

> having a dispute with the Lord Halifax at Dinner before company I told him that I had rather be a plaine honest country gentleman, than a cunning, false, Court knave. After this I never spoke more to his Lordship nor he to me till his death which happened the next year.[164]

Indeed, after Halifax's death, Alexander Stanhope nervously wrote to his son that the

> sudden loss of our generous friend, my good Halifax, is a great blow to us all, but particularly to you in this critical conjuncture, when you had so fair hopes by his favour. … What the young Lord Halifax's temper is, I know little or nothing, but intend to write to him next post, and doubt not of your compliance with all the devoirs of decency and respect to his Lordship.[165]

Alexander Stanhope was thus a client of Halifax – in their correspondence if anyone used flattery it would be the former. He was also a well-schooled diplomat – Halifax was not seeking to win the support of a politically-naïve Anglican through extravagantly apocalyptic

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[162] Charles-Édouard Levillain, 'French Diplomacy and the Run-up to the Glorious Revolution of 1688: A Critical Reading of Jean-Antoine d'Avaux's Correspondence as Ambassador to the States General', *JMH*, 88:1 (2016), 142-3.
[163]Kent Archives, U1590 C7/19, Chesterfield to Alexander Stanhope, 20 Mar. 1692.
[164] Add MS 19253, 'Letter-book of Philip Stanhope, 2nd Earl of Chesterfield'.
[165] Alexander Stanhope to James Stanhope, 25 May 1695, in Philip Stanhope, Viscount Mahon (ed.), *Spain under Charles the Second; or, Extracts from the Correspondence of the Hon. Alexander Stanhope, British Minister at Madrid. 1690-1699. From the Originals at Chevening* (1840), pp. 62-3. Stanhope's letter to the 2nd marquis was suitably obsequious.

expressions around the war against France. Yet his correspondence with the English resident in Madrid was suffused with a Protestant-inspired foreign outlook. Foxcroft seems not to have used this correspondence, while Brown was more interested in its relation to *Advice to a Daughter*. The letters show Halifax regarded the fight against France as vital to the continuation of European Protestantism. Discussing a possible engagement between the elector of Bavaria and the French in 1692, he wrote 'it giveth an expectation of a battle, which being between two such very great Armies, will have such consequences, that the fate of Christendome seemeth in good measure to depend upon it'.[166] Portrayals of Louis XIV as antichrist were not uncommon in this period. In *Character of a Trimmer* Halifax described him as 'no more than a Whip in God Allmighty's hand, to be thrown into the fire when the world hath been sufficiently scourged with it'.[167] However, for Halifax to use similar language in private correspondence shows the religious dimension to his francophobia. Despite the fact that the Grand Alliance contained Catholic powers, France needed to be combatted as the most dangerous popish nation. Thus Halifax warned in 1690 that:

> if the K of France getteth Mons, and endeth the Campayne with successe answerable to this first undertaking, hee will bee so Great that who ever is Pope must bee his Chaplaine, and dipose the Holy Ghost to sanctify all he doth and so transferre the Infallibilty from Rome to Paris'.[168]

Clearly Halifax feared a papacy dominated by France which would occasion the loss of balance in Europe, and lead to an outright attack on Reformed Christendom. Support for the Grand Alliance did not mean Halifax had abandoned confessional dislike of Catholicism. Regarding all Catholic powers as liable to engage in persecution, he felt that holding a balance of forces in Europe would dampen their behaviour. 'Sure, Spayne would bee so farre reconciled to heresie; as to forget their aversion to it, whilst it hath the greatest share in

[166] Kent Archives, U1590/C7/27, Halifax to Alexander Stanhope, 29 Mar. 1692.
[167] Brown, I, 196.
[168] Kent Archives, U1590/C7/27, Halifax to Alexander Stanhope, 24 Mar. 1690.

supporting them against France; but nothing is so humorous as ignorance'.[169] Thus Halifax's fundamental understanding of European politics – that Catholic powers would persecute less if England could hold the balance of power – was not merely a rhetorical device in *Character of a Trimmer*, but a genuinely-held belief which continued to inform his behaviour after the Revolution.

Destruction of the balance between nations and the rise of France to unmediated power would lead to the persecution of the Reformed churches on the continent. As Bethel had argued, to prevent the persecution of the Huguenots, they needed to be 'of necessary use to their King … keeping the balance betwixt *Spain* and *France* even … would consequently make them useful'.[170] That balance destroyed, much of Halifax's career would seek to rectify the consequences. Concerns over Reformed religion abroad can help to explain his otherwise petty dislike of Shaftesbury and Exclusion, given that the pro-Monmouth faction on the 1679 Privy Council 'put domestic issues above foreign ones'.[171] By dividing Protestants in England, the drive for Exclusion had hindered England's ability to fulfil its obligations to co-religionists abroad.[172]

The fate of the Protestants of France was of utmost concern to the Savile family. Halifax's chaplain, and later literary agent, was a French Huguenot named Alexander Sion 'forced for his preservation to retire into Our Dominions … [after] diverse prosecutions for his Religion'.[173] Halifax's middle son and heir William employed a Jean de Jourdan – ordained by Compton in 1696 after a reference signed by four ministers of London's Savoy Church – as a domestic chaplain.[174] The strong religious affinity he felt towards European Protestants

[169] Kent Archives, U1590/C7/27, Halifax to Alexander Stanhope, 22 July 1690.
[170] Bethel, *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell*, p. 4.
[171] Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, p. 48.
[172] Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*, pp. 238-239.
[173] Brown, I, xl-xlii.
[174] Robin Gwynn, *The Huguenots in Later Stuart Britain* (3 vols, Brighton, 2015-20), I, 315.

clearly contributed to him being 'from first to last diametrically opposed to all collaboration with France', as Foxcroft puts it.[175] Halifax's correspondence shows that from the late-1670s he was deluged by reports of increasing persecution of the Huguenots. A typical dispatch from April 1680 warned that 'the poure protestants are still more and more persecuted, ten of their churches being of late demolished in Normandy, & all those of Britange having for certain undergone the same fate'.[176] Two years previously his uncle Henry Coventry had received an unsuccessful request from Compton the bishop of London for assistance in preventing the destruction, contrary to the Edict of Nantes, of the Huguenot church at Exodun, Poitou, as part of growing French intolerance towards Protestantism that would culminate with the Edict's revocation in 1685.[177] Henry Savile reported that many Huguenots were 'apprehending daily greater calamitys', and seeking to leave France.[178]

Notably, Henry informed Halifax that the executions prompted by the Popish plot revelations were a cause of the deteriorating situation for the Huguenots. 'The Archbishop of Paris, and the Pere de la Chaise', he wrote in June 1679, 'do all they can to prevail with this King to make him revenge the quarrell of the English Catholicks upon the French Protestants'.[179] When mob violence erupted at trials in England and a spate of executions occurred during summer 1679, Henry grew increasingly desperate.[180] By August he warned 'every body have seen [accounts disputing the plot], the rumours concerning our barbarity increase daily here, and it grows absolutely necessary' for the government to publish in French 'proofs' of the veracity of the convictions.[181] Halifax in reply advocated 'the translating into French a very good pamphlet lately come out as an answer to those very speeches … made by the Jesuits at

[175] Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 64.
[176] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/219/14, f. 2, L Champion to Halifax.
[177] IHR, XR 60/29, Coventry Papers. Vol 38, Papers relating to France, vol. 2, 1676-1685, ff. 108-10.
[178] Henry Savile to Halifax, 28 Feb 1680, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 141.
[179] Henry Savile to Halifax, 5 June 1679, 'Savile Corespondence'., p. 93.
[180] Kenyon, *Popish Plot*, pp. 176-80.
[181] Henry Savile to Halifax, 2 Aug. 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 113.

the execution'.[182] Though Halifax's attitude to the Plot was often cynical, he seems to have been angered by its impact on the Huguenots. On 31 May 1689 the House of Lords voted 35-23 to reject a bill by the Commons to overturn the convictions of Titus Oates. Only two 'Williamites' joined in voting against Oates. That Carmarthen was one is hardly surprising given the role the Popish Plot played in his earlier impeachment – Halifax was the second.[183] Similarly after a warning from Henry of a threat that 'every English Protestant in this town [Paris] should be murther'd' if the Catholic lords in the Tower were executed, Halifax voted to acquit William Howard, Viscount Stafford at his trial in December 1680.[184]

Halifax evidently received a regular supply of religious literature from the continent. In 1678 his brother queried that 'you have not acknowledged the receipt of the two books I sent by Captn. Lockhart; it were pity they were lost, being both much esteem'd by all good Protestants'.[185] Halifax's private writings contain numerous commentaries on works of religious history, which influenced his understanding of contemporary Europe, and show his concern for Protestants there. For example, in response to a work by Pierre Jarrige on the Jesuits, he noted that the 'Inquisition in Spayne took its rise from the Expulsion of Mores … The same must happen in France, for the same reason, in respect of the Protestants'.[186] This fear was strengthened by the fact he often received (erroneous) reports of imminent plans for a grand European Catholic alliance. While some in England believed that disputes between Louis XIV and Pope Innocent XI signalled the possibility of a Gallican Reformation which might see the Most Christian King follow the example of Henry VIII, there is no evidence Halifax considered this at all likely.[187] In mid-1681 his agent reported a rumour that the Pope

[182] Halifax to Henry Savile, 11 Aug. 1679,' Savile Correspondence', p. 117. Halifax was likely referring to John Williams, *An Impartial Consideration of those Speeches* (1679).
[183] Paley, I, 284.
[184] Henry Savile to Halifax, 5 June 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 94.
[185] Henry Savile to Halifax, 15 Sept. 1678, 'Savile Correspondence' p. 71.
[186] Brown, II, 308.
[187] Jotham Parsons, *The Church in the Republic: Gallicanism and Political Ideology in Renaissance France* (Washington D.C., 2004), p. 176.

intended to settle his dispute with Louis, 'provided he would engage him self to the holy see, to doe his utmost endeavours to roote heresy not only out of his Kingdome, but out of all Europe'.[188] It may have been this concern for European Protestantism, rather than the pleas of government ministers, which convinced him to return to court by the end of May that year.[189]

Halifax was not just sympathetic to the plight of the Huguenots but also took steps to support them both in France and England. 'I approve … your countenancing the Protestants', he told Henry, 'which I think the principall work of an English minister in France'.[190] This 'countenancing' took two forms. The first involved pressuring the English crown to take a more assertive stance against French persecution of Protestants. Both Savile brothers told Charles II he was a guarantor of the Treaties of Nantes and Paris and needed to do 'what the world expects from him … who is the chiefe Protestant prince in Europe'. While Henry would not see the king act like his 'great predecessour Elizabeth I … who found [a pro-Protestant policy] the onely way to bee quiett in her life and glorious after it', his efforts did have some effect.[191] Charles wrote to the French king reminding him that he was a grandson of the creator of the Edict of Nantes, Henri IV, 'whose precious blood circulates in both our veins'.[192] Henry, who had an often antagonistic relationship with the French court, was allowed to object vigorously to instances of English Protestants being subject to anti-Huguenot legislation and efforts to convert them to Roman Catholicism.[193] His stance received enthusiastic backing from Halifax. Mentioning a 'piece of intelligence' that Henry had received a blow from Louis during a disagreement, Halifax noted 'you cannot imagine how such a thing as this enhanceth your reputation amongst all true lovers of the gospel'.[194]

[188] Nottinghamshire Archives DD/SR/219/14, f. 18, L. Champion to Halifax.
[189] Brown, 1, 17.
[190] Halifax to Henry Savile, 9 June 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 98.
[191] Henry Savile to Sir Leoline Jenkins, 22 July 1681,' Savile Correspondence', pp. 209-10.
[192] Gwynn, 'Government Policy Towards Huguenot Immigration', 210.
[193] David J. Sturdy, 'Savile, Henry', *ODNB*.
[194] Halifax to Henry Savile, 10 June 1680, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 155.

The second part of the 'countenancing' of French Protestants involved support for Huguenot immigration to England. As early as 1679 Halifax told Henry that he supported allowing Huguenots to settle in England, though he recognised the difficulty of such a policy being adopted: 'we may please ourselves with dreaming of such things, but we must never hope to get further'.[195] In July 1681 the ambassador let his dreaming get the better of him and sent a lengthy memorandum to Secretary of State Leoline Jenkins advocating a 'hearty declaration' to be distributed across Europe offering all Protestants everywhere the right and assistance to migrate to England.[196] Halifax reprimanded his brother 'to be wary in your expressions, without abating any thing of your due zeal for religion', but the brothers' efforts had had an effect.[197] On 28 July 1681 an order in council stated that Charles would 'grant unto every such distressed Protestant who shall come hither for refuge, and reside here, his letters of denization under the Great Seal without any charge whatsoever'.[198] Gywnn notes that Charles's 1681 declaration for the Huguenots appeared very quickly and efficiently, compared to a lengthy (and widely noticed) delay under James II to organise a collection for the refugees.[199] A significant reason for the discrepancy may well be the position of Halifax, a highly influential courtier in 1681 and dismissed from the Privy Council the day before Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. It is worth noting that the Saviles supported the French Huguenots for reasons of the Protestant religion, rather than English interest. Protestant immigrants frequently brought valuable economic skills with them, which helped them to gain acceptance and advocate for improving their conditions in England.[200] However, Halifax made it clear that he regarded the economic imperative for Huguenot naturalization

[195] Halifax to Henry Savile, 9 July 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 97.
[196] Henry Savile to Sir Leoline Jenkins, 22 July 1681,' Savile Correspondence', p. 210.
[197] Halifax to Henry Savile, 28 July 1681, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 212.
[198] Daniel Statt, 'The Birthright of an Englishman: The Practice of Naturalization and Denization of Immigrants under the Later Stuarts and Early Hannoverians', *PHSL,* 15:1 (1989), 67.
[199] Gwynn, 'Government Policy Towards Huguenot Immigration', 213; Robin Gwynn, 'James II in the Light of his Treatment of Huguenot Refugees in England, 1685-1686', *PHSL,* 23:4 (1980), 217; E. S. De Beer, 'The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and English Public Opinion', *PHSL,* 18:4 (1947-52), 300-2.
[200] John Miller, 'Town Governments and Protestant Strangers, 1560-1690', *PHSL*, 26:5 (1997), 577-89.

as subservient to the religious one, as only 'those that have not zeal enough for the preserving our religion might have wit enough to do it for the encreasing our trade'.[201]

As a result of their sympathy for the Huguenots the Saviles developed close ties to French Protestants. As ambassador to France, Henry attended services at the Huguenot chapel at Charenton Val de Marne, and objected to demands that he have an Anglican chaplain attend him. Halifax encouraged this behaviour, writing that a chaplain would be 'an incumbrance', and 'I approve yr going to Charenton, and your countenancing the Protestants, which I think the principall work of an English minister in France'.[202] This stance very clearly placed him on the side of Huguenots who did not conform to Anglican liturgy, to the fury of High Anglicans, and demonstrates his sense of a European-wide Protestant community.[203] There were differences in authorised Huguenot religious practice in England. The Church of the Savoy used a French translation of Anglican liturgy, but the Church at Threadneedle Street relied on a Royal Charter from Edward VI's time to justify otherwise nonconformist worship.[204] In the 1630s Laud had sought to 'harry and displace' this latter group, while in 1685 an effort was made in Parliament to pass a bill mandating French churches conform to the Church of England. Internationally, Laud's ally Sir John Scudamore, the English ambassador to France from 1635 to 1639, refused to attend Huguenot services, instead having his chaplains read from the *Book of Common Prayer* in the embassy.[205] Henry's decision to attend Charenton was thus a profoundly political statement. Similarly, Alexander Sion, though ordained a priest by Compton in 1683, had in 1680 been prepared to accept employment as an assistant pastor at the Threadneedle Street Church.[206] Halifax's subsequent

[201] Halifax to Henry Savile, 9 June 1679, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 97.
[202] 'Savile Correspondence', p. 98.
[203] John Miller, 'The Immediate Impact of the Revocation in England', in Caldicott, Gough, Pittion (eds), *The Huguenots and Ireland*, p. 162.
[204] Gwynn, *The Huguenots in Later Stuart Britain*, I, 5.
[205] Ibid., pp. 25, 129.
[206] Ibid., p. 407.

employment of him is another indication of his more fluid attitude to the boundaries of acceptable Protestantism.

Through Henry's 'great assiduity at Charenton … I have got into the friendship of the gravest [Huguenots]', and Halifax was able to arrange the marriage of his eldest son Henry to Esther de la Tour de Gouvernet, daughter of a wealthy French Protestant family.[207] Although Henry predeceased his father, Halifax helped the rest of the de Gouvernet family to migrate to England, where both Esther and her mother were buried in Westminster Abbey.[208] Like his uncle Sir William Coventry, Halifax demonstrated his commitment to the Huguenots in England by leaving a substantial sum in his will for the refugees.[209] Thus, it can be seen that Halifax saw himself and should be placed within the context of European Protestantism towards the end of the seventeenth century – a Protestantism that was under attack and beleaguered particularly in and from France. His support for the Huguenots and personal connections with them is a notable example. Moreover, his commitment to a Europe-wide Protestantism helped inform his political actions and his dislike of a rapprochement with the France of Louis XIV.

This discussion of Halifax's religious views and the impact they had on his continuing antagonism to a pro-French policy has a few important implications. First, in the debate over the secularisation of foreign policy, Halifax might be considered as the most likely to fit into Pincus's scheme of politicians who ceased to see foreign politics though a confessional lens. A man who routinely faced allegations of atheism, irreligion, and scepticism of Christian doctrine outside of some very limited basics could be expected to lead the vanguard of Francophobic Englishmen who had abandoned 'identity politics'.[210] Yet a study of his

[207] Henry Savile to Halifax, 28 Feb. 1680, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 141.
[208] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/221/94, f. 37, Madame de Gouvernet to Halifax, 1686.
[209] Sidney Lee, revised by Sean Kelsey, 'Coventry, Sir William', *ODNB*; Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 336.
[210] Pincus, *1688*, ch. 4.

published and unpublished writings, and private correspondence indicates that his opposition to Louis XIV was neither naïve as to the need for alliances with other Catholic powers, but nor was it 'post-confessional'. Secondly, it suggests that despite his advocacy of a blue-water strategy he did not reject the idea of war against France as part of a Protestant foreign policy.

Conclusion

When Halifax died in 1695, his opposition to the government of William III had alienated him from even more of his old friends. According to one, on his deathbed he 'lamented the former parts of his Life, with solemn resolutions of becoming in all respects another man, if God should raise him up. And so, I hope, he died a better man, than he lived'.[211] Yet paradoxically, the fact that Halifax had deeply irritated many prominent members of the Williamite episcopate demonstrates that to a degree, his religious convictions remained highly relevant. And whether or not Burnet was correct about Halifax's dying sentiments, it is certain he passed away in the happy knowledge that his son and heir had just married the daughter of Nottingham, his great religious ally.

This chapter has sought forcefully to dispel previous notions of Halifax's religiosity. The 'Black Marquis' was highly critical of the behaviour of the clergy of the Church of England, but that was because he wanted to reform the church for the sake of Protestantism. Halifax was a committed Anglican, with a clear historical sense of both the legitimacy of Reformed religion and also its correct path. Strong believers in belonging to a European Protestant community, the Savile family strove to promote the interests of their co-religionists at home and abroad. Forcefully advocating English commitment to the Huguenots, Halifax was able to pressure the government of Charles II into offering relatively generous concessions to refugees. His belief in the need to guarantee Protestant unity through comprehension and the

[211] Burnet, *History*, IV, 268-9.

promotion of a programme of moderate reform of the church may have not been totally fulfilled, but it had successes. The Williamite episcopate, whose key figures were aligned to Halifax's vision, sought to use reform and conciliation to prevent radicalism or religious strife amongst Protestants. 'Set God allwayes in your sight', was the advice Lady Elizabeth Coventry offered her grandson at the height of the civil wars, 'and remember his commandements to obaye them'. She may well have been pleased with the results.

CHAPTER TWO

The Country Opposition and Politics in the 1670s

In 1672, as part of a royal effort to broaden support for the 3rd Anglo-Dutch War, Halifax was made a Privy Councillor and in June sent to join Arlington and Buckingham's diplomatic mission to the continent.[1] The experience, the last time he would leave England, had a profound impact on Halifax's engagement with the politics of the 1670s, pushing him in two contradictory directions. Witnessing the near collapse of the Protestant United Provinces in the face of an Anglo-French assault convinced him of the dangers of popish Francophile influences in Charles II's court but the disintegration of the Dutch republican regime illustrated the destructive power of mob violence incited by preachers. This chapter will consider that embassy, and examine Halifax's engagement with emerging party politics towards the latter half of Charles II's reign. It will show how he successfully rallied an element of middle-ground opinion against polarising Whig and Tory positions. However, his political views and behaviour were idiosyncratic, making 'moderate' a problematic descriptor of him. Exclusion, in Halifax's view, risked harming the wider Protestant cause to which he was so committed; was likely to provoke a civil war in England, and would distract attention from the need to form alliances against the increasing power of France. Moreover, Shaftesbury's tactics of appealing to popular sentiment were deeply antithetical to Halifax who was apprehensive of the possible consequences. His return to the court party after 1680 can therefore be explained both by his dislike of the Exclusionists' tactics and his desire to increase the influence of those who could properly be considered to be the true representatives of the nation: the aristocracy. The chapter has four sections: the first briefly

[1] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 70.

details the embassy; the second discusses Halifax's initial involvement with the Country party; the third will set out how his alliance with Shaftesbury fractured; and the fourth will look at how he sought to promote and enhance aristocratic influence in localities.

1. Embassy to the United Provinces

Leaving London on 15 June, he reached Calais a fortnight later, arriving in Bruges on 3 July.[2] There he was met by those fleeing the advancing French troops, concerned that the war would leave the Catholic French ruling over the Protestant Dutch. 'I am informed', he wrote to Arlington, 'by some that come from Rotterdam & other places would choose England as the lesser evill though att the same time they accuse us to be ye Authors of their ruine'.[3] A few days later, James Vernon, who was acting as Halifax's secretary, recorded that in Middleburg 'I saw severall women shed tears and wring their hands as Wee passed by'.[4] From Middleburg Halifax wrote to Arlington 'what I have observed in this little time is an extreme aversion in this people of Zeland from the French'. The fear of the populace at the prospect of French occupation was the 'consideration of preserving their religion, they being here very Zealous Protestants, & universally so without any mixture of Roman Catholiques'. Unsuccessfully, and in opposition to the other plenipotentiaries – Arlington and Buckingham – Halifax sought to lessen the severity of peace terms with the Dutch.[5] Although it applied to both Protestant Dissenters and Catholics, the 1672 Declaration of Indulgence was attacked as a device which sought to advance Catholicism. In the House of Lords in 1673 Halifax sat on parliamentary committees for Bills for 'the ease of Protestant Dissenters', and to 'prevent the growth of popery'.[6] A belief that figures in Charles's court were aiding Catholicism at home,

[2] Ibid., p. 75.
[3] Add MS 72578, fols. 21-22, Halifax to Arlington, 30 June 1672.
[4] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 82.
[5] Littleton, 'Savile, George', 322.
[6] Ibid., 323.

and harming Protestants abroad through a pro-French foreign policy shaped Halifax's political behaviour until 1689 and contributed to his drift into opposition politics. As Scott argues, this political journey was typical not only of Englishmen of the 1670s, but part of a broader trend of fears of popery and arbitrary government driving instability in the seventeenth century. 'In the 1620s we encountered a comparable situation, combining perceived military and religious danger abroad; royal failure to oppose this giving way to alliance with it; popish policies and inclinations at home'.[7]

Correspondence with the former council of trade official Pierre du Moulin – a Huguenot who had fled to the Netherlands in July 1672 – shows the depth of Halifax's concerns.[8] Du Moulin did not need to convince Halifax of the dangers of Louis XIV establishing a 'Universal Monarchy', writing 'et d'ailleurs, comme j'ai l'honneur connaitre parfaitement vos sentiments sur ce sujet-la, je n'ai pas besoin no plus de m'enfforcer davantage de vous convaincre d'une verite dont vous etes deja persuade'. In previous conversations, Halifax had apparently described English friendship towards France as akin to unleashing a raging lion on Europe. Du Moulin concluded with an appeal to Halifax to alter English policy, urging 'il faudra se souvenir que nous sommes tous citoyens du monde'.[9] Halifax's analogy of Louis XIV to a lion that needed chaining was used by du Moulin in his influential pamphlet *England's Appeal From The Private Cabal At White-hall To The Great Council Of The Nation* (1673), which sought to turn parliamentary opinion against the war. It was ridiculous, du Moulin argued:

[7] Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 175.
[8] Stuart Handley, 'Du Moulin, Pierre', *ODNB*.
[9] Du Moulin to Halifax, undated (ca. Nov. 1672 to Jan. 1673), quoted in K. H. D. Haley, *William of Orange and the English Opposition 1672-4* (Oxford, 1953), p. 73. The notion of a 'citizen of the world' had previously been used as a rhetorical device in anti-French appeals to English public opinion by the Imperial diplomat François-Paul de Lisola, whose work Halifax owned, in 1667. See Mark Goldie and Charles-Édouard Levillain, 'François-Paul de Lisola and English Opposition to Louis XIV', *HJ*, 63:3 (2020), 563.

> that a Protestant Kingdom, without being compelled to it by some urgent and unavoidable necessity, should ever fight with so much fierceness for the destruction of the Protestant interest: or that English Counsellors should advise his Majesty to run the fortune of a French King without a rational prospect of advantage to himself.[10]

Allying with France mistakenly repudiated the Triple Alliance of 1668, by which England, the United Provinces, and Sweden had succeeded in 'chaining up a devouring *Lion*, who was never satiated with prey'.[11] So irrational was English policy, he argued, that only sinister corruption in the royal court could explain it:

> Let those that have *Advised* his Majesty to this War speak, they must now pull their Vizard off, they must appear in their true shape; & tell us plainly whether they are paid for making the *French King* the Universal *Monarchy, And* whether to bring down new Golden showers into their Laps, *England* must at Least be made Tributary to the *French.*[12]

Although courtiers in general were attacked, Halifax escaped censure. Indeed, one of the criticisms of English policy was the effort to marginalise his role in negotiations: 'Who were those (after my *Lord Hallifax* could be kept out no longer) who went privately to the *French Camp* under several pretences, and had still *Negotiations* of their *own* on foot?'[13]

Halifax's experience of this embassy pushed him, on his return, into opposition to the Crown's use of prerogative power and its perceived tolerance of popery. In March 1673 he was a parliamentary manager in conferences between the Commons and Lords over the wording of the Test Act.[14] However, as well as contributing to his disillusionment with the pro-Catholic policies of the Court, Halifax's travel showed him the fragility of government and order in face of mob violence by the people. During his time in the United Provinces he witnessed the fall of the De Witt brothers. Initially his correspondence suggested he believed the republican regime would survive the stresses of war. Though 'the people said to be much

[10] Pierre du Moulin, *England's Appeal* (1673), p. 1.
[11] Ibid., p. 8.
[12] Ibid., p. 33.
[13] Ibid., p. 50.
[14] Littleton, 'George Savile', p. 322.

enclined to the Prince of Orange but ye magistrates in Holland generally averse to him', and Johan De Witt had survived an assassination attempt.[15] Yet in a contest between the people and magistrates, the former overwhelmed the latter. Halifax was in Middleburg when he heard of the execution of one of the attempted assassins, Jacob van der Graeff.[16] Yet the 'sentence, was, in fact, the last show of strength by a dying regime'. Whipped up by *The Struggle of Jacob*, a pamphlet which depicted the calm, pious, martyrdom of the deceased, mob violence exploded in Dutch cities.[17] Popular uprisings had occurred previously, but as Israel notes, '1672 was different. This was the first time widespread unrest, encouraged by political agitators, shaped events in a sustained fashion'. Pamphlet battles raged over whether popular action from below the level of the magistrates was illegitimate (the position of republican States party writers) or whether the people were acting as 'true patriots', as the Orangists claimed.[18] Halifax recorded how:

> … the Prince of Orange's Colours flourish every where in this place, & the people are much pleased at it, he is chosen Stathouder of Amsterdam, Delf[t], & other places in Holland in many of them it was done by a kind of violence of ye people upon the Magistrates.[19]

The violence went beyond forcing the revocation of the Perpetual Edict, which had been designed to curb the power of the Prince of Orange in the state. On 20 August Johan De Witt was visiting his brother Cornelius in prison in The Hague, where he had been tortured and sentenced to banishment. By afternoon a crowd, assisted by the Orangist civic militia had surrounded them. The two did not even make it to the improvised gallows. Bludgeoned to death, some of their body parts were allegedly cannibalised by the mob.[20]

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[15] Add MS 72578, fols. 21-2, Halifax to Arlington, 30 July 1672.
[16] Add MS 72578, fol. 22, Halifax to Arlington, 4 July 1672.
[17] Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641-1672* (first pub. 1939, English translation by N. V. A. Oosthoek, 1969), pp. 347-9.
[18] Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 801-2.
[19] Add MS 72578, fols. 22-3, Halifax to Arlington, 5 July 1672.
[20] Herbert H. Rowen, *John de Witt: Statesman of the "True Freedom"* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 216-17.

His embassy influenced Halifax's attitudes to politics in the 1670s – shaped by fear of the threat to a stable, Protestant order from Francophile Catholic absolutism from above, and popular anarchy from below. Rather than moderation, conventionally understood, he embodied a kind of 'ideological schizophrenia'[21] – an aristocratic combination of radical criticism of royal power and absolutism with deep social conservatism and detestation of what he referred to as 'the Beast called the Mob'.[22] These attitudes help demonstrate why he became disillusioned with the Court and then returned to it. Generally, a significant tranche of Country opinion disliked perceived corruption and popery at Court but was nevertheless reluctant to join with the Whig party to impose Exclusion. Personally Halifax allied with moderate politicians successfully courting them, with both patronage and persuasion. But his beliefs were influenced by his idiosyncratic politics, in particular his overriding concern for a Protestant foreign policy and hope that Limitations could drastically reduce the powers of the monarchy.

2. Political parties and Exclusion

The historiographical debate over the emergence of political parties and the link between that and the struggle to exclude James Duke of York from the succession has raged for longer than the struggle itself. J. R. Jones argued that the first Whigs constituted a political party – they were organised both in Parliament and in the constituencies, they were disciplined, they appealed to popular sentiment through large scale use of propaganda and they had, in Antony Ashley-Cooper, 1st earl of Shaftesbury, a charismatic and effective leader.[23] Moreover, Shaftesbury successfully focussed on the single issue of Exclusion in order to drive his programme. This line of argument found no favour with Jonathan Scott, who doubted the

[21] The phrase is used by Blair Worden, *The Rump Parliament, 1648-1653* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 69.
[22] Kent Archives, U1590 C7/19, Halifax to Alexander Stanhope, 14 Aug. 1694.
[23] J. R. Jones, *The First Whigs: The Politics of the Exclusion Crisis, 1678–1683* (Oxford, 1961), p. 2.

importance of Exclusion as driving politics in the period. Instead, the debate around the succession was exclusively a means of conducting a battle over popery and arbitrary government: the '"exclusion crisis", was not therefore … principally about "exclusion" at all'.[24] Moreover, there were not meaningful Whig and Tory parties, but rather a recurrence of the 'crisis of popery and arbitrary government' which bedevilled English politics in the seventeenth century.[25] In opposition to this, Harris and Tapsell argue that while pre-1660 divisions and the memory of the civil war remained, the Exclusion debate of the 1680s saw new developments, especially in the growth and solidification of partisan division and the use of appeals to public opinion. For Harris, it was not that the 'Whigs' of 1678 had almost totally become 'Tories' in 1682. Instead English society was so divided that people viewed themselves as belonging to either group, and the end of Charles II's reign marked 'the first age of party in England'.[26] Tapsell's work on the personal rule shows bitter political competition, centred around greater press output, religious persecution, and the anticipation of new elections, which continued even after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament.[27] As a result, the political significance of 'moderates' as a separate category largely disappeared: 'we should be concerned with different strands of thought within Whig and Tory circles, rather than a pursuit of a substantial and separate "middle-ground" … the divisiveness of the Exclusion period left a very deep-seated legacy'.[28] Nevertheless some, such as Sir John Holland, who moved from opposition to the machinations of Danby in the 1670s, opposition to Exclusion, and finally opposition to the Whig junto of the 1690s could be seen as representing a 'moderate in the age of party'.[29]

[24] Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677–1683* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 8.
[25] Ibid., p. 13.
[26] Tim Harris, 'Party Turns? Or, Whigs and Tories Get Off Scott Free', *Albion,* 25:4 (1993), 586-90.
[27] Grant Tapsell, 'Parliament and Political Division in the Last Years of Charles II, 1681-5', *PH,* 22:3 (2003), 243-62.
[28] Grant Tapsell, *The Personal Rule of Charles II, 1681-85* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 196.
[29] John Miller, 'A Moderate in the First Age of Party: The Dilemmas of Sir John Holland, 1675-85,' *EHR,* 114:458 (1999), 844-74.

Halifax and those close could be seen as representing a separate, and politically influential group in English politics in this period.. Halifax was not a fully-fledged Whig in 1678 – he already held objections to Shaftesbury. Nor was he a committed Tory in 1682. In the 1670s he had sought to prevent Tories like York, Rochester or Danby from monopolising political control and pursuing a High Church agenda; while after 1680 he accepted the need to use coercive force against the dangerous Whig party. Most importantly, however, he deeply distrusted party as a force which would destabilise social order. This chapter shows the continued relevance of moderate opinion and politics during and after the Exclusion Crisis. It thus differs from the interpretation of Scott, who argues for vast movement in public sentiment between 1678 and 1681. Instead it will show the existence of a crucial and enduring middle-ground of public opinion in an increasingly polarised society. As one study of court rhetoric of moderation put it, 'fears of renewed civil war, religious fanaticism, popular disorder, and the arbitrary power of Parliament caused the moderate center to choose the lesser evil of monarchy and Established Church once more'.[30]

It was his rejection of Exclusion that gained Halifax most notoriety during his lifetime. Swatland notes that he moved from 'Country to Court' between 1675-9 and became a member of the 'Tory' party in 1680-1.[31] However, this transformation was less surprising than has sometimes been recognised. While James II 'never could understand his politicks', numerous other members of the Commons and Lords evidently did, given that they followed similar trajectories.[32] Moreover, rather than seeing this network in which Halifax played an important role as 'abandoning' the opposition, we should rather view the Country 'party' as fracturing. Its moderate wing, while remaining committed to some original Country aims,

[30] John Patrick Montano, *Courting the Moderates. Ideology, Propaganda and the Emergence of Party, 1660-1678* (2000), p. 51.
[31] Andrew Swatland, *The House of Lords in the Reign of Charles II* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 258.
[32] Brown, I, xx.

split. This split was the result of three major factors: ideological differences, pragmatic concern over the proposed solution to 'popery and arbitrary government', and distrust over the tactics of some opposition leaders in their appeal to 'popularity'. Those close to Halifax in Country opposition gradually grew estranged from the more radical partisan behaviour of the future Whigs. Seeking to promote the election of supportive MPs, they hoped to achieve comprehension for Protestant Dissenters, a pro-Dutch foreign policy, and Limitations on monarchical powers while avoiding the excesses of appeals to party or the unrest they felt Exclusion would cause. Halifax's views were also deeply connected with his aristocratic conservatism – he disliked the tactics of the Whigs because they sought to enflame public opinion to achieve their goals. Instead in the 1680s he pursued his vision of enhancing aristocratic control in the localities.

Halifax and the Country Party

From the 1670s Halifax was part of a broad group of peers and MPs opposed to the dominance of Danby, hoping for the comprehension of dissenters, and desiring an anti-French foreign policy. The Country members of parliament in the 1670s were deeply concerned at the means used by the earl of Danby to secure loyalty in the Commons. Instead of convincing members out of 'interest' or argument the government used payments on a vast scale. By mid-1675 thirty MPs were in receipt of pensions which totalled roughly £30,000 per year. As Smith points out, such blatant bribery was probably counter-productive, and provided a grievance around which Country politicians could cohere. Danby's payments 'alienated at least as many members as they won over … members accused him of trying to create a "Pension Parliament"'.[33] For Halifax and other sympathisers with the Country position, Danby's actions were likely ultimately to lead to the collapse of Parliament as an

[33] David L. Smith, *The Stuart Parliaments, 1603-1689* (1999), p. 154.

effective part of the constitution. Writing later,[34] he referred to how the 'event [of bribing MPs] prooved this; the Ancient temper of Parliaments altered'.[35] Even a sympathetic account of Danby's ministry admits that if 'moderate' government policy (such as a Dutch alliance) was accompanied by efforts to create pensioner MPs, it would drive many, including Halifax, into opposition.[36] Danby's biographer considered that the competition between him and the opposition sought 'not merely the triumph of one statesman over his rival but the victory of one system of government over another'.[37] Indeed, the concern that corrupted MPs would betray the national interest, a key thread of the Country mentality dating from the 1670s, was summarised towards the end of Halifax's life by his anonymous pamphlet addressed to electors, *Some Cautions*. Warning of the danger of electing poor men he argued 'when it cometh to bee the question with such a man, whether hee shall bee just to the publique or cruell to his family, it is very possible the decision may bee on the side of corrupted Nature'.[38] Halifax's dismissal from the Privy Council in January 1676 together with the Puritan leader Holles, and their replacement by bishops, shows the importance of religion in Halifax's opposition to the government, but the immediate cause was his attack on Danby for being corrupt.[39]

Halifax was connected to country members in Parliament who disliked the religious policy of the government. In April 1675, in opposing Danby's non-resisting Test Bill, he regularly met with Shaftesbury and Holles at Holles' house.[40] The measure, proposing an oath against altering religion or the government, was unacceptable to those who sought to revise the Restoration religious settlement to grant toleration or comprehension to Protestant

[34] Brown, II, 17, dates *Fees and Salaries* to probably after Feb. 1690.
[35] Brown, II, 88.
[36] Montano, *Courting the Moderates*, p. 257.
[37] Andrew Browning, *Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds, 1632-1712* (3 vols, Glasgow, 1944), p. 465.
[38] Brown, I, 321.
[39] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 325.
[40] Patricia Crawford, *Denzil Holles 1598-1680. A Study of his Political Career* (1979), pp. 212-3.

dissenters.[41] According to opponents it would 'make a distinct Party from the rest of the Nation of the High Episcopal Man, and the Old Cavalier, who are to swallow … all the Power and Office of the Kingdom'.[42] Halifax spoke in the House of Lords against the bill. His speech earned him praise from sympathetic Puritans and the Huguenot community in Charenton, and the published account of the debate praised the 'quickness, Learning, and Elegance' with which he attacked the bishops.[43] Many of his allies amongst Country party MPs shared elements of his religious outlook. Sir William Hickman, the MP for East Retford, espoused Country positions in the 1670s, for example advocating a Dutch alliance and a bill 'for uniting Protestant subjects', and subsequently voting against Exclusion.[44] A friend of Halifax's, in 1680 he wrote that 'I had sent yr Ldp; Dr ["Stillingf" crossed out] Tillotsons sermon preacht before the King, but I know you had it from another hand', as well as giving the news that 'S[i]r W[illiam] C[oventry] will be with you next week'.[45] Despite the fact that both men were at that point focussed on electoral politics in order to defeat Exclusion, Halifax still desired religious material from latitudinarian divines like Edward Stillingfleet or John Tillotson, who combined a desire to secure Protestant unity with strong anti-Catholicism.

Key amongst the allied Country politicians was Halifax's uncle William Coventry. His move towards the opposition was regarded as a triumph by like-minded observers. 'It is an incouragement to us country Gentlemen that Sir W: Coventry intends to be one' wrote Thomas Hickman-Windsor, future 1st Earl of Plymouth, and Halifax's brother-in-law, in 1672.[46] Windsor later violently turned against Exclusion, and due to 'the ill condition of my

[41] Brown, I, 5-7.
[42] Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, John Locke(?), *A Letter from a Person of Quality* (1675), p. 1.
[43] Shaftesbury, *Letter*, pp. 14, 25; Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 324.
[44] M. W. Helms and E. R. Edwards, 'Hickman, Sir William, 2nd Bt', in Henning, II, 544-5.
[45] Add MS 75360, unfoliated, Hickman to Halifax, 29 Apr. 1680.
[46] Add MS 75359, unfoliated, Windsor to Halifax, 4 Nov. 1672.

health' gave Halifax his proxy in the Lords in 1679.[47] Coventry demonstrates that the Country group in the House of Commons was a relatively loose one – 'his inspirations in debate carried great weight with very many members, but he did not aspire to the position of a party leader'. He was, however, one of the three MPs regarded by Haley as prominent in the Country party in the 1673-4 session who would vote against Exclusion in 1679.[48]

As MP for Great Yarmouth, Coventry was prominent in the attack on the policy of toleration pursued by the Cabal ministry and served on the committee for the Test Act in 1673.[49] On 23 May 1677, his encouragement caused the Commons to respond to a royal request for supply by demanding that an alliance with the Dutch was formed first. As he recounted:

> his Mai: made the speech of wch the enclosed is a copy. Soe soone as the house returned they entered into the debate, & after a bitter debate returnd into a Com. of ye whole house, where it was resolved that an address should bee made to the Kg for an alliance particularly wth the Dutch… against the growth in power of France, & to give reasons why wee could not give supply up till the alliances were declared.[50]

A letter from his cousin Thomas Thynne, then MP for Oxford University, demonstrates there was some coordination of the opposition: 'I heare our carrying the vote for ye naming Holland to bee an Allie, much displeased the Court'. Moreover, he recognised the need to maintain potential support in the Commons, given 'Sir H. Goodrick and Sr Jn. Reresby have openly left us'.[51]

So far this chapter has outlined the three major ideological factors which led Halifax and a group of like-minded politicians to ally with the Shaftesbury-dominated opposition in the 1670s: opposition to the corruption encouraged by Danby; and a dislike of government hostility to Dissent; and a desire for an anti-French foreign policy). The following section

[47] Ibid., Windsor to Halifax, 31 Mar. 1679, 12 Apr. 1679; Sean Kelsey, 'Windsor, Thomas, First Earl of Plymouth', *ODNB*.
[48] K. H. D. Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 353-4.
[49] Eveline Cruickshanks, 'Coventry, Hon. William', in Henning, II, 544-5.
[50] Add MS 75362, unfoliated, William Coventry to Halifax, 24 May 1677.
[51] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 128-9.

will show how the loose, 'Country' coalition supporting those policies fractured, and caused a group of figures with overlapping interests and politics, led by Halifax, to recoil from the emerging Whig party.

3. The fracturing of the Country party

Shaftesbury and the Country party opposition had achieved notable parliamentary victories against the government in the 1670s. During the earl's period of imprisonment in the Tower in 1677-8 he drew up lists of parliamentarians based on political allegiance. His optimistic calculations ultimately showed 76 peers as some variant of 'worthy' (including the 'thrice worthy' Halifax) while only 62 were 'vile'.[52] Yet this putative majority did not materialise. Indeed the Country party in the Lords almost split in half from 1675 to 1680. Of the seventeen 'stalwarts of the country party' who had signed at least one protest against the non-resisting test bill (Halifax signed four out of six), only nine voted for Exclusion in 1680, and eight against.[53] A similar pattern existed in the Commons. Notably many of the 'worthy' MPs who voted with the court in the First Exclusion Parliament were close to Halifax. Sir Thomas Clarges was one of the three 'thrice worthy' members to have voted against Shaftesbury in 1679.[54] Regarded as one of Halifax's 'friends' in the Commons, Clarges defended him in the Commons' debate of 22 November 1680 which called for his removal from office.[55] Clarges was evidently considered sufficiently close to him that when Charles Goodall had 'bin told that my Lord Halyfax has a minde to entertaine one in his family to reade to him and to doe him service in writeing as occasion shall serve' he recommended Charles Hauses through Clarges.[56]

[52] K. H. D. Haley, 'Shaftesbury's Lists of the Lay Peers and Members of the Commons, 1677-8', *BIHR*, 43:107 (1970), 87.
[53] A. S. Turberville, 'The House of Lords under Charles II. Part Two', *EHR*, 45:177 (1930), 58.
[54] Haley, 'Shaftesbury's Lists', 91.
[55] M. W. Helms and Leonard Naylor, 'Clarges, Thomas,' in Henning, II, 78.
[56] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/219/11, f. 4, Goodall to Clarges, 27 Apr. 1681.

Half of the four 'twice worthy' MPs who voted against Exclusion had a connection to Halifax. William Hickman has already been discussed, while Henry Powle was respected by moderate Country figures.[57] When sending his nephew news about elections for the Second Exclusion Parliament in Gloucestershire, William Coventry reported 'Tuesday next Cyrencester chooses, where it is now somewhat doubted whether Mr Powle will carry it or not. I heare hee went thither yesterday, wch I hope perhaps may settle them'.[58] Powle, who won re-election, defended Halifax in the Commons in 1680, although he subsequently returned to the opposition.[59] By including the predicted intensity of support, Shaftesbury's categorizations also suggest that Exclusion was disproportionately unpopular amongst more moderate members of the opposition. Of the 45 'thrice worthy' MPs re-elected in 1679, over three-quarters voted for the Exclusion Bill, while only about half of the 48 'twice worthy' MPs did.[60] A significant number of moderates undermined the effort to achieve Exclusion by breaking away from the opposition.[61] There was clearly a distinct ideological middle-ground in Restoration England. While not following Tory ideology this group disliked Shaftesbury's increasingly radical political tactics; held pragmatic objections to Exclusion; and believed in the virtues of passing Limitations as a means of following a Protestant foreign and domestic policy.

A major division amongst the parliamentary opposition occurred immediately after Parliament was recalled in 1677. Prorogued since November 1675, the more radical of the opposition leaders planned to argue (against the warnings of Holles and Halifax) that such a long prorogation amounted to a dissolution. When in the first sitting of the Lords on 15 February the Duke of Buckingham rose 'in great bravery and in liveries of blue' to claim

[57] Haley, 'Shaftesbury's Lists', 91.
[58] Add MS 75362, unfoliated, Coventry to Halifax, 17 Aug. 1679.
[59] Basil Duke Henning, 'Cirencester', in Henning, I, 240.
[60] Haley, 'Shaftesbury's Lists', 89-93.
[61] Jones, *The First Whigs*, p. 64.

Parliament was dissolved, Danby's cousin Lord Frescheville immediately called for the arrest of Buckingham, Shaftsbury, Salisbury and Wharton.[62] They were promptly sent to the Tower and, while Halifax opposed their imprisonment, he did not claim Parliament was dissolved.[63] A similar pattern followed in the Commons, where a group of MPs led by Sir John Mallet lost a vote on the legitimacy of the session after moderate Country members such as Powle and Thomas Thynne refused to support them.[64] There were two reasons for the loss of such support. The first was a desire to avoid such a drastic constitutional dispute with Charles. In the Lords Holles backed a compromise position – advocating the dissolution of Parliament but denying that a dissolution had already legally taken place.[65]

Secondly, for the grouping close to Halifax foreign policy took precedence over ensuring the election of a new Parliament. Foxcroft notes that divisions between Shaftesbury and Halifax were evident from 1676[66] and indeed from 1672 over their attitudes to the Dutch. Shaftesbury's primary concern was the English trader struggling with a Dutch competitor, Halifax's the Huguenot or Reformed pastor at risk of French occupation: his desire less the destruction of mercantile Carthage, than the humbling of persecuting papal Rome. When trying to influence parliamentary opinion, du Moulin was sharp enough to know his appeal to Shaftesbury should focus on domestic affairs. As Haley put it, 'the appeal here was as frankly national as the appeal to Halifax had been European'.[67] This helps explain why at some point Shaftesbury altered his description of William Coventry from 'twice worthy' to 'vile'. This was highly unusual – even Halifax's description remained unchanged as 'thrice worthy'.[68] Cruickshanks argues this was likely due to Coventry greatly angering Shaftesbury shortly

[62] Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 417.
[63] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 125.
[64] Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 422.
[65] Ibid., p. 418.
[66] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 124.
[67] Haley, *William of Orange and the English Opposition*, p. 75.
[68] Haley, 'Shaftesbury's Lists', pp. 88, 99.

after the earl was imprisoned, by prioritising foreign policy over domestic issues in a speech to the Commons.[69] Responding to a debate on 'grievances', the Yarmouth MP stated:

> As for "Grievances," he is not very forward to present any. But there is one, above all, that concerns us all to think of Consider the posture we are in, in relation to France, the greatest Grievance that can be to the nation. In respect of France and Popery, all other things are but trifles.[70]

The division between those who prioritised domestic affairs within England (led by Shaftesbury), and those (led by Halifax and Coventry) who were more concerned to contain France was crucial in causing the Country party to fracture on questions of tactics and Exclusion.

From the beginning of elections to the First Exclusion Parliament, Halifax sought to encourage the election of MPs who would support his stances. His cousin Thomas Thynne, who was elected for Oxford University in January 1674, had little chance of being re-elected there due to his association with the Country party. Instead he was elected in February 1679 to represent Tamworth, where his recent acquisition of Drayton Park gave him the ability to control at least one seat.[71] Having voted against Exclusion he shared Halifax's view of being attacked by both parties: 'I have sat in two Parliaments, and have had the hard fortune in the first to displease the Court, in the second the country'[72]. However, Halifax provided more than a mere model, he encouraged him to stand again in the October elections. 'Besides your kindnesse to mee in prevailing against your own inclinations at my request', and standing again, he wrote to Thynne in July, 'you are doing the most publique service that can bee to the Nation, by making use of your interest to get reasonable men chosen for the

[69] Cruickshanks, 'Coventry, William'.
[70] Grey, *Debates*, I, 188.
[71] A. M. Mimardière and Basil Duke Henning, 'Tamworth'; Leonard Naylor, 'Thynne, Thomas I', in Henning, I, 391 and III, 566.
[72] Cruickshanks, 'Coventry, William'.

P[ar]l[iamen]t'.[73] By supporting 'reasonable men', Thynne was helping to secure the defeat of his fellow member for Tamworth. John Swinfen had been one the most enthusiastic supporters of Exclusion in May, and Thynne had agreed to use his influence to partner with Sir Andrew Hacket, 'a weak man, but honest', who was elected alongside Thynne, defeating Swinfen by a single vote.[74] In the same letter Halifax indicated that this effort was not confined to Tamworth. Expressing dismay that William Coventry had declined to stand again, he nonetheless expressed hope that William Hickman would be re-elected at Retford but requested that Thynne partner with him if Hickman were to be defeated.[75] We can therefore see Halifax encouraging the election of MPs explicitly because they would support him politically – if the 'rest of England had as good a peopell of electors as you have … things might bee brought to such a settlement, as that wee might att least sleep secure from any sudden destruction'.[76]

Halifax saw his politics as representing a reasonable continuation of the Country group. He did not regard himself as a member of the Tory party but instead clearly regarded himself as freed from either extreme. Nor was he alone in doing so. Thynne made the positioning explicit when discussing the candidates he supported. Amongst promises that Gloucestershire and Warwickshire would not send a single 'unreasonable man' to Parliament he stated that 'my endeavour is as much to keep out Lord Danby's friends, as fanaticks'.[77] Thus, while Southcombe is correct to note that the late seventeenth century gradually saw a devaluing of 'the language of moderation' and 'claims to moderation were treated as false' by many, it is clear that many of those connected to Halifax remained committed to the pursuit of a kind of

[73] IHR, XR 71/8, 5: Halifax to Thynne, 31 July 1679.
[74] A. M. Mimardière and Basil Duke Henning, 'Hacket, Sir Andrew', *Eidem*, 'Swinfen, John', in Henning, II, 459 and III, 522. Add MS 75376, fol. 11a, Thynne to Halifax, 7 July 1679.
[75] IHR, XR 71/8, 5: Halifax to Thynne, 31 July 1679.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Add MS 75376, fols. 11a and 11b, Thynne to Halifax, 9 July 1679.

via media, which rejected both the corruption of the court, and the 'fanaticism' of those who engaged in popular politics.[78]

The picture of Halifax that emerges – supplied with detailed information about various electoral contests, and frequently rallying moderates – is at odds with that of the isolated minister reliant on wit to maintain royal favour as he is sometimes depicted. Knights overstates the position when he claims that 'Halifax never enjoyed, or fostered, the personal following enjoyed by [Shaftesbury] … and therefore had to rely on the personal nature of his relationship with the King'.[79] Clearly the moderate peers and MPs who gathered around Halifax were less numerous and organised than the emerging Whig and Tory parties, but there remained a politically significant middle-ground of opinion in Restoration England.

A Moderate Party?

Given Halifax's reputation as 'The Trimmer', there has long been debate over the extent to which he represented an actual trimmer party.[80] Certainly, many of those suspected of writing *The Character of a Trimmer*, which was first circulated in manuscript in 1684, were close to Halifax and shared his politics. Some studies (such as Brown's) have suggested that the putative Trimmer group which emerged in political discourse were 'moderate Tories', while Benson suggests that pro-Trimmer pamphlets 'seem to support the Whig identification'.[81] Regardless, both agree that Halifax did not head anything resembling a Trimmer party. Others regard Trimmers as being a far more coherent group. In his study on Shadwell, Pincus accuses fellow historians of setting up a too rigid Whig-Tory binary, arguing that trimming

[78] George Southcombe, 'The Polemics of Moderation in Late Seventeenth-Century England', in Almut Suerbaum, George Southcombe, Benjamin Thompson (eds), *Polemic. Language as Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Discourse* (Farnham, 2015), pp. 247-8.
[79] Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 353.
[80] See Foxcroft, *Character*.
[81] Mark N. Brown, 'Trimmers and Moderates in the Reign of Charles II', *HLQ*, 37:4 (1974), 311-36: David R. Benson, 'Halifax and the Trimmers', *HLQ*, 27:2 (1964), 115-34.

moderation is ‘a Restoration ideological category which has largely fallen out of the historiographical tradition’.[82] Similarly, Conniff argues that Halifax and those around him accepted a form of partisanship, neither Whig nor Tory, approving ‘of moderate parties based on interest … [but not] what we would classify as ideological parties’.[83] However, the figures connected to Halifax would have regarded themselves as rejecting any kind of meaningful party organisation. For such a group, the existence of parties would lead to civil strife and unrest. As one study of eighteenth-century ideas of party has shown, although justifications of party existed, as late as 1780 ‘more than 600 men and women from all walks of life gathered for a meeting of a debating society, the School of Eloquence, in Soho Square, London, to discuss “whether parties were beneficial in a free state”’. Although the two-hour debate concluded parties were beneficial in the previous century the answer would likely have been overwhelmingly negative. Another 1780 debate at the Coachmakers Hall Society, ‘Which is the most to be dreaded in this country, the influence of the Crown, or the spirit of party?’, provides a schema to trace Halifax’s political movements in the 1670s.[84] In the middle of the decade he would have answered the former, at the end the latter. Indeed for Halifax, the actions of parties in opposing each other meant that there could be no benign ‘interest based’ party. His *Fundamentals* of 1693-4 noted that ‘Parties mistake their interest by the same reason that private men overvalue themselves; viz. by the faults of others’.[85] And his apprehensions about nobles acting as demagogues are summed up in his view that ‘A Man that will head the Mob is like a Bull let loose, tyed about with Squibs and Crackers. He must be half mad that goeth about it’.[86] This outlook explains why many of the moderates

[82] Steven Pincus, ‘Shadwell’s Dramatic Trimming’, in Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (eds), *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 255.
[83] James Conniff, ‘The Politics of Trimming: Halifax and the Acceptance of Political Controversy’, *The Journal of Politics*, 34:4 (1972), 1196-97.
[84] Max Skjönsberg, *The Persistence of Party: Ideas of Harmonious Discord in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, 2021), pp. 6-7.
[85] Brown, II, 145.
[86] Brown, III, 229.

centred around Halifax were willing to cooperate with the opposition to thwart the more threatening Court party of Danby in the 1670s, but also why, once Shaftesbury led the opposition into more extreme and partisan behaviour they recoiled.

Hutton argues that given the strength of the monarchy there was no real Exclusion Crisis: 'Charles's control of his realms was never in doubt'.[87] But those willing to form parties which used extreme measures could seriously challenge social control. The fragmenting Country group had very different approaches to political activity. The Whigs demonstrated substantial organisation in constituencies, discipline**,** popular appeal, large-scale propaganda, and possession of a charismatic leader in Shaftesbury.[88] While Halifax sought to some degree to coordinate in constituencies, he differed on the other elements of Whig behaviour. Indeed, as Jones points out, he differed from the Whigs, his former allies, on the key question of party organisation, as 'Shaftesbury added to reputation the leadership and management of a party of which the very idea was abhorrent to Halifax'.[89]

For Halifax, Shaftesbury's behaviour proved that the creation and leadership of a party was synonymous with disruptive appeals to the public, which often stretched the boundaries of the law. Convinced that he could further exploit anti-Catholic sentiment, Shaftesbury had by 1679 'deliberately placed himself at the head of unrest and embraced an alliance with the people, hoping to frighten the King into submission'.[90] The consequences of such partisanship were demonstrated at the start of the First Exclusion Parliament. The tactics of the Whigs, as much as the policy of Exclusion itself, alienated moderates. After the first sitting of the House of Commons which, late into the night, showed a clear pro-Exclusion majority, on 11 May the Whig Green Ribbon Club organised a bonfire by Temple Gate. After

[87] Ronald Hutton, *Charles the Second: King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford, 1989),p. 357.
[88] Jones, *The First Whigs*, p. 2.
[89] Ibid., p. 77.
[90] Knights, *Politics and Opinion,* p. 227.

servants attempted to extinguish the fire 'the gentlemen of the club' threatened them with swords. Such an outburst of violence was, for Halifax, an inevitable consequence of partisan competition, for 'whilst severall parties are at football, they will break all the windows in the town'.[91]

Whig behaviour, such as the effort to organise a petition from the City, could be seen as 'a return to the policy pursued by Pym and Alderman Pennington in 1641 … to bring such a pressure of public opinion to bear that first the House of Lords and then the King would fall in with the demand of the House of Commons'.[92] In London in late 1679, numerous taverns were funded by Whig lords to act as locations for collecting signatures, 'with tables, petition forms and pen and ink for the purpose'.[93] Having two years previously used legally dubious means in an attempt to secure a more supportive House of Commons, Shaftesbury made it plain he would use petitioning as a tool to haul politics 'out of doors'.

As well as a combined parliamentary and 'popular' effort by the Whigs to secure Exclusion there was a combined legal and 'popular' attack on James. In June 1680 Shaftesbury attempted to have the duke of York prosecuted for recusancy in Middlesex. Though his effort failed, the accompanying widely-disseminated pamphlet, which was signed by prominent Whigs and cited resolutions in the Commons, implied James's involvement in the Popish plot, and 'further alienated moderates'.[94]

Halifax's dislike of excessive partisanship may have hastened his break with Shaftesbury and the emerging Whigs, but he equally disliked Tory behaviour. The reason for such dislike lay

[91] Brown, II, 146.
[92] Haley, *First Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 520.
[93] Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II. Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 172
[94] Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, p. 271; Anon, *Reasons for the Indictment of the D. of York Presented to the Grand-Jury of Middlesex, Saturday Julye 26, 80 by the Persons here under Nam'd* (London, 1680).

in the fact that overly polarised elections could lead to a breakdown of social stability, as at the bitter election at Southwark in early 1681, where the Exclusionist candidate, backed by the 2nd Duke of Buckingham, was met by a Tory mob who:

> hang'd a black pudding att a long pole, and cryed carrying it up & down in his sight, no black pudding man, no two penny cut, no rumper, no garter man, no buggerer, no Buckingham.[95]

For a conservative aristocrat who believed 'the House of Lords [is] the likest the Roman Senate, &c., Commanding Armies, and doing Justice', the prospect of elections being a means for rabble to abuse a prominent aristocrat – using slogans Tory partisans had forced into the public sphere – would have been horrifying.[96]

Thus, in many ways, the circumstances of writing and means of distribution of *The Character of A Trimmer* offer far more insight into Halifax's political outlook – and the limitations of his partisanship – than its actual contents. Recent work has highlighted the continued relevance of scribal manuscript circulation in late seventeenth-century England, Barber showing the impact of Tory newsletter writer John Dyer – 'that Sawcy Scribbler' – on politics in the 1700s.[97] Similarly, Love argues that scribal publication had a recognised social function, 'a means by which ideologically charged texts could be distributed through the governing class, or various interest-groups within that class, without their coming to the knowledge of the governed'.[98] Like many contemporaries, Halifax regarded the use of appeals to the public as dangerous and unnecessary. In this regard, his attitude did not differ widely from figures earlier in the century, such as Sir George Calvert, who distinguished between communicating royal policies via private letters to local officials, and a printed

[95] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/219/14, L. Champion to Halifax, 12 Feb. 1681.
[96] Brown, II, 86.
[97] Alex Barber, '"It is Not Easy What to Say of our Condition, Much Less to Write It": The Continued Importance of Scribal News in the Early 18th Century', *PH*, 32:2 (2013), 300.
[98] Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), p. 177.

public declaration, which 'was only to the vulgar sort of people, that had no interest in the business, nor were capable of any thing, but feare, and rumour'.[99]

Brown makes clear *Character of a Trimmer's* obvious differences from the Shaftesburian tactic of popularity, 'it was a thoughtful essay sent privately to three persons who were close to the King, not a rabble-rousing libel that issued from a secret press and was scattered about the streets of London at night'.[100] Unlike the Exclusionists, who frequently printed justifications of their actions in Parliament, Halifax refused to do so, much to his brother's annoyance. Despite his deeply shaken response to attacks in the House of Commons on his actions as a minister in early-1681, he preferred instead to return to his country house at Rufford.[101] Aversion to publishing a direct appeal for public approval was summed up in a letter to Thynne, which outlined 'my method shall be to let the storm have its course … I do not doubt but I shall be able to wipe off the dirt that hath been thrown upon me'.[102]

Key to Halifax's dislike of partisanship was his fervent belief that appeals to the public would endanger the health of the body politic. Those who shared his Country beliefs during the 1670s but moved away from Shaftesbury would have doubtless agreed with his sentiment that 'they who are not wise enough to governe themselves, are seldome wise enough to chuse those that can'.[103] A frequent complaint of aggressive partisan polemic was the extent to which it included the 'vulgar sort' in political debates. 'You shall sometimes find a seditious libel to have passed through so many hands that it is at last scarce legible for dust and sweat',

[99] Noah Millstone, *Manuscript Circulation and the Invention of Politics in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 66.
[100] Brown, I, 64.
[101] Halifax to Henry Savile, 13 Dec. 1680, in 'Savile Correspondence', 170; Brown, I, 13.
[102] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 331.
[103] Brown, II, 147.

alleged the Tory Edmund Bohun, while others sneered at the style of material designed to be easily read aloud to the illiterate in coffee-houses.[104]

For many the public mood had become dangerously 'over-heated' by the intensification in political polarisation encouraged by Whigs and Tories. Indeed, Halifax and those close to him frequently made allusions to a public that was sick and in need of treatment. While contemporaries routinely regarded Parliaments as a curative 'physician of the realm', by 1680 moderates saw Parliament as itself an infected institution.[105] Charles II's personal rule saw almost constant rumours of elections for a new Parliament, a course of action Halifax repeatedly advocated.[106] When expressing frustration to Halifax at the king's refusal to call a new parliament in mid-1681 his ally Hickman was explicit in his view of a diseased political nation:

> I wish I could see why King hid [sic] from a healing (wch I am sorry is so remote a contemplation) I believe there may be some yt are not desirous of it, but I am satisfyed the Body is inclind to imbrace an opportunity of reconciling[107]

Ending his letter Hickman summarised his continued moderate outlook 'we' had hopes of an 'army, to be raisd, and parliament to be calld, and ye Dukes going to church'.[108] As it became apparent that the opposition would refuse to compromise on the issue of Exclusion and support Limitations instead, Halifax became increasingly convinced that the nation was ill. Like much of his writing from the period, Halifax was deeply pessimistic at the extent of partisanship, complaining to Thynne 'a fine world, and a happy prospect of things when our remedies are little less to bee feared, than our disease'.[109]

[104] Harris, *London Crowds*, pp. 99-100.
[105] Smith, *The Stuart Parliaments*, p. 179.
[106] Tapsell, 'Parliament and Political Division', pp. 243-62.
[107] Add MS 75360, unfoliated, Hickman to Halifax, 3 Aug. 1681.
[108] Ibid.
[109] IHR, XR 71/8 – Thynne Papers. Vol. 15 – Letters 1679-1704 Halifax to Thynne, 5 Oct. 1681

Halifax is often viewed as a 'moderate' as someone who 'trimmed' in order to seek an accommodating middle way between extremes and to modern ears this often has positive implications. However, Shagan's work on moderation cautions against such an anachronistic use of the term. Rather than seeking compromise, he argues, moderation was itself 'aggressive' and deeply coercive, 'the quintessentially English quality of moderation, as it developed in the early modern period, was at heart an ideology of control'.[110] Looking at the language used by Halifax and his friends it appears that most references to 'moderation' do seem to be in the modern, rather than the early modern sense Shagan detects. An example would be Thynne's reference to 'moderate Counsells' prevailing. There is no doubt, however, that Halifax's language around remedies, while not explicitly using the word 'moderation', nonetheless envisages harsh authoritarian policies to moderate political excess. Such sentiments can ultimately be viewed as a shift in political mentalities, which, while keeping moderates separate from the Tories, nevertheless justified their participation in the Tory reaction.

Monmouth and the 'Black Box'

Halifax was further offended by the Whigs increasingly using Exclusion as a means to advance Charles's illegitimate son the Duke of Monmouth to the throne. Accepting the need for some kind of solution to the problem of a popish successor, Halifax had two objections to the Monmouth partisans: dislike of the use of 'popular' tactics to aid an illegitimate heir and fear that raising Monmouth to the throne would alienate William of Orange and thus jeopardise the prospect of a Protestant foreign policy which would confront France. It was common knowledge that relations between Monmouth and Halifax had long been cold, and in

[110] Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation. Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2011), p. 10.

the aftermath of the failure of Exclusion they had an open confrontation after a service at St. Martin's Church. Meeting Halifax, Monmouth loudly attacked him:

> I have heard you moved the King in Council for a Proclamation to forbid all persons keeping me company, I can assure yr Lop there needs no such proclamacon to forbid me keeping yr Lop company.[111]

In some ways, promoting 'the Protestant Duke' marked a simple solution to the problem of a popish successor. Monmouth was born in 1649 to Charles and Lucy Walter. Illegitimate, he was unable to succeed to the throne, and therefore the heir was his Catholic brother James, Duke of York. However, if Charles and Walter had been married when Monmouth was born, he would be the rightful heir to the throne. There had been rumours of 'a bill to affirm that the King was married to the Duke of Monmouth's mother' in late-1667, but neither Shaftesbury, Buckingham, Holles nor Halifax appear to have supported it, and no measure was put forward.[112] At the end of March 1680 rumours began circulating in London of a new 'discovery' which proved Monmouth's legitimacy, thus excluding James without altering the hereditary succession.[113] Spreading like wildfire through London, in early April news of the 'Black Box' reached Halifax from Gilbert Burnet, who noted 'there was a strange story publish'd yesterday in Coffee houses'. The rumours suggested that a marriage contract between Charles and Lucy Walter had been left in a locked box by the former bishop of Durham, John Cosin, and recently discovered.[114] Evidently the stories greatly concerned Halifax and the letters between the two over the next few months all mentioned the progress of the report.[115] Despite informing Halifax on 15 May of royal efforts to quash the report,

[111] Add MS 28569, fol. 36, William Blathwayt to Robert Southwell, 29 May 1682.
[112] Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 199.
[113] Anna Keay, *The Last Royal Rebel. The Life and Times of James, Duke of Monmouth* (2016), p. 242.
[114] Add MS 75376, fol. 37b, Burnet to Halifax, 3 Apr. 1680.
[115] See Lane Poole, 'Some Unpublished Letters, *EHR*, 26 (1911), 535-42.

after Charles demanded to 'have no more of that Farce', Monmouth's popularity appeared to have been enhanced by the reports.[116]

This was in part because of the publication the same day of Robert Ferguson's *Letter to a Person of Honour concerning the Black Box*. Ferguson's pamphlet was 'far more outspoken than any previous advocacy for Monmouth's claims'.[117] The Whigs appeared to have embraced the promotion of Monmouth and with it an appeal to the public. By the end of the month, Monmouth had, according to Burnet, attended a large dinner amongst supporters in London with 'above forty Lords and Gentlemen of Quality, Lord Russell was one'.[118] That persistent Black Box claims and coffee-house rumours in general were chief amongst his allies' concerns is shown by a letter Halifax received from Thynne in mid-1680. Discussing a report that Halifax was planning to return to court, he noted: 'y[o]u have made all ye discourse this last weeke, and silenced black box Tangier and all other Coffee house news'.[119] Halifax had himself apparently been subject to attack in the coffee houses earlier, for he told Thynne 'I have such interest… at Court, to entitle mee to a part of the fury of the Coffeehouses'.[120]

Halifax saw the reports around the 'Black Box' and the surrounding advocacy of Monmouth as an intentional strategy used by Exclusionists to inflame public opinion. 'As for the letter about the Duke of Monmouth', he told Thynne, it was one 'in which no little the little Gentleman [Shaftesbury] is consulted' and was 'written in a style to stirre the world up immediately into a Confusion'[121]. Moreover, such appeals to popularity were, he believed, not merely illegitimate, but highly dangerous. Given Halifax's understanding of the past, he

[116] Ibid., Burnet to Halifax, 15 May 1680.
[117] Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 577.
[118] Ibid., Burnet to Halifax, 29 May 1680.
[119] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 224.
[120] IHR, XR 71/8 Halifax to Thynne 31 Jul. 1679.
[121] Halifax to Thynne, 6 July 1680, quoted in Brown, I, 11.

felt ‘history can shew such Preliminaries to a Civill Warre’ and thus feared that ‘if such extremityes come of without some violence of one side or other, it is strange’.[122] This was a view similar to that of Roger L’Estrange, whose objective in writing *The Observator* was his belief that ‘Tis the Press that has made ‘urn Mad, and the Press must set ‘um Right again’.[123] L'Estrange poured out invective against Dissenters, London’s mercantile Whig elite, and contemporary Catalines – demagogic nobles like Shaftesbury and Monmouth who sought to give a mob the legitimating title of ‘the People’. *The Observator’s* fiery rhetorical style made it the voice of popular Toryism, for while ‘it nodded approval at the Tory magnates … it spoke not for them, but for the harassed parish clergy, embattled magistrates, churchwardens and vestrymen, the loyal middling ranks’.[124]

However, while L’Estrange supported a publishing campaign intended to vilify the Whigs, Halifax felt that would further inflame partisan tensions. Fears that an explosive Whig intervention in the public sphere would prompt a violent reaction from the other side were vindicated by the Tory responses to *A Letter to a person of Honour*. Halifax, long regarded as sympathetic to Puritans, would not have been surprised to see criticisms of Ferguson as being ‘a diligent Frequenter of the *Protestant Conventicle* too, I should have said *Coffee-House*; being undoubtedly a *Jesuite* under a Puritan-vizard, so the more mischievous’. [125] Goldie’s work on propaganda favouring Monmouth suggests that much elite debate centred not around the Whig pamphleteering in mid-1680 but rather the claim advanced in William Lawrence’s *Marriage by the moral law of God vindicated* (1681). The Whig lawyer sought to prove that bastardy did not prohibit inheritance, and that thus Monmouth was the rightful heir. It was to

[122] Brown, I, 11.
[123] Peter Hinds, *The Horrid Popish Plot: Roger L’Estrange and the Circulation of Political Discourse in late Seventeenth-Century London* (Oxford, 2009), p. 107.
[124] Mark Goldie, ‘Roger L’Estrange’s *Observator* and the Exorcism of the Plot’ in Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (eds), *Roger L’Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture* (2008), pp. 70-71.
[125] Anon, *The Imposter Expos’d* (1680), p. 46.

this ‘argument that Dryden and Locke allude, not to Ferguson’s tale of the Black Box’. Many attacks on Monmouth sought to disprove Lawrence’s theories, but Halifax was more fixated on the impact of Ferguson’s populist appeals, than the abstract intellectual speculation over ‘whether the law of nature distinguishes between a wife and a concubine’.[126] Indeed, it was precisely because the advocacy of Monmouth was connected to Shaftesbury and thus involved such a direct appeal to the people that it frightened his former allies in Parliament. Jones notes that while the rumours ‘had a considerable effect on the ignorant and credulous … [they had] a detrimental effect on the educated’.[127]

For many, the English revolution had proved the consequences of ‘extremityes’ which directly appealed to the people. Halifax’s private writings often mentioned how simplistic popular statements taken to their logical conclusion could justify rebellion. Alluding to a comment of Sir John Hotham as he barred the gates of Hull to Charles I, Halifax wrote:

> see how arguments may bee stretched: If a man, without Authority, had killed Faux as he just going to set fire to the traine, hee had not been guilty by the Law; this instance they made use of it against Ch[arles] I to justify the necessity of their resistance.[128]

The middle-ground element in English politics had not changed their position on royal powers, sympathy for dissenters, or their conviction of the necessity of conflict with France. They were, however, increasingly convinced that continual Whig appeals to the public risked civil war.

In the 1680 debate over Exclusion an explicit attempt was made to exploit ambiguity over the question of who would succeed if James were barred from the succession. This would embarrass and potentially split the Exclusionists, by forcing them to state their preference for

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[126] Mark Goldie, ‘Contextualising Dryden’s Absalom: William Lawrence, the Laws of Marriage, and the Case for King Monmouth’, in Richard Strier, Donna B. Hamilton (eds), *Religion, Literature and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 210-12.
[127] Jones, *The First Whigs*, p. 125.
[128] Brown, II, 41.

Monmouth, thus angering pro-Williamite forces, or to abandon the 'Protestant Duke' as illegitimate.[129] Jones argued 'the Tories spoke more effectively … had clearly rehearsed their tactics, and the speeches displayed considerable coherence and co-ordination'.[130] As Hickman's speech in the House of Commons argued:

> Here is nothing in the bill that the crown may devolve to the next successor. Suppose that two Protestants lay claim to the crown; if they divide, they may let in Popery at the end of it. Princes often leave those things doubtful, but Parliaments should leave them plain. I would have it left to the next right heir in succession.[131]

However, there are two problems with describing this as 'Tory' tactics. The first is that it was moderate speakers who made this argument – Halifax's ally Sir William Hickman in the speech above. Other figures who shared elements of his views on Exclusion included Daniel Finch, future earl of Nottingham, who followed up Hickman by warning that if 'the King may die before the Duke, and if no successor be named, there will be an undeniable interregnum'.[132] The second problem is that such a tactic against Exclusion – accepting it was theoretically possible, but that without clarity it could divide two potential Protestant successors – is decidedly un-Tory. Indeed, Hickman's speech angered the duke of York precisely for this reason. James complained that Hickman had defended 'the constitutionality of Exclusion'.[133]

In the House of Lords, Halifax advanced distinctive arguments against Exclusion. As Dryden remembered in 1691, his 'wholesome councels … wisely administered and as well executed, were the means of preventing a civil war'.[134] He did not adopt the traditional argument that Exclusion was wrong because of the right of hereditary succession – notes by Lord

[129] Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 598.
[130] Jones, *The First Whigs*, p. 135.
[131] Grey, *Debates*, VII, 427.
[132] Ibid., p. 429.
[133] Helms and Edwards, 'Hickman, Sir William'.
[134] Kenyon, p. 14.

Huntingdon of the 1680 debates in the House of Lords record the Duke of Newcastle's contribution, for example, as simply 'Not fitting to bee debated it is to Alter ye Succession'.[135] Instead, conceding the right of Parliament to pass Exclusion, Halifax countered that York would fight a civil war in response, with instability in the three kingdoms undermining the English Parliament. James would be aided by the help of 'papist[s] in England'; 'Irland in a dangerous Condition not a Gun mounted [Exclusion would] provoake ye Duke [to] Joine with the Irish'; and given the support of James in Edinburgh Exclusion would be the 'Disuniting off Scotland'.[136] Halifax's argument appealed to moderate opinion by embracing theoretical and practical limitations on monarchical powers and, warning of conflict, reframed Exclusion as a mirror-image of the crises which caused the Civil War. An effort by the English to impose unpopular policies upon Scotland and Ireland would lead to rebellions there, and ultimately give a small minority of religious and political extremists within England the opportunity to force a radical settlement upon the nation. Other moderate peers shared Halifax's fears. Thomas Belasyse, viscount Fauconberg had like Halifax, been a part of the Privy Council in the early-1670s, before drifting towards the Country party. Opposing Exclusion in the debate he was clear that his position was not a classically Tory one – 'I am not of the bishops' opinion, that by the laws of God it cannot be proved'. Rather, he explained, it would practically endanger Protestantism by 'draw[ing] [in] the French and Irish'.[137]

Halifax argued that an English Exclusion Crisis would spark a British crisis of popery and arbitrary government via a renewed civil war, and by so doing he decisively mobilised moderate opinion to support the government. His use of such arguments was not a cynical attempt to justify publicly his opposition to Exclusion, when his real goal was to use the

[135] E.S. De Beer 'The House of Lords in the Parliament of 1680', *BIHR,* 20 (1946 for 1943), 33.
[136] Ibid., 35.
[137] Charles Littleton, 'Belasyse, Thomas', in Paley, II, 207-20.

succession question as a means of undermining ministers he personally disliked, such as Shaftesbury or Sunderland.[138] At dinner with his client Sir John Reresby in late 1680 he confided that he should prepare in case 'unhappy differences might arise in the nation from thes disputes about the succession and in case it should come to a warr'.[139] Similarly in a letter to Gilbert Burnet in August 1680 he revealed his concern over the volatility of the country: 'the account you give of things in Scotland, giveth ground to fear there may bee some disorders, if more than ordinary care bee not taken to prevent them'.[140] Halifax's views on Exclusion were therefore formed by personal concern that such a measure could trigger a return to the 1640s, and his example shows how the appeal to a genuine section of moderate political opinion allowed the defeat of Exclusion. The success of Halifax's arguments demonstrate that for some in the English political nation, there was a crisis specifically about Exclusion. Ultimately the decades after 1688 proved that the core claim of moderate anti-Exclusionists – that the removal of James Stuart from the throne was possible, but would cause severe civil unrest; risings in Scotland and Ireland; and French-sponsored invasions of the British Isles – was correct.

Limitations

Moderate opinion was further sustained by the genuine alternative hope of limiting the power of any popish successor. Halifax, along with Sir William Temple and Sunderland, had first proposed a scheme of Limitations in 1679, by suggesting that a Parliament would meet automatically after Charles's death with the power to appoint judges, ministers, lords lieutenant, and navy officers.[141] Halifax's letter to Thynne before the second Exclusion Parliament made clear that his hope of passing Limitations remained. Discussing how

[138] Most emphatically argued by Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, pp. 48, 76.
[139] Reresby, p. 205.
[140] Lane Poole, 'Some Unpublished Letters', 538.
[141] Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, p. 33; Brown, I, 10.

Thynne should vote in the Commons he argued that 'if there is any politicks of making our selves safe by lower expedients, I had rather use them, than venture upon so strong a remedy as the disinheriting the next heire of the Crown'.[142] The idea of Limitations also appealed to the 'Puritan Whig' element of the Country opposition. Their leader Holles, like Halifax, preferred Limitations as a more effective solution than Exclusion.[143] Though his biographer suggests that his 'willingness to compromise on Exclusion won him no friends in the House of Lords', it in fact allied him with the moderate group and had he not died before the November 1680 debate on Exclusion, it seems likely he would have raised similar objections to Halifax.[144] Indeed, advocating Limitations could convince some former Exclusionists to compromise, as the example of Sir Robert Markham shows. Elected 'for Newark in the Exclusion Parliament on the Savile interest', he nonetheless voted for Exclusion in 1679. Showing perhaps that aristocratic patronage could, under the right circumstances, be superseded by local factors and national ideology he was subsequently re-elected. However, by 1680 he had moved against Exclusion, arguing instead for 'such powers and limitations as might be thought convenient upon a serious debate, it might give great satisfaction and probably secure the Protestant religion'.[145]

Restrictions on a Catholic heir had been proposed under Danby, who, in 1677, introduced a bill that would have removed control over appointing bishops from any future King who refused to reject transubstantiation. The power to fill ecclesiastical vacancies, and the education of royal children, would have been placed in the hands of the episcopacy. But for Country Party politicians, this was merely a continuation of Danby's 1675 plans to 'make a distinct Party… who are to swallow … all the Power and Office of the Kingdom'.[146] By

[142] XR/71/8, Halifax to Thynne, 5 Oct. 1680.
[143] Mark Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan Whigs* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 181.
[144] Crawford, *Holles*, p. 237.
[145] J. S. Crossette, 'Markham, Sir Robert, 2nd Bt.', in Henning, III, 20.
[146] Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, p. 32; Shaftesbury, *Letter*, p. 1.

limiting James without empowering the episcopacy, there was thus a major difference in 1679. Halifax's ideas involved increasing the power and independence of Parliament and marginalising the political influence of bishops. Indeed, as Knights notes, had Halifax's November 1680 proposal passed, it 'would have conferred on Parliament and council powers not achieved even after the Glorious Revolution'.[147] Thus although it was lost with the dissolution of Parliament, we can see a coherent middle-ground political agenda in 1681, rejecting Exclusion and the use of popularity on the one hand, but seeking to reduce the powers of the monarchy and reform the Church of England to be more sympathetic to dissenters on the other.

4. Interest, and aristocratic influence in localities

Halifax hoped that noble control over local politics, through the exercise of aristocratic 'interest' could promote social stability and prevent the harms of the paid courtier MPs he opposed in the 1670s. The English constitution, he felt, 'is first, the Nobleman; live great, have interest and Command, breed himself either for Warre, or Councels; of the Great Councel [i.e. Parliament] alwayes'.[148] Given their land-holdings, offices in local government, and social influence, peers could 'dominate local society and nearby towns, including parliamentary elections'.[149] Indeed, Holmes considered 'the years between the defeat of the second Exclusion Bill in 1680 and the rise of Walpole to power in the early 1720s' were a golden age of influence for the House of Lords.[150] This claim is broadly correct, although

[147] Ibid. p. 88.
[148] Brown, II, 86.
[149] Ruth Paley and Paul Seaward, (eds), with Beverly Adams, Robin Eagles and Charles Littleton, *Honour, Interest and Power: The Illustrated History of the House of Lords, 1660-1715* (Woodbridge, 2010), p. 291.
[150] Geoffrey Holmes, *Politics, Religion and Society in England, 1679-1742* (1986), p. xv.

perhaps dating slightly earlier than 1680, and Halifax shows how important aristocratic control of local politics was in the 1680s.[151]

'Interest' might involve promoting the economic interests of a constituency. This was certainly the case with Sir William Coventry. As MP for Great Yarmouth he was a committed ideological moderate and very close to Halifax. However, he was aware that he needed to support the fishing industry in his constituency to maintain support. As he was informed in 1664 'the town depends so much upon their seamen that they will not, … in common prudence, must not, disoblige them in point of interest'.[152] In 1679 his support of the town's economic interest, combined with more moderate politics, helped shield him from charges of being 'a friend to the Duke of York's interest'. Thus, while the town's 'partial conformists' successfully ousted the Tory Sir Thomas Medowe for the pro-Exclusion Richard Huntingdon, Coventry was not only returned as MP, but was paid £45 by the corporation to do so.[153] Halifax recognised that Coventry's unique interest at Yarmouth could protect him from Whig efforts to defeat him and it was for that reason that he was so concerned that he should stand for re-election.

Halifax held estates and influence in Nottinghamshire, although as Foxcroft notes 'he was by birth and interests essentially a Yorkshireman' and served as the deputy lord lieutenant and a colonel of the militia in the West Riding in the 1660s.[154] In 1664 following the failure of the Farnley Wood Plot to overturn the restored monarchy in Yorkshire a bill was (unsuccessfully) introduced to re-establish the Council of the North and 'so confident were the Ministers that the Bill would be passed that the Duke of Buckingham… was appointed

[151] See Victor L. Stater, *Noble Government: The Stuart Lord Lieutenancy and the Transformation of English Politics* (Athens, G.A., 1994), pp. 125-57.
[152] Perry Gauci, *Politics and Society in Great Yarmouth, 1660-1722* (Oxford, 1996), p. 111.
[153] Ibid., p. 146.
[154] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 32.

President of the Council at York'.[155] Referring to this promotion, the future Duke of Newcastle Henry Cavendish told Halifax that while 'my Ld Buckingham is Pricedent of ye North', he hoped Savile would be made 'Vice Precedent'.[156] Halifax had had substantial influence over Yorkshire politics before the fall of Danby, and afterwards was able to expand his client network by providing patronage to the former Treasurer's local allies. Pickavance considered Halifax to be isolated at court and therefore 'concerned to assemble in the localities men … personally indebted to him for their advancement'.[157]

In 1680, he succeeded in expanding the number of his clients, chief amongst them John Reresby. An ally of Danby, Reresby's politics moved closer to the Country party during the Exclusion Crisis. When his old patron fell, he 'rejoined the followers of Halifax, then in the ascendant, who refrained from comment on this example of trimming in reverse'.[158] Halifax subsequently used his influence with 'the Whiggishly inclined' Sir Michael Wentworth, who dominated elections in Reresby's seat of Aldborough, to ensure that Reresby was re-elected to Parliament in 1681. Although Wentworth agreed to allow Reresby to stand uncontested, his support had, in the words of Pickavance 'been very reluctant … only lent at the insistence of Halifax', and the other Aldborough MP Sir Godfrey Copley was a committed Whig.[159] A correspondent of Reresby's noted with concern in December 1681 that Wentworth had been in Aldborough insinuating that he 'was a courtier'.[160] We can therefore see both the extent and limitations of aristocratic patronage. It is probable that Halifax's support helped to secure

[155] Rachel R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (1921, reprinted Wakefield, 1975), pp. 456-7.
[156] Add MS 75359, Henry Cavendish to Sir George Savile, 16 Sept. 1664.
[157] Robert Pickavance, 'The English Boroughs and the King's Government. A Study of the Tory Reaction, 1681-85' (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1976), pp. 190-195.
[158] Eveline Cruickshanks and Basil Duke Henning, 'Reresby, Sir John, 2nd Bt.', in Henning, III, 322.
[159] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', p. 82; Paula Watson and Virginia C. D. Moseley, 'Aldborough', in Henning, I, 471.
[160] WYAS, Mexborough papers 156 19/18/91 Edward Morris to Reresby, 9 Dec. 1681.

Reresby's election, but Halifax was unable to impose two candidates in Aldborough who would support his policies.

Although he served in Parliament, Reresby was more useful to Halifax in his capacity as a local office holder, having been appointed Governor of York with Halifax's help in April 1682.[161] Reresby appears to have acted as the head of a local intelligence network, using his contacts to feed information on local politics upwards to Halifax. In 1682 he notified his patron of county JPs who were negligent in enforcing laws against dissent, thus enabling a more effective purge of the bench, and he also reported on the struggles of 'the loyall party' in the city itself.[162] Halifax's patronage of Reresby also ensured that he was able to promote a more moderate policy against the Yorkshire networks of Danby and Hyde. The selection of Reresby as governor of York was controversial, even amongst those opposed to Exclusion. A correspondent wrote to Halifax shortly after the appointment, warning

> yor Ldship is mightily discoursed of by the Gentlemen in Yorkshire for being the person that preferred Sr John Reresby to that employ, and it hath given discontent to severall, and more especially to ye Citty of Yorke severall Gentlemen in that Countey hath discoursed wth mee if I knew who did it, I toald them I beleeved my Ld of Danby was the cheife man in it[163]

While Halifax would doubtless have enjoyed the prospect of his rival being vilified for the promotion of his own client, other Tories tried to remove Reresby. Halifax's cousin Thomas Thynne had previously attempted to undermine those they regarded as too close to Danby, even while opposing 'fanatics'.[164] After 1681 Halifax fought for influence with the duke of York's ally and 'aboriginal Tory', Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester, whom he accused of financial corruption, and by 1684 had been able to place Thynne's brother Henry onto the

[161] Mary Geiter, 'Reresby, Sir John, Second Baronet', *ODNB*.
[162] Michael John Short, 'The Political Relationship Between Central Government and Local Administration in Yorkshire, 1678-90', (DPhil thesis, University of Leeds, 1999), pp. 49, 165; Add MS 75360, unfoliated, Reresby to Halifax, ca. 1682.
[163] Add MS 75360, unfoliated, Sir John Millington to Halifax, 10 May 1682.
[164] Add MS 75376, fol. 11a, Thynne to Halifax, 9 July 1679.

Treasury commission.[165] The two rivals also disputed with each other for control of Yorkshire offices. Reresby notes: 'Lord Rochester being angry at my being made governor of Yorke … was the roote of the endeavours to throw me out ever since'.[166] Those supportive of Rochester in Yorkshire criticised Reresby's performance as governor as a means of undermining Halifax's position at court.[167] While this move failed, opponents of Halifax were able to force Reresby out of his seat at Aldborough. 'By the end of 1683', Pickavance relates, 'he had been laid aside in the face of intense campaigning by Sir Roger Strickland … a High Tory'.[168] Strickland, who was a 'crypto-Catholic' had been promoted by the Duke of York as a way to challenge the political influence of the more moderate Halifax in Yorkshire.[169] Halifax reciprocated, and sought (successfully) to use his influence to have the more moderate William Swillington placed on the Yorkshire shrievalty ahead of the Yorkist candidate Sir Richard Grahme in 1681.[170]

Halifax used his local influence to challenge both Exclusionist Whigs and hardline Tories for control of Yorkshire politics. An effort to promote an alternative to High Toryism continued after 1681, and indeed after the Revolution, when William III appointed Halifax *custos rotolorum* of the West Riding as a means of limiting lord lieutenant Carmarthen's (formerly Earl of Danby) attempts to monopolise local power for a Tory interest.[171] Part of Halifax's political influence came from genuine support for his policies. However, for those he could not convince, he was willing to use his influence as a noble to promote those who would

[165] Grant Tapsell, 'The Life and Career of Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, c. 1681-c. 1686' (MPhil thesis, University of Cambridge, 1999), p. 41.
[166] Reresby, p. 288.
[167] Cheryl Margaret Keen, 'Yorkshire Politics, 1658-1688' (PhD thesis, University of Sheffield, 1990), p. 213.
[168] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', p. 84.
[169] Paula Watson, 'Strickland, Sir Roger', in Henning, III, 503.
[170] Keen, 'Yorkshire Politics', p. 194.
[171] Michael Eric Watts Maddison, 'The Justices of the Peace and the Administration of Local Government in the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire Between 1680 and 1750' (PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1986), p. 86.

support his policies because of patronage. This was done both to contain the threat of the Whigs, but also to prevent an excessive control by Tories.

Halifax's influence on Yorkshire politics was seen in Pontefract, the seat he represented in 1660 and where his family owned one of the burgages.[172] In August 1679 John Peables, the clerk of the peace for the West Riding, wrote to Reresby to inform him that Halifax had instructed his steward to use his influence in support of John Kaye.[173] This is presumably for the August election of that year though the History of Parliament does not show Kaye as having stood that year. The chosen candidates were Sir Patience Ward and Sir John Dawnay. Patience Ward, originally from Pontefract, had made a successful career in London, supported accommodation with Protestant dissenters and the Huguenots and became Lord Mayor of London in 1680 when he was a strong supporter of Exclusion.[174] Obviously Halifax did not have total control over the seat's MPs, but his pressure caused its MP John Dawnay to adopt a 'more moderate' stance on Exclusion.[175] Thus, having supported Exclusion in 1679, the offer by Halifax of an Irish peerage, granted in early-1681, led Dawnay to support Halifax's position in future parliaments.[176] Between then and 1685 Thomas Yarburgh a 'moderate tory'[177] was seeking Halifax's approval for his candidature. Thus in October 1681 he asks Reresby to seek Halifax's recommendation unless Halifax intends his son 'for that place' and in January 1682 notes that Lord Downe has been to Pontefract and hopes that with Halifax and other friends he will be able to 'make a push for it when the time comes'.[178] By

[172] Paula Watson and Virginia C. D. Moseley, 'Pontefract', in Henning, I, 481.
[173] WYAS, MX 18/14/129 John Peables to John Reresby 27 Aug. 1679; Watson and Moseley, 'Pontefract', in Henning, I, 481.
[174] Ibid, and Gary S de Krey, 'Ward, Sir Patience' *ODNB*.
[175] Keen, 'Yorkshire Politics', p. 253.
[176] M. W. Helms, 'Dawnay, John' in Henning, II, 199.
[177] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', p. 85; Watson and Moseley, 'Pontefract'.
[178] WYAS MX, 19/18/33 and 19/18/69, Thomas Yarbrough to John Reresby 12 Oct. 1681, and same to same 21 Jan. 1682.

1685, pressure from Halifax caused the other Exclusionist MP Sir Patience Ward, to be replaced by Thomas Yarburgh.

Halifax's influence in Yorkshire is similarly apparent in the election of one of the county's MPs, the relatively moderate Charles Boyle, Lord Clifford. Boyle relied on the support of Halifax in the West Riding, and Halifax's friend Lord Fauconberg in the North. Consequently, having supported Exclusion in 1679, 'perhaps under the influence of Halifax and his brother-in-law Laurence Hyde' he moved away from the Whigs afterwards, and voted against the bill.[179]

Halifax sought to ensure that aristocrats with connections to him likewise used their influence to ensure the election of moderate MPs. His brother-in-law Thomas Hickman, Baron Windsor was urged by Halifax to use his interest to ensure the election of more moderate MPs after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament in 1681. Windsor promised to help regain control of Worcestershire from Exclusionists, claiming:

> wee are very forward in this Country towards Choosing Parliament men when the King shall please to call a Parliament and the gentry are very confident of outing both Sir Fr[ancis]: Wynnington in Worcester and [Thomas] Foly in the County.[180]

Both Foley and Winnington had voted for Exclusion, and Halifax evidently continued to encourage Windsor to ensure their defeat. In September he wrote, thanking Halifax 'for yo[u]r advice which I wil be sure to follow, I have not in the least lett the inclinations of the honest party coole, but doe still incourage them to be diligent'.[181] By 1685 Windsor's promises proved correct, and both Foley and Winnington were defeated, with the latter's replacement William Bromley described as 'a discreet and moderate man'.[182]

[179] A. M. Mimardière and Eveline Cruickshanks, 'Boyle, Charles, Lord Clifford', in Henning, I, 701.
[180] Add MS unfoliated, 75359, Hickman-Windsor to Halifax, 16 Apr. 1681.
[181] Ibid., Hickman-Windsor to Halifax, 20 Sep. 1681.
[182] Edward Rowlands, 'Bromley, William', in Henning, I, 75.

As well as seeking to influence the election of MPs, Halifax supported a campaign of borough charter renewal as a means of enhancing aristocratic control over local politics. While in government he was one of 'the three members of the cabinet most closely associated with the borough policy', alongside Francis North, Lord Guilford (who had presided at Stephen College's trial) and Secretary of State, Leoline Jenkins.[183] However, unlike his efforts to support the election of moderate MPs, the policy did not seek to alter the composition of a future House of Commons by altering the borough electorate. Instead, the goal was to prevent local political factions causing tension and unrest, as in Nottingham in 1682, when for a period of time the town had two rivals claiming to be mayor.[184] As Halliday has argued, the *quo warranto* campaign was designed to tame conflict with the urban community in the search for unity, not give central government the ability to influence elections. When James II attempted to use remodelled charters to secure a Parliament in favour of repealing the Test Acts the result was chaos, not smoothly functioning absolutism. Rather the main beneficiaries of Charles's campaign were 'local grandees [who] regained an influence in the towns that they had not enjoyed since before the Civil Wars'.[185]

Halifax was often the main conduit for the reincorporation of charters across England and particularly in the north. His correspondents informed him of the process of charter campaigns in Worcester, Nottingham, East Retford, and Berwick.[186] And since Reresby was kept informed by his correspondents of similar processes not just in York but also in Pontefract and Doncaster it is probable that Halifax was well aware of these also.[187] In Berwick concern over 'fanatic' magistrates included the more serious concern that they were

[183] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', p. 59.
[184] David H. Hosford, *Nottingham, Nobles, and the North. Aspects of the Revolution of 1688* (Hamden, Conn., 1970), p. 47.
[185] Paul D. Halliday, *Dismembering the Body Politic. Partisan Politics in England's Towns, 1650-1730* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 235-6.
[186] Add MS 75359, Windsor to Halifax, 19 Oct. 1681; Duke of Newcastle to Halifax, 18 Mar 1684; Same to Same, 14 Jan. 1685.
[187] WYAS MX 21/27/25, Thomas Yarburgh to John Reresby, 30 Dec. 1684.

sheltering Scottish covenanters by refusing to implement laws against dissent, 'so that it is next to impossible for his Majesty to obtaine the ends of his Government'.[188] After the Duke of Newcastle was able to secure the charter's surrender – 'w[hi]ch is penned as fully as ever sorender was of a Charter' – Halifax presented the town's petition along with its mayor. Newcastle, however, sought to be adequately compensated for his efforts, and requested 'your Lo[rdshi]p would please to present againe my humble Petition to his Maj[es]te he would oblige me soe much as to bestow a Company upon my Cosen'.[189] Halifax also put pressure on Newcastle, as lord lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, to use his influence to obtain the charter of Nottingham.[190] Despite his reluctance, Newcastle was prevailed upon to spend time in the city in order to ensure that the corporation voted in favour of requesting a new charter.[191]

Nevertheless the charter campaign was relatively limited – its success, argued Pickavance 'can be attributed in large measure to the moderation with which it was applied'.[192] Unlike under James II the process removed overly radical opposition forces, rather than seeking to create what would have in effect been a 'packed' Parliament to secure the repeal of the Test Acts. Indeed, while the 'moderate sort of people' in Yarmouth accepted the surrender of the town's charter in 1683, they were nevertheless separate from a Tory group. Demanding that the surrender be limited in scope and follow a legal process of responding to a prior *quo warranto*, they were, Gauci claims 'evidently well informed of recent events, and their independence of mind suggests that local "parties" were more fluid' than had previously been recognised.[193] The process of remodelling charters might have appealed to moderates but

[188] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', p. 178.
[189] Add MS 75359, Newcastle to Halifax, 14 Jan. 1685.
[190] Robin Eagles and Richard Harrison, 'Cavendish, Henry', in Paley, II, 481-8.
[191] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', p. 166.
[192] Ibid., p. 186.
[193] Gauci, *Politics and Society*, p. 159.

more importantly than that it also ensured that country gentry were placed on the remodelled corporations. This was in keeping with Halifax's support of aristocratic influence. Through making the gentry honorary burgesses, the stabilisation of local politics during the 'Tory reaction' can in part be seen as the 'triumph of the landed interest over the towns'.[194]

While Halifax and nobles close to him exerted their influence to regain control of local politics, he also enabled aristocrats who regretted their support for Exclusion to return to the court. Having previously been in opposition, Halifax perhaps was a more sympathetic figure to some former Exclusionists. Emblematic of his ability to use both his reputation and the offer of patronage to win nobles back from supporting Exclusion is the case of Theophilus Hastings, 7th earl of Huntingdon. Huntingdon, who had previously supported the court, abruptly switched to backing Exclusion in 1679, something Littleton ascribes to opportunism or anger at being denied patronage in Leicestershire.[195] By 1681 Huntingdon appears to have feared his strategy had been deeply rash, and he was advised to 'apply yourself very much to my Lord Marquis Halifax'.[196] In late-October Huntingdon personally apologised to the king, claiming that recently he 'had by experience found, that they who promoted the bill of exclusion were for the subversion of monarchy itself'.[197] The Whigs, recognising that the public defection of a noble would only further erode support for Exclusion amongst moderates, a bitter pamphlet dispute conducted in Peter's coffee-house in London nearly led to a duel between supporters of Huntingdon and the duke of Monmouth.[198] The most significant outcome of Huntingdon's change of heart, however, was his subsequent promotion to *custos rotulorum* of Leicestershire, demonstrating Halifax's ability to reward

[194] Pickavance, 'English Boroughs and the King's Government', pp. 310-20.
[195] Charles Littleton, 'Hastings, Theophilus', in Paley, III, 255-72.
[196] Neil Paterson, 'Politics in Leicestershire, c. 1677 to c. 1716' (PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 2007), p. 159.
[197] Littleton, 'Hastings, Theophilus', p. 261.
[198] Hinds, *The Horrid Popish Plot*, pp. 323-5.

those nobles who abandoned the opposition.[199] Ensuring widespread aristocratic compliance with the government by the limited use of purges, and the promise of returning to office if nobles ceased backing the opposition, was key to the defeat of Exclusion.

Conclusion

Despite England's increasing political divisions, there remained a significant and committed middle-ground of opinion. Halifax was often willing to make ideological and personal appeals to this group. He continued to represent many Country party positions of earlier years and was deeply wary of any Tory effort to increase the power of the bishops, or to create an executive independent of Parliament. However, by 1680, he was even more alarmed by his erstwhile colleagues, who were promoting Exclusion with increasing zeal. For men such as Halifax, this effort represented the greatest risk of harm to the Protestant religion, not because it attacked the hereditary rights of God's anointed, but rather because of its practical consequences. Exclusion would weaken the Protestant interest at home by risking another civil war and damage it abroad through English political attention being diverted from forming an alliance against France. Perhaps even more objectionable to Halifax than Shaftesbury's ends were the means he appeared willing to use to attain them. Halifax found efforts to rally popular support against the House of Lords and in favour of an illegitimate claimant repugnant and destabilising.

The political settlement envisaged by Halifax was neither the Tory vision of an alliance between monarchy and episcopacy, nor the Whig hope of a populace exerting pressure on behalf of a House of Commons filled with partisan MPs. Rather Halifax and those close to him sought to use the aristocracy and local landed gentry to maintain stability. Having failed to win support for his favoured policies from the Whigs in 1681, Halifax willingly decided to

[199] Littleton, 'Hastings, Theophilus', p. 261.

‘cure’ the frenzy of popular agitation through participation in the personal rule. This process involved seeking to strengthen the local political power of landed gentry – especially those who would support his views – while simultaneously seeking another Parliament, in the hope that the public mood would have sufficiently cooled that party candidates did not dominate another House of Commons. Ultimately the project to implement Limitations in the short-term and prevent the emergence of permanent political divisions did not succeed. This chapter has shown how dislike of partisan politics led Halifax to rally a significant group of middle-ground opinion against Exclusion. To some, the proposed alternative of Limitations was a moderate compromise between Whig demands for safety against a future Catholic monarch, and Tory demands for the hereditary succession to be followed. However, for others Limitations was not a ‘moderate’ compromise, but an even more radical, and republican, proposal than Exclusion. It is to this area of Halifax’s republican inclinations that the thesis will now turn.

CHAPTER THREE

Trimming and Republicanism in the Restoration Crisis

On 17 January 1685 John Finch wrote to Viscount Weymouth speculating on the authorship of a pamphlet circulating at court: *The Character of a Trimmer*. 'The conjectures of the author are various, and amongst the pretenders of it S[i]r William Temple, Captain Titus, S[i]r William Coventry & Mr Nevill.' William Coventry was an understandable suggestion – indeed he stated he approved of the work; similarly Temple had supported Halifax's return to the Privy Council in 1679.[1] But that the prominent republican writer Henry Neville was conjectured as a possible author is more surprising. It might, of course, simply be a mistake by Finch or a throwaway comment. But the link has been ignored with most modern commentators simply accepting Halifax either as a moderate Tory, or part of an actual group of trimmers. The contention of this thesis is that Finch's attribution of *Character of Trimmer* to Neville was a good guess, given its content and positions.

This chapter will seek to discover why contemporaries thought *Character of a Trimmer* might have been written by Neville. It will analyse Halifax's political writings and will advance the argument that Halifax was much more closely aligned to the republican thinkers of the late seventeenth century than most historians have considered. *Character of a Trimmer*, Halifax's most famous pamphlet, was probably written in 1685, when it started circulating in manuscript, but not published until 1688.[2] *Character of a Trimmer,* with its use

[1] Brown, I, 33
[2] Brown, I, 34.

of the concept of interest and its claims that the king would be strengthened if he limited his powers, reconciled with parliament, and rejected prerogative, contains subtly republican elements. Indeed, the *Character* directly follows elements within Neville's *Plato Redivivus*, and, it will be suggested, contains a similar anti-monarchical and anti-patriarchal viewpoint. The argument has four main parts. First, it will examine the connections between Halifax and English republican writers and contemporary assessments that Halifax was a republican; secondly it will discuss Republican themes within his writing; and thirdly it will show how Halifax's views on the general need for limitations on royal power were influenced by his republican sympathies, and explain his behaviour around Exclusion. Finally the last section considers how Halifax viewed participation in politics stressing his dislike of popular involvement and emphasis on the need for aristocratic engagement.

1. Connections between Halifax and the English republican writers

After the English Revolution, it has been argued, some writers continued to assert the compatibility of commonwealth principles with monarchy. Works by Zera Fink and Caroline Robbins are regarded as key in sparking an upsurge of interest by historians in republicanism, and, in 1975, J. G. A. Pocock combined the classical republican heritage identified by Fink with Robbins' commonwealth tradition of the long-eighteenth century.[3] The late seventeenth century is thus regarded as an especially pivotal time when the 'neo-Harringtonians' Halifax was connected to, sought 'to restate Harringtonian doctrine in a form appropriate to the realities of the Restoration'.[4]

[3] Zera Fink, *The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England* (Evanston, IL, 1945); Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth Century Commonwealthman: Studies in the Transmission, Development and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II Until the War with the Thirteen Colonies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959).
[4] J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment. Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975), p. 406.

Historians are divided over whether republicanism required the rejection of monarchy. Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen's edited volumes on republicanism as 'a shared European heritage' argued the answer was yes, that to be an early modern European republican 'meant repudiating the age-old belief that monarchy is necessarily the best form of government'.[5] This statement has been attacked by Wootton and Nelson, who argue that the idea of republicanism as antonym of monarchy was 'invented' by Florentine thinkers in the fifteenth century. By the eighteenth century it had become an exclusive concept, making the notion of an intellectual history of 'classical republicanism' anachronistic.[6] Hammersley, however, suggests the two conceptions of republicanism existed together as 'both traditions (the exclusivist and the pluralist) developed during the eighteenth century remaining closely intertwined'.[7] As an example, she argues that the writing of the English commonwealthsmen of the eighteenth century, which considered that republican ideas of the mid-seventeenth century were applicable to monarchical government, were pivotal in the development of exclusivist republican thought in France and America.[8] For Worden seventeenth-century republicanism could involve acceptance of a monarch. Thus 'Sidney is less interested in constitutional arrangements than in the principles upon which they are built. They are the classical principles of mixed government. … most weight [being given] to the aristocratic component'.[9] Similarly, Scott argues that earlier writing which focussed excessively on Harrington has led to an overly constitutional interpretation of republicanism. 'For most

[5] Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen, 'Introduction', in Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen (eds), *Republicanism, A Shared European Heritage: Volume 2, The Values of Republicanism in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 1.
[6] David Wootton, 'Review: Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage by Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner', *EHR*, 120:485 (2005), 137-8. See also Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010), ch. 1.
[7] Rachel Hammersley, 'The Historiography of Republicanism and Republican Exchanges', *History of European Ideas*, 38:3 (2012), p. 331.
[8] Rachel Hammersley, *The English Republican Tradition and Eighteenth-Century France: Between the Ancients and the Moderns* (Manchester, 2010), pp. 14-16.
[9] Blair Worden, 'Republicanism and the Restoration, 1660-1683' in David Wootton (ed.), *Republicanism, Liberty and Commercial Society, 1649-1776* (Stanford, 1994), p. 164.

English republicans, constitutional prescription, where it existed, was far less detailed than in Harrington and secondary to the enunciation of general moral principles'.[10] Gaby Mahlberg's work on Henry Neville, argues that English republican culture towards the end of the seventeenth century, while theoretically supportive of kingless government was more concerned with anti-patriarchalism: 'they were against tyranny, not monarchy'.[11]

Embracing a role for the House of Lords, and fixating on corruption, the 1680 publication of Neville's *Plato Redivivus* played a key role in transforming the ideas of Machiavelli into the republican thought that would be central to the American Revolution.[12] Though *The Machiavellian Moment* has been robustly criticised, in particular for ignoring European influences on republicanism (aside from Machiavelli) and claiming republicanism as anti-commercial, it remains hugely influential.[13] Halifax's writings sit firmly in this tradition. He was regarded positively by the eighteenth-century commonwealthmen, American revolutionaries, and had influence over French figures.[14] Halifax can be viewed as part of the trend to see republicanism's viability as resting more on moral foundations than constitutional structures. Thus he argued that England's lack of 'Vertue, Morality, diligence, Religion', the crucial republican preliminaries 'maketh all the Republican Schemes, whether

[10] Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth Principles, Republican Writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 10.
[11] Gaby Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture in the Seventeenth Century: Dreaming of Another Game* (Manchester, 2009), p. 3.
[12] Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 406. See also J. G. A. Pocock, 'Machiavelli, Harrington and English Political Ideologies in the Eighteenth Century', in J. G. A. Pocock (ed.), *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 104-47.
[13] Jonathan Scott, 'Classical Republicanism in Seventeenth Century England and the Netherlands', in Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen (eds), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage Volume 1: Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2002); Keith Michael Baker, 'Transformations of Classical Republicanism in Eighteenth-Century France', *JMH*, 73 (2001). Steven Pincus, 'Neither Machiavellian Moment nor Possessive Individualism: Commercial Society and the Defenders of the English Commonwealth', *American Historical Review*, 103:3 (1998), 705-36.
[14] Both *Cato's Letters* and *The Independent Whig* praised the 'wise' Halifax for his anticlericalism. See Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthmen*, p. 118; John Trenchard, Thomas Gordon, *The Independent Whig* (1721), p. 116. John Adams recorded reading and discussing *Character of a Trimmer*. John Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams. Vol. 1*. Edited by L. H. Butterfield (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), p. 40. For the interest of French republican figures in Halifax, see Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677–1683* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 240.

borrowed from the Ancient, or invented by the Moderne Doctors in Politiques, to bee no more than dreams'.[15]

In discussing classical influences on republicanism, Scott cautions against too sharp a dichotomy between Greece and Rome claiming that the English preferred the Roman model.[16] Most republican writers of the period cited both Greek and Roman precedents. *Plato Redivivus* is an obvious case. Similarly, *Character of a Trimmer* uses both Greek and Roman examples of virtuous rule to warn of a loss of liberty. The notion of classical republicanism in the early modern period has been challenged by scholars such as Paul Rahe and Vickie Sulivan, who argue that seventeenth-century republicanism was 'modern' and substantially different from the ancients.[17] Rahe views Halifax as part of the emergence of a modern republicanism which was more sceptical of the ideal of virtue through the participation of citizens. Instead, he acted as the chief English adherent of Montaigne in his 'depreciation of human pretensions'. *Character of a Trimmer* is cited as an example of this:

> His point was simple. Where Aristotle intimated, and the ancient Greeks generally believed, that man is only fully human when aiming to be a god, he contended, instead, that "by aiming to be more than a man, he becomes a beast …"[18]

Yet this characterisation, it is suggested, is misleading. The passage cited condemns not human pretensions, but tyranny, namely that of Louis XIV. Indeed, elsewhere in the work, Halifax cites the example of Lycurgus as a man, who, by ruling virtuously, attained genuine power and glory. While Halifax believed in the role of virtuous citizens, he thought that the number of citizens capable of ruling virtuously was strictly limited. Halifax should therefore be situated within a pluralist classical republican tradition, willing to tolerate monarchy,

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[15] Brown, I, 303.
[16] Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth Principles*, p. 6. For an account which stresses the predominance of Greek writings in the classical heritage of European republicanism, see Eric Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought* (Cambridge, 2004).
[17] Vickie B. Sulivan, *Machiavelli, Hobbes, and the Formation of a Liberal Republicanism in England* (Cambridge, 2004).
[18] Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern. Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* (1992), p. 273.

though seeking to limit its power through the empowerment of a virtuous nobility. In this respect his thought shows the influence of the best known of the republican writers, Machiavelli, and contains similarities with leading English republicans of his day, of whom the two foremost were Henry Neville and Algernon Sidney.

Machiavellian thought and Interest

Like Neville and Sidney, Halifax's writing was significantly influenced by Machiavelli. He possessed a number of books by and about the Florentine, *The Prince* in Latin; the *Complete Works* and the *Discorsi* in Italian, as well as *Modern Policies from Machiavel*, wrongly attributed to William Sancroft. He also had two English-language translations of Machiavelli, Edward Dacres' 1640 translation and Neville's 1675 one. Dacres' translation was far more ambivalent than previous ones about the Italian writer, justifying it as a kind of self-defence manual. By studying Machiavelli, he told his readers, 'thou shalt find him much practisd by those that condemne him; who willingly would walk as theeves doe with close lanternes in the night, that they being undescried, and yet seeing all, might surprise the unwary in the dark'. Indeed, as well as exposing the hypocrisy of those who condemned Machiavelli's realistic description of politics and human nature, Dacres claimed it would be of service to the virtuous. The author, Dacres claimed, could not inspire men to do evil, rather

> out of the wicked treasure of a mans own wicked heart, he drawes his malice and mischiefe. From the same flower the Bee sucks hony, from whence the Spider hath his poyson. And he that means well, shall be here warnd, where the deceitfull man learnes to set his snares.[19]

During the Civil Wars, as Raab notes, Machiavelli was appropriated to advocate, or condemn, a number of positions - to justify a republic; claim that both Charles I and

[19] Nicolo Machiavelli, Edward Dacres (trans.), *Nicholas Machiavel's Prince. Also, the life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca. And the Meanes Duke Valentine Us'd to Put to Death Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliverotto of Fermo, Paul, and the Duke of Gravina. Translated out of Italian into English; by E.D* (1640), Epistle Dedicatory.

Cromwell had been villainous Machiavellian schemers; and tar the Long Parliament as composed of empty atheists.[20] After 1660, the works of Algernon Sidney and Henry Neville continued the republican Machiavellianism which had first been formulated in James Harrington's *Oceana*. Significantly, Neville's 1675 translation of *Machiavel's Works* contained a forged letter, allegedly from Machiavelli (but dated a decade after his death), written by Neville. It is unclear whether Halifax owned a copy of the letter, included in the volume presented to Cosimo III but not published 'for Feare of giving offence to the Government', but the letter circulated in manuscript until its publication in print in 1689.[21] The fictitious Machiavelli defended himself from charges of atheism by claiming he merely opposed abuses by the clergy and made clear that he was not criticising English kings. Indeed, English monarchs were praised for their 'excellent Laws and Constitutions to found and maintain their Government, and who reign over the hearts as well as the Persons of their Subjects'.[22] Nevertheless, the 'Letter' involved Neville characteristically dressing up proposals for radical reform as conservative measures to preserve the *status quo*. Thus the religion of Machiavelli became indistinguishable from a mid-1670s opposition politician railing against Danby and the bishops. The examples of Luther – 'that bold Fryar' – and Calvin – 'that famous Reformer' – showed rulers the need to remove 'this Clergy or Priest-Craft, as it is now, in the ground … the least fibra of this Plant will over run again the whole vineyard of the Lord'.[23] Neville's *Plato Redivivus*, citing Machiavelli as proof of the preferability of balanced republics, continued the adaptation of Machiavelli according to the political circumstances of the time. It was, argued Raab, 'as near to a republican polemic as a reasonable man might write in that jealous time'.[24]

[20] Felix Raab, *The English Face of Machiavell, A Changing Interpretation 1500-1700,* (1964), pp. 111-40.
[21] Gaby Mahlberg, 'Machiavelli, Neville and the Seventeenth-Century English Republican Attack on Priestcraft', *Intellectual History Review*, 28:1 (2018), 83-88.
[22] Raab, *English Face of Machiavelli*, p. 221.
[23] Mahlberg, 'Machiavelli, Neville', 91.
[24] Raab, *English Face of Machiavelli,* pp. 218-219.

Halifax too, shared elements of Machiavellian thought. Alongside a new style of historical writing which paid no heed to divine inspiration, Raab argues the other 'major development of this new ideological climate was the birth and political accession to respectability of the notion of "trimming" … "trimming" was the Machiavellianism of the post-Restoration, the individual contribution of that age to the general theory of political mechanics'.[25] And emblematic of this climate was, Raab argues, Halifax – 'a radical conservative … spiritual forebear of the Bow Group' – who recognised that everything must change to remain the same.[26] In particular he cites elements of *Character of a Trimmer* which discuss religion as 'pure Machiavellianism, transferring the thought in *The Discourses*, I, 11-15 to the circumstances of the late seventeenth century'.[27]

Although Raab's work has been influential, including being positively cited by Mark Brown, there are some errors with his interpretation.[28] First, of course, Raab was writing before the change in historiographical interpretation away from seeing the Restoration as the dawning of a more secular era that prefigures the dawning rationalism of the eighteenth century. Thus, his linking of trimming to the new respectability of a secular approach to politics is problematic. While he wrote on 'Trimmers' there is no evidence Halifax ever positively embraced the label – indeed in C*haracter of a Trimmer* he merely states that he is not afraid 'to say that I preferr them [the Trimmer's principles] before any other Politicall Creed, that either our angry divines or our refined Statesmen would impose upon us'.[29] Moreover, while Halifax recognised that religion could promote morality or foster civil discord, he was a committed Protestant. The element of the *Character* which Raab regards as 'pure Machiavellianism' could equally be viewed as a relatively standard latitudinarian call to

[25] Ibid., p. 241.
[26] Ibid., p. 242.
[27] Ibid., p. 244.
[28] Brown, II, 132.
[29] Brown, I, 178.

lessen liturgical purity within the Church of England in order to foster Protestant unity: 'though the foundations of it [religion] are to be unchangeable and eternall, yet the forms and circumstances of discipline are to be suted to the severall clymats and constitutions'.[30]

Raab's other claim that 'The other basic Machiavellian notion which Halifax denied (by ignoring it) was that of history as the essential school for politicians',[31] is difficult to sustain. Halifax's cynicism about human nature, and man's lack of virtue, was key to more conservative approaches. Thus he could write that:

> it is a sign of an honest man, to wonder at great barbaritys, but it is a sign too that he is a stranger to the history of mankind. The best is, not to lessen the belief, that others may do ill; nor the aversion one has to do it one's self.[32]

Indeed, the *Character of a Trimmer* advocates that politicians learn from Machiavelli himself. To risk widespread discontent with the government, he writes, is 'to apply cupping Glasses to a great Beast naturally disposed to sleep, and to force the Tame thing, whether it will or noe, to be valiant, must be learnt out of some other Book than Machiavell, who would never have prescribed such a preposterous method'.[33]

While sharing elements of Machiavellian prudence in terms of politics, Halifax did not share the Florentine's enthusiasm for civic strife and expansion to provide moments of greatness and triumph over fortune. Rather than eulogising the turbulence of Rome, for Halifax, the advantage of frequent parliaments was the ordered and controllable removal of corruption, as 'may be fresh Gales of asserted Liberty without turning into such storms or Hurricanes as that the state should runn any hazard of being cast away by them'.[34] He preferred stability over expanded empire. As Neville's translation of the *Discorsi* put it,

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[30] Brown, I, 200.
[31] Raab, *English Face of Machiavelli*, p. 251.
[32] Brown, III, 55.
[33] Brown, I, 241.
[34] Ibid., p. 195

> either you argue for a Republick, whose aim is to extend and propagate its Empire, as Rome; or one whose designes reach no further than to preserve what they have got. In the first case, 'tis necessary in all things to follow the example of Rome; in the second, Venice and Sparta are rather to be imitated.[35]

Halifax's acceptance that England could preserve itself without risking conquest, and his preference for limiting political participation meant that he agreed with the second approach. England's foreign policy, he considered, should be a naval-based military strategy which maintained a balance of power on the European mainland. Defeat in the Hundred Years' War had been inevitable, if not actually beneficial: 'admit the English to bee Gyants in Courage, yet they must not hope to succeed in making warre against Heaven, which seemeth to have enjoyned them, to acquiesce in being happy within their own Circle'.[36] Indeed, while trade with Asia and America was natural, Halifax appears to have had a deep suspicion of land-based conquests. Writing in *Rough Draught*, he argued that even if an absolute monarchy enabled conquests, 'I am not ashamed to own my low spirited frailty in preferring such a modell of Government as may agree with the reasonable enjoyments of a free people, before such a one by which Empire is to bee extended at such an unnaturall price'.[37] Going further he wrote 'The people who are subdued, by a great Empire, are in a better condition by it generally, than the people that conquer them, after the first violences are past'.[38] In connecting the expansion of empire to a loss of liberty at home Halifax was making arguments which form part of a stream of classical republican arguments which used Sallust's depiction of Sulla to warn that as military glory had destroyed the liberty of Rome, so it would in England.[39] From Machiavelli some English republicans learned that while greatness and expansion risked a loss of liberty, remaining static risked foreign conquest. The

[35] Nicolo Machiavelli, Henry Neville (trans.), *The Works of the Famous Nicolas Machiavel, Citizen and Secretary of Florence Written Originally in Italian, and from thence Newly and Faithfully Translated into English* (1675) p. 274.
[36] Brown, I, 297.
[37] Brown, I, 300.
[38] Brown, III, 81.
[39] Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 65-72.

dilemma republicans had was, as Kennedy puts it, 'if a republic expands, it most certainly will degenerate into an empire; if it seeks to preserve its liberty through internal stability, it will eventually fall prey to aggressive enemies'. Consequently, republics needed to choose models for expansion, with Machiavelli preferring 'the creation of an unequal league of states' as one which could enable Florence to maintain liberty at home without conquest from abroad.[40] Embracing such an approach, figures like Sidney sought a 'commonwealth for expansion'.[41] However, Kennedy argues that seventeenth-century English republicans split over the question of expansion, embracing and rejecting different elements of Machiavelli's politics. One group, which included Nedham, Worsley and Sidney supported expansion, and, rejecting the notion that men, rather than money, were the sinews of war, celebrated commercialism.[42] Sidney, according to his biographer, 'had no more time than Machiavelli for stability at the expense of vigour'.[43]

Halifax, on the other hand, agreed with Machiavelli that 'Men are more the Sinews of War than Money', though he coupled a scepticism about commerce with a scepticism about expansion. Indeed, he suggested 'Money hath too great a Preference given to it by States'.[44] In Kennedy's account this would put Halifax on the side of those 'who sought a republic for preservation [and] rejected Machiavelli's insistence on the positive … role of social conflict in the maintenance of republican liberty and *grandezza*, but accepted his conception of politics and the elevation of the common good over individual self-interest'.[45] Similarly, in looking at models from history, Halifax's sympathies were with those concerned with preservation. Kennedy writes that 'Athens and Holland became the model for [expansionists]

[40] Geoff Kennedy, 'The "Republican Dilemma" and the Changing Social Context of Republicanism in the Early Modern Period', *Journal of Political Theory*, 8:3 (2009), 315-317.
[41] Blair Worden, 'The Commonwealth Kidney of Algernon Sidney', *JBS*, 24:1 (1985), 18.
[42] Kennedy, 'The Republican Dilemma', 323-329.
[43] Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic, 1623-1677* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 31.
[44] Brown, III, 466.
[45] Kennedy, 'The Republican Dilemma', 322.

… and Venice and Sparta were the ideal republics extolled by [preservers] … with Rome often appropriated in different incarnations by both sides'.[46] Halifax's writings exhibited Laconophilia, praising Lycurgus and noting 'Amongst the Spartans, the Kings of all others were least permitted to break the Lawes. The Spartan Princes renewed their oath of Allegiance to the Lawes, every moneth'.[47]

Halifax hoped England, rather than expanding, could act as 'perpetuall umpire', obtaining glory by preserving balance of power in Europe. His solution to the question of power or liberty was to use international balance as a means to preserve England's liberty from invasion without needing to have such a significant military that it risked degenerating into a military dictatorship. Unlike Machiavelli's Florence, England did not require military greatness to prevent invasion – the threat of sea power alone could maintain a balance in Europe. Thus, English opposition to the overbearing French was meaningless 'till the word Parliament was put into them: that Powerfull word had such an effect, … which may convince us of what efficacy, a King of England's words are, when he will give them their full weight, and threaten with his Parliament'.[48] A Parliament, reflecting the nation's interest, would, (unlike Kings or Lord Protectors), always use the power of declaring and funding war to maintain a balance of power in Europe. Thus, England being reduced to its 'limits' as *Character of a Trimmer*, put it, safeguarded liberty at home while enabling influence abroad. Similar arguments were made in other contemporary works. Burnet praised Henry VIII for his actions at the start of his reign: 'he did so exactly pursue that great Maxime of Princes, of Holding the Balance, that still as it grew heavier, whether in the Scale of France, or Spain, he governed Himself and Them as a wise Arbiter'.[49]

[46] Ibid., p. 323.
[47] Brown, III, 39.
[48] Brown, I, 230.
[49] Burnet, *Reformation*, I, 3.

Up to the reign of Elizabeth, Halifax claimed 'our third power, though in it selfe lesse than either of the other, [i.e. Spain and France] happned to be superiour to any one of them, by the choice we had of throwing the scales on that side to which we gave our friendship'.[50] By following this principle the English had achieved power and glory, but under the Stuarts corruption and unreason had undermined the national interest. It was profoundly regrettable, the *Character* argued, 'that equality between the two monarchies, which we might for ever have preserved, hath been cheifly broken by us, whose Intrest it was above all others, to maintaine it', while England's growing closeness to France in the 1680s meant the world saw the nation as 'falling into Apostacy from the common intrest'.[51] It is striking how much Halifax's language around interest and balance in 1683 mirrored that in a 1680 pamphlet by Slingsby Bethel, *The Interest of Princes and States*. Bringing the interest language of the De La Courts to an English audience, Bethel had argued that England had made a similar set of historical foreign policy mistakes. Scott's summary could equally apply to Halifax: 'under Elizabeth England had united with Holland to defeat Phillip II; it was now the "Interest of King and Kingdom of England to do the same against France"'.[52]

Given the context in which Halifax was writing, blame for England's actions was laid upon crafty foreigners, however it is obvious that he is attacking the courts of England's Stuart monarchs for stoking an international crisis of popery, in order to fund the domestic imposition of arbitrary government:

> *Gondemar* was as saucy, and as powerfull too in King James his court, as any French Ambassador can have been in any time since … so that from that time, instead of weighing in a wise ballance the power of either Crowne, it looketh as if we had learnt only to weigh the pensions, and take the heaviest.[53]

[50] Brown, I, 23.
[51] Brown, I, 223, 228.
[52] Scott, *English Republic*, p. 215.
[53] Brown, I, 224.

England's princes, the pamphlet heavily implied, had prioritised their own private interest – pensions for themselves and their corrupt courtiers – over the interest of England, and failed to hold the balance in Europe. If financial corruption hindered the achievement of England's interest, so too did political division. In order to pursue an attack on the Spanish Netherlands, Halifax argued the French 'had an Intrest, either to dispose us to so much good will, or at least to put us in such a condition that we might give no opposition to their designes'. Therefore, 'they put in practice seasonable and artificiall whispers' – seeking to use the legacy of Amboyna to encourage anti-Dutch sentiment in England, and increasing divisions between king and parliament to prevent an English alliance with the weaker power in Europe.[54] If the English did not pursue their own interest, Louis XIV was praised for understanding his nation's interest better. It was naïve to believe that a French alliance against the Dutch could grant England naval domination, for the 'King of France, like a wise prince, … would no more let the Power of the Sea, than we ought to suffer the monarchy of Europe, to fall into one hand'.[55] Interest, the Trimmer repeatedly declared, was central to diplomacy, meaning the claims 'such very refined statesmen' (most likely referring to Rochester, Sunderland, York, and Portsmouth) made about closeness to Louis XIV would not come to fruition. Louis would never 'helpe the Crowne of England to be absolute', as that 'would be to take paines to put us in a condition to oppose him, as it is, and must be our Intrest, as long as he continueth in such an overballancing greatnes'.[56]

The discussion of foreign policy in the *Character of a Trimmer* then, involved Halifax using the language of interest in a manner that would be less offensive to the royal court in order to put forward arguments similar to those made by someone who four years previously had been

[54] Brown, I, 225.
[55] Brown, I, 226.
[56] Brown, I, 235.

elected sheriff as part of a 'republican capture of London'.[57] While Halifax shared an interpretation of the foreign policy interest of England, he was sceptical of any policy which could risk civil war. On the question of whether extensive royal power was needed 'to secure the Prince it is prerogative enough that it is infinitely more the interest of every nation to obey than to rebell'.[58] While abhorring the popular politics and tactics of the Exclusionist republicans, he sought to implement their foreign policy vision of 'interest' through seeking to convince the aristocrats and gentry in Charles's court.

Halifax's analysis of interest formed a significant part of his thought, and exposing or revealing true interest, whether of individuals or the nation, was a chief concern. Yet while he saw interest as pervasive, he did not consider that it made irrelevant an older politics based on a virtuous ruling elite, guided by reason and commitment to the greater public good. Despite 'the corruption of our nature [which] throws a mixture of our interest, into most our vertues. In our corrupted state, we must not cavil at vertues, for their having too much allay in them'.[59]

Henry Neville and Halifax

Halifax was close to the republican writer Henry Neville. Connections between the two, this section argues, have not been fully explored, largely, it is suggested, because of the misattribution of authorship of one pamphlet. The pamphlet - *A Seasonable Address to both Houses of Parliament* – was published in 1681 and is very hostile to *Plato Redivivus*. In Mahlberg's excellent work on Neville, her acceptance of Halifax's authorship of the pamphlet means discussion of the connections between Halifax's position and Neville's is limited and she regards his attitude towards *Plato Redivivus* as highly critical. 'Both

[57] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, p. 173; Gary S. De Krey, 'Bethel, Slingsby', *ODNB*. De Krey is more cautious about attributing Bethel's success to his republicanism.
[58] Brown, III, 229.
[59] Brown, III, 295.

[Edward] Pettit and Halifax', she writes, 'noted that Neville reduced the King to "a Duke of Venice" – a term commonly used by the Duke of York'.[60] Pettit's criticism of Neville was certainly vituperative, 'he very Dogmatically proclaims the State of Venice, to be the Perfectest pattern of Government now existent … he slights the Plea of Monarchs Divine right'. It argues that Neville's goal was to turn the monarch into a Duke of Venice and claimed to expose a plan by which he would

> cully the King out of his Prerogatives, with the rusty Complement of giving him more Ease, and of making him more Glorious. These, and other wicked and ridiculous Positions, destructive both of King and People, make up the Politicks of this filthy Dreamer, who has more of Pythagoras his Ass, than of Plato's Spirit in him.[61]

However, there is compelling internal and external evidence that Halifax was not the author of *A Seasonable Address*. Foxcroft notes that if *A Seasonable Address* was written by him it would be his only pamphlet in which 'a contemporary politician is satirised by name'.[62] Meanwhile it is hard to believe that Halifax, who in 1678-9 had discussed with his brother the best Protestant academy to which to send his sons,[63] wrote conspiratorially that 'the poyson of Presbytery, formerly known by the name of Puritanism, hatch'd at Frankford and Geneva, grown to a head in Scotland with the Reformation, has infected the generality of the Kingdom'.[64] Accordingly, if *A Seasonable Address* is removed from the corpus of Halifax's work similarities between the two men become clearer. Incorrectly regarding Halifax as a critic of efforts to curb the power of the monarchy has led some to downplay the extent of his sympathy for republican measures and connections and similarities to republican writers of the period.

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[60] Ibid., p. 182.
[61] Edward Pettit, *The Visions of Government* (1684), pp. 101-102. Neville is also accused of copying the maxims of Hobbes and Machiavelli.
[62] H. C. Foxcroft, 'The Works of George Savile, First Marquis of Halifax', *EHR*, 11:4 (1896), 705-7.
[63] Henry Savile wrote to Halifax in 1678 that he did 'not doubt but… the spiritual food of the successors of John Calvin will… nourish their souls'. 'Savile Correspondence', p. 74.
[64] *A Seasonable Address* (1681), p. 5.

Other evidence connects Halifax with Neville. Nicholas von Mahltzahn placed Neville in London with Halifax, in summer 1679, shortly before *Plato Redivivus* was published. In letters sent to his patron, Cosimo de Medici in 1679, Neville reported Halifax told him that he doubted the veracity of the Popish Plot.[65] The two men had similar positions on Exclusion – warning it would cause civil war and suggesting instead limitations on the power of the crown. The Green Ribbon Club attacked 'Mr Nevil the pretended politician … papist', while an informer accused Neville of involvement in a scheme to murder Shaftesbury. In this respect he underwent a similar experience to Halifax in feeling the wrath of the Whig popularity machine, and his correspondence displays a similar sense of being shaken by the vituperative attacks. By 1680 he wrote to his patron Cosimo d'Medici that 'if I did not have things to do in London, I would immediately come to Italy … for not having to stay beaten and trampled on by two notorious factions, the courtiers and the furious among the people, the first of which would like to introduce tyranny and the other anarchy and chaos, threatening extreme ruin to all those who are not on their side and who are not willing to comply with their capricious politics'. Neville's rant resembles one of Halifax's at the same time – both feeling persecuted by the 'furious among the people', both anxious about battles between two factions leading to conflict and both feeling their views fitted with neither party. Indeed, so could his choice of consolation: retiring from public life and 'reading about the histories and actions and virtues of the ancients who at least did not have any turbulence and wars for religious reasons'.[66]

Neville was labelled a key figure in the neo-Harringtonian turn by Pocock, being connected to a group around Shaftesbury who sought a strengthened House of Lords as a means to balance the ancient feudal constitution.[67] However, for Mahlberg this is misleading, 'a

[65] Nicholas von Maltzahn, 'Neville, Henry', *ODNB*.
[66] Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture*, pp. 60-67.
[67] Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 406.

narrow constitutionalist interpretation of republicanism', which misses the fact that 'Neville still believed in 1681 that the old order had been irrevocably destroyed and continued to work for reform, based on the changed property-power relations and Harringtonian principles'.[68] Neville's 1680 pamphlet *Plato Redivivus* offered as a solution to the succession crisis, the passage of widespread limitations on royal power in a system which retained a role for the House of Lords.

Halifax's approach to prerogative was similar to that of Neville. Firstly, he accepted the legitimacy of some limited royal power, however, 'Prerogative must either bee founded upon a Law, or upon a clear uninterrupted Coustome'.[69] When prerogative was overstretched, Halifax followed the analysis made by Sidney and Neville. Allowing for the dispensing of laws, he wrote, would destroy liberty. Halifax rejected the suggestion that 'there is a difference between laying a law asleep by a dispensation and killing it … for if I have power to lay a man asleep by opium, and authority to give him as much as I please of it, then I conceave I have the power to kill him'.[70] Moreover, the exercise of such power effectively made meaningless all existing laws, 'the death of one Law by that means, is a sentence against all the rest, upon the same bottome of arguing'.[71] The outcome of such behaviour would remove the ability to have any freedom or property: 'will any man call it a property in a house, if another man hath a power reserved to burne it? or in land, where a neighbour hath a right reserved, when ever hee pleaseth to drown it?'[72]

Halifax further argued that to claim that royal power allowed the dispensing of laws would require the total submission of the ruled:

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[68] Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture*, pp. 8-9.
[69] Brown, II, 26.
[70] Brown, II, 48.
[71] Brown, II, 26.
[72] Brown, II, 27.

> It would bee Required that Princes should bee a distinct sort of creature, to clayme Prerogatives of this kind; else, strange to clayme a priviledge to destroy their own Species … to make a people their patrimony and not a trust is making the people beasts, or the Princes Gods, free men not being within the inventory…[73]

Thus he approvingly cited Lord Falkland's speech to the House of Lords in 1641 which supported the impeachment of Lord Keeper Finch on the grounds that his actions in justifying Ship Money would have settled 'an Arbitrary, that is, an intollerable forme of Government, and have made even your Lordships and your posteritie but Right Honourable Slaves'.[74] Historically, exultations of the ruler's prerogative showed the practice was un-Christian. Given the necessity 'to make the Supream Magistrate more than a man, to entitle him to such an unlimited Prerogative. … therefore the Ancient flatterers … to justify the throwing such incense, they deified their Emperours'.[75] Caligula, Nero, and Louis XIV were all cited in this context with the latter, 'the greatest pretender to Prerogative at present, not ashamed of a Resemblance to the Sunne'.[76]

Secondly, Halifax feared the exercise of non-legal prerogative from non-royal sources. Given that justifications for excessive royal prerogative often involved claims of necessity, there was a risk that others could make counter-claims of necessity. Thus the Civil War could be attributed using the justification, as 'no sooner had Necessity been urged in Shipmoney, but the people took the example and made it a plea to take up armes'.[77] Halifax thus accepted a substantial amount of republican thought around the question of prerogative. Even if the ruler dispensed with laws in a limited fashion, the effect would be effectively to destroy all freedom and property. Moreover, to claim 'necessity' as a justification would be to risk a civil war. Unlike Sidney or Locke, however, Halifax never explicitly justified civil war as

[73] Brown, II, 36.
[74] Ibid., 28; David L. Smith, 'Cary, Lucius, Second Viscount Falkland', *ODNB*.
[75] Ibid., p. 31.
[76] Ibid., 27, 38.
[77] Ibid., 40.

preferable to tyranny, given that he felt such a conflict would ultimately result in even more arbitrary rule.[78]

Algernon Sidney and Halifax

Halifax's links to Algernon Sidney, the republican writer and his uncle by marriage, are also worth unpacking in more detail. In addition to familial ties, both men had educational and personal ties to Huguenot France. Sidney's father the earl of Leicester served as ambassador to France from 1636-1641, resulting in Algernon, like Halifax, being educated at a Huguenot Academy – either in Paris or Saumur.[79] While in France the family met Henri, Duc du Rohan, whose works Halifax studied. Moreover, Leicester's embassy, like Henry Savile's later, received criticism from some English Protestants for attending the Huguenot temple at Charenton.[80] While in exile in France Sidney corresponded with the tutor of Halifax's son, Pierre du Moulin, as well as having a lengthy correspondence with Halifax's brother Henry Savile. Moreover, the library of each shows the presence of numerous works of Huguenot resistance theorists, such as Hotman, Beza, Mornay and Languet.[81] Combined with elements of similar politics, these similarities lead Scott to conclude that the two men held 'a shared protestant-international perspective'.[82]

When facing execution for his role in the Rye House Plot, Halifax's closeness to Sidney meant he made a significant effort to save his uncle's life. Burnet records that Sidney:

> Sent to lord Halifax … a paper to be laid before the king, containing the main points of his defence: upon which he appealed to the king, and desired he would review the whole

[78] Worden, 'Commonwealth Kidney', 18.
[79] Jonathan Scott, 'Sidney, Algernon', *ODNB*.
[80] Deborah B. Charnoff, 'Men Set on Fire: Algernon Sidney and John Adams: Remodelling Anglo-American Republicanism' (PhD thesis, City University of New York, 2019), pp. 114, 142.
[81] See W. R. Bowen, G. Warkentin, and J. Black (eds), *The Library of the Sidneys of Penshurst Place circa 1665* (2013).
[82] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, p. 140.

> matter. Jeffreys upon that in his furious way said, either Sidney must die or he must die[83]

Indeed, Scott argues that the survival of the manuscript copy of *Discourses Concerning Government*, which was not published until 1697, may well have been due to Halifax's influence. Halifax, he notes, was 'the only person who was a senior government minister at the time of Sidney's execution, still an active political presence after 1688, and remained nevertheless sufficiently sympathetic to Sidney and his political thought to seek its preservation'.[84] Moreover, Charnoff has argued that *Character of a Trimmer* was motivated by Halifax's dislike for Sidney's execution, and that Halifax's 'emphasis on law and many other republican ideas embraced the views articulated by Sidney'.[85] Certainly, though less willing to contemplate rebellion against Charles II than Sidney, Halifax's private writings show sympathy for elements of the former's thought. Thus Halifax stressed that a constitution 'is alterable; and by that draweth nearer Perfection; and without suiting itself to differing Times and Circumstances, it could not live'.[86] Indeed, in private writing he was willing to defend the presence of 'that *Supremacy* or *Power* which is set up in every Nation in differing Shapes, that altereth the Constitution as often as the Good of the People requireth it'.[87] Moreover, while highly sceptical of the outcomes of a civil war, he did not reject the theoretical legitimacy of resistance to a tyrannical monarch. 'If Kings are only answerable to God, that doth not secure them even in this World; since if God upon the Appeal thinketh fit not to stay, he maketh the People his Instruments'.[88] Clearly then, the two men shared elements of political thought, although Halifax was more flexible than Sidney and more concerned about the prospect of a civil war.

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[83] Burnet, *History*, II, 408.
[84] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, p. 144.
[85] Charnoff, 'Remodelling Anglo-American Republicanism', p. 241.
[86] Brown, II, 222,
[87] Brown, II, 222.
[88] Brown, II, 222.

They were also willing at times to endorse similar political solutions. In particular Halifax's embrace of Limitations – over either Exclusion (which would merely replace one monarch for another, as well as risk civil war) or unaltered succession – can be seen as his effort to implement republican politics in a practical setting. Houston believes it likely that Sidney also supported an element of his nephew's plans for James to succeed with the powers of the monarchy curtailed. These involved a law surrendering royal control over the militia, and banishing James from England until he succeeded, whereupon most powers of the crown would be vested in a 'council of forty-one'. While Sidney intended these Limitations to apply to all monarchs, Halifax confining Limitations to a popish successor should be seen as a politic means to seek to pass a radical measure. Both uncle and nephew shared a commitment to solve the Exclusion Crisis through 'an emphasis on the constitutional restriction of the powers of the Crown'.[89] Sidney's correspondence suggests he was extremely close to his nephew throughout 1679 – welcoming Lord Eland when he returned from France and being sent copies of Marvell poems by Halifax.[90] Even after Halifax spoke against Exclusion in the House of Lords in November 1680 it seems Sidney continued to back the strategy of Limitations. In December 1680 it was reported that 'Algernon Sidney and the ablest of the republican party said, that if a bill of limitation was once got, they should, from that moment, think themselves sure of a republic'.[91]

Contemporary assessments of Halifax

Numerous contemporary assessments depicted Halifax as a republican. Gilbert Burnet wrote that he 'studied to infuse in some a zeal for a commonwealth'.[92] Charles himself was

[89] Alan Craig Houston, *Algernon Sidney and the Republican Heritage in England and America* (Princeton, N. J., 1991), pp. 52-53.
[90] Algernon Sydney to Henry Savile, 17 Apr. 1679 and 12 June 1679, in *Letters of the Honorable Algernon Sydney to the Honorable Henry Savile, Ambassador in France* (1742), pp. 25, 76.
[91] James Macphearson, *The Life of James the Second*, (2 vols, 1775), I, 110-111.
[92] Burnet, *History*, II, 206.

reluctant to promote Halifax to Privy Council in 1679 perhaps because of Halifax's tendency to make remarks sceptical of hereditary succession – mocking those 'who would hire a coachman because his father was a good coachman'.[93] The strongest criticism of Halifax as a republican came from James, Duke of York who at various times described Halifax as a republican and an atheist. In 1679 he lobbied hard against Halifax's promotion – discussing the triumvirate of Halifax, Essex and Sunderland he wrote that he regarded the 'first as one that does not love monarchy as it is in England' and 'the most dangerous man in the land'.[94] His letters to William of Orange warned darkly that Halifax was seeking to make him a 'Duke of Venice', and that Limitations were 'a thing so prejudicial to all the royal family … [that it] would draw after it the ruin of the Monarchy'.[95] Burnet recorded the Duke 'spake to me often of him [Halifax], as a man yt in his heart hated all kingly Government'.[96] Other responses to the *Character of a Trimmer* made similar allegations. One considered it to be a tract by a radical Whig who 'will make no Scruple of lending his Vote to a Bill of Exclusion'.[97] Halifax was close to republicans, accused of holding such views himself, and his writing justified those claims.

2. Republican themes in Halifax's writing

This section will look at a number of themes within republican writing and how Halifax dealt with them. In particular it considers his analysis of how the decay of virtue led to the corruption of public office and thus how he used his reading, particularly of Tacitus, to condemn – though in slightly coded language – Charles II and his court, and rejected patriarchal theory in a manner similar to both Henry Neville and Algernon Sidney.

[93] Burnet, *History*, II, 205.
[94] James, Duke of York to Colonel Legge, 22 June 1679, in *HMC Dartmouth*, (1887), I, 36.
[95] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, p. 115.
[96] Burnet, 'Manuscript History'.
[97] David Wykes and B. D. Greenslade, '"The Trimmers Character": A Further Reply to Halifax', *HLQ*, 35:3 (1972), 208.

Studied for politics: How Halifax read his Tacitus[98]

Halifax was almost obsessively concerned with the decay of virtue and enveloping corruption so that *Character of a Trimmer* is filled with references to Nero, Caligula, and Julian the Apostate as examples of monarchs with corrupt courts. Such corruption led to changes that were partly moral – 'the original gentleman is almost lost'; partly institutional - 'where there is need of money Banquers must rule all'; and partly concern over a professionalised military. These elements undermined what Halifax considered to be the main pillar of the English constitution, 'which is, first, the Nobleman: live great, have interest and Command, breed himselfe either for Warre, or Councels; of the Great Councel alwayes'.[99] This combined decay of virtue – sometimes spelled by Halifax in a military context as 'vertue' – resulted in a lessening of checks on corruption and ultimately the risk of the growth of slavery. In analysing this concern of Halifax's it is necessary to consider both how he reached his conclusions and how his reading impacted his writing.

Trajano Boccalini's *Advertisements for Parnassus* (1612-13), a copy of which Halifax owned, takes the form of a dialogue between various Italian philosophers and Apollo. At one point 'an eminent virtuoso' gave 'an elegant oration in praise of the present age'. The speaker was received 'very coldly' by Apollo, who gave him 'a pair of excellent spectacles' made by Tacitus. Wearing his gift, the orator was subsequently able to see corruption and 'base contrivances' everywhere in the present.[100] Halifax used Tacitus in a similar fashion, as a useful tool to reveal the corruption in contemporary England. Halifax possessed a number of editions of Tacitus as well as commentaries by Justus Lipsius and Christopher Forstner (in

[98] See Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, '"Studied for Action": How Gabriel Hervey Read His Livy', *P&P*, 129 (1990), 30-78.
[99] Brown, II, 86.
[100] Quoted in Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought. Volume 1: The Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 168.

Latin) Scipione Ammirato and Fabio Frezza (in Italian) and Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt and Amelot de la Houssaye (in French) and his distant relative Henry Savile's English version.

However, 'it was not a simple thing to understand what political lessons were to be derived from his (Tacitus) work'.[101] Paul Seaward distinguishes two main readings of Tacitus. He suggests that the conventional interpretation showed how easily and quickly monarchy could turn to corruption and vice and that the circle around Ben Jonson in the early seventeenth century adopted such a reading. On the other hand he argues that Clarendon did not share that 'somewhat hysterical' reading.[102] Nevertheless Clarendon on the whole adopted a 'Tacitean' approach to his depiction of the opponents of Charles I particularly in his character sketches where he emphasised the dissimulation practised by among others Sir Henry Vane and Cromwell. In his reading of Charles I, though, Clarendon adopted a more nuanced approach. He 'avoids… ascribing to the king the arts of dissimulation and deceit… [and] regards them as essentially antithetical to the values and procedures that should be central to royal government.'[103]

Amelot's works – 'the most striking example of the Lipsian tradition' in the late seventeenth century – sought to give the reader a useful, practical, and subversive guide to seventeenth-century politics.[104] Claiming that many contemporary works of history and politics (such as Machiavelli and Sarpi) were 'Tacitean', he took

> works of critical history and political sociology and re-presented them with his prefaces, notes and commentaries, all of which "helped" the reader use these books to criticize royal despotism. Authors such as Tacitus, who had been a staple of absolutist historical culture, were now presented as tools of subversion.[105]

[101] Paul Seaward, 'Clarendon, Tacitism and the Civil Wars of Europe', *HLQ*, 68:1-2, (2005), 310.
[102] Seaward, 'Clarendon, Tacitism' 291.
[103] Seaward, 'Clarendon, Tacitism', 309.
[104] Jacob Soll, 'Amelot de la Houssaye (1634-1706) Annotates Tacitus', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 61:2 (2000), 169.
[105] Jacob Soll, *Publishing the Prince: History, Reading, and the Birth of Political Criticism* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2005), p. 8.

Amelot's deeply politicised rendering of Tacitus was a safe means to condemn his own government. He 'must have felt some satisfaction', claims his biographer, 'at having managed to legally publish an attack on monarchical tyranny in Louis XIV's Paris without state retribution'.[106]

Halifax's interest in Tacitist thought was highly active, through his connection to his cousin Wentworth Dillon, earl of Roscommon.[107] Partial manuscript notes for a biography made by Roscommon's friend and dean of Gloucester Knightley Chetwood record Halifax's participation in a 'sort of Academy, in imitation of Caen', focussed on translating classics that the earl established. Other participants included Richard Maitland (later duke of Lauderdale), the earl of Dorset, Lord Cavendish (later duke of Devonshire), Sir Charles Scarborough, Heneage Finch and John Dryden. Chetwood wrote that the 'Marquess of H:, … undertook the Translation of Tacitus, an author perfectly suited to his tast. He carried it on a good way, & corrected a great many mistakes in the Version of Mr Ablancourt'.[108] Though Roscommon, an ally of the Duke of York, did not share Halifax's politics, it seems reasonable to conclude that at roughly the same time he wrote *Character of a Trimmer*, he was involved in close study of the historian most to his 'tast', Tacitus.[109] One additional point is worth making. Perrot d'Ablancourt (1606-1664), was 'the Academician and ally of Richelieu … the only other [from Amelot] French translator of Tacitus who published [posthumously] between 1680 and 1700'.[110] Halifax's corrections of Ablancourt may reflect his preference for the style of Amelot, who used his Tacitus translations to insert significant

[106] Ibid., p. 79.
[107] Carl Niemeyer, 'The Earl of Roscommon's Academy', *Modern Language Notes,* 49:7 (1934), 436.
[108] Greg Cingham, 'Knightly Chetwood's "A Short Account of Some Passages of the Life & Death of Wentworth Late Earle of Roscommon": A Transcription and Introduction', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700,* 25:2 (2001), 117-38.
[109] Gillespie dates the Academy from 1682. Stuart Gillespie, 'Dillon, Wentworth, Fourth earl of Roscommon (1637-1685)', *ODNB*. Barclay suggests it did not exist until at least early-1684. Andrew Barclay, 'Dating Roscommon's Academy', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture 1660-1700*, 26:2 (2002), 119-26.
[110] Soll, 'Amelot de la Houssaye', 173.

textual commentary, and criticised d'Ablancourt as a mere 'Grammarian', rather than a 'Statesman'. Certainly it seems likely that Halifax would have agreed with Amelot that a useful reading of Tacitus would highlight the 'Maxims of State, which abound in the original text'.[111]

Halifax viewed Tacitus as the best historian for use in analysing politics. Thus, he wrote that 'Tacitus is the finest Libell that ever was writ, and is of more use and instruction, than the most Regular History that ever came into the world'. Unlike histories which sought to impart moral lessons, he argued that what 'deserveth most to bee commended, that is most usefull, so that if wee may profit more by Tacitus than wee can by Livy, Wee are ungratefull if wee do not give the preference to the first'.[112] Halifax's use of 'Libell' does not imply that he believed Tacitus's histories to be untrue, but rather that they were damning (and accurate) indictments of the corruption of weak and tyrannical rulers and the consequences they had on their people. Thus when discussing the selection of ministers, he wrote 'There is not a stronger libell against a Prince than a favourite without merit … Every grace hee doth him, is publishing a new libell against himselfe'.[113] Similarly the existence of laws:

> are so many Libels against mankind, by shewing they have need of them, to keep them within the bounds of Common Justice … Multiplication of Lawes is an undesirable evidence of the World's growing worse … New Chaines made in every age to ty up the beast Mankind.[114]

History could be of use to a politician, but to be so it had to 'libel' corruption, in order to provide a means for him to recognise and combat it in a contemporary setting. In his preference for Tacitus over Livy Halifax followed in the footsteps of many seventeenth-century writers. Bradford argues that defenders of Tacitus valued him, because unlike other

[111] Ibid., p. 175.
[112] Brown, III, 368.
[113] Brown, III, 353.
[114] Brown, III, 382.

histories his writing, though 'unpleasant and sorrowful', according to Lipsius, acted as a realistic instruction on politics.[115] Halifax thus admired Tacitus's cynical depiction of the corruption of Imperial Rome, over those 'Historians [who] are almost as well pleased in writing a great action, as the Hero was in doing it; for this reason those who are too sincere to invent, are apt to improove a tale in the telling it'.[116]

Halifax's writings contain numerous direct references to passages from Tacitus. Thus the *Annals'* depiction of Tiberius seeking to dissemble and hide his weaknesses were analogous to seventeenth-century England. 'The highest panegyricks of great men were not writ by those who were nearest them. Cromwell, &c. *Cui semper major ex longinquo reverentia*'.[117] Similarly, the ministerial corruption engendered by Tiberius, in his reluctance to alter governors or generals is depicted as similar to the unease with which Princes discarded long-serving ministers.[118]

Character of King Charles the Second

Halifax used his fondness for Tacitean history most obviously in his *Character of King Charles the Second*. Brown suggests the work, written between 1685 and 1695, and first published in Pope's edition of 1750, acted as a form of private speculation from Halifax, possibly in response to the earl of Mulgrave's character sketch of Charles, which circulated in manuscript from late-1685.[119] Although, unlike others, Halifax did not directly compare Charles to Tiberius, the implication was obvious. The monarch was satirised as weak, immoral, and spreading corruption throughout his court. His excessive use of dissimulation was particularly criticised, for while 'it is a Defect not to have it at all, and a fault to have it

[115] Alan T. Bradford, 'Stuart Absolutism and the "Utility" of Tacitus', *HLQ*, 46:2 (1983), 129.
[116] Brown, III, 368.
[117] Brown, III, 98.
[118] Brown, II, 208.
[119] Brown, II, 438-44.

too much', Charles, Halifax claimed, had far too much. Learning the art from his time in France, the monarch's untrustworthiness was so obvious that seasoned observers ceased to believe him. Such behaviour corrupted his ministers, who 'compared Notes, and got Evidence; so that those whose Morality would give them leave, took it for an Excuse for serving him ill'.[120] Halifax's call for moderate use of dissimulation mirrored European Tacitists like Lipsius. In the epoch one historian has described as 'the age of dissimulation', the practice was considered justified if used by princes as a form of self-defence but was not so frequent that others saw through it.[121] The excessive use of secrecy by Charles thus removed him from the ranks of rulers legitimately using reason-of-state, instead becoming a tool for corruption. As Leira argues, the Tacitist understanding of dissimulation was strictly limited, as 'the only thing that could legitimate immoral behaviour is the interest of the commonwealth'.[122] By Charles dissimulating excessively, and doing so to avoid responsibilities of government, he behaved not like a prudential European ruler, but a weak tyrant in the model of Tiberius.

Instead of a monarch with limited powers, leading through example and honesty and trusting the council of his great nobles, Charles was both tyrannical and weak. Halifax blamed Charles's immorality as well as his dissimulation, for corrupting the governance of England. Factional rivalry with the duchess of Portsmouth, an ally of James and Sunderland, in the 1680s helped weaken Halifax's influence at court and prevented the realisation of an anti-French foreign policy.[123] Thus Halifax wrote of how 'Her Chamber was the true Cabinet

[120] Brown, II, 489-90.
[121] Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying. Dissimulation, Persecution and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Harvard, Mass, 1990), 330; Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley, California, 2009), p. 128.
[122] Halyard Leira, 'Justus Lipsius, Political Humanism and the Disciplining of 17th Century Statecraft', *Review of International Studies*, 34:4 (2008), 683.
[123] See J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, 1641-1702* (1958), pp. 80-108.

Council … to have the Secrets of a King, who happens to have too many, is to have the King in chains'.[124] For a King to be imprisoned by a chief minister was a failing; for him to be so because of the influence of a mistress was worse. As he wrote, 'The Present Mistresse must bee sole Minister, till the warmth is stayed'.[125] Contemporaries were aware both of Portsmouth's influence at court and Halifax's cold fury at her power. His client Reresby was obsessed by the woman who was almost an English equivalent of a 'maitresse-en-titre'. Meanwhile reports in 1681 state how Halifax was required 'by ye King's positive command' to attend him 'in her [Portsmouth's] lodging, wch formerly he never would'.[126] Halifax thus depicted the monarch as subverting the government of England through his weakness for his mistresses. While some historians have claimed that Charles's mistresses were part of a conscious strategy to cement the monarchy's appeal, Halifax was not among those enthralled by the restored monarch's personification of 'a new politics of pleasure'.[127] Indeed, the evidence of his writing and politics suggests that he would have fully agreed with the group identified by Harris who regarded royal mistresses as a popish fifth-column promoting depravity at court, and blamed them for financial problems.[128]

The King's faults, argued Halifax, came from a 'Love of Ease … an Opiate'.[129] Thus he took mistresses in part to have an excuse not to be disturbed, and when he empowered single

[124] Brown, II, 492.
[125] Brown, II, 211.
[126] Nancy Klein Maguire, 'The Duchess of Portsmouth: English Royal Consort and French Politician, 1670-85', in Robert Malcolm Smuts (ed.), *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 258-61.
[127] Kevin Sharpe, '"Thy Longing Country's Darling and Desire": Aesthetics, Sex, and Politics in the England of Charles II', in Catherine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander (eds), *Politics, Transgression, and Representation at the Court of Charles II* (2007), p. 18.
[128] Tim Harris, '"There is none that loves him but drunk whores and whoremongers": Popular Criticism at the Restoration Court', in MacLeod and Alexander, (eds), *Politics, Transgression and Representation*, pp. 40-43. And for a discussion of the planned Winchester whose backstairs would have facilitated the passage of mistresses and other shady operatives, see Simon Thurley, 'A Country Seat Fit for a King: Charles II, Greenwich and Winchester' in Eveline Cruickshanks (ed.), *The Stuart Courts* (Stroud, 2009), pp. 214–39.
[129] Brown, II, 502.

ministers 'he chose rather to be eclipsed than to be troubled'.[130] The disordered court neglected the interests of the nation, and permitted a situation where 'Charles Stuart would be bribed against the King'. Central to this process was the subversion of correct forms of governance and counsel. In Portsmouth's private chambers lay the real cabinet council, while Charles used 'his Back-Stairs to admit Men to bribe him against himself'.[131] The backstairs referred to the rooms of William Chiffinch (1602-1688), closet-keeper to the King, whose rooms near to Charles were used as a means to supply the King both with informants and prostitutes.[132] Of relatively low social status, Chiffinch's ability to give access to the King meant that he received both bribes and deference from his notional social superiors, something 'which Algernon Sidney later condemned as one further symptom of an ill-regulated commonwealth'.[133] Sidney connected sexual immorality to the rise to power of unvirtuous ministers, and unvirtuous ministers to the undermining of parliament. It was, he wrote, impossible for 'H-de, Cl--f—d, F-lm--th, Arl-ng--n and D-nby … [to obtain] the chief places, if the disposal of them had bin in a free and well-regulated Parliament'.[134] Similarly, he asked 'what place Chiffinch, F-x and Jenkins, could probably have attained, if our Affairs had bin regulated as good men desire?'. It would not be possible for corruption and 'Flatterers' to succeed if under 'the severe Scrutinys of a Senat or People'. This fact explained 'why the worst men have ever bin for Absolute Monarchy, and the best against it'.[135] Thus for both Sidney and his nephew, Halifax the personal immorality of monarchs not only bred corruption but also undermined proper government which included parliament.

[130] Brown, II, 494.
[131] Brown, II, 499.
[132] David Allen, 'The Political Function of Charles II's Chiffinch', *HLQ*, 39:3 (1976), 280-2.
[133] Ibid., 288-90.
[134] Algernon Sidney, *Discourses Concerning Government* (1704), p. 135.
[135] Ibid., p. 136.

Halifax's reading of the classics was central to both his political thought and his behaviour as a politician. However, unlike Gabriel Hervey he did not seek Livy to provide uplifting and moralising rhetoric on the greatness of certain actions.[136] Instead he preferred the realism of Tacitus whose unflattering portrayals of court life he saw mirrored in contemporary England. Rather than embrace an amoral or absolutist view of politics, however, he maintained that virtue, though diminishing, could be restored. With the active leadership of a virtuous king, constrained by law to follow the counsel of great men, he felt and hoped corruption could be overcome.

Patriarchy

The prime exponent of a patriarchal theory of government was Robert Filmer, whose *Patriarcha* was published in 1680 (though probably written before 1631).[137] Patriarchalists argued that given societies descended from family units, every human with the exception of Adam had been under the continual authority of a father-figure. Furthermore there was no 'inherent difference between familial and political rule'.[138] The implication of this, as Schochet noted, was to refute contractual arguments: 'authority was therefore natural, not conventional; men had not created the state and were therefore powerless to change or control it'.[139] As Filmer himself put it:

> the dispersion of nations over the world after the confusion of Babel, was by entire families over which the fathers were kings; and from them all kings are descended; all kings are either fathers of their people, or heirs of such fathers or usurpers of the right of such fathers.[140]

In the English context, this meant that the King had absolute authority over Parliament, which was a relatively recent grant.

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[136] Jardine and Anthony, '"Studied for Action", 73.
[137] Glenn Burgess, 'Filmer, Sir Robert', *ODNB*.
[138] Gordon J. Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought. The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1975), p. 56.
[139] Ibid., p. 55.
[140] Robert Filmer, 'Patriarcha', in J. P. Somerville (ed.), *Sir Robert Filmer: Patriarcha and Other Writings* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 2.

Henry Neville, who was with Halifax shortly before completing *Plato Redivivus,*[141] did not subscribe to the patriarchal theory of government espoused by Filmer and indeed Mahlberg considers that 'neo-Harringtonian' is a misleading term to describe Neville's politics, which she prefers to see as dominated by anti-patriarchalism. The English republicans typified by Neville 'were against tyranny, not monarchy'. Indeed, she argues the man who had been an MP from 1649-53 and 1659-60 was shaped by his 'first-hand experience of politics … [which accounts] for his political pragmatism and flexibility and the willingness to collaborate with non-ideal governments to achieve change from within'.[142] As Neville wrote in *Plato Redivivus*, patriarchal theory is not 'worth the taking notice of … if we could trace all Foundations of Polities that now are, … we shall find none of them to have descended from Paternal Power'.[143] Nor was Neville the only republican who rejected Filmer's theorizing, it was a key focus for Locke and Sidney also.

Halifax's refusal to adopt patriarchal theory makes his writing similar to that of Henry Neville. Had Halifax been seeking to persuade a court dominated by Tories he would surely have deployed some instance of the benefits of patriarchy perhaps advocating the king's summoning of a Parliament in the same way that a father would forgive his children. But the only instance in the *Trimmer* of the idea of a father of the nation was criticism of Cromwell for putting his own interest above that of the nation in supporting France against Spain: '[s]uch a method was natural enough to an Usurper, and shewed he was not the lawfull Father of the people by his having so little care of them'[144] The implicit point that Halifax is making is that by failing to maintain a balance of power between France and the Netherlands Charles is also no father of the people.

[141] Nicholas von Maltzahn, 'Neville, Henry', *ODNB*.
[142] Gaby Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture*, pp. 2-4.
[143] Henry Neville, *Plato Redivivus* (1680), p. 31
[144] Brown, II, 225.

Indeed Halifax's rejection of patriarchal theory was one of the ways in which *Character of a Trimmer* came under attack. Mulgrave's *Character of a Tory* repeatedly hammers home the notion of patriarchal power and the king as a father figure. Mulgrave rejects the claim that the king should seek to reconcile with parliament 'since things must needs continue thus, 'till one side a little submits, is it hard to determine which should first yield; the Children, or the Father? the Subjects, or the Sovereign? the Parliament, or the King?'[145] Ultimately Mulgrave argues that the authority of the king, like the authority of a father should triumph. Halifax's absence of analogies to the monarch as father figure in *Character of a Trimmer* is matched by his scepticism of the concept in his unpublished writings. He writes, for example,

> Between all men there is a mutual tho' an unequall right: fathers, husbands, Princes, &c. Rights of Princes, as well as the Libertys of the people, are best preserved, when least inquired into. Even paternal right is forfeited by being unnatural.

Similarly:

> The power given by the law to fathers over their children is founded upon a supposition that they cannot be so unnatural, as to abuse it. The law thought it safe to trust, where a man must renounce nature at the same time that he deceives his own children. The law is not answerable for the corruption of nature in particular instances, if the generall rule is well grounded.[146]

Halifax comes even closer to explicitly rejecting patriarchal theory when he states

> The people will bee apt to alleadge it is at least as reasonable that liberty should bee unalienable, as that hereditary oppression can bee entayled, &c. To make a people their patrimony and not a trust is making the people beasts, or the Princes Gods.[147]

As previously discussed Neville's connections with Halifax have not been fully explored by historians because of the attribution of *Observations* to Halifax. But Neville's *Plato Redivivus* is recognised as the most 'republican' justification for limitations on the power of a

[145] John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, 'Character of a Tory', in *The Works of John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, Marquis of Normanby, and Duke of Buckingham* (2 vols, 1729), I, 60.
[146] Brown, III, 251, 120.
[147] Brown, II, 36.

monarch, albeit for all monarchs. In fact, as the next section will demonstrate there are striking similarities between *Plato* and Halifax's works.

3. Limitations

Halifax had profound concerns that the Crown was either breaking or stretching laws to their limit, with figures at Court seeking to reject theories of an ancient constitution, and argue that parliament and the common law were grants from the Crown, rather than fundamental rights.[148] He had four areas of objection at the time of writing: the failure to summon a parliament in contravention of the Triennial Act, the promotion of Jeffreys to the Cabinet Council, the extension of royal government to Massachusetts, and the appointment of the Catholic Justin Maccarty, to the Irish army in December 1684.[149] The English laws were, he claimed, in an echo of Montaigne, 'the 'Chaines that tye up our unruly passions, which else like wild beasts let loose, would reduce the world into its first state of Barbarisme and Hostillity'.[150] Crucially, he again sought to claim that Charles's interest would be best followed by limiting the use of his prerogative, enforcing anti-Catholic legislation, and calling parliament. A king who was aware of the need 'to prevent the temptations arising from common frailty', would be better able to preserve his power by limiting it, as 'Chaines of Gold' would prevent the monarch from acting against reason or the 'Universal Opinion' of his subjects.[151] Halifax considers that 'Our Laws make a true distinction betweene Vassalage and Obedience, between a devouring prerogative, and a Licentious ungovernable freedom'.[152]

Though Halifax seeks to argue that the 'Trimmer' would best preserve royal power, he nevertheless makes analogies to other law-breaking rulers that suggest the pamphlet was

[148] See J. G. A. Pocock, 'Robert Brady, 1627-1700. A Cambridge Historian of the Restoration', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 10:2 (1951), 186-204.
[149] Brown, I, 53.
[150] Ibid., p. 180.
[151] Ibid., p. 187.
[152] Brown, I, 194.

aimed at more than merely convincing Anglicans at Court. Thus a monarch who seeks to expand his power, as Louis XIV did, is alluded to as the epitome of bestiality and unreason. He was depicted 'gazing amongst his flatterers, like a Child never contradicted … Condemned never to heare truth, and consequently never to do Justice'. Rather than a 'Sun King', 'by aiming to be more than a man, he becometh a Beast; A mistaken Creature swelled with Panegyriques, and flattered out of his sences … An ambitious Ape of the Divine greatnesse … a wild beast in rich trappings' who was destined for Hell.[153] In a similarly provocative analogy, he observed that history showed that lack of observance to law led to a situation where 'it was as capitall for a man to say Nero did not play well on the Lute, as to commit Treason or Blaspheme the Gods'.[154] While not explicitly describing Charles's behaviour as tyrannical, he accused the Tory high-flyers who encouraged absolutist behaviour as treating him like a Roman emperor, hoping 'their flattery would make him beleive, that they paid divine worship to him'.[155]

The interpretation of Tacitus popularised by Ben Jonson and the 1st Earl of Essex, that 'the propensity of a monarch to listen to evil counsellors was a manifestation of a weak tyranny, characteristic of a ruler who was dominated by will and passion rather than concern for the public good',[156] is echoed in Halifax's portrayal of a monarch who descends into sensuality, and devolves power to corrupt ministers, hinted at in *Character of a Trimmer*, and given more explicit colouring in 'Character of King Charles'. Like Essex, Halifax accepted that history could aid a politician, 'that deserveth most to bee commended, that is most usefull'. The historian he had in mind was, of course, Tacitus and he also accepted Jonson's depiction of Sejanus, derived from Tacitus, in *Sejanus His Fall* where the protagonist is introduced as a

[153] Ibid., p. 196.
[154] Ibid., p. 186.
[155] Ibid., p. 240.
[156] Alexandra Gajda, *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford, 2012), p. 22.

powerful minister enriching himself through the sale of offices.[157] Halifax drew parallels with Charles deciding to empower chief ministers so as to give himself ease. 'A Sole Minister', he wrote, 'Getteth his thoughts to the top of the house and hee neither will nor perhaps can get them down againe'. The marginal note made by Halifax did not reference Rochester, Sunderland or Danby, but 'Sejan[us]'.[158]

The fact that *Character of a Trimmer* praised English laws would not have alienated many in Charles's court. Absolutism was not a doctrine of lawlessness, and Harris notes 'a significant legal-constitutionalist dimension to royalist thought' in the reign of Charles, with most Tories unwilling to embrace institutions like a standing army which could enable the monarchy to rule without Parliament. Yet his definition of Tory, encompassing both the absolutist and 'legal-constitutionalist' varieties, is individuals 'who opposed the exclusion of the Duke of York and defended the principle of hereditary succession'.[159] While Halifax fit the first of these criteria, he did not the second. His scepticism of the value of hereditary right as described by Burnet - 'Who takes a coachman to drive him, because his father was a good coachman'[160] was well known, while the Limitations he proposed to the Exclusion Crisis would have drastically curtailed James's inheritance. As Scott points out, his opposition to Exclusion was not 'moderate' in a traditional sense, because, 'Halifax was less "radical": it was Shaftesbury who inveighed against Halifax's Limitations scheme "as much more prejudicial to the crown, then the Exclusion of one heir"'.[161] While he could engage in a legal discourse with 'rule of law Tories' such as Mulgrave, he did not share a fundamental tenet of the latter's thought.

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[157] Blair Worden, 'Ben Jonson Among the Historians' in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, (Basingstoke, 1994), p. 85.
[158] Brown, II, 186.
[159] Tim Harris, 'Tories and the Rule of Law in the Reign of Charles II', *Seventeenth Century*, 8:1 (1993), 9-11.
[160] Burnet, *History*, II, 205.
[161] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, p. 139.

When discussing whether England should be a monarchy Halifax's arguments – even when writing for an audience at court – are strikingly reluctant. 'Monarchy is a thing which leaveth men no Liberty, and a Commonwealth such a one as alloweth them no quiet … [England is] a wise mean between these Barbarous Extreams'[162]. Indeed sometimes they verge on the satirical, the Trimmer seeming to argue that the main reasons for England to have a king are the stupidity of its people and the lack of virtue in its gentry and aristocrats. Thus, a benefit of kings is that they are 'liked by the People for the bells and the Tinsell, the outward Pomp and the guilding, and there must be milk for Babes, since the greater part of mankind are, and ever will be included in that List'.[163]

Moreover he argues that England lacked the crucial republican preliminaries of virtue and morality, making 'Republican Schemes… no more than dreams'.[164] For:

> Rules of a Common-wealth are too hard for the Bulke of Mankind to come up to; that forme of Government requireth such a spiritt to carry it on, as doth not dwell in great numbers, but is restrained to so very few, especially in this age, that let the methods appeare never so reasonable in Paper, they must faile in Practice.[165]

Character of a Trimmer (and *Rough Draught)* note the moral failings that would undermine a commonwealth and then list how morality and virtue could be increased, thus presumably fulfilling the preliminaries of a republic. In the former it is by the moral example of a monarch who follows laws limiting his power, and in *Rough Draught* by encouraging volunteer military service by the aristocracy. In many ways this is similar to Neville's explanation in *Plato Redivivus* where the English gentleman declares his nation:

> not Ripe yet for any great Reform; not only because we are a very Debauch'd People; I do not only mean that we are given to Whoreing, Drinking, Gameing and Idleness;

[162] Brown, I, 184.
[163] Brown, I, 185.
[164] Brown, I, 303
[165] Ibid., p. 185.

> but chiefly that we have a Politique Debauch, which is a neglect of all things that concern the publick wellfare, and a setting up our own private Interest against it…[166]

Halifax could have written a political pamphlet intended to convince readers merely of the desirability of a new parliament, of an anti-French foreign policy, and of a relaxation of laws targeting Protestant dissent without discussions of constitutional theory. The fact that he chose to include such a half-hearted defence of monarchy and accounts of the corruption and lawlessness of Nero and Louis XIV means it is therefore necessary to regard the *Character of a Trimmer* as more of a statement of Halifax's republican leanings than has previously been accepted. For example, Mulgrave's account of 'A Character of a Tory', written in response to Halifax, makes a far simpler justification of monarchy in England – it has been long established in England, and divine law mandates obedience to rulers and parents. Indeed, comparing the two texts it is striking that the frequent use of patriarchal language by Mulgrave is almost totally absent in Halifax. Thus, the former rejects the claim that the king should seek to reconcile with parliament by declaring that in a struggle between the two the king should prevail.

Responding to the claim of the Trimmer to be unfairly attacked for his moderation, Mulgrave posed the question:

> Suppose a father or master finds himself oppress'd by any sort of ill usage, and accordingly implores the help of his children or servants, who yet all the while stand careless by with a most provoking indifference, rather seeming to insult over his need of their assistance, than eager to relieve him by it.[167]

It was therefore Tories who were the real moderates, whereas trimmers merely were 'these luke-warm friends, these infamous servants, these unnatural children', displaying 'unworthy and unnatural coldness'. Even if our father were in the wrong in a dispute, concludes Mulgrave, we would still be obligated to support him.[168]

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[166] Neville, *Plato Redivivus*, p. 282.
[167] Mulgrave, 'Character of a Tory', 63.
[168] Ibid., 63-5.

The virtuously limited monarch

In *Character of Trimmer* Halifax suggests that a monarch, by accepting greater legal limitations on crown power, and a greater role for Parliament, could follow the example of Lycurgus so that safety would come from uniting the monarch's interest with that of the nation, while glory would be derived from acting as a virtuous example. Rejecting the idea that the Tory Reaction could instil fear without generating hatred, and therefore ultimately rebellion, Halifax argued that his counsel was the most effective at avoiding war. History, he wrote, showed that the Pretorian Guards ultimately overthrew the emperors who created them to secure their power.[169] Machiavelli justified his claim on the grounds that most men 'are unthankfull, unconstant, dissemblers, they avoyd dangers, and are covetous of gaine … when it [danger] approaches, they revolt'.[170] Halifax, on the other hand, argued that a Prince could, by granting liberty to his subjects and acting as an example, spark a revival of national virtue that would once again allow the prioritisation of the public interest. Charles should follow Lycurgus of Sparta, whose 'example was a better Law, than he could with all his skill tell how to make'.[171] Halifax hammers this point home throughout *Character of a Trimmer*: the king could avoid rebellion if he 'by the irresistible power of his vertue, doth so reconcile dominion and allegiance, that all disputes between them are silenced and subdued'. Glory would be best secured through a king's goodness, rather than 'borrow[ing] an authority from dark Records raised out of the grave, which besides their non usage, have alwayes in them matter of Controversie and debate'.[172] Thus while Louis XIV was the bestial, unreasoning Prince who showed his Machiavellian qualities by thinking 'fitt for his own creditt to give at least an outward, when he refuseth a reall Worship to the Laws', Charles could be a virtuous

[169] Brown, I, 189.
[170] Machiavelli, *Nicholas Machiavel's Prince*, p. 130.
[171] Brown, I, 185
[172] Brown, I, 186.

ruler acting in his nation's interest.[173] The rhetoric of a King holding power best by ruling through virtue and strictly confined by laws has typically been associated with the Commonwealthsmen of the post-Revolution period. Yet Halifax and Neville were using this language before the post-revolutionary period saw the emergence of calls for a 'Patriot King'.[174]

Halifax argued that royal power would be enhanced, rather than reduced, by reconciling with parliament. Firstly, he argued, a failure to follow law would act as justification for the people to break it themselves. Instead, if the king agreed to 'consult with his Physitians in Parliament' he could heal divisions.[175] Moreover, while the King should seek to obtain 'Political Omnipotence',

> this cannot be attained by force upon the people, let it be never so great; there must be their Consent too … Whereas the virtuall Consent of the whole being included in their Representatives, and the King giving the sanction to the united sence of the people, every Act done by such an Authority seemeth to be an effect of their choice, as well as a part of their Duty…[176]

The final means by which Halifax sought to argue that national unity and stability could be obtained through the monarch lessening his powers, thus increasing his glory, was to urge the king to lead by example rather than coercion. In an obvious inversion of chapter 17 of *The Prince* he wrote

> he who feareth a King only because he can punish, must wish there were no King; so that without a Principle of Love there can be no true Allegiance, and there must remaine perpetual seeds of Resistance against a Power which is built upon such an unnatural foundation as that of fear and Terrour.[177]

By claiming that the King would be made more secure by accepting a reduction in his power Halifax makes arguments that almost directly parallel those of Neville. When in *Plato*

[173] Brown, I, 181.
[174] Jonathan Duke-Evans, 'The Political Theory and Practice of the English Commonwealthsmen, 1695-1725', (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1980), p. 90.
[175] Brown, I, 197.
[176] Brown, I, 197.
[177] Brown, I, 188.

Redivivus a character asks why war should not be declared on the king to force him to accept Limitations, he is told:

> This Remedy will be either none, or worse than the Disease. … [a military dictator could seize power] And in this corrupt Age, it is ten to one, he will rather do Hurt than Good with the Power he acquires. But because you ask me how we would perswade the King to this? I answer, by the Parliament's humbly Remonstrating to His Majesty, that it is in his own Interest, Preservation, Quiet and true Greatness, to put an end to the Distractions of his Subjects, and that it cannot be done any other way…[178]

The claim that forcing the issue of Exclusion would cause a catastrophic civil war was central to Halifax's objections to the bill in 1680. And while Neville's pamphlet suggested parliament tell the King his power would be enhanced by accepting limitations on his power, Halifax's pamphlet makes almost identical claims. A Tory attack on Neville summarised his position as: 'he disapproves a Civil War only because he doubts the success: He beseeches the King therefore that he would be graciously pleased to lay down his Imperial Crown: Tells him it will make himself Glorious, and his People happy'.[179] Finally, where the *Character of a Trimmer* declares that a prince whose virtue inspired his people would be more absolute than one who ruled through fear, Neville states: 'a Prince who is a lover of his Country, who is Gracious, Wise and Just … shall be ten times more absolute when this Regulation is made, than ever he was or could be before'.[180]

Though Halifax and Neville differed on their precise ideal constitution, the two men shared notable similarities. While republicanism might be an ideal political settlement, in England it was impossible, and to seek to secure it by force would be counter-productive. Patriarchalism was a ridiculous theory, but the idea of a monarchy was deeply embedded in the psyche of the English. Therefore the sensible English republican needed to convince the King himself that it was in his interest, and accorded with the principles of reason, to cease seeking to

[178] Neville, *Plato Redivivus*, p. 219.
[179] Thomas Goddard, *Plato's Demon* (1684), p. 219.
[180] Neville, *Plato Redivivus*, pp. 248-49.

dominate his people, and revert to being a patriotic *primus inter pares*, leading his people by example and virtue rather than power. Goddard, the Tory critic of Neville, declared that his intention was to 'unmask our Republican Daemon, & shew no less his horrid Claws, than his Cloven-feet'.[181] Without his vitriol, this chapter argues for the same reading of the *Character of a Trimmer*.

The Limitations Proposal

The Exclusion Crisis gave Halifax an opportunity to propose measures that would drastically curtail the powers of a Catholic successor, and confer powers on parliament that would (royalists feared) not be returned to a Protestant monarch after James's death. On 29 November 1680 the Bill for Securing the Protestant Religion was introduced in the House of Lords. It provided that on Charles's death Parliament, whether sitting or prorogued, should meet immediately and continuously sit for six months. If Parliament was dissolved then the members of the previous Parliament should do likewise, at Westminster 'or at any other place to which they shall think fit to adjourn themselves'. Following this the bill required that any vacant ecclesiastical benefices should be conferred by Parliament on 'the most pious and learned Protestants'. James, should he become King, would be prevented from using the negative voice or disposing of:

> any offices, civil, ecclesiastical, or military, from raising any forces of sea or land within England or Ireland without consent of both Houses of Parliament. And in case any place in the Privy Council or any offices belonging to the Militia, Admiralty, etc., shall be vacant at the death of his now Majesty, the same shall be disposed of and filled up by the two Houses of Parliament…[182]

Halifax's proposals thus went far beyond merely preventing James from interfering with the Church of England. The mere existence of a royal veto to legislation had been a source of

[181] Goddard, *Plato's Demon*, p. 258.
[182] HMC *Lords*, pp. 220-222.

complaint from some republican writers, who alleged it marked the absence of freedom. As Skinner's study on neo-Roman writers has shown, they regarded a nation as being enslaved – even if the ruler did not personally behave tyrannically – 'if it is merely subject or liable to having its actions determined by the will of anyone other than the representatives of the body politic as a whole'. This could occur if the constitution 'allows for the exercise of any discretionary or prerogative powers on the part of those governing it'.[183] Halifax, whose classical education meant he 'read ye Roman Authors much and delights mightily in them', would have been well aware of this discursive claim.[184] As the 'Noble Venetian' in *Plato Redivivus* argued, the mere existence of a royal veto was incompatible with a free state:

> I have heard much talk of the king's negative voice in parliaments; which in my opinion is as much as a power to frustrate, when he pleases, all the endeavours and labours of his people, and to prevent any good that might accrue to the kingdom by having the right to meet in parliament: for certainly, if we in Venice had placed any such prerogative in our duke, or in any of our magistracies, we could not call ourselves a free people.[185]

Its removal went much further than the revolutionary settlement, which preserved the power, last used by Anne.[186] Meanwhile, preventing the monarch from altering the Privy Council or militia would have given extraordinary powers to landed nobles and gentry. The most radical part of the measure, however, concerned the consequences for a Catholic King who sought to evade the provisions of the bill. If James:

> shall raise or attempt or offer to raise any such forces without such consent of both Houses of Parliament as aforesaid, it shall and may be lawful to and for any the people of England to oppose such forces so raised and such attempts for raising the same or aforesaid, and the persons so raising such forces in this Kingdom, or introducing any foreign forces, and the officers and soldiers so raised or introduced

[183] Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*, pp. 49-51.
[184] Burnet, 'Manuscript History', f. 4.
[185] Neville, *Plato Redivivus*, p. 128.
[186] The continued use of the veto angered many supporters of the Revolution. For example, Paul Foley said of William III 'it appears not that he understands our constitution'. See James Jay Carafano, 'William III and the Negative Voice', *Albion*, 19:4 (1987), 513.

> into this Kingdom are adjudged to be levyers of War against the King and shall be incapable of pardon but by Act of Parliament.[187]

Had the bill passed, a legal right of resistance would have been enshrined, authorising opposition to the military forces assembled by a King. The measure would have transformed English politics and political theory, both for the republican figures who supported it, and the royals who viewed it with horror. It is unsurprising that many of the figures who would lay the groundwork for 'True Whiggism' after the Revolution, such as John Wildman, endorsed Halifax's Limitations plan. Merely removing a Catholic from the throne was not sufficient, and, if it installed a Protestant monarch with full prerogative powers, potentially worse. As Goldie notes, unlike the exclusionists of 1678-81, 'The commonwealthmen … adhered to the goal of limitations and perceived that if this were achieved it would barely matter which prince was on the throne'.[188]

All three of the figures discussed here were willing to endorse relatively similar political solutions and Halifax's embrace of Limitations – over either Exclusion (which would merely replace one monarch for another, as well as risk civil war) or unaltered succession – can be seen as his effort to implement republican politics in a practical setting. Until 1680 Sidney supported elements of his nephew's plans for James to succeed with the powers of the monarchy curtailed. While Sidney and Neville intended these Limitations to apply to all monarchs, Halifax's bill would have confined them to a popish successor as a politic means to seek to pass a radical measure. Burnet's history supports this view. In 1679, he reported that some close to Halifax argued 'that the limitations proposed were so advantageous to public liberty, that a man might be tempted to wish for a popish king, to come at them'.[189] In December 1680 Halifax still sought to convince Burnet that 'any limitations whatsoever that

[187] *HMC Lords,* pp. 220-222.
[188] Mark Goldie, 'The Roots of True Whiggism, 1688-94', *HistPolT,* 1:2 (1980), 206-7.
[189] Burnet, *History,* II, 206.

should leave the title of king to the duke, though it should be little more than a mere title, might be obtained of the king'.[190] This was similar to Sidney's views, for the proposal was 'as Mr. Algernon Sidney and his party thought, a gentle way of dropping the government into a commonwealth'. In contrast a bill of Exclusion would as Sidney, Neville, and – this chapter argues – Halifax all thought, merely replace one king with excessive powers with another, and possibly in the meantime provoked a civil war. Burnet, who fell out badly with Halifax after the revolution, attributed the latter's refusal to back Exclusion to his 'hatred of the earl of Shaftesbury and his vanity'. Rather it is suggested here Shaftesbury's populist demagoguery was deeply distasteful to Halifax, and counterproductive to his aims. One of the arguments against Limitations by supporters of Exclusion was that Halifax was seeking to establish a republic. Responding to royal claims that the Whigs had acted 'out of fondness of their Old Beloved Commonwealth Principles'[191], an opposition pamphlet responded:

> The fondness of old beloved Common-wealth Principles is not to be imputed to either House of Parliament or indeed to the Nation; there never was a People more desirous of their old Government and Laws, or that have shewed more duty or respect to their Prince; the Court expedient mongers were indeed settling a Republick, and I fear the change of our Government from none but the Papists; absolute Monarchy or a levelling Democracy will either serve their turn …[192]

It seems certain that the chief 'expedient monger' was Halifax. And while this may be viewed as a mere rhetorical device, Burnet's account of Exclusionist responses suggests the allegation of Halifax's republicanism was common. Shaftesbury's reason for rejecting Limitations and demanding Exclusion, was he said, because 'it was a greater Inconvenience than ye other; for where as it was said, yt ye Exclusion opened a door to make Kingdome elective, this was a total change of Government, and made it a Democracy instead of a Monarchy'.[193] Western briefly noted similarities between the proposals of Halifax and

[190] Ibid., p. 249.
[191] Charles II, *His Majesties Declaration* (1681), p. 9.
[192] *A Letter from a Person of Quality* (1681), p. 8.
[193] Burnet, 'Manuscript History', fol. 49.

Neville, stating the former's preference for Limitations was partly driven by his 'Republican inclinations'.[194] Contemporaries shared this assessment. Burnet was clear that while some justified Limitations as a moderate compromise, Halifax's republican sympathies meant he regarded it as superior to Exclusion:

> I do verily beleive Halifax was ye more set on this, because it would bring ye Prerogative so low yt it would be little more than a name. For tho he used to Rally a Successive Monarchy much … yet he liked a Successive Monarchy, better then a leap over a person only in hatred to him, by which the publick got little, since ye Crown retained still its mighty Prerogative…[195]

Thus this chapter argues that there is compelling evidence that Halifax's republican leanings have been understated and that when contemporaries accused him of republicanism it was a reasonable attack. Republican-inspired solutions could be found as much in the efforts of Halifax as radicals of Rye House. His connections to republican thinkers were significant, and influenced his thought and behaviour. Limitations could secure a republican-influenced settlement built on, and acting as an instrument for, virtue thus retaining and enhancing the power of the House of Lords, which Halifax envisioned as an English equivalent of the Roman Senate. In anticipation that Charles might summon another Parliament after 1681, *Character of a Trimmer* can be seen both as an effort to encourage the King to obey the Triennial Act, but also to advocate again for the passage of Limitations, which provided a republican solution to the Exclusion Crisis.[196]

Two major challenges can be made to this interpretation of Halifax. The first is that Halifax was merely (like many) a believer in mixed monarchy; the definition of republicanism given here is too broad, and Halifax should not be regarded as a republican. The contention of this thesis is that in practice the extent of removal of royal powers contemplated by the Bill really

[194] J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution: The English State in the 1680s* (1985), p. 37.
[195] Burnet, 'Manuscript History', fol. 49.
[196] See Grant Tapsell, 'Parliament and Political Division in the Last Years of Charles II, 1681-5', *PH*, 22:3 (2003), p. 254.

would have turned England into a *de facto* republic. James and William feared this outcome; Shaftesbury and the Exclusionists alleged that it was Halifax's goal; republican writers like Neville and Sidney hoped for it. Had Limitations been passed, the powers of the monarchy would have been reduced under James to the level of a Duke of Venice. In 1680 the Prince of Orange and his supporters were deeply apprehensive about Halifax's bill. Henry Sidney, William's chief provider of English intelligence at this time, advised William that the royal powers lost 'would be hardly regained in the sequel by a Protestant Prince.'[197] Clearly, they feared that once these prerogatives had been stripped, it would be hard to get them back. Van Leeuwen, the Dutch Ambassador was instructed to make contact with Halifax and remonstrate with him over the damage the bill could cause to a future King William.[198] So concerned were the Dutch that they complained to Charles, but, adopting an attitude of 'benevolent neutrality … the only comfort which the King offered in reply was that he would try to limit the damage as much as possible'.[199]

In the context of the crisis of the 1680s if Halifax cannot be called republican it is hard to see how Neville and even Sidney should be. This chapter thus disagrees with the interpretation put forward by Knights, who contends that Halifax's opposition to Exclusion was opportunistic factionalism. 'Halifax', he argues, 'not only pursued his rivalry with Shaftesbury, but did so by using the succession as one of his weapons'.[200] As has been shown, Halifax was scathing about justifications for monarchy and supported drastically reducing royal power. Limitations were for him the best possible option. Indeed, as Knights noted, his 1680 bill, 'lost on the prorogation of 10 January [1681] … had it passed, would have conferred on Parliament and council powers not achieved even after the Glorious

[197] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 264.
[198] Ibid., p. 265.
[199] Ronald Hutton, *Charles the Second: King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford, 1989), p. 396.
[200] Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 48-50.

Revolution'.[201] This was Halifax's ideological intention, not a by-product of his dislike of Shaftesbury.

The second challenge is that Halifax's actions were motivated not by republican leanings but fear of a possible Civil War and the prospect of a Catholic heir. This claim rests on the fact that Halifax's Limitations bill in 1680 only applied if the monarch were Catholic, and additionally that in 1689 he opposed efforts by loyalists to pass a regency as an alternative to deposing James. Yet for Halifax in the Convention Parliament the risk of a total collapse of order if Dutch troops withdrew from England meant that crowning William and Mary was a necessity. Even in that context, Halifax appears to have supported crowning William alone, with Mary and Anne next in succession. Burnet reported that 'Many of the republican party approved of this: for by it they gained another point: the people in this case would plainly elect a king, without any critical regard to the order of succession'.[202]

4. Participation in politics

Late-seventeenth-century republicanism might be radical but it did not need to be popular. Conniff argued that the *Character* marked Halifax as 'a systematic and careful thinker', whose work involved the acceptance of political difference, provided it was through 'moderate parties based on interest'.[203] Yet to imply that Halifax accepted partisan divides ignores the fact that although he argued 'struglings which are naturall to all mixed Governments … support and strengthen, than weaken or mayme the Constitution', he stressed that differences needed to be 'kept from growing into Convulsions'.[204] 'Struglings' ought to be the result of the independent deliberations of the Houses, rather than interest-

[201] Ibid., p. 89.
[202] Burnet, *History*, III, 390-1.
[203] James Conniff, 'The Politics of Trimming: Halifax and the Acceptance of Political Controversy', *The Journal of Politics*, 34:4 (1972), 1176-97.
[204] Brown, I, 195.

based partisan conflict. He regretted that 'the Parliaments are so altered from their original Constitution, that between the Court and the Country, the House, instead of being united, is like Troops of a contrary Party facing one another, and watching their Advantage'.[205] Partisanship, Halifax argued weakened the ability of the Houses of Parliament to press their interests, or act for the nation. By the division it engendered, even the 'best Party is but a kind of a Conspiracy against the rest of the Nation. They put every body else out of their Protection. Like the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*, all others are the Offscowrings of the World'.[206] Perhaps unsurprisingly, a chief complaint about parties in parliament was their tendency to seek to impeach ministers who 'deserted' them. However, he also argued that partisanship contributed to excessive civic division, and thus potentially violence. 'Whilst the severall parties are at football, they will break all the windows in the town'.[207] As Halliday shows, the bitter parliamentary divisions of 1679-81 drastically exacerbated pre-existing tensions across towns in England – 'the noise was deafening, even in Whitehall'.[208] Further, the heat of their rhetoric made parties believe that their own interest was actually that of the nation, thus justifying extreme measures. The problem with the maxim of *salus populi*, he wrote, was 'what is the definition of *Populi*? The Nation, not a party'. However, 'partyes call their friends onely the people, as men call the cercle of company they converse in, the World'.[209]

Halifax thus sought to curtail acceptable political disagreement, rather than expand it, and his political thought was entirely compatible with curtailing the franchise to limit 'convulsions'. In *Some Cautions*, he argued 'that none should bee chosen for a County, but such as have, either in possession or reversion, a Considerable estate in it', and that the borough franchise should be restricted to borough residents with 'some estate in the county' while in

[205] Brown, II, 234.
[206] Ibid., p. 235.
[207] Ibid., p. 146.
[208] Paul Halliday, *Dismembering the Body Politic. Partisan Politics in England's Towns 1650-1730* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 124.
[209] Brown, II, 75.

unpublished writings he argued it might be preferable to abolish borough corporation parliamentary seats, 'so that only knights of the shire would sit in the House of Commons'.[210] By doing this, he hoped to replace the disguised private interests of parties with a true national interest as a result of publicly virtuous politicians. Halifax was not alone in talking about a restriction of the franchise. Goldie notes that many commonwealthmen also wanted to reduce the voting power of those who could be dependent on patronage. Among them were Philip Lord Wharton who wanted to see Dissenters comprehended, the freeholder franchise increased to £20 freehold or £30 copyhold and 'the crown's borough mongering powers to be abolished'.[211]

Even after the dissolution of Parliament, the expectation of a future one maintained the Whig-Tory divide in the imagination.[212] Thus the *Character*, as well as a putative programme for government, could be viewed as a tacit call for figures at court to use their influence in a future election to ensure the election of less partisan figures. However, even accepting that there was no prospect of Charles summoning a new parliament, the widespread news culture of the 1680s ensured that partisan divides intensified. As Tapsell notes an 'obsession with political news meant that no act of dissolution or prorogation could readily stifle discussion and debate'.[213] A part of the *Character* therefore suggests that mere repression would not be able to ensure civic peace, but there needed to be active efforts at reconciliation.

Of course, claims to lack affiliation with either party were frequently the prelude to vicious partisan diatribes. During the later Sacheverell Controversy, for example, a tract by William Bisset stressed that he belonged 'to no party, that I know of; being sensible, there are knaves and rakes among all'. He then proceeded to accuse Sacheverell of whipping up a mob; using

[210] Brown, I, 149, 329.
[211] Goldie, 'Roots of True Whiggism', 210-25.
[212] Grant Tapsell, *The Personal Rule of Charles II* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 31.
[213] Ibid., pp. 92-94.

foul language; taking and then abandoning a lover; being a Jacobite, a liar and an alcoholic; and inciting an attack on a dissenter's house which killed a woman giving birth.[214]

Nevertheless, this chapter argues that Halifax's objection to partisanship was not a rhetorical device but rather a call to limit the acceptable sphere for public debate. It should be noted that the first complaint Halifax makes in *Character of a Trimmer* mirrors one of the main reasons he broke with Shaftesbury and the early country party – hostility to pamphleteering aimed at the lower orders, who given their lack of reason could turn to violence. The times were an 'Age overrun with Scriblers, as Egypt was with flyes and Locusts', with the government having sponsored a swarm of the 'Vermine of small Authors'. The consequence of popular politics was producing polemics 'which doe so raise our Passions, that our Reason can make no resistance'. It was especially dangerous to agitate the people:

> generally they are uncapable of making a Syllogisme or forming an Argument, yet they can pronounce a Word, and that serveth their turne, to throwe it with their dull malice at the head of those they doe not like; such things ever begin in Jeast and end in bloud.[215]

Objecting to the extension of political activity towards those who lacked the reason to justify their participation, Halifax's politics of trimming, did not seek to find a middle ground between Whig and Tory policies. In the reply by Mulgrave, the Tory position was justified as a necessary counterattack, and that while he abhorred pamphlets, 'for that very reason I approve of the publishing those on the Crown's part at present, to counterpoise the much greater number written of late on the people's'.[216] For Halifax, however, Tory pamphleteering was excessive. Rather than calming the passions of the people, it was arguing for 'suppressing all kind of right which may remaine in the body of the people'. The 'small authors' that were employed, Halifax considered 'though it is not very easie to have Abilities

[214] Mark Knights, 'How Rational was the Public Sphere?', in Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, (eds), *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2012), p. 257.
[215] Brown, I, 178.
[216] Mulgrave, 'Character of a Tory', II, 53.

equall to such a Subject' were making offensive rather than merely defensive claims, with arguments about royal prerogative that ran contrary to reason, nature and interest.[217] Thus, he attempted to reverse the Tory argument made by L'Estrange that trimmers were merely disguised rebels, 'your temporizing, fleering, and glozing Trimmer … is a spy, and a conspirator in one … prethee tell me, which was the more criminall, the soldier with his spear [i.e. the Whigs], or Judas with his kiss?'.[218] In fact, by stirring up the passions of the people with unreasonable arguments the hard-line Tories were more likely to provoke Civil War.

Conclusion

Harris argues there:

> certainly were people who saw themselves as occupying a middle position between the two extremes, who espoused an ideological position which they saw as being distinct from that of either party, and who often applied the label "trimmer" to themselves. What is less clear is whether we can talk about the trimmers as a distinctive and coherent third force in politics at this time.[219]

Trimming must be separated from a self-congratulatory account of centuries of English common sense. Halifax's statements around Exclusion show an indication of him 'playing the British card' but that is more to do with concern over turbulence in England leading to the Stuart ship-of-state crashing into the iceberg of Scotto-Irish rebellion.[220] Trimming in this respect was a plea for safety, rather than a statement of doctrine; less an ideological position than a dislike of the tumults afflicting politics. Domestically, the pamphlet is equally disdainful of the Tory crowd burning Jack Presbyter as it would be of the Whig one engaging in a bonfire of a Pope. Harris's own work showed the idea that Toryism was 'unpopular' to be fallacious, so Halifax's disdain makes sense.[221] 'The king and his advisers', he writes,

[217] Brown, I, 191.
[218] *Observator*, 1 Jan. 1683, quoted in David R. Benson, 'Halifax and the Trimmers', *HLQ*, 27:2 (1964), 121.
[219] Tim Harris, *Restoration. Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (2006), p. 325.
[220] Harris, *Restoration*, p. 241.
[221] Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge, 1988).

'quite deliberately chose to appeal to the masses, even to the point of engaging in activity that might be described as rabble-rousing'.[222]

Trimming in this regard fits the model of moderation proposed by Shagan – Halifax's ideal would be the punishment, side-by-side, of Whig and Tory propagandists who incited the people. Shagan rejected the notion of moderation as being about compromise, rather 'in early modern England, the ubiquitous moral principle of moderation was a profoundly coercive tool of social, religious and political power'.[223] While many in early modern England claimed to seek moderation, they really wanted to control, purge, and prosecute those who fell outside of their own arbitrarily defined acceptable middle ground. Covering such a widely used phrase across the whole of the early modern period, Shagan intentionally omits various themes, including the trimmer debate of the 1680s.[224]

If many Tories supported hardline Anglican policies and loyalty to the hereditary monarch even if he was Catholic, and Whigs demanded a Protestant monarch and the power to suppress popery and prelatism in the Church, Halifax's position was radically different. The goal of politics was to secure stability, virtue, and government by those with sufficient reason to follow the public interest, meaning both the limitation of monarchical power, and the exclusion of those appealed to by popular politics. Halifax's republican-influenced trimming did not seek a compromise between the factional parties of Whig and Tory and ultimately Mulgrave's account of the distinctiveness of the position laid out in *Character of a Trimmer* is apt. Rather than balance a boat weighed down on one side by Whig pressure, as his truly

[222] Tim Harris, '"Venerating the Honesty of a Tinker": The King's Friends and the Battle for the Allegiance of the Common People in Restoration England', in Tim Harris (ed.), *The Politics of the Excluded, c.1500-1850* (Basingstoke, 2001), p. 196.
[223] Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation. Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2011), p. 3.
[224] Ibid., p. 26.

'moderate' Tory did, or supporting the Whig pressure, the Trimmer sat at the bottom of the vessel, criticising both of his fellow passengers.[225]

[225] Mulgrave, 'Character of a Tory', p. 72.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Revolution of 1688

Introduction

On 1 February 1689, Sir John Reresby, the ousted governor of York, visited Halifax's London house, where his patron was debating parliamentary strategy with the speaker of the Commons, Sir Edward Seymour, and (to Reresby's disgust) Gilbert Burnet, 'the great creature of the Prince of Orange'. Reresby, who had spent James's reign agonising over the increasing irreconcilability of his loyalty to the monarchy and the Church of England, was stunned not merely by the recent revolution, but also the revolution in the conduct of Halifax, who had turned from refusing to back William's invasion to being his most vehement supporter among the nobility. In justification, 'Halifax tould me… that he was not privy to this design of the Prince his comming at the first; but now that he was here, and upon soe good an occasion, we were obliged to defend him'. Overriding Reresby's objections, Halifax breezily asserted 'that as things stood now *salus populi* was *suprema lex*'.[1] The statements were emblematic of Halifax's rather inglorious behaviour during the Revolution: in response to circumstances he opportunistically seized the chance to regain power and change English policy, using a series of ad hoc improvisations, deceit, and rhetorical appeals to necessity. Yet if Reresby was left feeling disorientated by the rapid change and uncertainty of the Revolution, Halifax was no different. A few days after the meeting he 'confessed that ther was noe great hopes of a lasting peace from this settlement; however, it was the best that

[1] Reresby, pp. 547-8.

could be made at this time of the day'.[2] Contemporaries were deluged with fast-changing reports, false rumours, and interruptions to the receipt of news, leading to widespread bewilderment and a sense of time detaching itself from comprehensible history. People in England, Claydon argues, far from viewing the Revolution as the opportunity to forge a novel, progressive future, felt 'it tore events out of time …so extraordinary that they could not be woven into any coherent story and had to be contemplated as self-sufficient particularities, with no clearly discernible meaning'. Rather than 1688 marking the emergence of a 'modern', dynamic sense of time, 'reaction to 1688–9 has parallels with postmodernity's fragmentation of temporal experience, particularly its disorientating isolation of the present moment from any clear pattern of history'.[3]

Even supporters of William were stunned by events. Preaching in January 1689 John Tillotson remarked that 'it was a wonderful *Deliverance* indeed, if we consider all the Circumstances of it: The *Greatness* of it; and the *strangeness* of the *Means* whereby it was brought about; and the *Suddenness,* and *Easiness* of it'.[4] For opponents like Reresby, imprisoned in York, the hasty upending of certainties was profoundly distressing. 'My Lord', he wrote to Halifax giving him news of the seizure of York by conspirators led by the earl of Danby,

> we are all surprized with this great and generall revolution … I have noebody to advise with in your absence but my own thoughts … I should be glad to receive some light in this obscure matter, and what shines from your Lordship is ever clearer to me then what I receive from others.[5]

Reresby did not get much light from Halifax, and for the historian, finding the inner light which guided Halifax during the Revolution is exceedingly difficult. Limited direct

[2] Ibid., p. 553.
[3] Tony Claydon, *The Revolution in Time: Chronology, Modernity, and 1688-1689 in England* (Oxford, 2020), pp. 45-6.
[4] John Tillotson, *A Sermon Preached at Lincolns-Inn-Chappel,* (1689), p. 26.
[5] Reresby, p. 585.

correspondence survives, and much evidence comes from contemporaries distrustful of him or confused by his behaviour. The Halifax who emerges is a deeply unattractive figure: this chapter argues he behaved deceitfully towards his King; was willing to disseminate falsehoods which contributed to nationwide anti-Catholic riots in the winter of 1688; and left his friends feeling betrayed.

This picture goes against the account of Halifax in traditionally Whig accounts of the Glorious Revolution, which stress its peaceful, defensive, and constitutional character. As Trevelyan said, 'it was a victory of moderation, a victory not of Whig or Tory passions, but of the spirit and mentality of Halifax the Trimmer'.[6] However, this chapter will show Halifax willing to consider a radical solution to the question of succession, motivated to a significant extent by a fear of the mob, and pushing parliamentary procedure to the limits. Halifax's experience of the Revolution, and concern to ensure English participation in a coalition against France supports interpretations stressing the international dimension to 1688. Whether the Revolution was a foreign invasion followed by a 'dynastic putsch',[7] or 'merely a by-product' of William's armed intervention, without which there could not 'have been a Revolution, or anything remotely like one'[8] has been disputed. Harris, for example, claims 'external factors alone cannot explain why James's regime toppled … on the contrary, it was domestic political turmoil that in the main was responsible for bringing James down'.[9]

Both domestic and foreign factors contributed to William becoming King– had there been no domestic unrest, there would have been no invasion, and 1688 marks the last time in English history that the northern magnates successfully rose against central government, seizing most

[6] George Macaulay Trevelyan, *The English Revolution, 1688-1689* (1938), p. 241.
[7] Dale Hoak, 'The Anglo- Dutch Revolution of 1689', in Dale Hoak and Mordechai Feingold (eds), *The World of William and Mary* (Stanford, CA, 1996), p. 26.
[8] Jonathan Israel, 'Introduction', in Israel (ed.), *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and Its World Impact* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 5.
[9] Tim Harris, *Revolution. The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (2006), p. 14.

key cities within weeks. But the decisive factor in William being crowned was his troops, not popular or gentry desire for a Revolution, nor the landed elite's decision to 'not lift a finger to help' James against William, as they had done against Monmouth.[10] The 'foreignness' of the Revolution was notable to its detractors. When Reresby arrived in London on 22 January 1689 'I found London much changed … the streets were filled with ill lookeing and ill habited Dutch and other strangers of the Princes army'. To his dismay 'the Citty was soe pleased with their diliverers that they did not or would not perceive their deformity, nor the oppression they laid under'.[11] With significantly less 'revolutionary' agitation against James William could have still seized the throne; without a large accompanying army (and defections among James's forces) the Prince of Orange would likely have suffered a similar fate to the Duke of Monmouth. The English peers who invited William on 30 June 1688 were 'neither considerable nor representative'.[12] While individual peers were recognised as significant leaders of political factions 1688 was not the triumphal reaction of the nobility as a class. Indeed, Speck argues some historians highlight the role of nobles merely to invert the Marxist account, with 1688 depicted as a feudal reaction to a bourgeois-supporting monarch.[13] If the Revolution heralded the dominance of the aristocracy over politics in the long eighteenth century that was not evident at the time. As Glassey notes 'the aristocracy had no especial reason to believe that its interests would be advanced by the substitution of William for James'.[14] Indeed Halifax spent a great deal of the Revolution desperately attempting to maintain the dignity of the House of Lords at a time when the peers were being railroaded by popular pressure, and the threat of anarchy if William and his troops departed.

[10] W. A. Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988), p. 243.
[11] Reresby, p. 545.
[12] J. P. Kenyon, *The Nobility in the Revolution of 1688* (Hull, 1963), p. 9
[13] Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, p. 6; J. R. Jones, *The Revolution of 1688 in England* (New York, 1972), p. 301
[14] Lionel K. Glassey, 'In Search of the *Mot Juste*: Characterizations of the Revolution of 1688–89', in Tim Harris and Stephen Taylor (eds), *The Final Crisis of the Stuart Monarchy. The Revolutions of 1688-91 in their British, Atlantic and European Contexts* (Woodbridge, 2013), p. 14.

Revisionist approaches to James have claimed the King's primary aim was not to re-establish Catholicism but to secure religious toleration for all his subjects. Pincus's 'modernization' thesis that the King was seeking to construct an intolerant, absolutist Catholic state has proved controversial, but it did 'land heavy blows on the dubious developing scholarly notion that James was sincerely committed to religious toleration as a virtuous goal in its own right'.[15] Deducing James's motivations is difficult. Nevertheless, as Sowerby notes, Halifax intervened into the public sphere, with *Letter to a Dissenter* and *Anatomy of an Equivalent* precisely because James's policy of repealing the Test Acts was attractive to many.[16] A combination of public support and a capacious interpretation of royal prerogatives meant he might have succeeded but *Letter to a Dissenter* reduced popular support for James's programme, and minimised the likelihood of alterations in the law. The Catholic writer Henry Neville Payne considered it the most 'disloyal and dangerous' work ever published.[17]

As Goldie and others have noted, the acquittal of the Seven Bishops in summer 1688 reduced James's religious programme to tatters before William left for England.[18] Halifax's initial reaction to the Dutch invasion was far from enthusiastic, but disintegration of James's regime gave him an opening both to return to personal prominence and to promote policies he supported. His behaviour was both reluctant and opportunistic, marked by a series of unplanned, short-term improvisations. The religious and political principles outlined in previous chapters influenced him, but there was no sense of Halifax working towards a long-planned outcome. He did not necessarily see 1688 as a turning point in English history, nor did he recognise the need to develop an alternative programme of modernisation in response to James. Insofar as Halifax viewed the Revolution as 'Glorious' it would have been because,

[15] Grant Tapsell, 'Not So Revolutionary', *The Review of Politics* 72:4 (2010), 723.
[16] Scott Sowerby, *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution* (2013), p. 17.
[17] Pincus, *1688*, p. 195.
[18] Mark Goldie, 'The Political Thought of the Anglican Revolution' in Robert Beddard, (ed.), *The Revolutions of 1688* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 107-8.

as Scott argues, 'it restored, and secured, after a century of troubles, what remained salvageable of the Elizabethan church and state'.[19] Indeed Halifax's anxiety over the return of 'arbitrary government' under the reign of a reliably Protestant monarch was a key reason for his drift into opposition to William in the 1690s.

This chapter will adopt a comparatively detailed chronological approach as it attempts to analyse Halifax's intentions at key points during James's reign. It argues that, after his dismissal from office in 1686, he consciously sought to reposition himself as an unrebellious Protestant and that his reluctance to invite William to invade had two main motivations: his belief that James's efforts at re-Catholicisation were bound to fail, and his fear that an invasion risked civil war. Once William's success was probable Halifax was willing to support him, partly again to avoid the possibility of war but also because the offer of the crown to William and Mary by Parliament strengthened the quasi-republican arguments he had long made and he had no theoretical objections to the idea of an elective monarchy.

From the death of Charles II

The death of Charles II came as Halifax seemed to have been about to reconcile the Duke of Monmouth with his royal father thus displacing James at court. In 1683 Halifax had been instrumental in getting Monmouth to apologise for his links to the Rye House plotters and in making James accept the apology, for which James correctly blamed Halifax.[20] In November 1684, the Comte D'Avaux, French ambassador to The Hague, reported an attempted reconciliation between Charles and William of Orange: 'this intrigue was carried on by my Lord Halifax, who wanted to reestablish the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Monmouth in

[19] Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677–1683* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 27.
[20] Anna Keay, *The Last Royal Rebel: The Life and Death of James, Duke of Monmouth* (2016), pp. 303-14.

the good graces of the King of England'.[21] By February 1685 Monmouth had received a letter from Halifax stating that James was about to be banished.[22] 'Certainly noe man was in greater favour with him [Charles], when he unfortunately dyed, then the marquiss', noted Reresby.[23]

Instead Rochester was appointed Lord High Treasurer, marking the final defeat of Halifax's efforts to tar his rival with fraud in relation to the tax farm and removing the Treasury from commission for the first time since the fall of Danby. In the process, two allies of Halifax – Sir Dudley North and Henry Thynne – lost their places as treasury commissioners. They would not be reappointed when Rochester was removed and the Treasury commission restored in early 1687.[24] In an irony, given Halifax's mockery of Rochester's demotion to the role in 1684, the vacancy caused by Rochester's promotion led to Halifax being 'kicked upstairs' to Lord President of the Council.

Halifax was almost immediately aware that James, while superficially rewarding him for his role in defeating Exclusion, in practice had not forgotten Halifax's other behaviour during his brother's reign and intended to minimise any influence he had over power. Halifax's client Reresby was keenly aware of this fact, 'whether this preferment (though a degree higher as to place) was desired or not by his lordship was a doubt, the trust and profit of Privy Seale being thought to be greater'.[25] James, Burnet commented, had 'said he would forget every thing that was past, except his behaviour in the business of the Exclusion.'[26] His new position gave Halifax access to most formal councils, where he displayed 'smug omniscience [which] would have tried the patience of a saint' according to Kenyon, but James ignored his advice

[21] Jeanne Antoine de Mesmes, Comte D'Avaux, *Negotiations ... Containing the Steps Taken by the Prince of Orange to Ascend the Throne of Great Britain; and the Intrigues of the Court of France to Counteract his Measures...* Translated from the French (4 vols, 1754–55), III, 73–77.
[22] Keay, *The Last Royal Rebel*, p. 328.
[23] Reresby, p. 360.
[24] Kenyon, *Sunderland*, p. 98.
[25] Reresby, p. 353.
[26] Burnet, *History*, III, 8.

and it became clear that he only retained Halifax because his 'presence in the government gave it a veneer of aristocratic pseudo-liberalism which would be invaluable when it came time to face parliament'.[27] His *de facto* unimportance was demonstrated early on in the new reign, when he unsuccessfully attempted to secure Burnet – who emigrated soon after – an audience with the King.[28] Halifax remained in position, supporting (along with most peers)[29] James's government's stability during Monmouth's desperate invasion and encouraging the pro-Dutch policy followed by Rochester, which resulted in an Anglo-Dutch conference agreeing to renew all treaties between the United Provinces and England in Windsor on 17 August.[30]

Could he have re-engineered his dominance at court over Rochester and his brother Clarendon, who had been appointed to Halifax's former (and preferred) role as Lord Privy Seal? Knights argues that Halifax advocated policies designed to appeal to the king in order to monopolise power for himself, suggesting that 'rivalry with other ministers was Halifax's real trademark'.[31] Burnet attributed Halifax's rise to prominence as Charles II's chief minister after 1679 to his 'lively and libertine conversation' with the King, and attributed his advocacy of William being given the Crown alone in 1689 to ambition.[32] However true this charge was, there was one card a court politician seeking to displace the Hydes could have played in summer 1685 – appealing to James's religion by offering to convert to Catholicism. Halifax's anti-Catholicism rendered such a strategy unacceptable to him. Halifax's mockery of the story of a Catholic missionary attempting to convert the King of Siam had 'highly provoked' James, who had a profound distaste for Halifax's religious beliefs.[33] A letter from Louis XIV

[27] Kenyon, *Sunderland*, p. 114.
[28] Burnet, *History*, III, 22.
[29] Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, p. 7.
[30] Kenyon, *Sunderland*, p. 119.
[31] Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, p. 353.
[32] Burnet, *History*, II, 206.
[33] Burnet, *History*, II, 464.

to ambassador Barillon – 'The King of England is justified in believing, that since Lord Halifax has no religion he cannot be a very faithful Minister, or one much disposed towards the maintenance of the Royal Authority' –indicates how James's earlier comments that Halifax was an atheist were shared internationally. [34] Moreover, during James's efforts to convince Rochester to convert in 1686, he displayed particular hostility to two Anglican divines known to be close to Halifax. 'The King told Rochester to choose any ministers of the Established Church, with two exceptions. The proscribed persons were Tillotson and Stillingfleet.'[35]

In contrast to Pincus who argues James sought to build a modern absolutist state, Sowerby sees Halifax as emblematic of a 'paranoid-style' of English politics, which refused to accept that James's intentions were essentially benign. [36] The account of Halifax – who popularised the term 'repealer' in the *Letter to a Dissenter* – given here does not need to conflict with his overall thesis.[37] But James's initial desire concerning the Church of England was neither peaceful co-existence with liberated English Catholicism, nor the violent suppression of Protestantism. Rather, 'he had so absolute a conviction of the rightness of the Roman faith that he believed men would freely embrace it once its political disabilities were removed', a misjudgement that would badly hamstring his reign.[38] Yet Halifax is an odd flag-bearer for Anglican bigotry. Frequently associated with efforts to weaken the monopoly of coercion of the Church in the 1670s, he called for some relaxation of anti-Catholic legislation in *Character of a Trimmer*. During the chaos between 11 and 16 December 1688, when he held the greatest personal power over military force, he ordered troops to disperse anti-Catholic

[34] Louis XIV to Paul Barillon, Oct. 1685, quoted in Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 218.
[35] T. B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II* (5 vols, 1848), II, p. 194. Halifax's links to Stillingfleet and Tillotson are discussed in ch. 1.
[36] Pincus, *1688*, p. 23.
[37] Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, p. 30.
[38] G. V. Bennett, 'The Seven Bishops: A Reconsideration', in D. Baker, (ed.), *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian* (Oxford, 1978), p. 274.

rioters and authorised them to open fire to rescue Queen-Dowager Catherine of Braganza, whom he served loyally as chancellor. He did not have a propensity to see false conspiracies *in an English context* – he doubted the veracity of the Popish Plot at an early stage (publishing pro-plot propaganda was done because of political necessity, not sincerely-held belief), and comparing his 'Character of Charles II' to that of Mulgrave, he was unwilling to indulge theories of Catholic plotting being behind the death of the monarch.[39] Yet Halifax considered James's repeal plans unacceptable.

Halifax would have been deeply unconvinced by James's embrace of toleration. At the start of the King's reign, many 'anti-Trimming' bishops seemed willing to accommodate James by a tacit bargain whereby prosecution of Catholics was limited in exchange for the continuation, even intensification, of campaigns against Protestant dissent. As Bennett notes, while the spring 1685 royal command not to enforce recusancy laws against those with certificates of loyalty was superficially neutral, in practice 'it was soon clear that such certificates were a device to distinguish catholic recusants from protestant dissenters'.[40] If Halifax was unwilling or unable to play the Catholic card, his rival Sunderland was happy to do so. Positioning himself close to leading Catholics at court, and eventually converting, Sunderland's renewed influence was shown when Jeffreys was appointed Lord Chancellor in September. With James's Catholic faction urging the King to show resolve, Halifax's position became increasingly precarious. At Council Halifax's motion that officers in commission should take the Test received no support.[41] On 19 October 1685 Halifax was removed from office at a private meeting with James. According to Burnet, the King stated 'he would be served by none but those who would vote for the repeal of the tests', asked how

[39] Brown, II, 444.
[40] Bennett, 'Seven Bishops', p. 273.
[41] Burnet, *History*, III, 69.

he would vote Halifax 'very frankly answered, he would never consent to it'.[42] As Morrice reported:

> The Marquesse of Hallyfax some say was not satisfied in all things that were proposed to be transmitted to the Parliament, as touching the Nulling the Habeas Corpus Act, the Malitia Act, and particularly the incapacitating test[.] Its certaine the Marquisse was upon Lords day last removed from being President of the Counsell… Thus is the Marquesse fallen that has done so great service.[43]

Even when defying James, Halifax's previous government roles under Charles meant many Whigs would never forgive or trust him. In the Commons debate over a motion demanding his removal from office in November 1680, Sir Nicholas Carew alleged that Halifax would move towards Catholicism under James: 'I would not have two Hares on foot at once. Lord Halifax sees that Popery will come in, and he will turn. Pray remove him'. John Dutton Colt, a Herefordshire MP, alleged his opposition to Exclusion was motivated by a desire to be made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.[44] Time did not soften Colt's views, which though especially violent were reflective of many Whigs and nonconformists. Convicted in 1684 for *scandalum magnatum* against James, he described Halifax as part of a cabal of 'the Imps and promoters of the Interest of that damnd Popish Dog York'.[45]

It seems likely that James's distrust of Halifax owed more to his backing of Limitations and his dalliance with republicanism than to his anti-Catholicism. Sunderland, of course, had actually supported excluding James from the throne (and Halifax briefly sponsored a parliamentary motion requesting the dismissal of former Exclusionists from royal service in May 1685 as a means to undermine his rival).[46] Shortly after Halifax's fall, Barillon reported that James had said:

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[42] Ibid., p. 71.
[43] Morrice, III, 41.
[44] Grey, *Debates*, VII, 1-31.
[45] Morrice, II, 475.
[46] Kenyon, *Sunderland*, p. 116.

> during the reign of the late King…, he had had a bad opinion of the Marquis's sentiments and conduct, and did not think him sufficiently attached to monarchy; that since his accession to the crown he had endeavoured to inspire him with better sentiments, and to induce him to follow maxims conformable to those which were becoming the Minister of a King, and even a good subject; that he had seen that his principles were unchangeable, and that, therefore, he was determined no longer to employ him.[47]

James claimed he had considered retaining Halifax to help manage the future sitting of parliament, but feared 'his example might infect many persons'.[48] James's apoplectic reaction to reports suggesting a member of the Imperial embassy considered James acted dishonourably by dismissing the man who had defeated Exclusion in 1680 was also reported:

> This discourse has come to the King's ear, who has found great fault with it… the Marquis of Halifax, to obtain the late King's confidence, strongly supported the succession against the Earl of Shaftesbury … But the day after this [Exclusion] Bill was rejected the Marquis proposed certain compromises inimical to the Duke of York, and more fatal to him than the Exclusion Bill; the most important was, exile during the life of the late King, and such great restrictions upon his authority in case of his succeeding to the crown, that the measure was considered more dangerous and less admissible than the Exclusion Bill. From that period the Marquis of Halifax has always declared himself openly against the Duke of York, and opposed everything advantageous to him …[49]

Halifax's dismissal was a triumph for Sunderland. As Kenyon notes, 'Halifax was his bitterest enemy, whose support for Rochester's foreign policy had been decisive in securing its general acceptance', and something 'at once recognised as a set-back to the anti-French party'.[50] Louis XIV crowed to Barillon:

> whatever effect it may produce, you are well aware that it cannot but be very advantageous to my interests that a Minister so devoted to Spain and so inimical to the Catholic religion, has been removed from the councils of the King of England.[51]

When news reached Reresby, he took the development worse than the death of a friend:

> I had the ill newes of the death of my good lord and friend the Earl of Ailsbury… but that which was much more afflicting was the account that my Lord Marquis of Halifax… was in disfavour with the King, and dismissed the Privy Council…

[47] Barillon to Louis XIV, 19 Oct. 1685, quoted in Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 449.
[48] Ibid., p. 449.
[49] Barillon to Louis XIV, 5 Nov. 1685, quoted in Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 452.
[50] Kenyon, *Sunderland*, pp. 124-5.
[51] Louis XIV to Barillon, quoted in Foxcroft, *Character*, p. 218.

Discussing the change with the Archbishop of York and Sir Henry Goodrick a few days later, Reresby found that both 'were very jealous that the King might offer something in Parliament this session in favour of popery'.[52] When Reresby talked to Halifax in person on 14 November about his dismissal, having arrived in London (perhaps conveniently[53]) a day after a key Commons vote which refused to discuss supply until the issue of Catholics in the army was resolved, Halifax sought to highlight his Protestant credentials:

> He said he might have continued with greater advantages then ever, if he would have joined in some things which he sawe was contriveing to be carried on, which he could not agree to … the remoove of him [Halifax] (especially at the beginning of a Parliament) astonished a great many, and made them fear that ther was a change of councils as well as councellers.[54]

Possibly Halifax had stayed in office in order to support Rochester's pro-Dutch foreign policy as long as he could. Certainly he exploited his dismissal as a way of repositioning himself as a leading Protestant noble. Writing to the earl of Chesterfield after his dismissal he emphasised his 'fayre fall' was solely because he 'could not prevayle with myself to promise before hand, to bee for taking away the Test and the bill of Habeus Corpus.'[55] So acutely aware was Halifax of the value of being perceived as an incorruptible, resolutely Protestant figure that he acted quickly to quash reports of reconciliation with James. After rumours of Halifax's imminent appointment as Lord Treasurer in mid-1686 spread to the north of England he wrote to Chesterfield that he could not:

> divest one's selfe of those foolish things called principles, which I find the wiser sort of men use like cloths, and make them yeeld to the fashion, what ever it is; which is a pitch of understanding I can not yet come up to, and, consequently, am too dull to meddle with so nimble a trade as that of the politiques that is grown up of late in the world.[56]

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[52] Reresby, p. 393.
[53] This is the interpretation in Scott Sowerby, 'Tories in the Whig Corner: Daniel Fleming's Journal of the 1685 Parliament', *PH*, 24:2 (2005), 171.
[54] Reresby, p. 395.
[55] Chesterfield, *Letters*, pp. 296-7.
[56] Chesterfield, *Letters*, p. 319.

In January 1688 Clarendon reported that Halifax, talking to Sir Paul Rycaut had denied the rumour of a rapprochement 'he had never been with the King since the sitting of the Parliament, nor seen his Majesty's face, but once by chance; in his coach in the street.'[57] The unprincipled, power-hungry atheist had been (partially) remade into the committed defender of the Church of England. This was an image that Halifax would seek to use as a factional cudgel against the Hyde brothers, who remained in government far longer.

In opposition

In February 1686 after James's prorogation of Parliament Halifax departed for Rufford. Halifax drew two observations from the first year of the reign and these help to explain his actions thereafter. First, he was confirmed in his belief that James intended to fill the army and parliament with Catholics, in the expectation that conversions would follow. While Halifax had been willing to consider some lessening of penal laws against Catholicism,[58] the full participation of Catholics in political life was unacceptable to him. Moreover it would have confirmed his belief that James's ultimate desire was the re-catholicisation of England and Scotland. In discussing James's speech at the opening of Parliament in November 1685, where he had made plain his intention of dispensing with the test for army officers, Halifax had said that since the house 'had reason to thank his Majesty when he would speak to them at all: they ought with greater reason to thank him when he spake plainly to them.'[59] Secondly, however, he was also convinced that James would not succeed. In a letter to Chesterfield in October 1685 Halifax predicted the effort to repeal the Test Act would fail. 'Either upon sounding men, they will be so discouraged as not to attempt these things; or, if they doe, that they will fayle in them'.[60] Halifax was particularly sceptical of James being

[57] Clarendon, II, 154.
[58] See ch. 1.
[59] Von Ranke, quoted in Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 458.
[60] Chesterfield, *Letters*, p. 299.

able to win over the military, as 'the officers in the army begin to think the repealing of the Test will be voting themselves out of their places'.[61] The example of Ireland proved Halifax's prediction that James wished to remove non-Catholics from the army correct. In the course of James's reign over 7,000 Protestants were dismissed from the Irish army, bringing ominous warnings to England and the United Provinces, where a large number re-settled.[62] That the parliamentary session following Halifax's dismissal was even more obstructive of plans to modify the Test and Habeas Corpus Acts than before, was less, for Halifax, a sign of James's tyrannical intent than a symbol of his weakness. The MP Daniel Fleming, on hearing of the prorogation, 'was told by divers Ancient members of Parliament, that they never did see them look more pleasantly, than they did upon this Prorogation: for that there was nothing enacted to the prejudice of the Established Religion'.[63]

The most prominent instances of the limited disobedience to James during 1687 came from the clergy – with the suspension of the fellows of Magdalen College for opposing the installation of a Catholic president and of Compton for defying the ecclesiastical commission.[64] Behind the scenes, Halifax was one of many nobles who sent encouragement to the suspended Protestants and was amongst those Sir Thomas Clarges petitioned to 'doe some good' for the ejected Magdalen fellows, those 'poore deprivees'.[65] Problems were also occurring for James in borough corporations. Remodelled charters had given Charles II power to purge corporation members, but he had used this sparingly - 'in the hands of his brother, the displacement power was a partisan bomb waiting to explode. James would light

[61] Chesterfield, *Letters*, p. 301.
[62] John Childs, *The Army, James II, and the Glorious* Revolution (Manchester, 1980), p. 68.
[63] Sowerby, 'Tories in the Whig Corner', 172.
[64] Bennett, 'The Seven Bishops', p. 280.
[65] Robert Beddard, 'James II and the Catholic Challenge', in Nicholas Tyacke (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford. Volume IV: Seventeenth-Century Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), p. 945.

the fuse in 1687'.[66] Many remodelled borough charters allowed the monarch to remove members of corporations, but only to suggest replacements. Thus, many corporations defied James by finding what Halliday terms 'creative reasons' not to implement his recommendations.[67] James therefore had to embark on a new *quo warranto* campaign allowing him to appoint members. This succeeded in increasing his theoretical power, but in practical terms it wrecked the engine of city government. 'By September 1688', argues Halliday, 'corporate governance … in many places, especially those sent new charters, ceased altogether'.[68]

There had, however, been some significant successes for James. Beddard, discussing James's Catholicisation of Oxford University, suggests that by the summer of 1688 the position of the Catholic religion in Oxford had been transformed and 'was fast acquiring the wherewithal to launch a counter reformation offensive'.[69] A major propaganda effort was launched in response to James's efforts. One of the most notable pamphlets was Halifax's *Letter to a Dissenter*, which sold over 40,000 copies and was met with no fewer than 46 responses.[70]

Letter to a Dissenter

Letter to a Dissenter was not directly intended as a rebuke to James's first Declaration of Indulgence, issued in April 1687. Instead, as Brown puts it, Halifax 'assumes… that his readers are already aware of the illegality of the declaration'. Rather, Halifax's goal was to stem the tide of addresses thanking James for his actions, and sometimes calling for parliamentary repeal of the Test Acts, which were being published gleefully in *The London*

[66] Paul Halliday, *Dismembering the Body Politic. Partisan Politics in England's Towns 1650-1730* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 238-9.
[67] Ibid., pp. 250-1.
[68] Ibid., p. 255.
[69] Beddard, 'James II and the Catholic Challenge', p. 947.
[70] Mark Goldie, 'The Revolution of 1688 and the Structure of Political Argument. An Essay and an Annotated Bibliography of Pamphlets on the Allegiance Controversy', *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities*, 83 (1980), 480.

Gazette.[71] This strategy – 197 were published in 1687 – mirrored the approach taken by Charles II's government during the Tory Reaction, where loyal 'addresses of abhorrence' attacking Whigs were published to highlight expressions of provincial loyalty, and encourage ambitious local figures to procure new expressions of support.[72] Thus the first sentence of the pamphlet condemns the 'Addresses [which] are in fashion'.[73] Halifax tried to appeal to anti-Catholic sentiment amongst Dissenters. Writing public propaganda, he utilised claims about the Popish Plot, in which he personally did not believe:

> The Church of *Rome* doth not only dislike the allowing Liberty, but by its Principles it cannot do it. Wine is not more expresly forbidden to the *Mahometans*, then giving Hereticks Liberty is to the *Papists*:… The continuance of their kindness, would be a habit of Sin, of which they are to repent, and their Absolution is to be had upon no other terms, than their Promise to destroy you.[74]

He 'refer[s] you to Mr. *Coleman*'s *Letters*, and to the *Journals* of *Parliament,* where you may be convinced'.[75] Bringing up the one aspect of Titus Oates's allegations which had merit – his 'amazingly lucky shot', which revealed correspondence between Edward Colman, a Catholic convert in the then Duke of York's service and Louis XIV's confessor – Halifax referenced a work which would have been owned by many nonconformists.[76] Colman, whose undoubted charisma was not matched by common sense, a 'story … of human weakness, of vanity and folly', had made boastful, unrealistic, and hyperbolic claims promising James's enthusiasm to re-Catholicise England, in the hope of winning financial support from the

[71] Brown, I, 78.
[72] Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 139-40. For an example of addresses as a means to highlight opponents of the Crown for purging from offices, see Reresby, pp. 230-1.
[73] Brown, I, 250.
[74] Ibid., pp. 251-2.
[75] Ibid., I, p. 251.
[76] J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot*, (1972), p. 70; Andrew Barclay, 'The Rise of Edward Colman', *HJ*, 42:1 (1999), 115.

French court to bribe MPs.[77] Speedily executed in 1678, his letters were widely publicised in various editions from 1678, and discussed the

> mighty work upon our hands, no less than The Conversion of three Kingdoms, and by that perhaps the subduing a pestilent Heresy, which has domineer'd over part of this Northern World a long time. There was never such hopes of Success since the Death of our Q. MARY, as now in our dayes, when God has given us a PRINCE who is become (may I say by Miracle) Zealous of being the Author and Instrument of so glorious a Work.[78]

Linking James with French intolerance enabled Halifax to raise the spectre of the persecution of Huguenots, who had seen the toleration guaranteed by the Edict of Nantes (1598) disappear when Louis XIV revoked it in October 1685. Thus, the *Letter* warned dissenters not to trust a government whose foreign policy involved 'Friendship with those who are so far from allowing Liberty, that they allow no Living to a Protestant under them'.[79] He also highlighted the substantially less generous reception given to Huguenots under James than that which they had been given under Charles II. James, according to Gwynn, 'believed the Huguenots were fundamentally anti-monarchical', and demanded new refugees conform fully to the Church of England, in an effort to discourage further arrivals.[80] Moreover, the *Letter* noted that James has initially sought to use the Tory-Anglican alliance from the end of Charles II's reign to revise the Test Acts. Rather than being sincerely committed to religious toleration, Halifax argued, 'these new Friends did not make you their Choice, but their Refuge: They have ever made their first Courtships to the Church of England, and when they were rejected there, they made their Application to you in the second place'.[81] James's policy reversals from initially embracing a harsh crackdown against nonconformists, such as the arrest of Richard Baxter within a fortnight of the new king's accession, before turning against

[77] John Miller, 'The Correspondence of Edward Coleman, 1674-78', *Recusant History*, 14:3 (1978), 272-3.
[78] *Mr. Coleman's Two Letters to Monsieur L'Chaise* (1678), p. 21.
[79] Brown, I, 255.
[80] Robin Gwynn, 'James II in the Light of His Treatment of Huguenot Refugees in England, 1685-1686', *EHR*, 92:365 (1977), 820-33.
[81] Brown, I, 251.

High Church Anglicans, created an opportunity Halifax could exploit.[82] Encouraging suspicion of the Court's motives, he sought to discourage public addresses of support. Thus he reproached those Dissenters, who, 'instead of silently receiving the benefit of this Indulgence … set up for Advocates to support it, you become voluntary Aggressors, and look like Counsel retained by the Prerogative against your old Friend Magna Charta'.[83] The 'danger of the means' of the toleration granted to Dissenters, as well as the potential empowerment of a packed, Catholic parliament meant that illegal use of the prerogative power could, as with the Huguenots, lead to a situation where they were 'therefore to be hugged now, onely that you may be the better squeezed at another time'.[84]

Halifax also insinuated that most dissenting addresses thanking James were the result of corruption, with courtiers who 'sprinkled Money amongst the Dissenting Ministers' planning to use similar methods to secure a compliant Parliament.[85] The claim that nonconformists were (sometimes through bribery) promoting the interests of Catholicism was a common rhetorical device of latitudinarian churchmen. Stillingfleet's suggestion in *The Unreasonableness of Separation* that financial concerns motivated nonconformists provoked a furious response from the Independent minister John Owen, who lambasted Stillingfleet's

> putid Calumny, such a malicious falshood, such a frontless Lye, as Impudence it self would blush at being made an instrument to vent it, and withal extreamly ridiculous; Yet because it seems useful unto the Good End of *Uniting Protestants*, and *Opposing Popery*, it hath not onely been reported by sundry of the *Clergy*, but embraced and divulged also by some of their weak and credulous Followers.[86]

Halifax's comment was not secular cynicism, but a repetition of Low-Church arguments, and helped to rally Anglicans sympathetic to Dissent to oppose James's campaign for toleration.

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[82] N. H. Keeble, 'Baxter, Richard', *ODNB*.
[83] Brown, I, 257.
[84] Ibid., p. 252.
[85] Ibid., p. 253.
[86] John Owen, *An Enquiry into the Original, Nature, Institution, Power, Order and Communion of Evangelical Churches* (1681), p. 5.

The suggestion of corruption might have been offensive to nonconformists, but for those still interested in returning to the Church of England after measures for comprehension were passed, stressing the continued influence of Latitudinarians was significant. Thus, the *Letter* sought to divide moderate dissenters from their more hard-line counterparts. Halifax highlighted that it was Quakers who 'are now made Favourites … they are on a sudden grown the most Accomplished men of the Kingdom', referring in particular to William Penn and 'his Hat'.[87] Unlike Penn, who was fully committed to religious toleration, in 1687 many moderate Dissenters still hoped to re-join the Church of England, rather than merely be exempted from civil and ecclesiastical sanction for not attending (or partially participating in) Anglican services. Toleration was preferable to persecution, but the *Letter* subtly dangled the greater prize of a reformed and broadened Church of England to nonconformists. Indeed, while Halifax's mention that William of Orange would succeed to the throne is often read as promising that toleration could come after James died, William also offered the prospect of an expanded Church. The Dutch Republic was known for its tolerant attitude towards religious nonconformity, and William and Mary were close to figures sympathetic to comprehending moderate Dissenters within the Church of England. Significant amongst these was Gilbert Burnet, living in exile in the Netherlands since May 1686. The Scotsman's role in convincing the Prince and Princess of Orange to oppose James's policies was such that Dryden dubbed him 'Captain of the Test', and the furious King attempted (unsuccessfully) to have Burnet extradited to Scotland for treason.[88] Burnet sought to relieve Protestant nonconformists through means other than Indulgence. 'Comprehension, rather than toleration', argues Greig, 'was Burnet's answer to the problem of Dissent'.[89] Thus, while the *Letter's* comment that Dissenters should wait for 'the next Heir bred in the Country which

[87] Brown, I, 252-3
[88] Tony Claydon, 'Burnet, Gilbert', *ODNB*.
[89] Martin Greig, 'Gilbert Burnet and the Problem of Nonconformity in Restoration Scotland and England', *Canadian Journal of History*, 32:1 (1997), 4.

you have so often Quoted for a Pattern of Indulgence', is often cited, the following line was equally significant. In a nod towards a Protestant Union, Halifax wrote of 'a general Agreement of all thinking Men, that we must no more cut our selves off from the Protestants abroad, but rather inlarge the Foundations upon which we are to build our Defences against the Common Enemy'.[90] This language was strikingly similar to Burnet's arguments a decade earlier, when he urged Charles II to:

> compleat and perpetuate this Blessing [of the Reformation, by], the composing of our differences at home, the establishing a closer correspondence with the Reformed Churches abroad, the securing us from the restless and wicked practices of that Party [i.e. Catholics]'.[91]

Halifax's implied promise was key for many nonconformists. Calamy later recorded that as well as being convinced not to 'hazard the publick safety' by submitting addresses thanking James, figures like Baxter 'waited in expectation of seeing the Effects of the Marquesses Declaration on behalf of the Church Party; that *all Haughtiness* (they are his own Words) *towards the Dissenters was forever extinguished*'.[92] As well as quoting Halifax's promise to 'inlarge the Foundations' of Protestantism, Calamy cited the pledge that the Church's 'Spirit of Persecution, [had turned] into a Spirit of Peace, Charity, and Condescention'.[93] That the end of 'persecution' meant more for moderate Dissenters than merely repealing laws against Protestant dissent was suggested in Halifax's calls for nonconformists not to be swayed by a desire for revenge against High Anglicans. Crucially, he warned Dissenters not to follow the past example of 'Rigid Prelates', and

> take warning by their Mistake in the same kind, when after the late King's Restoration, they preserved so long the bitter taste of your rough usage to them in other times, that it made them forget their Interest, and sacrifice it to their Revenge.[94]

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[90] Brown, I, 262-3.
[91] Burnet, *Reformation*, epistle dedicatory.
[92] Edmund Calamy, *An Abridgement of Mr Baxters History of his Life and Times* (1702), p. 624.
[93] Brown, I, 259.
[94] Ibid., p. 258

It is in this context that the *Letter's* plea for Dissenters to remember that 'the other day those of the Church of England were Trimmers for enduring you', highlighting the abuse heaped on supporters of comprehension under Charles II by L'Estrange, should be understood.[95] For a crucial group of Dissenters, Halifax was offering not just an alternative means of obtaining James's offer, he was offering something better.

Previous generations had used the threat of Catholicism to justify their desire for Protestant unity comprehending moderate Presbyterians.[96] Part of *Letter to a Dissenter* can be seen as an effort to ensure the Church of England committed to comprehension. While the Anglicans who remained at court like Rochester hoped to turn the clock back to early-1685, Halifax looked to resurrect the 'engine' of James's government through a programme of religious reform, either when James died or realised his toleration policy could not succeed. If the Guildhall Declaration of late-1688 marked the desperate 'counter-revolution of the Loyalists'[97], then part of *Letter to a Dissenter* can be seen as the start of a 'counter-revolution of the Latitudinarians' that culminated in failure with the collapse of Nottingham's comprehension bill in 1690.

The Anatomy of an Equivalent

In mid-1688, with reports circulating widely that James would offer an 'Equivalent' to compensate the Church of England for the repeal of the Test Acts, Halifax published *The Anatomy of an Equivalent*.[98] Though not generally considered one of Halifax's most important works it was well-known enough by contemporaries that a version (adapted but containing much of the original's prose) appeared in Edinburgh in 1706, during negotiations

[95] Ibid., p. 262.
[96] Henry Horwitz, 'Protestant Reconciliation in the Exclusion Crisis', *JEH, 15*:2 (1964), 201-17.
[97] Robert Beddard, 'The Guildhall Declaration of 11 December 1688 and the Counter-Revolution of the Loyalists' *HJ*, 11:3 (1968), 405.
[98] Brown, I, 107.

for Anglo-Scottish Union.[99] Halifax in opening the *Anatomy* described new invented words which 'are not of long continuance… after Whig, Tory, and Trimmer have had their time, now they are dead and forgotten, being supplanted by the word Equivalent, which reigneth in their stead'.[100] Reflecting a concern 'that a specious terme might not impose upon the weak brethren', as Halifax's chaplain, Alexander Sion put it, *The Anatomy* sought to ensure the continuation of non-cooperation with and passive resistance to James's toleration campaign. It leant heavily on associating James with French-style policies, noting the French-root of any equivalent and arguing 'The French King's *Equivalents* in *Flanders are* very extraordinary Bargains; his manner of proposing and obtaining them is very differing from the usual methods of equal dealing'.[101] As in *Letter to a Dissenter*, Halifax argued that James's initial hostility to Protestant Dissenters made his change of policy untrustworthy. In private business, it would be unwise to bargain with someone making inconsistent arguments, 'in a Publick case, if the same men who promote and press a thing with the utmost violence, do in a little time after with as much violence press the contrary, and profess a detestation of the very thing, for which they had before imployed all their Interest and Authority'.[102]

Halifax underlined why he was so committed to the Test Acts' prohibition on Catholics sitting in Parliament. First, he argued that no equivalent could mitigate the risk of something which 'may naturally tend to the misplacing the Legislative power in the hands of those who have a separate interest from the body of a People, there can be no treating, till it is demonstrably made out, that such a consequence shall be absolutely impossible'.[103] Secondly,

[99] *The Anatomy of an Equivalent by the Marquess of Halifax,* (Edinburgh, 1706). See also William Derringer, *Calculated Values. Finance, Politics, and the Quantitative Age* (Harvard, 2018), pp. 79-114.
[100] Brown, I, 265.
[101] Brown, I, 266.
[102] Ibid., p. 271.
[103] Ibid., p. 275.

as in other political writing, Halifax used the suggestion that the national interest of England required a Protestant state.

Attitudes to the Prince of Orange

Anatomy illustrates Halifax's continued opposition to James's catholicising policies so why did Halifax not join the 'Immortal Seven' and invite William to invade? Unlike the other conspirators, he regarded the widespread celebrations at the acquittal of the Seven Bishops on 30 June not as proof that James's regime was so unpopular invasion would be welcomed, but rather as evidence that foreign intervention was unnecessary.[104] As he put it:

> To men at a distance the engine seemeth to moove fast, but by looking neerer, one may see it doth not stirre upon the whole matter, so that here is a rapid motion without advancing a step, which is the only miracle that [Catholic] church hath yet shewed to us.[105]

However, Halifax's pre-1689 attitude towards William was also deeply ambivalent. Kenyon suggests that he was wary of the designs of 'a prince of proven ability and marked authoritarian tendencies', whose ascent to the throne could 'exchange King Log for King Stork'.[106] Present in the United Provinces in 1672, when the office of *stadhouder* was revived and given to William, presaging the downfall of de Witt, a man who 'had notions of the commonwealth from the Greeks and Romans', Halifax could have viewed this as equivalent to the Roman emergency dictatorship of the late Republic.[107]

He may also have had personal fears. Foxcroft argued Halifax, apprehensive of committal for high treason in November 1688, only said that he had not invited William after

[104] Grant Tapsell, 'Immortal Seven (act. 1688)', *ODNB*.
[105] Quoted in George Southcombe and Grant Tapsell, *Restoration Politics, Religion, and Culture: Britain and Ireland, 1660-1714* (Basingstoke, 2010), p. 98.
[106] Kenyon, p. 18.
[107] Charles-Édouard Levillain, 'William III's Military and Political Career in Neo-Roman Context, 1672-1702', *HJ*, 48:2 (2005), 326-7.

reassurance from James, although as with others he refused to repudiate the expedition.[108] Yet if the possibility of a treason charge formed part of Halifax's motivation, he could have avoided this risk by refusing to contact William, confining himself to generalities, or telling William that James would succeed but the English needed to trust in God. Moreover, extreme caution on Halifax's part is a poor descriptor for someone who published two pamphlets criticising James during his reign, which given James's conflation of opposition with treason, could have prompted a charge of seditious libel. In July 1687 when the governors of the Charterhouse (including Halifax) refused to accept a Catholic, Morrice noted that 'It is supposed this matter will be further inquired into, and it will be made criminall if it can be in Hallifax &c'.[109] In February 1688 Morrice reported on letters sent, inter alia to Halifax:

> A coppy of that… to the Earle of Dorsett follows – 'Twere pitty that one of the best of men should be lost for the worst of Causes don't sacrafice a life every body values for a Religion you yo*ur*self despise, Make yo*ur* peace with yo*ur* lawfull soveraigne, or know that after the 27 of January you have not long to live, Take this fair Warning from a friend, and repent before repentance be too late.
>
> That to the Marquesse of Hallifax was much the same… only its said it was in that **The Religion which you yo*ur* selfe believe not a word of.**[110]

In contrast to Halifax Chesterfield provides an example of an actually cautious figure. He repeatedly refused Halifax's pleas to attend the House of Lords in person. 'I could wish with all my hart, that you would overrule your aversion to the journy' to the capital, Halifax pleaded in 1685, 'since I make very much difference between my Lord of Chesterfield and his proxy. I know of weight your assistance is in speaking'. Halifax promised that he could ensure Chesterfield missed much of the session, 'provided wee might reserve you for some of those criticall debates upon which, to our thinking, every thing dependeth. I have perswaded my Lord Weymouth to come up, who had taken other resolutions'.[111]

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[108] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 8
[109] Morrice, IV, 108-9.
[110] Ibid., p. 219.
[111] Chesterfield, *Letters*, p. 309.

Halifax's wariness seems to be less for his personal safety and more on two linked lines: first, that the expedition was risky, and secondly that it could exacerbate tensions within the political nation and potentially lead to civil war. Burnet notes that, when Sidney attempted to sound out Halifax about an invasion by William, Halifax considered it to be 'impracticable: it depended on so many accidents, that he thought it was a rash and desperate project, that ventured all upon such a dangerous issue, as might turn on seas and winds.'[112] In *Letter to a Dissenter* Halifax argued for 'the Duty incumbent upon you, in Christianity and Prudence, not to hazard the publick Safety, neither by desire of Ease, nor of Revenge'.[113] Halifax's concern about the dangers of renewed civil war was long standing. In the House of Lords debate on the Exclusion Bill he had reframed Exclusion as a mirror-image of the crises which led to the Civil War. An effort by the English to impose unpopular policies upon Scotland and Ireland would lead to rebellions there, and ultimately give a small minority of religious and political extremists within England the opportunity to force a radical settlement upon the nation. At dinner with Sir John Reresby in late 1680 he confided that he should prepare in case 'unhappy differences might arise in the nation from thes disputes about the succession and in case it should come to a warr'.[114] Similarly in a letter to Gilbert Burnet in August 1680 he revealed his concern over the volatility of the country: 'the account you give of things in Scotland, giveth ground to fear there may bee some disorders, if more than ordinary care bee not taken to prevent them'.[115]

1688

[112] Burnet, *History*, III, 278.
[113] Brown, I, 251.
[114] Reresby, p. 205.
[115] Lane Poole, 'Some Unpublished Letters', 538.

During 1688 rumour suggested that Halifax was moving to support James's government. In January Morrice reported: '[t]he Marquesse of Hallifax – hath severall times beene at Court of late'[116] and in May noted:

> The Marquess of Halifax [blank] is also reported to have his agents at Court to bring him in again also, and it is most certain that he has been Treating with, and offering Bishopricks and preferments to some of the Moderate Clergymen of greatest note in the Church of England.[117]

In February 1689 Reresby was told 'by a Court lady' (usually identified as Eleanor Wall, wife of Sir Theophilus Oglethorpe) that:

> his lordship had treated with the King to come again into business some weeks before the certainty of the Prince his invasion was certainly known; that she was the very person sent by him to the King, that the King mett him in her hous, and that they agreed upon terms, nay, that his lordship treated with some priests concerning his return to Court…[118]

This conversation is discounted by Foxcroft and indeed seems extremely unlikely. By early 1688, *A Letter to A Dissenter* had been published, Halifax was well aware of James's dislike for him and must have known that the chances of James wanting any reconciliation were small indeed. It is possible that he still hoped for some form of comprehension for the Presbyterians with a future move towards greater tolerance for Catholics and the other Dissenters, but it was improbable that James would welcome back one who had effectively accused him of lying by promising toleration to all dissenters. As Halifax says in the *Letter* the Papists 'are no more able to make good their Vows to you, then Men married before, and their Wife alive, can confirm their Contract with another.'[119] The personal nature of the attack on James in the *Letter* was recognized at the time in some of the responses that it provoked. Thus *An Answer to the Letter to a Dissenter* refers to the 'Vile Reflections on his Majesty',

[116] Morrice, IV, 205.
[117] Morrice, IV, 258.
[118] Reresby, p. 549.
[119] Brown, I, 251.

and notes that 'reflexions of a more odious Nature cannot be cast on any Man of Honor, than this Pamphleteer has cast on the King.'[120]

Gibson's comment that those who 'viewed James with ambivalence had shown little spinal fortitude. Of Danby, Halifax, Nottingham and Clarendon, the best that can be said is that they were cautious',[121] seems unduly critical of Halifax, who twice produced pamphlets which were far more libellous than the material the Seven Bishops were prosecuted for. And the threat of a prosecution was real – prior to 1694, 'a person who questioned the legality or the policy of any act of the government, even in a respectful manner, committed the offence of seditious libel'[122] even if the government, certainly between 1679 and 1696, usually used breaches of the licensing provisions to attack printed publications.[123]

Following James's second Declaration of Indulgence and the Order in Council requiring the clergy to read it in early May there were a number of meetings of the London clergy, including some with leading dissenters to decide on tactics.[124] The 'Sancroftian' bishops were aware they needed a broader base of support. An effective opposition movement to the King 'would have to be from a united protestant front, and this would have to include not only the Sancroftians but distinguished "moderate" divines like Edward Stillingfleet, John Tillotson, Simon Patrick and Thomas Tenison, and even (if possible) the leading dissenting ministers'.[125] These latitudinarian figures, whose closeness to Halifax has been discussed in chapter 1, were important not only for their support within the Church of England, but also their ability to reach out to nonconformists. In anticipation of a Parliament later in 1688 some latitudinarian figures began working on plans to introduce a measure of comprehension. So

[120] *An Answer to the Letter to a Dissenter* (1687) pp. 3, 7.
[121] William Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops* (Chippenham, 2009), p. 18.
[122] William Holdsworth, *A History of English Law* (1937), p. 341.
[123] Philip Hamburger, 'The Development of the Law of Seditious Libel and the Control of the Press', *Stanford Law Review*, 37:3 (1985), 690-7.
[124] Gibson, *Seven Bishops*, pp. 78-83.
[125] Bennett, 'Seven Bishops', pp. 280-1.

ambitious were these schemes that in early September the future non-juror Turner, bishop of Ely, warned Sancroft:

> it grows every day plainer to me, that many of our divines, men of name and note, (I pray God there be not some Bishops with them in the design) intend upon any overture for Comprehension (which time shall serve) to offer all our ceremonies in sacrifice to the Dissenters.[126]

Despite stating that Halifax was not consulted by the bishops about their refusal to read the second Declaration of Indulgence, Foxcroft notes that Clarendon criticised him because 'when the reading the declaration was under consideration, and the petition for which the bishops now suffer, he was so very cautious that he would give no advice at all.'[127] Morrice's report of the occasion suggests that it was Nottingham rather than Halifax who took the lead in advising such extreme caution:

> [t]he Clergy of London tooke the reading thereof into their serious Consideration, and advised with many of their brethren friends and acquaintance of different persuasions, in point of prudence or policy they advised with the Earle of Danby and the Earle of Hallifax, and especially with the Earle of Nottingham who has most reputation, and who they place most confidence in, and he was utterly against their refusall, unlesse they were unanimous therein.[128]

In the Chatsworth catalogue a document is noted variously as 'draft version of a petition… written by Lord Halifax' and as 'copy produced by…'[129] Whether actually drafted by him or not it certainly hints at closer involvement in the process than Foxcroft suggests. The document itself is intriguing - Foxcroft states: 'that the bishops should have refrained from presenting so politely exasperating a petition appears to us… strong evidence of their good judgment.'[130] The draft does not follow the line of either the original petition which argued that the 'dispensing power.. hath often been declared illegal in parliament' nor of the defence arguments at the trial which, initially at least, stressed that the bishops sought only not to be

[126] Ibid., p. 285.
[127] Clarendon, II, 176.
[128] Morrice, IV, 256.
[129] Chatsworth, CS1/60.
[130] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 507.

compelled to read the Declaration – there was nothing in it 'that any way touches the King's Prerogative…[131] Halifax's draft, on the other hand, emphasises the bishops' former loyalty their surprise at being labelled as criminal and Charles and James's promises
that earlier declarations of indulgence should not be taken as examples. It discusses the position of the bishops both as spiritual and temporal peers and refers to James's oath to support the Church of England 'as it is by Law Established'. There is a commitment to liberty of conscience for Protestant dissenters but no mention of the dispensing power. If this is a reflection of Halifax's thoughts or ideas for the bishops it undermines Foxcroft's argument that he was not consulted. Certainly he was involved in advising them about the possible need for sureties. Clarendon states that Halifax 'advised them to write every one to three peers to be bail for them when they came to the King's bench; which they said they did not like, and seemed not inclined to do it.'[132] The bishops appear to have followed Halifax's advice because Morrice notes for the day before the habeas corpus proceedings on 8 June:

> the B*isho*ps sent every one to four Peeres, to tell their Lo*rdshi*ps they did Suppose they might need Bayle on Friday and if their Lo*rdshi*ps would do them so great an honour as to be Bayle for them if there were occasion, they would be in the Hall the day following.[133]

In the end no sureties were taken and the bishops were released until their trial on 29 June when, on their acquittal, Halifax was said to have cheered and shouted 'Huzza'.[134]

The acquittal of the seven bishops led to mass Anglican rioting in London where:

> Westminster Hall and the palace yeard, with the streets near them, was soe full of people, and their huzzas and shouts for joy of their lordships delivery soe great, that it looked like a little rebellion in noise though not in fact; and bonefires were made not only in the citty but in most towns of England, when the news of it came … The parsons now began also to preach more loud and opon against popery then ever.

[131] Gibson *Seven Bishops*, pp. 86, 127.
[132] Clarendon, II, 176.
[133] Morrice, IV, 284.
[134] Gibson, *Seven Bishops*, p. 133.

Reresby also reported similar scenes in York 'upon occasion of some bonefires made by the rabble upon the news of the bishops being found not guilty.'[135] Halifax could well have seen this as a first expression of the breaking of the engine of James's rule which he had predicted to William. William himself wrote to Bentinck 'this affair of the bishops could carry matters promptly to extremes.'[136]

Invasion

Goldie suggests that 1688 witnessed two revolutions, an Anglican one followed by a Williamite one, and argues that 'had James capitulated in the aftermath of the trial he would certainly have kept his throne'.[137] There is dispute over Williams's motives for invading: 'William would have the crown or nothing',[138] or as the Duke of Berwick, James's illegitimate son, put it,

> his ambition was evident in all his intrigues to dethrone a prince who was his uncle and his father-in-law, in which he could not have succeeded but by numbers of ways contrary to the duties of an honest man as they are repugnant to Christianity.[139]

On the other hand, according to Hoak, before James 'vacated' the throne by trying to flee on 11 December, 'there is no evidence of any such plan' to make William king.[140]

This chapter argues that in so far as William had dynastic concerns they were related to his position as head of the house of Orange rather than as a Stuart.[141] He had no children by Mary and after her death made no moves to remarry even though the children of such a marriage could have succeeded Anne. His actions were conditioned by the European situation. William intervened because he felt that James's foreign and domestic policies were

[135] Reresby, p. 501.
[136] Gibson, *Seven Bishops*, p. 112.
[137] Goldie, 'Anglican Revolution', p. 108.
[138] Lucile Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution: The Part Played by William of Orange in the Revolution of 1688* (Harvard, 1954), p. 60.
[139] Andrew Browning (ed.), *English Historical Documents. Volume VIII. 1660–1714* (1953), p. 905.
[140] Hoak, 'The Anglo-Dutch Revolution', p. 19.
[141] Tony Claydon, *William III* (2002), p. 10.

damaging to an anti-French foreign policy in Europe, and thought intervention would lessen the harm. Invasion was desirable for defensive reasons, that is for fear England would ally with Louis XIV and attack the United Provinces. Pincus, for example, claims that by the end of 1687 James had decided to go to war with the Dutch, and the invasion should 'be understood as a pre-emptive first strike against an equally bellicose English polity'.[142] Anglo-Dutch relations worsened further when William refused publicly to support James's religious policies. When James demanded the return of British regiments serving in the United Provinces in January 1688, many Dutch foreign policy experts concluded he had become irreconcilably opposed to William. Van Citters regarded the request as 'a certain mark of war against the States General', while shares in the Dutch East India Company (VOC) fell by 13% in response to the news.[143] In this context it is hardly surprising that when Louis agreed to pay for part of the English navy in April 1688, it was interpreted, as Troost suggests, as looking 'suspiciously like the beginning of a formal alliance between England and France against the Republic'.[144] During his visit to England in 1687, Dijkveld was told by 'a group of notable persons in the English Church', that James's religious policies risked causing a civil war.[145] William was concerned that civil war might make England unable to join an anti-French alliance, and moreover could lead to the establishment of a Republic.[146] Thus, for William in 1688, there was a real danger that if he did not immediately intervene, England might attack the United Provinces anyway. Writing in November 1688 the Dutch envoy to Vienna noted that 'the Prince's expedition is looked upon as a means to bring England to a better correspondence … to be employed against France'.[147] From September 1688 William

[142] Pincus, *1688* p. 332.
[143] Pincus, *1688*, p. 329; George Hilton Jones, 'The Recall of the British from the Dutch Service', *HJ*, 25:2 (1982), p. 426.
[144] Wout Troost, *William III, the Stadholder-King: A Political Biography* (2005), p. 190.
[145] John Carswell, *The Descent on England: A Study of the English Revolution of 1688 and its European Background* (1969), p. 94.
[146] James Muilenburg, *The Embassy of Everaard van Weede, Lord of Dykvelt, to England in 1687* (Lincoln, 1920), p. 31.
[147] John Childs, *The Army, James II and the Glorious* Revolution, (Manchester, 1980), p. 173.

had a window of opportunity to mount a successful invasion – the backing of the city of Amsterdam and alliances with Sweden and several German states.[148]

James had told Barillon early in September that on William's arrival Halifax and others would be arrested. William's landing at Torbay on 5 November and the circulation of his Declaration galvanized activity. By the middle of that month James's army had begun to dissolve as Grafton, Ormonde and Churchill among others deserted.[149] Would Halifax have known in advance of some at least of these desertions? Certainly from early in James's reign he had strong suspicions of the likely disintegration of the army. Reresby notes on 16 September that Halifax 'advised me not to bee too earnest to be chosen, or at the least not to take the Court assistance too much, for many reasons then offered,' and this could be because he was aware of the coming invasion.[150] When interrogated by James at Colchester on 4 November, in probable apprehension of committal to the Tower, Halifax gave his word of honour that he had not invited William over while refusing at the same time to repudiate the expedition.[151] At about the same time in a meeting with James, Halifax, Nottingham and Burlington all refused to sign an address denouncing William's invasion. On 6 November the bishops also refused to sign or produce a similar address. For Gibson, 'the unanimous refusal of Halifax, Nottingham and Burlington and the bishops to denounce William's Declaration suggests an element of collusion in how they responded to James'.[152]

During November the Hydes and the bishop of Peterborough actively attempted to organise a petition from peers in London asking James to call a parliament. Clarendon's *Diaries* reported an address being framed on 8 November. After initially seeming enthusiastic,

[148] Stephen B. Baxter, *William III* (1966), p. 211, G. H. Jones, 'William III's Diplomatic Preparations for his Expedition to England', *Durham University Journal*, 129 (1987), 242.
[149] W. A. Speck, 'The Orangist Conspiracy Against James II', *HJ*, 30:2 (1987), 461.
[150] Reresby, p. 510.
[151] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 8-9.
[152] Gibson, *Seven Bishops*, p. 161.

Halifax employed various stalling tactics, demanding that all peers in London sign and presenting Clarendon with a different petition. When Clarendon visited Halifax, who was with Nottingham and Weymouth, on the 12th the group finally made their objections to any participation from the Hyde brothers clear.[153] Halifax told him

> I will not join with any who have sat in the ecclesiastical commission. I have no objections to my Lord Rochester, but he has sat in that court. Those proceedings must be questioned, and therefore it is not fit that any in that commission should sign this petition. Lord Nottingham said not fit he should join in the petition, for the reasons my Lord Halifax had given. Lord Weymouth said not one word …[154]

Demanding the exclusion of Rochester killed the possibility of a joint petition for a free parliament and thus seriously damaged the King's cause. Clarendon lamented 'Good God! what partiality is this; that two Lords must think to impose what they please upon the rest? We are like to be a happy people: God help us!'. When Sir Thomas Clarges was told about Halifax's behaviour 'he said, he wondered at him'.[155] Similarly, Beddard notes the negative consequences Halifax's actions had on the loyalist position. It 'laid bare the bewitching influence of aristocratic rivalry' which contributed meaningfully to the end of James's reign.[156]

Why then did Halifax act as he did: - sincere opposition to anyone who held office under James or an effort both to damage his old rival politically and to cement his own position as the leader of moderate Anglicanism? If Rochester had agreed to omit his name it would have acted as an admission of his wrongdoing under James and politically damaged him and other leading supporters of the High Church cause. The alternative – the petition was delivered on 17 November lacking the signature of Halifax – helped to bolster Halifax's political position. As Roger Morrice noted:

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[153] Clarendon, II, 201-2.
[154] Ibid., p. 203.
[155] Ibid., p. 204.
[156] Beddard, 'The Guildhall Declaration', 410.

> The Earle of Nottingham, the Marquesse of Hallifax, the Earle of Kent and divers other Noblemen did decline to signe this Address though they were privy to it, Whether it was because they would not joyne with any that had acted in the High Commission, as the Bishop of Rochester had. They say also they refuse to let the Lord Chancellour joyne with them in it, though he offered himself.[157]

Publicly refusing to join an address with Lord Chancellor Jeffreys helped to distance Halifax from the aspects of James's regime most disliked by nonconformists. At this point the outcome of William's invasion was uncertain and it is possible that Halifax was still attempting to position himself for a return to office under James. He could carve out a position for himself as reliably Protestant but neither a rebel like Danby, nor complicit in James's catholicising policies like Rochester. But Halifax would not have wanted merely to encourage James to return to his 'old friends' and thus embrace the High Tory Anglicanism of Charles's and the earlier part of James's reign. Halifax would have been deeply wary of such a conjuncture and would have preferred a reduction in the powers of the monarchy and substantial concessions to Protestant dissenters. Clearly, even before James's first flight Halifax was engaged in 'efforts to sabotage the scheme' of High Church loyalists and instead win the support of Dissenters.[158] His attempts to find a base of support for comprehension in 1680 had foundered because of his lack of contacts with and sympathy amongst nonconformists. By 1688 he had learned from that lesson and throughout the crisis of late-1688 he repeatedly emphasised to Protestant dissenters his distance from what Morrice called the '*Conspiratores Heirarchisi*'.[159] Halifax sought both to obstruct them, and to build political support for himself amongst moderate London nonconformists.[160] To an extent, Halifax succeeded in winning over 'the worthiest divines' during the course of the crisis, and Morrice's attitude towards him warmed over the following months.

[157] Morrice, IV, 340.
[158] Beddard, 'The Guildhall Declaration', 409-10.
[159] Morrice, IV, 419.
[160] Ibid., p. 367.

Hungerford

In the following weeks, James's position collapsed further. On 19 November Danby and a group of northern gentlemen seized the garrison at York. This was a blow to the King's authority: it was also a factional blow against Halifax. Reresby wrote to him seeking advice and his letter would have confirmed Halifax's suspicions that much of his personal influence in the North of England (securing Reresby the governorship of York was a key piece in this) risked being swept away. Those who had taken York, Reresby warned, were speaking very disparagingly of Halifax, 'the great earl [Danby] is their only idol, but this may be artifice.'[161] While Halifax had effectively positioned himself in London, the successful rising in the North risked a political solution to 1688 from which he was shut out.

At this time, James, realising the extent of dissatisfaction in the army, broke down mentally. News that the King was suffering from recurrent nosebleeds was circulating in London from 22 November, and on the 26th James returned to London.[162] The following day almost all the peers summoned to a meeting with James called for negotiations with William and a new Parliament; a '"bitter draught", but … [he] had little choice but to swallow it'.[163] Halifax's role in this meeting seems to have been one of disingenuous obsequiousness. Clarendon noted with disgust how he spoke 'very flatteringly; that he would not join in the petition [of 17 November], because he believed it would displease the King'. 'This Lord is a strange man', Clarendon complained, 'if we would have petitioned at this time, and in his way, all had been well; the displeasing the King was not then thought of'.[164] James's own performance was unlikely to have inspired Halifax with confidence. Clearly the King was aware that speculation over his health risked damage, and he declared 'he looked upon his

[161] Reresby, pp. 585-6.
[162] Clarendon, II, 206
[163] John Miller, *James II* (1978) p. 205.
[164] Clarendon, II, 210.

bleeding at the nose to be a great providence', as he would have been captured by Churchill if he had been well enough to inspect his troops. Further James warned the assembled peers 'that the Prince of Orange came for the crown, whatever he pretended; but that he would not see himself deposed; that he had read the story of King Richard II'.[165] Halifax too had also been thinking about him during the past few years. He owned a copy of the Whig politician Sir Robert Howard's 1681 *The life and reign of King Richard the Second*, and after the Revolution purchased Howard's *History of the reigns of Edward and Richard II* (1690), which depicted 1688, with a 'total lack of any sense of anachronism', as a repeat performance of 1327 and 1399.[166] Halifax's unpublished work 'Prerogative', written 'principally, and most likely entirely, during the reign of James II', contained multiple references to the deposition of Richard II, including a lengthy passage which quoted with seeming approval from the parliamentary articles against him.[167] The history of England, Halifax wrote, showed that usurpers could succeed if they acted 'for the generall good', even if they lacked claim to a title. However, 'when R 2d who had a good one claymed such a Prerogative as destroyed the Lawes, they rescued themselves from the usurpation though it came from a Legal Magistrate'.[168]

It is the claim of this chapter that at some point in mid- to late-November – and before he accepted a role in the Hungerford negotiations – Halifax had decided to abandon James. The precise date and precise final straw cannot be definitively stated. Possibly the success of Danby's rising forced him to act more assertively to win William's confidence (this theory was put forward by Burnet), possibly the extent of desertions from the King's army and news that William had ordered the Exeter clergy to omit prayers for the Prince of Wales convinced

[165] Ibid., p. 211.
[166] For a broader discussion of Howard, see Claydon, *Revolution in Time*, pp. 52-62.
[167] Brown, II, 5, 46-7.
[168] Ibid., p. 38.

him that James was finished.[169] Or possibly James's ranting about providential nosebleeds, Richard II, and his indecision while in London led Halifax fully to back William. His objections to William's invasion – that it was unnecessary and risked failing – were no longer relevant; his republican leanings meant he was theoretically perfectly comfortable with the concept of deposing a King (or excluding him from the throne). Having succeeded in establishing himself as a politician Presbyterians and moderate Anglicans could support he intended to help William either seize power or drive off James. This interpretation runs counter to those of Foxcroft and Kenyon. Both date Halifax's defection to 11 December, when James made his first attempted flight to France while Halifax was in Hungerford. As Kenyon says 'His studied loyalty to the King did not crack until 11 December… To his mind this act of criminal irresponsibility at a time of crisis dissolved the bonds of allegiance' 'He had stood by James as long as any reasonable man could, and defected to William only when this presented the best chance of peace.'[170] Foxcroft similarly dates Halifax's desertion of James to this moment '[t]hat Halifax should renounce from this moment the cause of James II cannot appear astonishing'.[171] Certainly, Halifax sought to use James's flight to justify his actions. Reresby reported that when criticised for voting that James abdicated the throne by 'a court lady' in February 1689, 'My Lord replied that the King dealt il with him in sending him a message to the Prince, and going away before he returnd. She said he should not say soe to her, that knew that his lordship sent him away, and then was angry that he went'.[172]

However, there is evidence suggesting he did not accept the Hungerford embassy purely to advance James's interests. It certainly might have risked undermining his position with moderate nonconformists. One eighteenth-century historian wrote:

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[169] Robert Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King: The Journal of the Provisional Government in the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988), p. 22.
[170] Kenyon, p. 19
[171] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 34.
[172] Reresby, p. 552.

> the Marquis of H-----x … began to be suspected by the Presbyterians themselves, since he undertook this Accommodation. Others said that the great warmth the Marquis had lately shewn for the King's preservation, did not so much proceed from his Affection to his Person, as from his domineering Spirit, which made him fond of a Negotiation, which he intended to ingross himself.[173]

Once again Halifax's failure to comprehend how deeply his putative allies mistrusted him risked undermining his political plans. In conversation with Sir Robert Howard, subsequently reported to the Williamite camp, Halifax defended himself. Howard complained that Halifax's participation

> would give very unhappy suspicions that he was engaged in a design to give a stop [to William advancing into London] by the delays of a treaty, and the mistaken notion of an accommodation; for I plainly told him that nothing of that sort would be endured, for there was no room left for trust, and everything must be built on new foundations.

In reply Halifax 'seemed then fully to agree with me, and assured me he would not act so as to deserve the least censure of this nature'.[174] Halifax's behaviour at the negotiations supports the theory that he was acting against James before the King's first flight abroad. The first dispatch the commissioners sent to James highlighted the strength and increase of William's support, as well as suggesting that for a treaty to be signed James would need to renounce the power of dissolving Parliaments – 'a hint sufficiently suggestive of 1640'.[175] The negotiations themselves were largely ineffective – 'posturing and positioning'– and unlikely to have produced anything valuable. 'Aside from the main discussions, the most important conversation at Hungerford was between Halifax and Gilbert Burnet.'[176] This highlighted the extent to which Halifax was already willing to contemplate a political landscape without James. Burnet reports that on the first night of negotiations:

> The marquis of Hallifax sent for me. But the prince said, though he would suspect nothing from our meeting, others might. So I did not speak with him in private, but in the hearing of others. Yet he took occasion to ask me, so as no body observed it, if we had a mind to have the king in our hands. I said, by no means; for we would not hurt

[173] Abel Boyer, *The History of King William the Third* (3 vols, 1703), I, 257-258.
[174] Quoted in Foxcoft, *Life*, II, 21.
[175] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 26. She nonetheless rejects the suggestion that Halifax sent intentionally gloomy reports to James in the hope of inducing his flight.
[176] Gibson, *Seven Bishops*, p. 170.

> his person. He asked next, what if he had a mind to go away. I said, nothing was so much to be wished for. This I told the prince. And he approved of both my answers.[177]

Asking Burnet this question should be viewed not as Halifax showing concern for James's welfare, but that his abandonment of James's cause, in favour of either enabling William to capture the King, or to encourage his exile, preceded James's first flight. Halifax had out-manoeuvred the efforts of the Hyde brothers in securing a role in the Hungerford commission. Before James decided to flee London he had decided to throw his support behind William.

Revolution Settlement

In the aftermath of James's flight from London, the successful establishment by Rochester on 11 December of a provisional government of peers meeting at the Guildhall both helped to stabilise London and provide a platform for a last-gasp effort by loyalists to rescue the King. The actions of the peers demonstrated, as Beddard puts it, 'the existence of a sizeable body of King's friends, who, at this eleventh hour, regarded James's political preservation as vital to the future prosperity of Anglican Toryism'.[178] The prospects of this meeting were regarded gloomily by the Puritan Morrice, who feared they might succeed saying 'many are thought to be playing the Trimmers, and to be laying a foundation upon a narrow bottom for Torisme againe to the exclusion of the true Reformed interest in the Kingdome, and for restoring the Hierarchy to its Zenith'.[179] Halifax was not among the group of Williamite peers who succeeded in neutering the Guildhall Declaration of 11 December by excluding a clause calling for James's return with honour but from the moment he took the chair he acted as a firm Williamite partisan.[180]

[177] Burnet, *History*, III, 341.
[178] Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King*, p. 37.
[179] Morrice, IV, 367.
[180] Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King*, p. 39.

Halifax returned to London on 12 December and on the 13th chaired a meeting of the Lords to deal with the riots that had broken out in the capital. In parliamentary debates Halifax pursued a somewhat contradictory strategy. On the one hand he sought to push a Williamite agenda through a conservative House of Lords most of whose members disliked it. Thus he needed to rely on the City of London and House of Commons to bully the peers into compliance. In spite of his best efforts, the House of Lords returned numerous unwelcome votes, so that he frequently sought to have the Lords adjourned to respond to the Commons. On the other, he strove to uphold the dignity of the peers, emphasising that symbolically, if not in reality, they remained the pre-eminent chamber. William had signalled his willingness to cut the Lords out of political discussions on 13 December. Presented with an address from the City and Lieutenancy of London inviting him to London and one from the peers which did not include the invitation, and which blamed misgovernment on royal ministers rather than on James himself, William 'seemed much pleased with those that came from the City, but not at all with that from the Lords'.[181] His response to the petition of the peers contained a thinly-veiled note of menace, announcing 'that he intended to be in town within a few days, the City having invited him hither'.[182]

Halifax's most significant contribution as chair of the Provisional Government was an ultimately unsuccessful effort to block the rescue of James after his capture at Faversham. When Sancroft's servant Thomas Liniall arrived at the Guildhall with news of the King's capture, he was initially told to 'withdraw alone', and 'not discourse with any'. Halifax's initial hopes of ignoring the messenger were damaged when the loyalist Mulgrave told peers that 'a poor countryman' had been sent 'with the news, in order to procure his rescue: which was like to come too late, since the messenger had waited long at the Council-door, without

[181] Clarendon, II, 225.
[182] Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King*, p. 40.

any body's being willing to take notice of him'. According to Mulgrave, Halifax attempted 'hastily' to adjourn the sitting, but was prevented by the former's refusal to stop speaking 'so that meer shame obliged them to suspend their Politicks a-while'. When a motion was proposed to send cavalry to rescue the King from 'the rabble at Feversham', the dismay of Halifax and the Williamite lords was obvious. 'Their looks', noted Ailesbury, later to be one of the few peers to accompany James to Rochester, 'were enough for to betray their hearts'.[183] Halifax told the peers 'that there may be many reasons to doubt this information may not be true; that, therefore, nothing may be done at present, but that they meet again in the afternoon'. The meeting was adjourned until 4pm, at which point the arrival of a second messenger and Rochester's scrambling to acquire more loyalists (attendance increased from 28 in the morning to 38 in the afternoon) forced the dispatch of a rescue mission.[184] Halifax was clearly fully driving for William's interest, and disregarding James's safety seemingly in the hope that the King either escaped or was harmed. Foxcroft's claim that Halifax was merely acting 'with a by no means unnatural desire of obtaining some respite for the consideration of this fresh and bewildering revolution' is unconvincing, and Halifax's openly hostile actions explain why he had no choice but to join William when James returned to London on 16 December.[185]

With James gathering a significant amount of popular and political support after his return to the capital, Halifax was chief amongst those dispatched by William to tell the King he needed to leave London for Ham in an ultimately successful bid to scare James into making a second attempt to reach France. For Beddard, the occasion marked the point where the unreliable Trimmer was finally pinned down. Halifax initially suggested that some of William's guards

[183] Ibid., p. 49.
[184] Ibid., pp. 91-3.
[185] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 4.

should be sent to inform James that it was not 'safe' for him to remain in London, whereupon William stated his wish that Halifax, Shrewsbury, and Delamere also attend.

> William could "not help smiling (as he own'd afterwards) to see him, who came as commissioner from the other side, accept to act so low a part so very willingly". His name having been spoken, the Marquess could do no other than accept with as good a grace as he could muster. In one masterly move William had "fixed" him to his interest for life.[186]

Yet Beddard's interpretation – that the unreliable Halifax was not fully 'fixed' to William until very late – is based on the account of Mulgrave, who did not attend the meeting in question.[187] Clarendon, who arrived at William's camp late on 17 December, reported:

> Lord Halifax said, he thought it were best to be sent by some of the Prince's officers; and I think he named Count Solmes; but the Prince replied, "by your favour, my Lord, it is the advice of the peers here, and some of yourselves shall carry it".[188]

No mention is made of William considering this a test of loyalty for Halifax, nor that Halifax was anything other than an enthusiastic partisan for William at this point. Indeed, Halifax's suggestion of Solmes (who accompanied the peers to James) is perhaps notable. Though Clarendon did not attach any significance to this, Morrice did, writing of the delegation: 'Count Solmes (Colonell of the Princes Guards, who in other Countries is an Executioner like our Lieutenant of the Tower)'.[189] Far from being a reluctant participant, Halifax had fully committed to scaring James out of England, in the knowledge that this would involve granting William control over the government (at the very least as regent, possibly as King) and participating in a war against France.

With James out of London, and under Dutch guard, Halifax chaired the meeting of peers called by William on 21 December in the Queen's presence chamber. While events were driven by William's command of force, Halifax sought to highlight the independence of the

[186] Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King*, p. 58.
[187] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 39.
[188] Clarendon, II, 229.
[189] Morrice, IV, 215.

Lords. He 'desired tenderness might be used in thanks for calling the Peers together, since they had a birthright, which might be prejudiced', and recommended they start meeting in the House of Lords itself. The revolutionary significance of meeting in a parliament chamber without royal permission was noted by conservatives. Clarendon opposed meeting there. Similarly Fauconberg 'doth not think the House of Lords proper, since they are not a House of Lords'.[190] Emphasising the independence of the peers from James was one of the symbolic ways in which Halifax sought to use his chairmanship to drive through the revolutionary settlement. The other was an attempt to delegitimise James. On 25 January, when the Bishop of Oxford included prayers for the King, Clarendon reported 'at which my Lord Halifax was very uneasy, and said to some Lords that stood by him, this must not be; but he took no publick notice of it'.[191] Timothy Hall, Bishop of Oxford, was loathed for having promoted the reading of James's *Declaration of Indulgence* by London clergy in 1687.[192] Three days later Halifax was better prepared, and told the Bishop of St. David's, another staunch Jacobite who the previous month had been assaulted by 'the rabble in Cambridge', to omit the prayer for the King:

> but the Bishop said plainly he would not omit it; upon which my Lord Halifax acquainted the House with it, and moved that prayers might be suspended till further order: which was accordingly directed.[193]

In addition to seeking to undermine support for James, Halifax used the power of the chair to influence the outcome of debates. He 'drove furiously' in encouraging peers to vote William and Mary as monarchs, curtailing debates and allowing loyalist peers to absent themselves from uncomfortable votes.[194]

[190] Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King*, p. 150.
[191] Alan Simpson, 'Notes of a Noble Lord, 22 January to 12 February 1688/9', *EHR*, 52:205 (1937), 92.
[192] Edward Vallance, 'Hall, Timothy', *ODNB*.
[193] Clarendon, II, 255; Stuart Handley, 'Watson, Thomas', *ODNB*.
[194] Clarendon, II, 260.

Three major factions within the convention can be discerned. The first, which backed a regency, consisted of the loyalists who feared any suggestion of an elective monarchy and were personally loyal to James. The second group was one round Danby whose members were against a regency on 29 December but who combined with the loyalists to amend the House of Commons resolution, replace 'deserted' with 'abdicated' and delete the language about a 'vacancy'. Finally the supporters of William, including Halifax, accepted the House of Commons resolution and wanted to install William and Mary.[195] Among these it is possible to distinguish one group wanting Mary as queen and William as consort; and another favouring William but divided between those supporting a joint monarchy and those, led by Halifax, who favoured the offer of the crown to William alone. Burnet reported:

> The marquis of Hallifax intended, by his zeal for the prince's interest, to atone for his backwardness in not coming early into it: and that he might get before lord Danby, who was in great credit with the prince, he moved, that the crown should be given to the prince, and to the two princesses after him. Many of the republican party approved of this: for by it they gained another point: the people in this case would plainly elect a king, without any critical regard to the order of succession.[196]

Halifax's commitment to giving William the crown is particularly relevant given his strong advocacy of Limitations rather than Exclusion in 1680. His

> apparently hypocritical stance may have come from a pragmatic conviction that in the exigencies of the moment some form of *de facto* government was necessary and that William would not take on that responsibility under limited terms that deprived him of outright kingship.[197]

During the Exclusion Crisis, Halifax had accepted the theoretical legitimacy of parliament excluding an hereditary heir from the throne. If William left there could be chaos. Moreover, a regency led by Mary would likely be dominated by conservative Anglicans, who would pursue policies Halifax disliked. This was the 'conspiratorio' of heirarchists Morrice feared:

> Which would utterly overthrow the Princes designe, which is to Retrieve and promote the Reformed Interest and Religion here and abrode, and to repress the Tirany of

[195] Horwitz, *Parliament, Policy and Politics* p. 10.
[196] Burnet, *History*, III, 390-1.
[197] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 344.

> France, If he should close with this narrow Interest here that counts the Reformed Ministers and Churches no Ministers nor Churches, but the troublers of the World fit to be depressed not advanced he would never be able to bring it to pass …[198]

Halifax's reasons for accepting William as king were pragmatic but also infused with his basic political instincts. The alternative to William becoming king was for James to return but this would be likely to lead to the return of the old Tory Anglican alliance and Halifax was bitterly opposed to that as well as to its foremost proponents. On the other hand were William to leave Halifax's fear would have been of further rioting. James's army had effectively disappeared and the troops guaranteeing social order in London were Dutch. If they were to be withdrawn there could be a return to the social upheavals associated with the civil war. Reresby noted Halifax:

> used some arguments to me to proove the legality of accepting to be soe. One was that the King haveing relinquished the government, it was not for that to be lett fall, and it could not be supported if men did not act under thos on whom it was conferred.[199]

Moreover, Halifax was committed to English participation in the war against France.

Why was Halifax willing to advance the idea of crowning William alone? It certainly enabled him to outflank Danby, but he already had credit with William for his role in the House of Lords, and could have advocated a joint William-Mary coronation. However, crowning William alone would have allowed Halifax to define the monarchy as purely elective, and it seems that he was at least vaguely interested in the plan. Apart from Halifax the only peer willing to contemplate crowning William alone was Lord Craven, 'a vicious and corrupt man', but when Burnet raised the prospect with Bentinck it was (to his horror) met with some approval.[200]

Conclusion

[198] Morrice, IV, 417.
[199] Reresby, p. 548.
[200] Burnet, *History*, p. 392.

Like many of Halifax's parliamentary schemes, the proposal to crown William alone lacked sufficient support and was jettisoned in favour of jointly crowning him with Mary. Yet in some ways 13 February 1689, when Halifax, as speaker, left the woolsack of the House of Lords to proffer the Crown of England to the new monarchs, marked the triumph of his career. He had finally bound England into an anti-French alliance, opened the door to comprehension of moderate dissenters, and emphasised the elective nature of the Crown. As an added bonus, his rivals from the 1680s had either been dismayed by the overthrow of James, or outflanked politically by him. There is an irony, too, that the marquessate Halifax received from Charles II in 1682 as a reward for speaking so effectively against Exclusion in the House of Lords in 1680 ultimately helped, by giving him precedence over the earls of Danby and Rochester when selecting a chair of the Lords during the Revolution, to exclude James from the throne in 1689. The action against Exclusion earned Halifax the lifelong enmity of many Whigs, but it gave him the power to force through the measure they could not – removing James, and indeed all future Catholics from the throne – and provided the best chance for comprehension since 1662. Charles might have found this paradox amusing; James, who possessed neither his brother's humour nor his ability to appreciate why political figures might disagree with a policy without being borderline treasonous, would not. The difference in personalities between the two brothers helps to explain why the former died in an English palace and the latter in exile in France. Charles used the political support High Church Anglicans were willing to offer him, but he did not fall into the misapprehension that that support was unconditional. James, on the other hand, believed that the absolutist sermons which claimed 'the King is not subject to the Coercive Power of the Law … when the Law is in force it can have no power over him', were representative of Anglican attitudes towards the pro-Catholic policies he desired.[201] When he met resistance he responded by wrecking the

[201] Harris, *Revolution*, p. 58.

engine of local support which could protect a monarch. Were Halifax aware of historical assessments of James he would likely have rejected revisionist claims that the King was simply interested in obtaining relief for all religious confessions, while at the same time scoffing at the idea he was building a modern absolutist state. This attitude explains why he urged public Dutch opposition to Test Act repeal while considering invasion unnecessary and risky. Civil War, not an English equivalent of the *dragonades*, was his great fear at the start of 1688.

Once William, assisted by the political, military, and diplomatic mistakes made by James and Louis XIV, was able successfully to assemble and land an invasion force in a bid to secure his Orangist (not Stuart) ambitions, Halifax's prime objection to invasion was removed. His decision to remain in London was motivated in part by his desire for personal safety, but it also gave him the opportunity to position himself for dominance in a putative post-invasion regime. His actions during October and November allowed him to present himself as a 'clean' political figure if negotiations between James and William proved successful; untainted by the (albeit pardoned) rebellion of Danby and Devonshire, and innocent of the complicity with catholicisation with which he sought to tarnish Rochester and Sunderland. This political image was, as has been shown, constructed with some effectiveness during the period, and at the cost of a united pro-James front in London. Halifax's actions were not necessarily hostile to William: by remaining in London he could help to provide a government purged of Catholic and pro-French influences, and willing to contribute to an Anglo-Dutch war against France. When James's military and mental stability collapsed, Halifax entered into the Hungerford negotiations fully willing to abandon James, either by aiding his capture by the Dutch or by helping to scare him to the continent.

Once William decided he would only accept the crown, Halifax was perfectly willing to use his influence in the House of Lords to secure it. Aside from providing stability, a declaration

of parliamentary support for William and Mary was more compatible with Halifax's principles than having William simply declare himself King, as some in his circle proposed. Moreover, the prospect of crowning William alone would have enabled the monarchy to be shown as fully elective, and enable it to act as a parliament-approved 'tinsel' for mankind. This solution Halifax sympathised with, and was the most practical 'republican' solution available in 1689. In notes Halifax made of his conversations with Burnet, sometime before August 1689, the Scotsman, who was horrified at the suggestion of excluding Mary from the throne, warned Halifax 'it was dangerous to give too much power to William that he was inclined to be arbitrary'.[202] The date for this remark is unknown, but it may well have been Burnet hoping to convince Halifax against giving William the crown alone. Ultimately Halifax would come to have concerns over what he perceived to be William's hostility to Parliament. If he did not regret the Revolution itself, he certainly did not anticipate many of its consequences, and his reaction to those unforeseen consequences forms the concluding chapters of this thesis.

[202] Add MS 51511, p. 40.

CHAPTER FIVE

Halifax and the Financial Revolution

Introduction

In the parliamentary debate over the Bank of England Sir George Savile, the owner of the great country seat of Rufford Abbey, made a typically sarcastic intervention. In response to a speech by a supporter who had pled the importance of the Bank to the state Savile mockingly declared it was 'as if he had been describing a conjugal love, and enlarging upon the affection that subsisted between a man and wife'. This George Savile was speaking in 1781, and responding to Lord North, but he could easily have been channelling Halifax, who expressed similar concerns over the impact of the financial revolution on the state and virtue, and recognised such developments were antithetical to his personal interest. Much of Halifax's income derived from the sale of annuities which would be adversely impacted by the developments mentioned and which are discussed in detail later in this chapter. Halifax's expressions of concern at the impact of commercialization on the landed interest form an early part of a political language that would last throughout the long eighteenth century. Indeed, one historian of the Bank notes 'over a hundred years after its foundation, the Bank was still having to fight the same battles it had fought during the 1690s'.[1]

The Glorious Revolution of 1689 has been portrayed as the triumph of a Whig economic vision.[2] And yet though Halifax helped to push through the granting of the Crown to William, in part because of his strongly anti-French views, he quickly turned against the methods being used by the government. In seeking to understand why Halifax moved from being a

[1] H. V. Bowen, 'The Bank of England During the Long Eighteenth Century, 1694-1820', in David Kynaston and Richard Roberts (eds), *The Bank of England: Money, Power and Influence, 1694-1994* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 8-9.
[2] Pincus, *1688*, pp. 366-99.

supporter of the Revolution to ending his life in opposition to the government, Brown does not discuss the role that his anxieties over economic changes played; while Foxcroft, in portraying Halifax as an heroic Gladstonian figure whose political thought stands above time or self-interest, largely ignored this element of his life. However, Halifax, like many other nobles, would have placed the continuance of his dynasty – secured on large, landed estates – above most other considerations and had access to a strand of contemporary political thought which justified the continuation of such landed dynasties as being in the public interest. The opposition to the establishment of the Bank of England provides a window into Halifax's turbulent political career in the 1690s. This chapter will examine the debates over the Bank and war taxation and then broader themes in economic historiography. Problems facing the landed nobility were raised during the period, with Halifax concerned that corruption and partisanship were further eroding the basis of an aristocracy already under pressure. In many ways he typified an aristocrat struggling with changes in the structure of estates, under pressure to enhance revenues, and taking on increasing levels of debt. The nature of his estate – particularly his sale of life annuities as an investment strategy – put him at enhanced risk because of the Financial Revolution.

Halifax's economic views and activities relate to various elements of economic historiography of the period. One is how to account for the fact that the post-revolutionary state was able to borrow at vast scale The literature is still heavily influenced by North and Weingast's 1989 work on credible commitment. In order for early modern rulers to borrow money, they usually attempted to set a precedent of 'responsible behaviour' by not violating property rights or defaulting on their commitments under any circumstances. However, when states fought wars 'the sovereign would heavily discount the future, making the one-time gain

of reneging more attractive than relative to the future opportunities foregone'.[3] The inability of the English Crown to behave 'responsibly', as evidenced by, for example, the 1672 Stop of the Exchequer, meant that for the Williamite regime to have fiscal stability it needed to establish institutions which would leave it 'constrained to obey a set of rules that do not permit leeway for violating commitments'.[4] They argue that creating 'multiple veto points' – the establishment of the Bank of England, earmarking specific taxes to repay specific debts, and strengthening the common law – all constrained the monarch and therefore ensured that the interest paid on long-term debt fell from 14% in 1694 to 3% in 1739.[5]

The North and Weingast thesis is opposed by historians who argue that partisanship, rather than institutions, explain changes in the financial position of the English state. Therefore 1672 was, according to Carruthers, attributable to the fact that 'those with a financial interest in Crown debts couldn't effectively pressure Parliament to repay them'.[6] In the absence of a parliamentary faction which would force repayment of general government debts, those who were willing to lend to the government under Charles used figures like Sir Stephen Fox as intermediaries, on the grounds that he had the political weight at court to prevent defaults.[7] After 1689 partisanship enabled a parliamentary force that could guarantee returns to government lenders. In 1672 most MPs were English landowners with limited direct ties to City financial interests, but by the 1680s and 1690s party divisions and identities had solidified. Stasavage notes that 'landowners could actually have had a short-term interest in defaulting on government debt so as to allow a reduction in taxes on land', but the nature of

[3] Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast, 'Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England', *Journal of Economic History*, 49:4 (1989), 807.
[4] Ibid., 804.
[5] Ibid., 824.
[6] Bruce G. Carruthers, *City of Capital. Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, 1996), p. 68.
[7] Christopher Clay, *Public Finance and Private Wealth. The Career of Sir Stephen Fox, 1627-1716* (Oxford, 1978), p. 77.

the Whig political coalition lessened the risk. [8] Thus, although Tory landowners were willing to contemplate this strategy, partisanship meant Whig landowners allied with the financiers. While those active in City finance were mostly Whigs, most Whigs were landed gentlemen rather than members of the 'monied interest'.[9] However, strengthened partisan feelings meant the Whigs were willing to ensure commitment to government debt. Consequently more intense partisanship, rather than better institutions, explain why England's borrowing costs were lower than France's. The crucial factor in England, Carruthers and Stasavage argue, was that 'holders of government debt were members of a cohesive cross-issue coalition in a parliament that would otherwise have been dominated by landowning interests'.[10] In essence, partisanship caused those who solely owned land to act against their economic interests.

Bank of England

In addition to the obviously pressing need to provide the government with finance, there were pre-existing arguments from writers on economics that the establishment of a national bank would prove beneficial to England. Josiah Child's *A New Discourse of Trade* (1668), which argued a bank could lower interest rates and potentially double national wealth, was owned by Halifax, while William Petty's *Quantulumcunque*, dedicated to him, made a similar argument.[11] Nevertheless, Halifax's opposition to the measure can in part be attributed to a fear that it would upend the traditional dominance of landed elites over England's government. As Burnet noted, opponents of the Bank warned that 'all the money of England would come into their hands, and they would in a few years become the masters of the stock and wealth of the nation.'[12]

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[8] David Stasavage, 'Credible Commitment in Early Modern Europe: North and Weingast Revisited', *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, 18:1 (2002), p. 156.
[9] David Stasavage, 'Partisan Politics and Public Debt in Great Britain, 1689–1742', *European Review of Economic History*, 11:1 (2007), 123-53.
[10] Stasavage, 'Credible Commitment', 184.
[11] A. Andreades, *History of the Bank of England, 1640-1903* (trans. Christabel Meredith, 1966), pp. 46-7.
[12] Burnet, *History*, p. 599.

The fear that growing national debt, and the permanent entrenchment of a Bank to ensure its repayment, would cause a moneyed interest to dominate the government, is clearly expressed in Halifax's writings. '[W]here there is great need of money', he wrote in an unpublished essay on politics, 'and consequently a necessity of anticipating, the Banquers must naturally, either bee hanged for having all the money, or they must governe all, because the Nation hath none'. Intriguingly, in the margins of the holograph sheet he wrote 'In France, corrected, &c'.[13] There are two possible events that Halifax was referring to. The first is mentioned in letters from Henry Savile which reported in 1681 that 'bankers heer [Paris] continue breaking … I am told Monsieur Colbert threatens to hang two or three for an example, that hee thinkes may prevent the like inconvencies for ye future'.[14] More likely Halifax was considering the case of Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's Superintendent of Finances from 1653 until his dramatic fall in 1661. Initially a close ally of Mazarin, his involvement with stabilising French borrowing led to him acquiring vast riches along with allegations of corruption. It was, however, his activities on Belle Île, where according to the king 'his extravagant expenses, fortifying strongholds, decorating palaces, forming conspiracies … in hope of soon becoming the sovereign arbiter of the state' sealed his fate as a potential *frondeur*.[15] After his guards lured Fouquet into a trap and arrested him on 5 September, Louis personally intervened in Fouquet's trial to increase his sentence from exile to life imprisonment on the grounds of *raison d'etat*. 'There was no precedent for such a step in the annals of French justice, nor was there another such intervention for the duration of the ancien regime'.[16] Fouquet's downfall could, of course, be read in more than one way. Fumaroli sees him as 'the

[13] Brown, II, 150.
[14] Henry Savile to Leoline Jenkins, 26 Apr. 1681, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 193.
[15] Vincent J. Pitts, *Embezzlement and High Treason in Louis XIV's France: The Trial of Nicolas Fouquet* (Baltimore, 2015), pp. 54-5.
[16] Ibid., p. 2.

heir of the spirit of the Edict of Nantes'[17] and suggests that he was toppled because of the intrigues of Colbert and encouragement of 'a king whose self-love was synonymous with the absolutist state'. Either way here was a warning of the power of financiers to enrich themselves by funding and encouraging more wars, and whose vast moneyed wealth gave them a platform to destabilise the entire constitution.

Halifax had a copy of Fouquet's *Defenses*, as well as works by his supporter Paul Pellisson, and he would have had additional awareness of the fall of Fouquet due to the role played by Barthélemy Hervart (1607-1676), whose fortune helped fund the dowry of his grand-daughter, who married Halifax's then heir in 1684. Hervart was the son of a protestant who had moved to France in the early part of the seventeenth century. He had been instrumental in the acquisition of Alsace for France partly by the loans he made to the French state and had received French nationality. In 1650 he was made Intendant des Finances and in 1657 Comptroller General of France.[18] Though he avoided significant personal harm from either the fall of Fouquet or his open Protestantism, Hervart almost certainly played some role in the corrupt financial practises under Mazarin, revealing to general astonishment at the 1664 trial that he 'had not even kept registers of the transactions, which, as controller, he was responsible for monitoring'.[19] Hervart's daughter Esther married Charles de la Tour du Pin, Marquis de Gouvernet and it was their daughter, also Esther, who married Henry Savile in 1684. Esther Eland only survived her husband by seven years dying in 1694 and by her will, which was disputed by Halifax, left most of her property to her mother.[20]

A significant part of Halifax's move towards opposition in the 1690s needs to be seen in the context of the growing concern that a financial monied interest was being empowered by the

[17] M. Fumaroli, 'Nicolas Fouquet, the Favourite Manqué', in J. H. Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss, (eds), *The World of the Favourite* (New Haven, 1999), p. 246.
[18] E. Monson, 'The Three Esthers: Noblewomen of the Huguenot Refuge', *PHSL*, 27:1 (1998), 1-3.
[19] Pitts, *The Trial of Nicolas Fouquet*, p. 145.
[20] Monson, 'The Three Esthers', 10-13.

government, and risked overturning England's traditional constitution. The Bank of England, he feared, was the vehicle which would cause a shift in control away from the land, through the incitement of war and debt. The connection of monied interests and continued war in Europe caused country gentlemen to demand the end of the latter to prevent the former becoming 'lords of us who have lands'.[21] The dominance of Court Whigs over the following decades would, for Halifax, have been a vindication of his fears.

Country ideology and neo-Harringtonianism

For a segment of English political society, the Bank of England was the epitome of the commercialization which was undermining the English constitution. This strain of intellectual thought involved England's 'Machiavellian moment', where a group of writers applied a contemporary interpretation of Machiavelli and James Harrington. Writers such as Shaftesbury and Henry Neville (to whom Halifax was close) praised the role of the nobility and the House of Lords, but warned the aristocracy was being attacked by the forces of commerce and courtiers. As Pocock put it, this conservative interpretation of the ideas of classical republicanism meant that 'Harrington did not believe in the Ancient Constitution, but Shaftesbury and the Person of Quality, twenty years later, did'.[22] This removal of the potential radicalism of republican ideas, suggested one scholar in a chapter on 'Machiavelli and the Trimmers', meant that Halifax's Machiavellianism gave a consistent basis 'to his career and thought … precisely in the fact that it was calculated to make England safe for the George Saviles of this world'.[23]

[21] P. G. M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit* (1967: reissued 1993), p. 26.
[22] J. G. A. Pocock, 'Machiavelli, Harrington and English Political Ideologies in the Eighteenth Century', in Pocock (ed.), *Politics, Language and Time. Essays on Political Thought and History* (1972), p. 120.
[23] Felix Raab, *The English Face of Machiavelli. A Changing Interpretation, 1500-1700* (1965), p. 248.

In the context of the Financial Revolution, a conservative, self-interested classical republican ideology made two important contributions. The first was to define ownership of land as the key basis of autonomy, and therefore liberty. While a land-holding citizen could be free and therefore virtuous, the citizen without land lacked virtue, and therefore became its antithesis, which by the late-seventeenth century 'ceased to be fortuna, but became corruption instead'.[24] Property was only valuable when it inculcated virtue and gave some protection to its holder from being revoked. Thus those whose incomes depended on government salaries were condemned as constituting 'the worst kind of corruption', according to Pocock, 'for it not only lessened his citizenship but perverted government itself from a public authority into a private interest'. The Bank of England would thus create the two great demons – a group of stock-jobbers, whose property consisted of money lent to the government, which in turn created a class of military office-holders. Like the army of the late-Roman republic, they would cease to be public-minded citizens and become a corrupt private interest.[25]

Secondly, neo-Harringtonian ideology provided an account which connected the decline of the House of Lords to the loss of liberty and the Ancient constitution. An economically strong and independent peerage was needed to provide balance between people and monarchy. As Shaftesbury put it in a speech in parliament in 1675 'My Lords, 'tis not only your Interest, but the interest of the Nation, that you maintain your Rights … there is no Prince that ever Governed without Nobility or an Army'.[26] That this language was highly flexible is evident by the fact that both Halifax and Shaftesbury continued to deploy the political language of classical republicanism long after they had fallen out over Exclusion – accusing each other of

[24] J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment. Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975), p. 402.
[25] J. G. A. Pocock, 'Civic Humanism and its Role in Anglo-American Thought', in Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, pp. 91-3. For an account on the conservative-republican strand of antiarmy political argument, see Lois G. Schwoerer, *"No Standing Armies!" The Antiarmy Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Baltimore, 1974), pp. 96-9.
[26] Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 415.

becoming courtier and partisan demagogue respectively. However, its flexibility meant that it could be interpreted in a variety of ways. While a belief that property led to political authority was common in the long eighteenth century, Langford notes that though 'many Harringtonians considered the sixteenth century a lost golden age; there were others who argued that it was by no means lost'.[27] Indeed, this chapter suggests that Halifax regarded commercialisation and the growth of powerful financial interests as factors which were endangering nobility, but hoped that they might be reversed.

Pocock's notion of a conservative republican tradition has been criticised as unrealistic given the changed nature of the English economy. Pincus suggests that the republican tradition was celebrated more for its abstract praise of liberty than its economic views. Instead, he argues, 'the new generation of radicals who emerged in the 1650s understood that the newly powerful states of early modern Europe could only continue to protect liberty by embracing commercial society'.[28] Meanwhile although Hayton accepts that there was a political language inspired by classical republicanism which formed a basis of Country ideology, he criticises Pocock for minimizing the Tory elements of Country ideology.[29] As a writer Halifax expressed Country sentiments without significant attachment to either party, and indeed he was one of the first to regard partisanship as a further cause of corruption, to go alongside non-landed property and state employment.

Debt and Credible Commitment

Recent economic historiography suggests that government debt, when held by a diverse (and potentially expanding) pool of investors and tied to a realistic ability of repayment, connects

[27] Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1994), p. 52.
[28] Steven Pincus, 'Neither Machiavellian Moment nor Possessive Individualism: Commercial Society and the Defenders of the English Commonwealth', *American Historical Review*, 103:3 (1998), 736.
[29] David Hayton, 'The "Country" Interest and the Party System, 1689-c.1720', in Clyve Jones (ed.), *Party and Management in Parliament, 1660-1784* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 56-9.

profit-seeking to partisan politics. As Carruthers argues, particularly given that Bank stock (*de facto* government debt) was easily alienable 'creditors have a financial interest in the ability of sovereigns to repay their debts, and therefore they acquire a politicised interest in the survival of the sovereign regime'.[30] More important than the 'credible commitment' of William was the 'credible commitment' that James would repudiate post-1688 debts if he recovered his throne. Contemporaries on both sides of the debate over the Bank also recognised that the holders of its stock would not merely hold an investment but also gain direct incentives regarding the direction of government policy. As Burnet put it:

> This, with all the other remote funds that were created, had another good effect; it engaged all those who were concerned in them, to be, upon the account of their own interest, zealous for maintaining the government; since it was not to be doubted, but that a revolution would have swept all these away …[31]

Many Protestants feared that a Jacobite restoration would repudiate not only debts but possibly also monastic grants of estates (such as Rufford Abbey), and Halifax went further than his former friend in analysing the political consequences of the Bank. For the opponents of the growth of the Bank and government debt, the holders of its stock would seek not only to guarantee their current profits but expand the opportunity for future investments. This meant a political constituency in favour of higher government debt, and therefore continued land war in Europe. The attractiveness of Bank stock to investors was of grave concern to Country figures, given it would enhance the wealth of financiers, whose profits would ultimately be paid by taxation on land, which they did not own. While Halifax died before the consequences of the Bank were realised, his then allies felt that their initial opposition had been vindicated. When Rochester and Nottingham sought, in the House of Lords in 1702, to prevent the renewal of the Bank charter they did so by arguing that the true interest and liberty of England was best served through a naval campaign, which could be funded without

[30] Carruthers, *City of Capital.* p. 4.
[31] Burnet, *History,* II, 599.

long-term borrowing.[32] Such sentiments came to be positively embraced by 1710. Dickson notes 'the contention that "they that have the Money, must have the Management" was the ground for the belief of Godolphin's supporters that Harley's new ministry would founder on the opposition of the monied interest'.[33] Halifax and other opponents of the Financial Revolution in the 1690s expressed concerns that a lack of money and the empowerment of a financial interest would ultimately lead to financiers controlling government.

Moreover, Halifax evidently feared the Bank would become an instrument for intensifying partisan conflict. That certain groups were willing to use finance as leverage for their political demands was made clear when in mid-1690 the Whig Earl of Monmouth demanded the dissolution of parliament as condition for the City providing a £20,000 loan.[34] The Bank of England, whose leading subscribers included Halifax's political enemies, especially the Duke of Leeds (£4,000) would, in his view, enhance the partisan power of a group he feared and disliked.[35] The implication of financially empowering a City Whig-dominated bank was particularly feared by the Country opposition figures with whom the Saviles became associated. Writing to the second Marquis in 1696 Francis Gwyn suggested that 'the animosity of Land Bank and Old Bank runs as high as Jacobite and Williamite'. Indeed, Gwyn warned Halifax about the political danger of its collapse: 'though Foley and Harley were at the head of it … the running down of our friend Paul' meant parliamentary enemies might declare the Land Bank 'a cheat' and 'a plot'.[36]

[32] J. R. Jones, 'Fiscal Policies, Liberties, and Representative Government During the Last Stuarts', in Phillip T. Hoffman and Kathryn Norberg (eds), *Fiscal Crises, Liberty, and Representative Government, 1450-1789* (Stanford, 1994), p. 85.
[33] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, p. 19.
[34] Gary S. De Krey, *A Fractured Society. The Politics of London in the First Age of Party, 1688-1715* (Oxford, 1985), p. 68.
[35] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, p. 112.
[36] Francis Gwyn to William Savile, 2nd Marquis of Halifax, 3 Aug. 1696, quoted in Dennis Rubini, 'Politics and the Battle for the Banks, 1688-1697', *EHR*, 85:337 (1970), 693, 710.

Halifax was well aware that the establishment of the Bank could harm him personally. As opponents such as John Briscoe complained, the Bank's high yields diverted capital from investment in land and trade to 'stock-jobbing'.[37] For someone who played a significant role as a seller of annuities the Bank thus risked depriving Halifax of the funds he needed to purchase and improve his lands. As Carruthers notes 'Goldsmith-bankers generally opposed the Bank because they were competitors', and therefore sought to hinder it.[38] He could equally have been describing private providers of annuities. To an extent this explains why Halifax opposed the Bank of England despite having access to economic writers who supported it such as Child and Petty. While falling interest rates might be beneficial in theory, this would not be the case if they did so because of a more attractive outlet to invest in. Indeed, this was recognised by some contemporary observers. On 23 April 1694 Halifax joined with Nottingham and Rochester in opposing the clause in the tonnage bill to establish the Bank of England. Littleton regards this, particularly Halifax's claim that the French did not pose a great threat to England and therefore supply was not urgently needed, as 'somewhat surprising in a man so long associated with opposition to France'.[39]

However, Halifax's motivations for opposition to the establishment of the Bank of England were probably more correctly appraised by the Prussian envoy Friedrich Bonnet. Thus, in discussing Halifax's opposition to Charles Montagu's plan in January 1693 to raise a million pounds by providing annuities at 10% for eight years and at 7% thereafter, he had noted:

> Si cet établissement a lieu il va ruiner le negoce du Marquis d'Halifax, qui depuis plusieurs années accepte tout l'argent qu'on luy offre; mais a' moins que les personnes ne soient bien caduques, il ne donne que 100 L. pour onze cens…[40]

[37] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, p. 25.
[38] Carruthers, *City of Capital,* p. 141.
[39] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 356.
[40] 'If this project is realised it will ruin the business of the Marquess of Halifax, who for several years, has accepted all the money offered to him but, unless the persons concerned are feeble, he only gives 100 pounds on eleven hundred.' Leopold von Ranke, *A History of England: Principally in the Seventeenth Century* (6 vols, Oxford, 1875, republished Cambridge, 2010), VI, 202.

Later in 1695 Bonnet wrote that Halifax – who joined with Rochester in supporting Nottingham's attack on the government – was among those opposed to 'une Banque, qui tend a la ruine du Commerce, et au rabais du prix des terres'.[41]

Additionally, the partisan divide over support for the Bank of England and other financial innovations was intensified by religious differences. Roughly a quarter of those who held at least £4,000 of Bank of England stock were definite or probable non-conformists.[42] Therefore, Carruthers suggests that 'Tory suspicions of the stock market were fuelled by the prominence of Huguenot and Jewish financiers and brokers'.[43] While Halifax was sympathetic towards Huguenots, and was deeply angered at the failure of schemes to promote Protestant unity, his writings suggest a level of anti-Semitism which may have contributed to additional dislike of the growing power of London financial interests. In a private essay that Brown believes refers to James II's toleration campaign, Halifax refers scathingly to an argument in favour, writing 'Dispensing: The service of all his subjects. An Archbishop or Jew Lord Mayor'.[44] It is unclear whether Halifax would have been more horrified by a Rabbi or a prelate serving as Lord Mayor of London, but he certainly compared the exclusiveness of partisanship to Judaism. Parties were, he claimed, 'like the Jews to the Gentiles, all others are the Offscowrings of the World'.[45]

Contemporaries were aware of problems, possibly less aware of solutions. Julian Hoppit's analysis of economic writing pre 1750 notes twenty writers alive in Halifax's time and Halifax's library contained works by almost half of them.[46] They certainly dealt with some of

[41] 'A Bank that encourages the ruin of trade and the reduction of land values.' Ranke, *History*, VI, 269
[42] De Krey, *A Fractured Society*, p. 109.
[43] Bruce G. Carruthers, 'Politics, Popery, and Property: A Comment on North and Weingast', *Journal of Economic History*, 50:3 (1990), 698.
[44] Brown, II, 205.
[45] Brown, II, 235.
[46] J. Hoppit, 'The Contexts and Contours of British Economic Literature, 1660-1760', *HJ*, 49:1 (2006), pp 79-110. Among the authors mentioned by Hopptt, Halifax owned works by Josiah Child, John Graunt, John Locke, Gerard Malynes, Thomas Mun, William Petty, William Petyt, William Temple and Andrew Yarranton.

the issues discussed here. William Petyt was a radical ancient constitutionalist and believed, as Halifax might have done, that there could be increase of trade and wealth under an absolute government. In his *Britannia Languens,* however, he argued strongly for the need to increase England's trade particularly at the expense of the French and Dutch and considered, in a view that Halifax might not have wholly shared, that

> it does much import all English gentlemen, Owners of Land, and others, who take themselves to be sharers in the National Interest to examine the past and present state of our Trade, and to seek for a legal regulation of it And that all private Interests destructive to our Trade ought to be relaxed, and given up for the future.[47]

Similarly Josiah Child contributed to the debate on the rate of interest and argued strongly in favour of lowering the statutory rate. He considered that 'Insomuch that to know whether any Country be rich or poor, or in what proportion it is so, no other question needs to be resolved, but this, viz., What interest do they pay for Money?'[48]

The accounts of Carruthers and Stasavage are bolstered by Halifax's writings on corruption, partisanship and the decay of land. Accepting the limitations of neo-Harringtonian arguments he wrote that 'it is not a certain position, that all governments are to be fixed, according to the balance of land'.[49] The risk that MPs could be blinded by partisanship is shown in his final published pamphlet *Some Cautions*, which addressed itself to electors in anticipation of the 1695 election. Warning that 'publique taxes are already heavy enough', Halifax complained about the behaviour of Whig politicians who, by continuing to tax land, would damage the balance of the English constitution:

> It is not lesse strange than I doubt it is true, that some men should bee so in love with their Mistresse Old England, as out of an heroick passion, to swim over to rescue her from being ravished, and when they have done the feat, the first thing after enjoyment is, that they go about to strangle her …[50]

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[47] William Petyt, *Britannia Languens, or a Discourse of Trade* (1689), p. 7.
[48] Josiah Child, *A New Discourse of Trade*, (1668), p. 9. Quoted in Tim Keirn and Frank T. Melton 'Thomas Manley and the Rate of Interest Debate, 1668-1673' *JBS*, 29:2 (1990), 147-73.
[49] Brown, III, 136.
[50] Brown, I, 335.

While an independent country member of parliament would protect the land, Halifax argued, a politician tied to party, even if a landowner, would be too intimidated and blinded to recognise his interests. Recognising the disciplining mechanisms with which post-1689 party organizations could force members into cross-issue coalitions, he noted that 'a Party setteth up a discipline like an Army: after once inrolled; hanged for a deserter'.[51] In analysing the connection between partisanship, finance and corruption Halifax 'strikingly anticipated the mood of later Augustan thought', according to Kramnick.[52] While those whose wealth was not dependent on land were unfree and corrupt, equally landowning party-men lacked agency and were susceptible to being controlled by the nexus of the Court, the stock-companies and the Bank of England.[53] To an extent Halifax also used the argument that partisanship fostered a loss of liberty, suggesting in *Some Cautions* that:

> when a man is drowned in a party; plunged in it beyond his depth; hee runneth a great hazard of being upon ill termes with Good Sense or Morality, if not with both of them. Such a Man can hardly bee called a free Agent, and for that reason, is very unfit to bee trusted with the people's liberty, after hee hath given up his own.[54]

If, therefore, Stasavage and Carruthers could attribute the support of landowning Whigs for the post-1689 fiscal regime to partisanship and religious divisions helping to form 'cross-issue coalitions', Halifax would similarly attribute 'the heat of party' to a loss of reason, sense of interest, and liberty amongst the landed. Though contemporaries hoped a narrow electorate of the wealthy and landed would prevent the corruption of politics, uncivil and impolite partisanship could undermine this. Partisanship was blamed for undermining rational behaviour in the interest of the locality and nation: 'one of the corrupting pressures on voters was printed electoral advice that was partial, misrepresentative, and emotive. Such print was

[51] Brown, II, 146.
[52] Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle. The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Ithaca, NY, 1992), p. 140.
[53] Ibid., p. 153.
[54] Brown, I, 331.

thought to appeal to fear, prejudice, and passion as much as reason'.[55] Fear of the decay of rational and stable governance was particularly strong in late seventeenth-century England. As Knights argues, while all European Enlightenments 'could be characterized by a stress on reason and moderation or by an attack on fanaticism and prejudice, in England these values were forged in the heat of intolerant, zealous, and immoderate partisan conflict.'[56]

As well as these concerns Halifax's personal finances and political thought were connected to fears about the decline of the aristocracy, and concern that ownership of land was no longer a means to economic pre-eminence. The late-seventeenth century was considered by many contemporaries the nadir of English landed society, with Halifax living through a period of profound decline which threatened both the economic position of the nobility and traditional social values. While there had been a broad inflation in land prices and rents from 1500-1650 there was subsequently a period of stagnation, with many families forced to rely on mortgaging their estates.[57] Clay regards Sir Harbottle Grimston – whose rent-income fell by roughly a fifth between the 1660s and 1690s – as reasonably typical for the period. Moreover, there was no obvious recovery on the horizon – 'there was every reason to fear that the income from land was likely to decline with the passage of time'. Indeed, given the likely continuation of a land tax, it was understandable for landowners at the time of Halifax's death in 1695 to think that the value of landed estates would continue to fall.[58] In order to compensate for an almost universal loss of landlord income, owners of land were required to experiment with enclosure and seek fewer tenants on consolidated estates.[59]

[55] Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 178-9.
[56] Mark Knights, *The Devil in Disguise: Deception, Delusion, and Fanaticism in the Early English Enlightenment* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 243-5.
[57] Rosenheim, *The Emergence of a Ruling Order. English Landed Society, 1650-1750* (1998), p. 49.
[58] Christopher Clay, 'The Price of Freehold in the Later Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *EconHR*, 27:2 (1974), 179-80.
[59] Rosenheim, *English Landed Society*, pp. 53-62.

In reality, the fears expressed by nobles did not materialize. The claim that the Civil Wars led to a permanent weakening of the position of the nobility is rejected by Cannon, who argues that by the end of the eighteenth century 'a comparatively small number of peers controlled to a great extent the commanding heights of political and social life … contrary to much presumption, aristocratic influence strengthened as the century progressed'.[60] Cooper suggests that land rents only saw 'some recovery after the late 1690s'.[61] Habakkuk dates the economic revival slightly later, suggesting 'circumstances were more favourable to landed incomes in the century after 1715 than they had been between 1640 and 1715'.[62] This ultimately translated into aristocratic optimism but Rosenheim suggests it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that landed elites regained their confidence as to their position.[63] Regardless of the precise date of the landed revival, Halifax's life took place in a period of profound landed pessimism.

Some historical writing has sought to downplay the distress that war taxation caused to landed elites. Brooks rejects the claim that the land tax was 'a fiscal weapon', instead arguing that given its local administration by political elites it acted as a tool of 'political stability'.[64] Indeed, given that the land tax ensured that an excise – 'a source thoroughly abhorred by the majority of country gentlemen' – was not implemented, it was less unpopular than previously believed.[65] However, despite the land tax being preferable to other methods of finance, many Englishmen became profound opponents of a war debt-Bank of England-taxation nexus which they believed was, in general, impoverishing landowners in favour of those who

[60] John Cannon, *Aristocratic Century. The Peerage of Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 175.
[61] J. P. Cooper, 'In Search of Agrarian Capitalism', *P&P*, 80 (1978), 49.
[62] H. J. Habakkuk, 'England's Nobility', in Daniel A. Baugh (ed.), *Aristocratic Government and Society in Eighteenth-Century England: The Foundations of Stability* (New York, 1975), p. 105.
[63] Rosenheim, *English Landed Society*, p. 253.
[64] Colin Brooks, 'Public Finance and Political Stability: The Administration of the Land Tax, 1688-1720', *HJ*, 17:2 (1974), 281-3.
[65] J. V. Beckett, 'Land Tax or Excise: The Levying of Taxation in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century England', *EHR*, 285-6. When mentioning Halifax specifically, however, Beckett misattributes William Temple's 'An Essay upon Taxes' (1693) to him.

owned stocks.[66] Indeed O'Brien shows that neither greater capacities for borrowing nor economic expansion were alone sufficient to pay for military expenditures. While the size of the British economy trebled between 1670 and 1810, tax receipts increased by a factor of 16.[67] The fiscal-military state of the long-eighteenth century was funded in large part by the British, including the gentry and aristocracy, paying significantly more in taxes. This concern about the impact of expanding taxation on the landed was expressed in 1705 by the trustees of a portion of Halifax's estate devoted to repaying debts who complained that 'by reason of taxes and loss of rents', they needed to sell lands outright in order to raise sufficient funds.[68]

Halifax's Finances

Halifax's economic activity was a mixture of the typical and atypical for nobles sceptical of investing in trading companies or debt. Halifax seems to have at times regarded active efforts to improve land as a moral obligation for landowners, considering that 'a man of quality is one of the most useless members of a commonwealth, if he does nothing, but receive rents and spend them'.[69] Moreover improving land conferred legitimacy on those who owned it. In his ideal of a 'Country Gentleman' Halifax seeks for someone 'to governe the Country upon the Bench, serve them in Parliament, improove his estate so as the better able to contribute to the publick charges … No ill figure. Compared with the town Gentleman, yet a better'.[70] So long as the country gentleman focussed on improving land, rather than engage in commercial speculation, seeking to increase income could be considered virtuous. Rosenheim's survey of the aristocracy suggested that most confined their income to rented land in the country and other 'largely conservative, non-commercial investments'.[71] Like a majority of other

[66] John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (1989), p. 124.
[67] Patrick K. O'Brien, 'The Political Economy of British Taxation', *EconHR,* 41:1 (1988), 6.
[68] John Habakkuk, 'Presidential Address: The Rise and Fall of English Landed Families, 1600-1800: II', *TRHS,* 30 (1980), 205.
[69] Brown, III, 238.
[70] Brown, II, 87.
[71] Rosenheim, *English Landed Society,* p. 6

aristocrats, who feared 'the projecting spirit' and thus eschewed joint-stock companies, Halifax seems to have been sceptical of investing in that sector.[72] He does not appear to have owned any Bank of England stock, nor participated in the slave trade through ownership of Royal Africa or East India Company shares.[73] Instead, he invested money in land and housing, which was funded in part through the sale of annuities. Brown notes that between 1651 and 1695 Halifax 'had increased his rental income (excluding fines) from £6550 to £14,704'.[74]

His estates followed the pattern, increasingly common from the mid-seventeenth century, of professional estate management.[75] The idealised depiction of a virtuous lord which continued to circulate in print throughout the seventeenth century demanded a noble be hospitable, offer charity directly to the poor at his gates, and take personal charge of his estate. As one work on hospitality stated: a good lord should make 'Hospitality his House-Keeper, Providence his Steward, Charity his Treasurer'.[76] For Halifax, however, who was rarely at Rufford, despite his protestations of enjoyment of retirement, the employment of a steward was essential.[77] John Greathead, William Turner, and Thomas Medhurst all fulfilled this role at some time and from 1690 the steward for his Yorkshire estates was Theophilus Shelton. Shelton had gentry connections, was an attorney and architect, clerk of the peace and first registrar of deeds for the West Riding of Yorkshire. He became armigerous and purchased an estate in Darrington probably from the trustees of the 2nd Marquis. Shelton was mentioned in the

[72] Ibid., p. 80.
[73] *A list of the names of all the subscribers to the Bank of England* (1694); Miranda Kaufman, 'English Heritage Properties 1600-1830 and Slavery Connections', *Historic England Publications* (2007), accessed at https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eh-properties-1600-1830-slavery-connections/eh-properties-slavery-connections-vol1/, pp. 1-4.
[74] Brown, 'Savile, George', *ODNB*.
[75] Rosenheim, *English Landed Society*, pp. 66-9.
[76] Felicity Heal, 'The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England', *P&P*, 102 (1984), 70.
[77] As noted by Hainsworth 'Landlords during the second half of the seventeenth century spent much more time in London than had their fathers and grandfathers'. D. R. Hainsworth, *Stewards, Lords and People: The Estate Steward and his World in Later Stuart England* (1992), p.8.

codicil to Halifax's will as his steward and bequeathed £10 to buy a mourning ring.[78] Shelton exemplifies many of the characteristics of the office:

> [l]andowners had a predilection to appoint stewards from amongst the ranks of gentlemen, or at least substantial yeomen. They preferred to find recruits amongst the younger sons of the gentry, country attorneys and yeoman farmers, whose interests could be expected to be allied more closely with their employers than with tenants. The higher the rank of the landlord, the higher the rank of his steward was likely to be.[79]

That Halifax employed such a figure did not prevent him from nevertheless continuing to embrace a nostalgia-infused conception of the role of the aristocrat. For example, when criticising the increase in state employment he complained that the 'Greatnesse of Salaries hath destroyed the Constitution of England; which is, first, the Nobleman: live great, have interest and Command, breed himself either for Warre, or Councels; of the Great Councel alwayes'.[80] While his employment of Shelton somewhat undermined his ideal, he seems to have modelled himself along this model, investing in and improving a large landed estate, while not behaving like contemporaries who were alleged to have had a financial need to hold office. Indeed, one of the most notorious of these, Robert Spencer 2nd earl of Sunderland, was Halifax's brother-in-law. Sunderland accepted his estates were poorly managed, writing in 1694 'I must say that if this estate were well managed it would be worth a great deal more, but to my shame, I am very unskilful'. Kenyon suggests the death of Sunderland's sister (and Halifax's wife) in 1670 'must have caused him grievous financial embarrassment', and his consequent need for the salary of office contributed to him not joining Halifax, Shaftesbury, and Russell in opposition to Danby.[81] The failure of nobles to manage their estates, combined with their profligacy, the decline of land, and lure of court salaries combined, for Halifax, into a toxic mixture of corruption and the decline of liberty.

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[78] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 265.
[79] Brian Barber, 'Theophilus Shelton (1645-1717), a Yorkshire Estate Steward, Attorney and Gentleman Architect', *YAJ*, 86:1 (2014) 218. See also Hainsworth, *Stewards, Lords and People*, ch. 2.
[80] Brown, II, 86.
[81] J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, 1641-1702* (1958), pp. 9-15.

The poverty of landowners and court patronage, he wrote, caused the ideal country gentleman to transform into a 'Courtier, Projector, Intriguer, &c. … In stead of understanding by staying at home, how to manage his estate, he learneth at London how to spend it'. [82] This connection of economic and political degeneration was what caused the decay of the English constitution, as the well-managed and financially self-sufficient estate was needed as a 'Seminary of Men fit to keep the ballance between the Crown and people in Parliament'.[83] Thus while for neo-Harringtonian figures such as Henry Neville and James Harrington, changes in land ownership had destroyed the political base of the nobility, Halifax saw salaries and commercialism as aiding a process that was underway, but potentially reversible.

Halifax therefore had a somewhat contradictory approach to personal finances. On the one hand he embraced a backwards-looking view of the role of a noble, avoiding 'stock-jobbing', condemning state employment, and using available capital to improve landed estates. On the other he invested in London housing, was interested in profiting from innovative mining techniques, and engaged in a kind of financial speculation through annuity provision. In this respect he fits Wrightson's description of a 'culturally amphibious' aristocrat who prospered through a combination of traditional aristocratic economic activities (and professed values) while also reconciling with elements of a market society – particularly investments in housing and improvements to landed estate, even if that undermined elements of a traditional feudal ideal.[84]

Halifax used the portions acquired on marriage for land purchases. Dorothy Spencer, his first wife brought a dowry of £10,000 and Gertrude Pierpoint, his second wife presumably another substantial sum. The estate he had inherited had to bear the charge of the portion of £7,000

[82] Brown, II, 87.
[83] Brown, II, 87.
[84] Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 2000), p. 275. The concept is discussed in Robin Hermann, '"Reasons Giuen by Me, Why I am in Debt": Monetary Crisis and the Second Earl of Bridgewater', *HLQ*, 77:2 (2014), 201-18.

for his sister Anne who married Thomas, Lord Windsor in 1656 though Windsor complained of underpayment. He also raised portions of £10,000 for his first daughter Anne on her marriage to Lord Carbery in 1682 and of £20,000 on the marriage of his younger daughter Elizabeth to Lord Stanhope in 1692.[85] He would also have expected to use the portions acquired at least by his eldest son in the same way. This is likely to explain why Halifax had been unenthusiastic about the form of settlement that would be made on the marriage of Henry, Lord Eland to Esther de la Tour du Pin - 'their way of treating about portions is very different from ours; the husband generally hath only the use, and the principal is to go to the children.' However, Henry Savile reassured him that 'the 25,000l would be paid at London, and submit to the English laws… and are content the money should be au fonds perdu'.[86] By the time of his second son's first marriage in 1687 to Elizabeth Grimston, William was already Lord Eland but half of Elizabeth's portion of £20,000 was not to be paid until the death of her father and both she and William Eland predeceased him. William Eland's second wife, Lady Mary Finch, brought a dowry of £20,000 in 1695 but with no surviving sons and portions of £55,000 to be raised for three daughters it was perhaps not surprising that there was litigation about where the burden should fall. In the event the case brought by William's daughter by his first wife, Anne, Lady Bruce, resulted in Sir George Savile paying £15,000.[87] In addition there was a liability of £2,000 as jointure to the 2nd Marquis's widow and portions of £25,000 in total for their children. As recorded by Sir George Savile '£25.000 together with ye Costs in ye suit Shou'd be Raised out of my Estate in my Possession & out of

[85] Brown, 'Savile, George', *ODNB*.
[86] Halifax to Henry Savile 11 Mar. 1680; Henry Savile to Halifax, 23 Mar. 1680, 'Savile Correspondence', pp. 145, 147.
[87] Barber, 'Theophilus Shelton', 220.

Barrowby in Lincolnshire, & out of Hallifax House in St James's Square London'.[88] Those sums were raised by mortgaging land.

While Halifax's use of improved agricultural techniques and land purchases was reasonably traditional he also sought to exploit the natural resources on his lands. He owned various works on mines and mining and he had extensive interests in the Derbyshire lead mining areas - in Eyam and Stoney Middleton in the northern High Peak hundred and in Crich in the southern Wirksworth wapentake. During the seventeenth century and with the development of new techniques, the importance of the southern lead fields declined while those of the northern area increased. Among those developing the fields, particularly through drainage, were the Earls of Rutland and Devonshire, but it was 'the mercantile lesser gentry' who put in most capital.[89] Until 1662 when the northern manors passed to Halifax free mining had existed in Eyam and Stoney Middleton but thereafter 'manorial custom was redefined, and the free miners excluded from freehold land,' as part of the 'retreat of free mining rights'.[90] Free miners claimed the right to dig ore wherever it was found subject to the 'lot' and 'cope' paid to the lord of the manor. Correspondence in the Savile estate papers from the 1670s shows Halifax's agents in communication with tenants in the manors of Stoney Middleton and Eyam about lead mining and the lot and cope payments due; in 1684 Robert Eyre wrote directly to Halifax bemoaning that 'ye Lott & Coap hath soe much declined this yeare' but promising that the investment in the 'Sugh' (the sough, used to drain the lead mines) 'would add to yor Lordshipps Lott & Coape above Two Hundred pounds a yeare'.[91] Whether or not this was successful by 1692 Shelton was complaining that the mines were 'in a very low

[88] Sarah Law, 'The Landscape of Rufford, 1700-1743: Reconnecting Archives with People and Place' (PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 2016), p. 56.
[89] Andy Wood, *The Politics of Social Conflict: The Peak Country 1520-1770* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 26–106.
[90] Wood, *The Politics of Social Conflict*, pp. 306-7.
[91] Chatsworth, HX/H/25 Robert Eyre to George Talbot, 11 Nov. 1672; HX/H/40 Robert Ashton to Halifax, 21 Apr. 1684.

condition; there is very little oar now gotten'.[92] The Talbots, also had been much involved in the development of the Peak District lead and coal mines in the sixteenth century and in 1690 a letter from the Earl of Shrewsbury appears to refuse to sell his property at Wingfield for 19 and a half years' purchase.[93] In Halifax's will he left his wife Gertrude all the lands in Crich 'of which I am now possessed in partnership with the Earle of Shrewsbury and others with the profitts of the Lead mines'. This was to be an additional part of Gertrude's jointure and in her will she left money to the poor of Belforston 'now my jointure' and to four other parishes Wingfield, Crich, Shirland and Streeton all of which are in the same area of Derbyshire.[94] Gertrude, in correspondence with the 2nd Marquis shows some knowledge of at least the existence of both lead and coal mines and talks about possible leases and the difficulty of getting good ones – 'there is so few leses to lett in that place that one may take the more time with less hazard to consider of it unless they will offer betar terms to tempt one'.[95]

Attempts were also being made to develop mining in the Yorkshire properties around Wakefield. Adam Donkerley, for example, wrote to Halifax in summer 1685 to say 'I have found 2 Iron Stone mines… and have sunk 2 shafts'.[96] Thomas Lister informed Halifax of the letting of coal mines around Emley on the Yorkshire estates – 'The Coalmyne & Close of Land at Soothill… I have lett to… at the same Rent is 30li p an & upon the same Condicions Mr Copley had it'[97]. Thus, when Sir George Savile inherited the estates from the 2nd Marquis in 1700 they comprised 'extensive lands, including collieries and lead mines, in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire'.[98] Shelton had continued to be employed by the 2nd Marquis and indeed by Sir George Savile and the correspondence between him and Shelton was principally

[92] Chatsworth, HX/H/132 T. Shelton to Halifax, 8 Aug. 1692.
[93] Add MS 75366 unfoliated, Earl of Shrewsbury to Halifax, 23 June 1690.
[94] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 265; Clay, 'The Savile Family', *YAJ*, 25 (1920), 9–47.
[95] Chatsworth, CS1/68/7 Gertrude Halifax to William 2nd Marquis of Halifax, 3 Sep. 1696.
[96] Chatsworth, HX/H/41 and 43 Adam Donkerley to Halifax, 28 Aug. and 5 Sep. 1685.
[97] Chatsworth, HX/H/32 Thomas Lister to Halifax, 23 Dec. 1676.
[98] A. A. Hanham, 'Savile, Sir George', *ODNB*.

concerned with the exploitation of the natural resources and the Yorkshire property which included land, woods, and coal mines in more than twenty four townships in the Huddersfield area.[99]

As with other members of the landed elite Halifax also invested in London property.[100] In Reresby's account of the 1685 Parliament he recalls supporting a proposal to fund additional supply to deal with the Monmouth Rebellion by imposing a tax on the rents of new buildings in London constructed after 1660 (excluding those rebuilt because of the Great Fire). During the debate in the House of Commons on 17 June, Reresby declared

> this one country drayned all England of its people, especially the north, our tenents all coming hither … that hereby this little piece of England had laid a tax in a manner upon all the rest of England, and was a nusance to all the rest.[101]

Even though Reresby's attack on the disproportionate wealth of London used much of the political rhetoric Halifax's writings did, and the fact that the measure was deemed too complicated to be worth passing, Reresby's actions earned him a reprimand from his patron. Three days after his speech, he reported

> My Lord Halifax took ill from me that I had been active in the Hous in the debate of taxing new buildings, he haveing a deep concern therein; but I tould him it was my judgement, and that if my father's interest were in it I should have said the same thing … but we presently understood one another, and he said he was sorry he had said anything to disturb me.[102]

Clearly, while Halifax might have approved of taxation measures to protect the country over London in theory, in practice he was willing to seek financial benefit from the growth of the capital.[103] In addition to his personal house in St James's Square, in 1687 Halifax paid £945 as part of a seemingly unsuccessful and litigious project to construct housing in Red Lion

[99] Barber, 'Theophilus Shelton', 218.
[100] Rosenheim, *English Landed Society*, p. 84.
[101] Reresby, pp. 375-6.
[102] Ibid., pp. 377-8.
[103] Elizabeth McKellar, *The Birth of Modern London. The Development and Design of the City, 1660-1720* (Manchester, 1999), pp. 63-4.

Fields. Similarly, the 2nd Marquis's will declares 'I charge my leasehold estate and ground rents in London with £500 p.an. to my wife for increase of her jointure'.[104]

In the Nottinghamshire county archives there is 'a particular of the London estate showing what is ffreehold and what is leasehold belonging to the Exors of the Right Honble Wm late Lord Marquis of Hallifax'. It dates from about 1712 but from the contents it is plain that many of the properties must have been acquired during the first Marquis's lifetime as the date of the lease is given and all predate his death in 1695. The properties are both leasehold and freehold and range in geographical extent. There are properties around Jermyn Street, near Halifax's own house in St James's Square. Additionally the estate owned property in Cheapside in the City of London, in what would become the west end in Red Lion Street and St Anne's parish, and further out in Earls Court where the ground landlord was the Earl of Bedford. The given value of the rents amounts to about £2,500 per annum and the costs in terms of ground rent and in one case a rent charge to 'ye poore of St Clement Danes' comes to something over £150.[105]

Halifax's somewhat typical practice of investing in lands and housing was partially funded by the more unusual activity of the provision of life annuities. Life annuities, providing a fixed yearly income for the life of a nominated individual or group in exchange for a lump sum payment, were reasonably common in early modern Europe. Despite the potential risk and element of gambling, Alter and Riley suggest that for individuals purchasing them, they could often be sensible investments. For example, they enabled investors to provide for younger children without alienating the family estate.[106] However, Alter and Riley mostly discuss the sale of life annuities by states. This is for a vital reason – selling a small number

[104] Clay, 'The Savile Family', 30.
[105] Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/SR/225/12.
[106] George Alter and James C. Riley, 'How to Bet on Lives: A Guide to Life Contingent Contracts in Early Modern Europe', *Research in Economic History*, 10 (1986), 15

of life annuities to individuals who lived unusually long lives could prove financially catastrophic. Sir Stephen Fox, for example, suffered a significant financial loss when he purchased the future rents of part of Catherine of Braganza's jointure in 1677 – the Queen lived until 1705.[107] On the other hand 'government minimizes its risks by selling a large number of contracts … it can expect to approximate closely the expected value of the annuity'.[108]

There are limitations in understanding quite how much of Halifax's wealth was based on annuities. He and his descendants' capacity for destroying the historical record may have been unsurpassed amongst the leading politicians of the late-Stuart era. Nevertheless, from the correspondence which survives a reasonably detailed reconstruction can be made of his role as a private annuity provider. He was certainly dealing in annuities by the mid-1670s for John Churchill had bought an annuity of £500 per year for £4,500 from him by 1675.[109] In January that year William 3rd Lord Brereton, corresponded with Halifax about the possibility of purchasing an annuity for Lady Langley and her mother. She wanted an annuity of £500 per annum and at the nine years' purchase requested by Halifax would put down £4,500 'about foure thousand of it being already in very good and safe hands in London, & the rest can be had at command'. Brereton considered the nine years' purchase to be very high 'yet the Consideration of dealing with a Person of so much Justice & Honour as your Lordship is, doth make them willing to agree with yr Lp'. The annuity was to be paid through a covenant on the rents of Fotheringhay. Brereton sought confirmation 'that there is no present Incumbrance upon it but three hundred pounds a yeare during my Lord Newport's Sonnes Life & five//hundred pounds during Mr Churchhills Life'. With the addition of Lady Langley's £500 per year annuity an estate with estimated rents of £1,500 per year was

[107] Clay, *Public Finance and Private Wealth*, p. 168.
[108] Alter and Riley, 'How to Bet on Lives', 12.
[109] 'Savile correspondence', p. 49.

committed to paying £1,300. Indeed Brereton was forced to ask to 'know how the Rents have kept up of Late yeares & whether there be any danger of their falling now'.[110] If this example is typical, we can see how precarious Halifax's economic position could become if the rack-rent value of his lands fell much further or if the nominees lived a long time. In the case of Churchill and Newport, they did not die until 1722 and 1723 respectively.

Halifax's traffic in annuities was sufficiently well known that even strangers sought his services. Henry Savile wrote to his brother in June 1677:

> I was this day desired from a man I have no acquaintance with, but his name is Sr Edward Bathe… to enquire of you whether you will not take nine years' purchase for four hundred pounds a year for his life. I promised to propose it to you, and, that being yr usual price, you know best whether you are ready for such a matter.[111]

And again in 1677 Henry Savile reports that

> I have read to Captn With that part of your letter which concerns him; he swears to me he can have for fourteen hundred what he offer'd fifteen to you for, but is so unwilling to deal with any body else that he has prevail'd with me to write once more to you and offer you sixteen hundred as the deepest he can go, and to you alone of all men living; therefore pray let me have one line more of you about this business.[112]

Halifax's trade in annuities continued after the Revolution for in 1690 he was negotiating with Frances Lady Brudenell. Her daughter 'Newbeurgh being about selling her estate & buying an anuity I beg leave of your Losp to discourse with ye concerning it'.[113] And on the cover of a letter from Halifax's lawyer in 1688 there is a note, possibly in Halifax's hand, that suggests a need to write 'by Turner' Halifax's agent in Yorkshire. The note lists a number of individuals (among them Sir Francis Winnington and 'niece Cooks') suggestive of financial transactions with them and also refers to 'Mr Savage a Mortgage of 300li upon Pershore tithes'.[114]

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[110] Add MS 75366 unfoliated, William, 3rd Lord Brereton to Halifax, 17 Jan. 1675.
[111] Henry Savile to Halifax, 5 June 1677, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 58
[112] Henry Savile to Halifax, 3 July 1677, 'Savile Correspondence', p. 65.
[113] Add MS 75366 unfoliated, Lady Brudenell to Halifax, 2 Apr. 1690.
[114] Add MS 75366 unfoliated, William Dobyns to Halifax 1688.

How (other than hypocrisy) can Halifax's condemnation of financial speculation be squared with his involvement with annuities? Possibly because his annuities were based on land. While, for example, Sir Stephen Fox paid capital upfront for annuities based on court pensions, Halifax's 'undertaking' took capital, often from younger children seeking a life income and used it to purchase and improve land. While for Fox wealth was based on courtiership, Halifax could to some extent claim to be improving the land.[115]

By the mid-eighteenth century the popularity of life-contingent contracts meant that mortality tables were widely available for public consumption, such as John Richard's *Annuities on Lives, and for Limited Terms* (1739), which attracted particular criticism for advising commercial dealing based on the future income of advowsons.[116] Halifax's library catalogues do not contain any specific works for the purchaser or seller of life annuities, but he did own John Graunt's *Natural and Political Observations Made Upon the Bills of Mortality* (1662). Graunt's work gave estimations on the probability of a person of a certain age dying in a given year. However, though impressive for its pioneering use of mortality records in demographic estimations, the work was limited and based on incomplete data.[117] In particular the Huygens brothers questioned whether higher rates of childhood mortality than in early adulthood had skewed Graunt's estimates.[118] Mathematicians who subsequently studied life annuities began to consider they were undervalued – that they were being sold for too few years' purchase. In the United Provinces in 1671 Johan de Wit noted that

> My Lords the States of Holland and West Friesland have in the course of a few years not only increased the charge for life annuities from 11 years' purchase to 12 years' purchase, and from 12 years' purchase to 14 years' purchase.[119]

[115] Clay, *Public Finance and Private Wealth*, pp. 173-86.
[116] Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman*, p. 18.
[117] Geoffrey Poitras, *The Early History of Financial Economics, 1478-1776. From Commercial Arithmetic to Life Annuities and Joint Stocks* (Cheltenham, 2000), p. 193.
[118] Alter and Riley, 'How to Bet on Lives', 6.
[119] Poitras, *The Early History of Financial Economics*, p. 225.

In 1693 Edmond Halley advised that life annuities should not be sold for nine years' purchase or less to anyone under the age of 55. For comparison, even assuming that the annuities of nine years' purchase were sold to John Churchill and Richard Newport in 1675, the latest possible date, the recipients would have been 22 and 31 years of age respectively. Halley's life annuity tables would have recommended they be sold at roughly twelve and a half and eleven and a half years' purchase.[120] The fact that Churchill and Newport lived so long meant the individual annuities were costly. However, in general it appears that even without the damage of the Financial Revolution, land taxation, and competition from the Bank of England and government annuities, the evidence suggests Halifax was selling annuities at a rate which would severely hurt his estate.

Had Halifax lived longer he would likely have faced difficulties given the cost of the annuities. After his death in 1695 the second Marquis formed a trust with properties whose incomes would pay the charges on the estate. However, by 1706 the trust could no longer pay its debts, 'by reason of taxes and loss of rents and other incumbrances on the estate', according to the trustees, who petitioned the House of Lords for a bill that would empower them to sell some of the land outright.[121] A lengthy legal dispute prevented the immediate sale, however in 1726 the Manor of Fotheringhay was sold for almost £45,000. Appropriately enough, given Halifax's expressed concerns that bankers and the monied interest in the City would eclipse the traditional landed nobility, Fotheringhay was purchased by the estate of the financier William Hewer, who had died staggeringly wealthy but owning almost no land.[122]

[120] Edmond Halley, 'An Estimate of the Degrees of the Mortality of Mankind, Drawn from Curious Tables of the Births and Funerals at the City of Breslaw; With an Attempt to Ascertain the Price of Annuities upon Lives', *Philosophical Transactions (1683-1775)*, 17 (1693), 603.
[121] Habakkuk, 'Rise and Fall of English Landed Families', 205.
[122] Ibid., 214-15.

Halifax was extensively involved in the sale of life annuities to the nobility and gentry, which were used predominantly to extend and improve his estate. This meant that in addition to Country party rhetoric in the 1690s appealing to his principles, it appealed to his purse. In his view a 'monied interest' which reduced the value of and investment in land, and the consequences of prolonged land war, whether through taxes on lands or debt instruments like the Bank of England and government annuities competing with his business, was as destructive to the Savile family as it was to the English constitution.

Conclusion

As a conservative aristocrat, Halifax was personally aware of the challenges that commercial changes in England posed to his traditional vision of the free, independent proprietor. Seeking to reconcile his political thought with his financial interests is at times difficult, even impossible, but it can be argued that his focus on investing in land exemplified a political distrust of monied wealth. In order for aristocrats to retain their economic and therefore, social position as landowners, they needed to enhance their revenues, often in ways which ran contrary to their traditional social role. Halifax's land investments in the 1670s and 1690s were funded through optimistic bets on the profitability of land and life annuities, and thus the fiscal-military revolution after 1688 was particularly unwelcome. For him, one of the greatest casualties of the Nine Years' War was the profitability of the Nine Years' Annuity. William's expansion of taxes and government debt facilities was destabilising to his financial position as a landed noble and therefore by extension the new monarch was destabilising to the balance of the English constitution.

Halifax had access to the political language of neo-Harringtonianism – a value system totally opposed to the economic changes introduced after 1688, which could be condemned as corrupting. His political ideology and self-interest led him soon to join with Country party

efforts against William's war after leaving office. In some ways this seems simply to stem from his over-confident sentiments around England's capacity for military successes. In his attitude to internal and external enemies Halifax was a hawk, but only a hawk who believed wars could be won with speed, ease, and by traditional means. His pre-1688 writings suggest he felt England's navy could bring a war with France to a positive conclusion extremely quickly. Once it became apparent that this was not the case, and that the Revolution had a larger price-tag, Halifax's slide into opposition, aided by neo-Harringtonian ideology, was somewhat inevitable. Writing in 1993 on recent historiography, Dickson noted the impact of Pocock's writing on the understanding of the Financial Revolution, and cited as the leading example Kramnick's work on Bolingbroke, which argued for the impact of Halifax's writing on his subject's thought.[123] It is time to regard Halifax as an early influence on the developing conservative opposition to the development of a 'monied interest'. His growing concern about the development of a military interest will be discussed in the following chapter.

[123] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, p. xviii; Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle*, p. 140.

CHAPTER SIX

Naval Politics and *Rough Draught of a New Model at Sea*

Introduction

'Trimming' was initially a naval term, referring to the adjustment of sails to take advantage of changes in the wind. As discussed in chapter three, in the early-1680s it was used as a term to abuse Anglicans who supported Dissenters and hoped to unify Protestants against the perceived threat of Catholic absolutism. It was in this context that Halifax wrote *Character of a Trimmer*, which partly served as a means to express his republican sympathies. In the 1690s what he regarded as the threat of the loss of liberty under a Protestant monarch led him to produce a detailed work on the composition of the navy. In writing on the gentleman-tarpaulin controversy, Halifax contributed to a debate which would roil naval politics and popular culture for much of the long eighteenth century. The contours of this debate were neatly elucidated by Charles Shadwell, the son of the 'trimming' dramatist Thomas, who debuted *The Fair Quaker of Deal* in 1710 at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.[1] The play depicted Gentlemen officers as incompetent, brutal, and bringing the fashions of the court into the navy. A characteristic tirade of rough tarpaulin Commadore Flip declares 'the best Commadores that ever went between two Ends of a Ship, had not a drop of Nobility in 'em, thank Heaven'. In common with many earlier advocates of tarpaulins Flip yearns for the glory of an imagined past, asserting 'it was not so in the Dutch Wars, then we valued our

[1] See S. Pincus, 'Shadwell's Dramatic Trimming' in Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier, (eds), *Religion, Literature and Politics in Post Reformation England, 1540-1680* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 253-74.

selves upon Wooden Legs, and Stumps of Arms, and Fought as if Heaven and Earth was coming together' (debacles such as the raid on the Medway are blamed on land-based administrators).[2] His chief antagonist, the foppish Lieutenant Mizen, is more interested in wooing a wealthy heiress than serving his country. When Mizen does discuss his ideal officers, he depicts a very different force to Flip's tarpaulin navy:

> I don't mean a Fighting Navy, for that's the least part of our business: I am for a Polite Navy:—That is a Navy full of Sense and good Manners; a Navy of proper handsome well drest Fellows; that when it appears abroad, may be the Wonder of the World, for Glittering shining Coats, pouder'd Whiggs, Snuff Boxes, and Fashionable Airs.[3]

In appropriate fashion, the play ends with both Flip and Mizen agreeing to mend their errors by following the shining moderate example of Captain Worthy, who combines noble martial virtue with proper experience of seamanship.

Historical writing since the publication of Brown's edition of Halifax in 1989 has demonstrated that the reality of naval officers was far more nuanced. Firstly the blind acceptance in much British historiography of the biases of Samuel Pepys, who regarded gentlemen officers as pitiful, and efforts to increase their number as pointless, has been challenged.[4] Despite the lurid depictions of noble officers from Macaulay onwards, English ships did not consist of patriotic common Englishmen being 'starved to death by a crowd of lecherous and gluttonous aristocratic sadists'.[5] In fact, gentlemen and tarpaulin officers were more often united than divided, for example in their dislike of the efforts of administrators in London to monitor their actions and limit their perquisites. Moreover, many tarpaulins shared the vices men like Pepys regarded as inherent to gentlemen, and conversely many gentlemen were experienced and competent seamen.[6] This more nuanced understanding of the role of

[2] Charles Shadwell, *The Fair Quaker of Deal, or, The Humours of the Navy* (1710), p. 4.
[3] Ibid., pp. 24-5.
[4] J. D. Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins: The Officers and Men of the Restoration Navy* (Oxford, 1991), p. 2.
[5] Ibid., p. 87.
[6] Ibid., p. 5.

landed elites in the military can be seen in Halifax's work. While he did not idealise 'Cavalier' naval officers, and saw some contemporary criticism of them as valid, he believed the vices he feared were infecting the aristocracy to be correctable. Crucially both his personal experience and his political values meant he believed encouraging the gentry to serve at sea – if they were correctly educated and trained – would impart virtue to gentlemen, rather than vice to the navy.

The second area of historiographical change concerns the idea and impact of a naval military revolution. While the claim that during the early modern period various improvements in military technology led to a transformation in the conduct and consequences of war has existed for decades such a 'revolution' was largely confined to land.[7] Yet, as M. A. J. Palmer first noted in 1997, if there was a military revolution during the seventeenth century, it was most transformational at sea. There, advances in sailing and cannon vastly altered naval combat, with the adoption of single-line battle formations leading to more inconclusive engagements, resolved through the errors of one side rather than the positive action of the other.[8] The consequence of this revolution at sea meant the skills naval officers required became significantly more technical, with gunnery and navigation – vital to maintaining a dense single-file line – replacing the ability to board an enemy ship as the most essential attributes of seventeenth-century captains. Moreover, improvements in naval technology required greater government involvement in the composition of the fleet – with the English navy typical in gradually elevating the involvement of private 'maritime entrepreneurs'.[9] While the English navy which fought the Armada consisted of 79 private vessels to only 23

[7] See Michael Roberts, *The Military Revolution 1560-1660. An Inaugural Lecture Delivered Before the Queen's University of Belfast* (Belfast, 1956); Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1988).
[8] M. A. J. Palmer, 'The "Military Revolution" Afloat: The Era of the Anglo-Dutch Wars and the Transition to Modern Warfare at Sea', *War in History*, 4:2 (1997), 123-6.
[9] For the concept of the medieval maritime entrepreneur, employed by the monarch on an ad-hoc basis, see Jan Glete *Swedish Naval Administration, 1521-1721* (Leiden, 2010) p. 577.

royal ships, royal ship-building programmes under the early Stuarts reduced the ratio to roughly even by the 1640s. The much criticised (and dubiously effective) 'big ship' policy of the Restoration government meant that Torrington's 56-strong fleet at the Battle of Beachy Head in 1690 consisted exclusively of state-owned vessels.[10] Thus, as Glete notes, large navies were arguably the most complex organisations of the emerging fiscal-military states, requiring planning, intensive capital investment, and highly-trained specialists to operate them.[11] In this context, control of the personnel manning the most expensive and complicated technology the state possessed was vital. Thus the idea of a 'ship-of-state' (employed by Halifax and his contemporaries) was not merely a verbose metaphor designed to appeal to an English public obsessed with imagined Elizabethan glories, the ship *was* the most important manifestation of the state. As Richard Harding noted, by 2006 historiography had only recently begun to examine the profound influence navies and their personnel had on their wider societies.[12] The growing historical recognition of the political and social impact of naval structures in early modern England, combined with Halifax's involvement with naval politics, mean a different interpretation of *Rough Draught* is needed. Kenyon suggested Halifax intentionally published the work so that he could 'ostentatiously reaffirm his belief in limited monarchy', and Brown thought it 'more probable' the pamphlet was intended to defend Nottingham from political attacks, but the argument of this chapter is that it should be read primarily as a sincere contribution to the issue of naval recruitment.[13]

Third, in the past forty years anglophone historians have significantly improved their understanding of navies in a pan-European context. As Harding states 'we know far too little about other navies and how and why they interacted in the ways they did'.[14] In interpreting

[10] M. J. Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c. 1550-1700* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 220-3.
[11] Glete, *Naval Administration*, pp. 241-2.
[12] Richard Harding, 'Introduction', in Richard Harding (ed.), *Naval History, 1680-1850* (Aldershot, 2006), p. xi.
[13] Kenyon, p. 21; Brown, I, 137.
[14] Harding, 'Introduction', p. xi.

Halifax's thoughts on maritime matters it is vital to understand they were profoundly influenced by foreign admirals, navies, and writing. A relevant example is in J. D. Davies's account of English attitudes to de Ruyter, which notes the impact of the first English biography of the admiral, published in London in 1677.[15] Halifax owned a 1677 biography of the Dutch hero though his copy was written in French, and published in Amsterdam by a Huguenot who had previously spent time in Germany.[16] The hitherto under-examined cosmopolitan dimension to Halifax's thought has a number of implications. It will be argued that *Rough Draught* was written from concern that England was losing ground to France, especially in naval matters. Moreover, in the context of calls to reform the selection of naval officers, Halifax's understandings of revolutions in naval recruitment across the continent substantially affected his thinking. In a narrowly Anglocentric debate to support gentlemen officers meant supporting a stronger monarchy, to the point of absolutism. To champion tarpaulins meant to seek to limit the monarch's power, to the point of seeking to emulate the Interregnum regime. However, in the early-1690s, calls for change in the English navy predominantly sought to reduce, not increase, gentlemen officers. Why then did Halifax argue in *Rough Draught* for protecting the role of gentlemen in the navy? Following the classic gentleman-tarpaulin distinction we would understand that gentlemen were needed to prevent England lapsing into a pure democracy or Commonwealth. And yet towards the end of his life Halifax's concern was not that William's government was too weak but that it was becoming too strong. From 1692 onwards Halifax was an enthusiastic promoter in the House of Lords of Place and Triennial Bills, which would have reduced William's powers to influence or bypass parliament, earning the enmity of the King in the process.[17] This

[15] J. D. Davies, 'The Good Enemy. British Perceptions of Michiel De Ruyter and the Anglo-Dutch Wars', in Jaap R. Bruijn, Ronald Prud'homme van Reine, Rolof van Hovell Westerflier (eds), *De Ruyter: Dutch Admiral* (Rotterdam, 2011), p. 126; Anon, *The Life of Michael Adrian de Ruyter, Admiral of Holland* (1677).
[16] Barthelemy Pielat, *La Vie et les Actions memorables de Sr. Michel de Ruyter* (Amsterdam, 1677).
[17] Littleton, 'Savile, George', p. 353.

contradiction, it is argued, can only be explained by examining the non-English navies of which Halifax had knowledge. In particular, Scandinavia offered an example of how replacing noble captains with non-gentry professionals helped cause, rather than shielded against, the emergence of an absolute monarchy. In this respect, Halifax's was a relatively early broadside in a debate which would rumble on throughout the long eighteenth century – how the state could field a technically proficient, disciplined, and professional navy without undermining traditional notions of noble and gentry martial leadership.

Publication of A Rough Draft

A Rough Draft, written in 1693, can be broadly divided into three parts.[18] First, Halifax espouses the importance of the sea and trade to England's identity and prosperity, and concludes that to protect them the navy must be strengthened in various ways, with the pamphlet considering one of the most important – the composition and education of naval officers. Secondly, it declares that as the navy is so important, its social composition would likely dictate England's form of government. In a largely theoretical section, the merits and (mostly) demerits of absolute monarchy are discussed, while the implausibility of a Commonwealth is highlighted. Halifax concludes that as England must have a mixed monarchy, its navy must have a mixture of gentlemen and tarpaulins. Finally, the pamphlet finishes with a somewhat vague account of how training gentry officers at sea would give an ideal balance to England's ships, and the English 'ship-of-state'. Connected to this final section is a page entitled 'Heads' in the notebook of Sir William Trumbull. The Heads lay out a more specific set of proposals for the recruitment and training of naval officers. They appear directly following Trumbull's copy of *Rough Draught*, and are written in the same hand. Brown argues that since 'a comparison of texts indicates that Trumbull copied Rough

[18] Brown, I, 123.

Draught directly from his friend Halifax's original, whereas all the other extant manuscripts in circulation derive from a clerical transcription, it is quite possible that Trumbull also copied the 'Heads' from a manuscript of Halifax's at the same time'.[19] Furthermore, as the proposals seem to enable the ideal Halifax outlines in the pamphlet, which ended by promising to offer some details about 'the probationary qualifications of an officer at Sea', it seems reasonable to assume they represent his thoughts.[20] The pamphlet was first published in April 1694, seemingly against Halifax's wishes, given he was not publicly identified as its author until 1700 and even his chaplain Sion did not know he had written it.[21] It seems likely therefore that someone who had a copy of the pamphlet in manuscript arranged for it to be printed. Sir John Pakington, Sir William Trumbull, Robert Harley, and Sir John Lowther are known to have owned versions of the pamphlet, although the latter of these is not based on a direct transcription from Halifax's original draft.[22] Intriguingly, the 1694 copy was printed by Allen Banks and entered in the *Stationers' Register* by Richard Baldwin.[23] Baldwin was a keen Whig propagandist in the 1680s, and after the Revolution he and Allen published fanatically Francophobic and anti-Catholic material, including a 1692 tract calling for a naval descent on France as a means to avoid having to have a standing army stationed 'in the Bowels of our Country', as well as 'some blunt criticisms of parliament's prosecution of the French war'.[24]

The Savile family and the navy

In seeking to understand *Rough Draught*, it is important to recognise the extent to which Halifax, and his family connections, were involved with naval politics during the Restoration.

[19] Brown, I, 124.
[20] Brown, I, 123.
[21] Brown, I, 138.
[22] Mark N. Brown, 'Sir William Trumbull and the Marquis of Halifax', *The British Library Journal*, 19:2 (1993), 142-7. Brown argues Lowther's copy most closely resembles the published version.
[23] *A Rough Draught of a New Model at Sea* (1694).
[24] Anon, *Short and Impartial Considerations* (1692), p. 32; Beth Lynch, 'Baldwin, Richard', *ODNB*.

First his uncle and early political patron, Sir William Coventry, had served both as MP for Great Yarmouth and Secretary to the Lord High Admiral. In the former role he heeded advice that 'the town depends so much upon their seamen that they will not … disoblige them in point of interest' and promoted the 1663 Herring Act and other measures to boost the maritime economy.[25] In the latter office he was closely involved in debates over naval personnel. Pepys recorded 'an hour's private talk with him' when Coventry discussed the criticism he was facing in the Cavalier House of Commons. In particular he defended himself from the:

> accusation, that the Cavaliers are not employed … he confesses that the more of the Cavaliers are put in, the less of discipline that hath followed in the fleet; and that, whenever there comes occasion, it must be the old ones [i.e. the 'tarpaulin' officers who had served the Interregnum navy[26]] that must do any good …[27]

However, unlike Pepys, Coventry gradually became more tolerant of gentlemen officers, provided they had sufficient experience at sea.[28] Much of his time in the 1660s was spent seeking to improve the professionalism of officers, both through improving oversight and training. Following the advice of William Pierrepont, who became Halifax's father-in-law in 1672, Coventry proposed a bill to expand the use of martial law at sea, which Pepys feared would 'give the Admiralty tyrannical power over under-officers'.[29] As will be discussed later, supporting excessive power at sea was often regarded as proof of sycophantic sympathy for gentlemen officers. Meanwhile, in 1664 Coventry proposed a reform to the system under which warrant officers were assigned. In place of certificates issued by individual captains he advocated a standardised examination, to take place in London before a panel of senior naval figures.[30] Though the plan was not adopted, in many aspects it resembled the exam for

[25] Perry Gauci, *Politics and Society in Great Yarmouth, 1660-1722* (Oxford, 1996), p. 111.
[26] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 5 notes that many in the early Restoration regarded any officer who held commission under the Republic as a tarpaulin, even if they came from aristocratic backgrounds.
[27] Samuel Pepys, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Ernest Rhys (2 vols, 1908), I, 375.
[28] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 35.
[29] Eveline Cruickshanks, 'Coventry, Hon. William', in Henning, II, 158.
[30] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 19.

lieutenants introduced in 1678, which in effect ensured that gentlemen officers would only receive preferment if they met a certain standard. From the 1660s, therefore, someone so closely personally and politically connected with Halifax that he was sometimes confused with him, displayed a more pro-gentleman attitude than Pepys, and sought to improve the training given to officers.

While Coventry provided Halifax's first entry into naval administration, another relative gave a direct insight to command at sea. In 1661 Anne Chicheley, Halifax's mother, reported that his step-brother John had embarked on a naval career. Her husband Thomas had 'sent his younger sonn with ye fleet, where he was presently seasoned with a sea-fight against ye Turke, towards ye making him a sea-man'.[31] Chicheley was certainly criticised for being a typical incompetent gentleman, though this was probably connected to factional rivalry within the navy. During the Third Anglo-Dutch War, his promotion to rear admiral was attacked by supporters of Prince Rupert. Chicheley, claimed one pamphlet, was 'a person of honour and quality, yet but of late a seaman'. Some responses from figures connected to the Yorkist faction accused Rupert of being a coward, homosexual, and an atheist. Another reply, most likely written by George Legge, defended the ability of Chicheley and others connected to York, and noted he had served as a captain since 1662.[32] Indeed, evidence suggests that Chicheley was the type of gentleman captain of whom Sir William Coventry *did* approve. His bravery at Lowestoft led to a knighthood and the praise of the lord admiral's secretary, who described him as 'the best of the young seamen' England possessed.[33] His naval experience also meant that he worked with Henry Savile and others with connections to Halifax on Charles II's admiralty commission. When first appointed to the Admiralty Commission in

[31] Anne Chicheley to Henry Savile, 26 Oct. 1661, in Lady Eveline Newton (ed.), *Lyme Letters, 1660-1760* (1925), p. 14.
[32] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, pp. 167-8.
[33] J. D. Davies, 'Chicheley, Sir John', *ODNB.*

1682, Chicheley was the sole naval officer present.[34] Indeed, Chicheley and Halifax seem to have shared some level of mutual respect. At the start of James's reign Chicheley reported his pleasure that Halifax had been 'made Lord President of ye Council, by choice, I am told, and not otherwise, wch I am glad to heare, he being able to do his Majesty good service in Parliament'.[35]

Though politically inclined to Toryism, Davies argued that Chicheley was 'always tempered by pragmatism: he hoped for a compromise over exclusion to save "this poore nation", and was later to accept the accession of William and Mary out of "necessatie"'.[36] His reputation remained high in the eighteenth century, with *Biographia Navalis* highlighting 'the favour in which he stood with different governments, and the high opinion entertained of his conduct, as a good officer and honest man … [by] the service in which he had been bred, and to which he had rendered himself an ornament'.[37] Halifax maintained interest in Chicheley and, after the Revolution, sought to ensure Chicheley continued to play a prominent role in naval affairs so that despite Chicheley's dismay at the removal of James he was appointed again to the Admiralty Commission in February 1689.[38] Moreover, Halifax's notes of his conversations with the new King show his efforts to protect his stepbrother. An entry in early-April 1689 reported 'Sir John Chicheley ill represented. I must tell him to speak to the King'.[39] But while Halifax's influence protected Chicheley from the dislike of William, the first change in the Admiralty Board which occurred after he relinquished the Privy Seal saw Chicheley removed from his position in January 1690.[40] Writing a pamphlet on naval recruitment was not a

[34] 'Lord High Admiral and Commissioners of the Admiralty 1660-1800', in J. C. Sainty (ed.), *Office-Holders in Modern Britain: Volume 4, Admiralty Officials 1660-1870* (1975), pp. 18-31.
[35] Sir John Chicheley to Richard Legh, 19 Feb. 1685, *Lyme Letters*, p. 127.
[36] J. D. Davies, 'The Navy, Parliament and Political Crisis in the Reign of Charles II', *HJ*, 36:2 (1993), 282.
[37] John Charnock, *Biographia Navalis; Or, Impartial Memoirs of the Lives and Characters of the Navy of Great Britain, from the Year 1600 to the Present Times*, (4 vols, 1794), I, 86.
[38] *CSPD* 22 Feb. 1689.
[39] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 213.
[40] *CSPD* 6 Jan. 1690.

vehicle for Halifax to smuggle in his (already published) abstract thoughts on constitutional balance. Rather it can be seen as the culmination of a long career involved with admiralty politics and questions of naval recruitment. In particular Chicheley can be seen as 'a Gentleman [who] maketh no other use of his quality than to incite him the more to do his duty'.[41]

Admiralty politics under Charles II

With a relative like Chicheley serving at sea, Halifax was typical of the Restoration aristocracy and gentry which was 'probably better informed of … naval matters than any of their predecessors and any of their successors'.[42] Sir John Reresby's views of naval policy were influenced by the letters of his brother who served during the Third Anglo-Dutch War.[43] However, Brown hardly discusses the significant role in naval politics played by Halifax during the period. For much of the twentieth century historians, following the interpretation of Pepys, have damned the English navy in the reign of Charles II as being wrecked by 'an institution found guilty of incompetence and failure on a breathtaking scale'.[44] Halifax was deeply involved in the changes of the early 1680s which saw the promotion of Chicheley, Henry Savile and Daniel Finch, future earl of Nottingham. In particular, Davies regards the promotion of the first two as being by 'Halifax's instigation'.[45] Initially the newly constituted commission suffered from division relating to the after-effects of the Exclusion Crisis. In January 1681 Edward Vaughan was 'upon pretence of his sicknesse' refusing to attend meetings, while fellow exclusionist Sir Thomas Lee was reported to be considering

[41] Brown, I, 306.
[42] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 103.
[43] Mary K. Geiter and W. A. Speck, 'The Reliability of Sir John Reresby's "Memoirs" and his Account of the Oxford Parliament of 1681', *Historical Research*, 62:107 (1989), 106.
[44] J. D. Davies, 'Pepys and the Admiralty Commission of 1679-84', *Historical Research*, 62:147 (1989), 34.
[45] Davies, 'The Navy, Parliament and Political Crisis in the Reign of Charles II', 286.

resignation. The following month the pair left alongside Sir Henry Capel.[46] The suggestion of an additional alteration in the Admiralty commission first appears in August 1681, when rumours of Henry Savile's withdrawal as ambassador to France began to circulate at court. That month Halifax reassured his brother about being jointly appointed to the Admiralty with his step-father's son – 'your informations concerning Sr John Chicheley were wrong'. Moreover, Halifax reported that he had told the King

> yr coming [home] would look like a disgrace; except you had the countenance of some other imployment to secure you from any such misconstruction. Then putting him in mind of the Admiralty, he presently fell into it, and said he would make a new commission where you and Sr John Chicheley should be taken in; he spoke it in a manner that I think you may rely upon it.

Indeed, Halifax seems to have regarded shaping the admiralty commission as of greater importance than keeping Henry in France. He advised his brother to write to the King and accept (presumably before the mercurial Charles changed his mind), with the admiralty described as 'a more desirable thing than the tinsell of an embassy'.[47] Rather than just being a means for Halifax to disperse patronage, the 1682 changes are widely recognised to have improved the competence of the commission, with even the otherwise hostile Tanner praising Henry Savile and especially Chicheley.[48] The addition of Arthur Herbert in August 1683 enhanced the technical expertise on the Board. However, according to Davies it probably also caused Charles to revoke the commission in 1684 after coming under sustained pressure from a Dartmouth-Pepys faction on the one hand, which hated Herbert, and a York-Portsmouth-Sunderland group on the other, which recognised the Admiralty 'was largely the domain of the increasingly isolated Halifax'.[49]

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[46] Henry Horwitz, *Revolution Politicks. The Career of Daniel Finch Second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 24-5.
[47], Halifax to Henry Savile, 21 Aug. 1681, 'Savile Correspondence', pp. 216-17.
[48] J. R. Tanner, 'The Administration of the Navy from the Restoration to the Revolution. Part III. – 1679-1688', *EHR*, 14:53 (1899), 48.
[49] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 197.

Admiralty politics under William III

Halifax's keen interest in naval administration continued after the Revolution in addition to his support of Sir John Chicheley, discussed earlier. The February 1689 commission scotched Torrington's hopes of becoming Lord High Admiral and returned the admiralty to commission. Initially containing seven members, the commission was hampered by sloppy attendance and Torrington being at sea. 'From June to September', Ehrman writes, 'the names of [John Vaughan, 3rd earl of] Carbery, [Sir John] Lowther and Chicheley appear regularly and almost exclusively at the head of the agenda'.[50] This meant that naval administration in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution was conducted by the son-in-law, cousin, and step-brother of Halifax. Foxcroft argues that this did not necessarily imply the influence of the Lord Privy Seal – 'all had other claims on the Government' – but other evidence indicates that Halifax actively sought to promote those he considered worthy to positions of power in the navy.[51] First, Lowther was the only one of three commissioners who (against the wishes of William) voted in favour of the Sacheverell clause to the Corporation Bill in early-1690 who was not purged at the next remodelling.[52] Additionally, Halifax's journals record an attempt to convince William to appoint Hugh Boscawen as a commissioner to the Admiralty in August 1689.[53] The King's dislike of the Cornish MP meant such an appointment did not occur.[54] As well as seeking to promote clients, there is further evidence of him playing some personal role in naval affairs, particularly in his and Nottingham's supervision of a programme for an expanded fleet from October to December 1689.[55] Halifax regarded naval policy as a means to establish patronage networks certainly,

[50] John Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III, 1689-1697: its State and Direction* (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 278-97.
[51] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 67.
[52] Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 322-3
[53] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 233.
[54] Paula Watson, 'Boscawen, Hugh,', in Henning, I, 690.
[55] Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 325-30.

but he also believed that appointees needed to have significant prior experience. His writing of *Rough Draught* should be regarded as a sincere effort to influence naval policy, informed in part by his own personal circumstances.

The crises of the 1690s

Davies argues that an anti-army, blue-water strategy which hoped to protect English liberties was enhanced with the removal of the threat of the navy being a tool of Jacobite absolutism after 1689.[56] To an extent Halifax's writing also reflects this shift from viewing all armed forces as potential tools of absolutism to definitively preferring the navy to the army. While in the *Character of a Trimmer*, Cromwell's anti-Spanish foreign policy was attacked as 'joyning with the stronger side' (that is France), no preference was given to how England should project military force.[57] In the aftermath of the Revolution, however, the *Rough Draught* described England as 'in an Island, Restrained to it by God Almighty, not as a penalty, but a Grace, and one of the greatest that can bee given to Mankind. Happy Confinement!'.[58] For Chesterfield, providence granting William's army victory at the Battle of the Boyne, but defeating his navy at Beachy Head was intensely confusing. Epitomizing the sense that England prioritising the sea was not merely a tactical choice, but divine duty he wrote to Halifax 'I confess it seems a little odd that God should appear for us at Land, and be against us on the water'.[59] By the time the *Rough Draught* was being produced, an inept government, rather than a puzzling deity, was deemed the cause of naval defeats. 'I cannot allow we have an army in Flanders; you have no obligation to have an army in Flanders', thundered Sir Thomas Clarges in the House of Commons in late-1693. 'Had we attended the

[56] Davies, 'The Navy, Parliament and Political Crisis', 288. See also Lois G. Schwoerer, *"No Standing Armies!" The Antiarmy Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (1977), pp. 137-87.
[57] Brown, I, 224.
[58] Brown, I, 296.
[59] Add MS 75361, unfoliated, Phillip Stanhope, 2nd earl of Chesterfield to Halifax, 20 July 1690.

sea, the French could have done little in Flanders'.[60] Halifax's notes recorded that 'Rochester Ld told me Sept 92 that we must keep a good fleet but it was impossible to keep so many land men and send so much money out of the Kingdom'.[61] This belief that England needed to look first to its own navy was shared by Halifax's son, who succeeded to the marquessate in 1695. In addition to using his position as MP for Newark to defend his father, William Savile made his position on military priorities clear: 'I am for providing first for ourselves in the fleet before we provide for others in an army'.[62]

Yet while the navy was regarded as England's saviour and jewel, to the shock of many it failed to live up to their high expectations. As Jones noted, anger at defeats at sea was heightened because in the decade leading up to England's declaration of war against France, 'almost everyone concerned with naval power' was labouring under the delusion that achieving supremacy at sea would be both easy and decisive.[63] Halifax and Nottingham were amongst those who believed that blockading France would strangle their trade, with the latter pinning his hopes that a 'descent' in 1692 would end the war.[64] However, when myth collided with reality defeats were profoundly unsettling, and led to an upsurge in debates over how to resolve naval weakness, combined with a worrying hunt for scapegoats. The first shock to the Royal Navy came when Torrington led an Anglo-Dutch fleet to defeat at Beachy Head in July 1690. The resultant criticism of the admiral can be seen in Halifax's writings on naval affairs in three ways.

First, Torrington was cited as emblematic of the flaws of gentlemen officers. Richard Gibson, a naval clerk and acquaintance of Pepys who spent much of the late seventeenth century in an

[60] William Cobbett, *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England* (36 vols, 1806-20), V, 788.
[61] Add MS 51511, p. 68a.
[62] Stuart Handley, 'Savile William, Ld. Eland', in Hayton, V, 373-4.
[63] J. R. Jones, 'Limitations of British Sea Power in the French Wars, 1689-1815', in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester, 1988), p. 35.
[64] Ibid., pp. 45-7; Horwitz, *Revolution Politicks*, p. 130.

ultimately futile attempt to eliminate gentlemen and nobles from the navy attacked Torrington directly in a pamphlet circulated in 1690. The former admiral was typical of noble captains 'preferring volunteer gentlemen and soldiers in their accommodation aboard before officers and seamen – as Lord Torrington by lodging soldiers in the middle and seamen on the lower gun deck'.[65] Gibson's criticisms were implicitly responded to in the *Rough Draught*, which accepted 'When a Gentleman is preferred at Sea, the Tarpaulin is very apt to impute it to friends or favour'.[66] For Halifax therefore a more formalised system of promotion – in which gentlemen were given incentives to enter the navy and received intensive training from a young age but were not automatically preferred – was essential to curbing social resentments. The 'Heads' which followed the pamphlet made clear 'when it comes to Flaggs and Admirals, No Rule but the Fittest'. In addition to a meritocratic system of promotion, Halifax, perhaps following the earlier effort of his uncle to eliminate more informal systems of promotion, advocated 'False Certificates from superiour Commanders to be examplarily punished'.[67] For Halifax, a stricter system to allocate command was not merely needed to improve the performance of the navy; without reform resentment against the incompetence of gentlemen officers could lead to their total removal.

If Torrington could be accused of lacking training in some of his tactical decisions, his failure to co-ordinate with the Dutch epitomised the flawed education of most English officers. Nottingham regarded Torrington's failure to support his allies (which he attributed to cowardice) as the key reason behind the defeat at Beachy Head.[68] That there were repeated problems with joint Anglo-Dutch naval actions during the Nine Years War is not surprising –

[65] Richard Gibson, 'Reflections on our Naval Strength', in J. K. Laughton (ed.), *The Naval Miscellany* (2 vols, 1913), II, 150.
[66] Brown, I, 305.
[67] Ibid., 309.
[68] Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, p. 353; C. D. Lee, 'The Battle of Beachy Head: Lord Torrington's Conduct', *Mariner's Mirror*, 80:3 (1994), 270-89. For a more favourable account of Torrington's conduct, see P. Le Fevre, '"Meer laziness" or Incompetence: the Earl of Torrington and the Battle of Beachy Head', *Mariner's Mirror*, 80:3 (1994), 290–7.

'hardly any of the officers could speak or understand the language of his opposite number'. This problem continued under successive English commanders – in 1692 Russell required both an English and a Dutch secretary.[69] Indeed, one of the reasons English officers so admired de Ruyter was that as a rare English-speaking Dutch admiral they could actually communicate with him.[70] In part to correct the insularity of the officer corps Halifax advocated exposing gentlemen recruits to foreign navies. His proposals for reform involved both practical experience and theoretical education. In peacetime English volunteers could be sent abroad to gain training with foreign navies enabling joint actions, and ensuring they were not released during times of peace.[71] Additionally, a naval school for gentlemen's sons was to give future officers a more European outlook: 'Sea Lectures to be Established and Incouragd. Publick Libraries of Sea-Voyages, Maps, &c. Dictionaries to understand the sea Termes in all Languages'.[72] It is worth noting that Halifax was willing to send his youngest son to fight abroad in the army of Austria and writing to Alexander Stanhope he commended the latter's decision to put his sons into the army and navy as:

> … raising them to make good figures in the world, which nothing is so likely to do as the military calling and therefore you have reason to applaud your selfe for chusing that method, as most advantageous to them, though your fears for them may sometimes give you disquiet.[73]

In the political aftermath of Torrington's defeat Halifax's attitude towards the disgraced admiral was ambivalent. On the one hand he typified the degeneracy and immorality Halifax feared the aristocracy was sinking into. Ehrman regarded him as 'almost a professional bad man' who seemed to have 'enjoyed his reputation' and contemporaries depicted 'a man

[69] J. R. Bruijn, 'William III and his Two Navies', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 43:2 (1989), 120.
[70] Davies, 'British Perceptions of Michiel De Ruyter', 122.
[71] Brown, I, 308.
[72] Brown, I, 309.
[73] Kent Archives, U1590 C7/19 Halifax to Stanhope, 24 Mar. 1690.

abandoned to luxury and vice'[74] In particular Dutch officers bitterly complained at his drunkenness and use of prostitutes.[75] James II had been utterly astonished when the then Herbert refused to support repeal of the Test Act in 1687 on the grounds of his conscience.[76] In December 1689 William responded to a rumour that he intended to resign by telling Halifax that 'nothing but meer lazinesse was the cause'.[77] In essence, had Torrington not existed, critics of gentleman officers such as Gibson would have had to invent him. In his scheme to improve the training of gentleman officers, Halifax may well have had Torrington in mind when he recommended new recruits 'to have another Probationary Year added as a Penalty to any who shall be proovd to have been twice Drunk within the compass of 6 months'.[78] On the other hand, Torrington offered Halifax a clear warning of the risk that the immorality of the aristocracy could lead to their privileges being removed. In reaction to Beachy Head, and in a potential breach of the privileges of the peerage, the admiral was imprisoned in the Tower of London under orders of the Privy Council. Regardless his opinions of Torrington's conduct, one of Halifax's chief concerns was to protect the rights of the nobility – particularly in this case when his long-time rival Carmarthen (formerly the earl of Danby) could be accused of being the person undermining them. Joining with Rochester, Halifax chaired the Lords committee which passed a resolution condemning Torrington's imprisonment.[79]

Command of the fleet subsequently alternated between Edward Russell (regarded as sympathetic to the Whigs) and a joint commission of Cloudesley Shovell, Henry Killigrew and Ralph Delaval (favoured by Nottingham). Halifax's writings seem to favour the latter as

[74] Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, p. 275; John B. Hattendorf, 'Herbert, Arthur, earl of Torrington', *ODNB*.
[75] Bruijn, 'William III and his Two Navies', 129.
[76] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 203.
[77] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 240.
[78] Brown, I, 308.
[79] Littleton, 'Savile, George', pp. 349-50.

a system of naval administration. His papers contain a nine-page draft of a speech calling for various offices of state including the Lord of the Fleet, to be put into commission. The work, like *Rough Draught*, was probably written in the aftermath of the catastrophic loss of the Smyrna convoy at Lagos in June 1693. Contemporaries recognised that 'right or wrong the Whigs lay all miscarriages at my Lord Nottingham's door' by blaming 'his' commission of admirals.[80] Consequently in one respect Halifax's writing on naval matters can be seen as an effort to protect Nottingham. As well as voting in the House of Lords against a resolution accusing the former Secretary of corruption and treachery at points Halifax directly criticised Russell.[81] While he had defeated the French fleet at La Hogue, Halifax suggested the victory 'would hardly have been lesse improoved, if there had been a Commission'. Indeed, had Russell not had sole command of the fleet 'the opportunity of destroying neer 20 ships more, might not have been lost'.[82] Halifax clearly preferred joint to sole command, for both political and practical reasons. First, diluting and somewhat distributing power could prevent political instability. When allocating commands he argued, 'the Nation is concerned to keep the balance somewhat even, by preventing the Overweight of these Single officers'.[83] Halifax was thus concerned that the effort by Whigs to eliminate the commission of the fleet in favour of the decisiveness of a single leader could lead to a single favourite either overcoming the king or acting as a tool for royal despotism. Moreover, he warned that concentrating power in a single admiral would discourage men of quality from entering the naval profession, as opportunities for promotion became limited. 'It is a more probable expectation, and consequently a better incouragement to the Officers at Sea, when they may hope to have their part in a Commission'.[84] In addition to naval policy being a lens through

[80] Christopher Hatton to Viscount Hatton, 1 Aug. 1693 in Horwitz, *Revolution Politicks*, p. 144.
[81] Ibid., p. 147.
[82] Brown, II, 106.
[83] Brown, II, 95.
[84] Brown, II, 109.

which Halifax saw his concerns over an unbalanced constitution and the need to promote sufficient numbers of gentlemen he displayed a recognition that warfare at sea had been utterly transformed. 'Former examples do not reach', he wrote, 'the Fleet was alwayes a Great Thing; but it is onely of late that it is *Everything*'.[85] Once again Halifax understood that appointing powerful nobles and members of the landed elite to the fleet simply on the basis of their 'quality' was no longer tenable. While in the decade before he was born 'the Duke of Buckingham might bee Admirall without Experience … It is not so now'.[86] The only question Halifax detected in the politics of the 1690s was whether the navy would be dominated exclusively by tarpaulins, or whether a reformed aristocracy could merit places.

The sense that the English navy could decisively and quickly defeat France, so strong in 1689, had disintegrated, and by 1693 criticism of gentlemen officers had intensified. The Whig Secretary of State John Trenchard commissioned Richard Gibson to report his proposals for naval improvement which advocated replacing gentlemen with merchants on the Admiralty commission, and suggested professional commercial seamen should be promoted to replace ousted gentleman captains. A summary of his position submitted to William in October 1693 argued that 'all Nations, who were ever Great by Sea, and have since lost it, came principally from putting their Navy into the hands of their Gentry (not bredd Tarpawlins) witness Spaine Portugall &c'.[87] Thus, the context in which Halifax was writing was one where the involvement of noble or gentleman officers was under profound threat. In seventeenth-century European naval policy, defeat was the mother of invention – and more worrying for Halifax, those innovations frequently ended the prominent role played by the aristocracy.

[85] Brown, II, 103.
[86] Brown, II, 90.
[87] Brown, II, 128.

Sweden: Aristocratic decline, professionalisation, and Protestant absolutism

By the 1680s France was self-evident proof that Catholic persecution and unlimited monarchical power were intrinsically linked – an absolutist monarchy required an absolutist religion.[88] Yet as Pincus notes, the most dramatic increases in monarchical power in the century after 1660 occurred in resolutely Protestant states. Though circumstances differed, these changes involved an alliance between a ruler and people, squeezing out the privileges of aristocratic or oligarchic class, with the opening up of military service to all acting to solidify absolutist tendencies. During the Dutch *Rampjaar* Halifax personally witnessed how 'popular political violence had changed the Netherlands from a republican into a quasi-monarchical regime'. In Scandinavia 'Frederik III and Christian V transformed Denmark from an elective monarchy into one of the most absolute states in Europe', while transforming the state in Sweden meant 'the Swedish nobility was emasculated'.[89] Sweden offered Halifax a troubling parallel to post-revolutionary England – a Protestant absolutist state, which may have initially fought against Louis XIV but was using a professionalising navy to extinguish aristocratic power. For the first four decades after its foundation in 1634, Sweden's admiralty board, the *Amiralitetskollegium,* had been dominated by nobles who also sat on the council with the title *amiralitetsråd*.[90] Such a position enabled the aristocracy to resist the efforts of the monarchy to pass a *reduktion* to recover alienated crown lands they held. This was particularly true during the regency of Charles XI, when the aristocracy was unwilling to impoverish itself to fund a vastly expanded navy. An '*Amiralitetskollegium* dominated by the richest families in Sweden' effectively acted as a bulwark against 'higher taxes on the aristocracy or any kind of *reduktion*'.[91] From the position of English observers,

[88] J. F. Bosher, 'The Franco-Catholic Danger', *History*, 79:225 (1994), 30.
[89] Pincus, *1688*, p. 35.
[90] Glete, *Swedish Naval Administration*, p. 297.
[91] Ibid., p. 302.

Swedish politics revolved around a clash between the ideal of a hereditary monarch with absolute power against what Roberts terms 'aristocratic constitutionalism', with the king restrained by a powerful nobility in the *Riksdag*.[92]

However, as in England in the 1690s, naval catastrophes acted as a catalyst for calls to remove the landed elite from military and political supremacy. Having abandoned its earlier practice of requiring *amiralitetsråd* to have had some previous experience at sea in 1660, the quality of nobles serving in the navy gradually declined.[93] The aftermath of a series of defeats in the Scanian War of 1675-79 directly impacted not only the composition of the Swedish navy, but its constitution. As Glete notes, the aristocratic admiralty 'was blamed for the disasters of this war, and the failure of the navy was one of the main reasons why aristocratic influence over the government of the state was discredited'.[94] Hans Wachtmeister, a professional naval officer, became the most important figure in Swedish naval administration and a leading advocate in Parliament for Charles XI's successful demand for a *reduktion*. The professionalisation of the navy and removal of military command from the nobility was thus closely connected to the loss of both land ownership and political power deriving from it. In the summer of 1680, when Halifax was attempting to pass Limitations which would reduce the powers of a future monarch in favour of noble-dominated parliamentary committees, the reverse of this occurred in Sweden, where 'enforcement of *reduktion* produced a major loss of economic, political and social power by the magnates, and a corresponding increase in the power of the Crown'.[95] While the king established absolutism at the expense of the aristocracy's position in the navy, economy and constitution, Wachtmeister 'and practically

[92] Michael Roberts, 'On Aristocratic Constitutionalism in Swedish History', in Roberts (ed.), *Essays in Swedish History* (1967), p. 14.
[93] Glete, *Swedish Naval Administration*, p. 297.
[94] Jan Glete, 'Bridge and Bulwark: The Swedish Navy and the Baltic, 1500-1809', in Richard Harding (ed.), *Naval History 1680-1850* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 238.
[95] A. F. Upton, 'The Riksdag of 1680 and the Establishment of Royal Absolutism in Sweden', *EHR*, 102:403 (1987), 302.

all professional sea officers, who had rarely been given land by the crown, belonged to the winners'.[96] The increase in the power of a professionalised military further forced the aristocracy into dependence upon the monarchy. As Upon notes, 'the members of the nobility who were hit by … the *reduktion* had only one road to recovery, and it led through royal favour'.[97]

A European perspective is vital to understanding Halifax's writings on the navy. In England, Colonel John Birch complained in 1678 that the preference shown 'gentlemen captains' over those 'who are bred betwixt London & Blackwall' was a tool for royal absolutism.[98] Similarly, Gibson's 1693 memorandum to William argued: 'to Introduce Voluntier Gentlemen into the Navy; to keep Seamen from Comanding in … Shipps of Warr; was the Designe of King Charles the 2d And King James the 2d to Introduce Popery into your Kingdom; by bringing Arbitrary Government into the Navy'.[99] Yet in Sweden, an undeniably Protestant monarch introduced professional seamen into the navy to break the power of the nobility and bring absolute government to his kingdom.

Various pieces of evidence suggest that Halifax was aware of the Swedish situation when writing *Rough Draught*. First, the *Character of a Trimmer* mentions Charles XI's *reduktion* campaign. Discussing foreign affairs he writes 'in *Sweden* they are troubled, that the King should have changed some things there of late by his single authority, from the Ancient and setled constitution'.[100] Moreover he owned John Robinson's 1694 work *An Account of Sweden*. The work was published without his permission partly because he had based his *Account* on accounts he had written as ambassador to Sweden. The publishers were keen to

[96] Glete, *Swedish Naval Administration*, pp. 303, 613.
[97] A. F. Upton, 'Charles XI and the Swedish Estates, 1680-93', *Parliaments, Estates, and Representation*, 22:1 (2002), 86.
[98] Davies, 'The Navy, Parliament and Political Crisis', 287.
[99] Brown, I, 128.
[100] Brown, I, 234.

print because of the success of Robert Moleworth's *An Account of Denmark* (1693), interpreted by many as a 'warning against authoritarian tendencies in England', and highlighting that Protestant as well as Catholic monarchs could introduce absolutism.[101] While Halifax's library did not contain the *Account of Denmark*, he owned Gideon Pierreville's *Present State of Denmark*, which also (though from a sympathetic perspective) described the removal of aristocratic privileges in favour of an absolutist monarchy. So sweeping were the changes military defeats in 1659 had ushered in that 'the Kingdom of Denmark, since the Reformation made in that State, in the year 1660 hath a Perogative of as large extent as any Monarch in Christendom'.[102] Pierreville appears to have partially plagiarised from the work of Sir Phillip Meadows, a diplomat to the Baltic under Cromwell, whose 1677 *Narrative* of the Dano-Swedish War was also owned by Halifax. Meadows argued 'the onely benefit and advantage which *Denmark* has received by this last War amidst many losses and sufferances was occasional and accidental', as military defeats led to an alliance between King and burghers, with the result that 'the Crown is also delivered out of the Guardianship of the Nobility, being changed from Elective to Hereditary'.[103]

Robinson's description of Sweden thus followed a common literary genre depicting the transformation of Scandinavian states into absolutism.[104] It clearly indicated that military defeat led to absolutism as 'the Clergy, Burghers, and Peasants, were easily persuaded, That the Miseries they had suffered, proceeded from the too great Power of the Nobility'. Meanwhile, the lack of virtue displayed by the 'Senate' contributed to a hatred of nobles, and thus gave Charles XI 'an opportunity to lay the Foundations of as Absolute a Sovereignty as any Prince in Europe possesses'. Moreover both Wachtmeister and Hans Fleming, an

[101] D. W. Hayton, 'Molesworth, Robert, first Viscount Molesworth', *ODNB.*
[102] Gideon Pierreville, *The Present State of Denmark …* (1683), p. 36.
[103] Phillip Meadows, *A Narrative of the Principal Actions…* (1677), pp. 147-51.
[104] Barbara Shapiro, *Political Communication and Political Culture in England, 1558-1688* (Stanford, 2012), pp. 63-4.

amiralitetsråd who sought to pass a *reduktion* under Charles X Gustav, are mentioned as key agents in the absolutizing process.[105] Additionally, Halifax's involvement with naval politics under Charles II would probably have given him some awareness of the Swedish fleet. Five Swedish officers gained commissions during the Second and Third Anglo-Dutch Wars, more than any other foreign nation, 'reflecting a particularly close relationship between the English and Swedish navies' during the Restoration period.[106]

Halifax's understanding of other European navies and their relation to constitutional change explains why he believed reform of the nobility to be so vital. As *Rough Draught* notes

> Men of quality in their severall degrees must either restore themselves to a better opinion both for morality and diligence, or else Quality itselfe will bee in danger of being extinguished. The Originall Gentleman is almost lost. In strictnesse, when Posterity doth not still further adorne, by their own virtue, the Scutcheon their Ancestours first got for them by their Meritt, they deserve the penalty of being deprived of it. To Expect that Quality alone should waft Men up into places and Imployments, is as unreasonable as to think that a Ship, because it is carved and guilded, should bee fit to go to sea, without Sayles or tackling …[107]

The metaphor of elaborately gilded ships shows an awareness of the frequent disputes between gentlemen captains and shipwrights over the extent of decoration of ships. While the former regarded this as essential to upholding England's honour, the latter considered the captains as vain and spendthrift.[108] Yet it also highlights Halifax's concern that the declining virtue of the aristocracy was delegitimising their claim to political power. Thus experience from a young age serving at sea could help to recover the virtue the landed elite had lost. While Gibson believed gentlemen captains caused 'this ill effect, as to bring seamen to covet to act like gentlemen when gentlemen should learn to act like seamen', Halifax hoped encouraging the sons of gentry to enter the navy could have the inverse effect. His notes on the earliest draft of the pamphlet state: 'As the Tarpaulin hath an ambition to get a Scutcheon;

[105] John Robinson, *An Account of Sweden* (1694), pp. 96-7.
[106] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 30.
[107] Brown, I, 307.
[108] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 44.

The Gentleman will mend his by being a tarpaulin. The consequences of this so good &c'.[109] Once gentlemen had served at sea from a young age, *Rough Draught* argues, the 'undistinguishing discipline of a Ship hath tamed the young Mastership which is apt to arise from a Gentleman's birth and education'. Partially accepting Gibson's criticism that gentlemen officers were more likely to 'punish seamen severely for slight causes', Halifax argued that 'When a Gentleman hath learnt how to obey, hee will grow very much fitter to command; his own memory will advise him … for smaller faults not to inflict too rigorous punishments'.[110]

Halifax's ideal was for political and military power to be concentrated in a virtuous nobility. Rodger's summary of England's naval conflicts with France in the long-eighteenth century detects 'a rise rather than a fall in aristocratic power', but argues this took place through a process whereby 'the hitherto middle-class and professional values of duty, self-discipline and piety infiltrated the character of the gentleman'.[111] Halifax, however, did not regard the adoption of such values as inherently 'middle-class', but rather a return to a virtuous nobility idealised through the political language of classical republicanism. Halifax's intellectual works led him being associated with neo-Harringtonian thinkers who accepted England would be a monarchy but hoped to follow a classical example of active, virtuous citizens who were able to bear arms and hold landed property.[112] Elements of Halifax's proposals to encourage gentlemen to join the navy are indicative of a concern that taxes to pay for the war would cripple the landed interest. As an inducement to gentlemen joining, they and their family were to be exempted from certain taxes and civic burdens.[113] Halifax obviously did not want England to become a democracy ruled by tarpaulins, rather he hoped gentlemen

[109] Gibson, 'Reflections', 157; Brown, I, 314.
[110] Gibson, 'Reflections', 150; Brown, I, 306.
[111] N. A. M. Rodger, 'Honour and Duty at Sea, 1660-1815', *Historical Research*, 75:190 (2002), 447.
[112] See Gaby Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture in the Seventeenth Century: Dreaming of Another Game* (Manchester, 2009), ch. 1.
[113] Brown, I, 308.

officers 'may have a right to bee admitted free Denizens of Wapping'.[114] Nevertheless, his rejection of a classical commonwealth in *Rough Draught* was hardly emphatic. While he concedes it may be true 'that the forme of a Commonwealth will best sute with the interest of the Nation', the English were temperamentally opposed to a Commonwealth and thus 'it will bee in vaine to dispute by Reason whilst Humour is against it'. Additionally he argued that England lacked the 'preliminaries' for a commonwealth, namely 'Vertue, Morality, diligence, Religion'. It is worth noting that Halifax's desire to train gentlemen in the navy to make them more worthy commanders, and establish exemplary punishments for those who were drunk, absent, or corrupt, were to an extent designed to return to the gentry the 'preliminaries' of virtue they had lost. It was hardly a ringing endorsement of monarchy to conclude 'a Commonwealth is not fit for us, because Wee are not fit for a Commonwealth'.[115] For Halifax, that England would be a monarchy was inevitable; however, whether independent, virtuous gentry and nobles could play any role in political life was yet to be decided. By reforming the nobility through encouraging them to undertake naval service, but preventing them from using their quality to behave corruptly, he sought not only to resolve the gentleman-tarpaulin debate but also set England's constitution on a more stable footing.

Educational reform and the French model

While Halifax's 'Heads' encouraging nobles to join the navy have been discussed in terms of their effort to lessen the vices of gentlemen captains, he also proposed measures to improve the education of naval officers. In doing this he both contributed to a debate on training which lasted until the end of the eighteenth century and also demonstrated his concern that the French model of education was leaving England behind. The English model of naval

[114] Brown, I, 304. In Tory propaganda, referencing Wapping denoted Whig support for mob rule. L'Estrange claimed Exclusionists trained their 'patriots and "true Protestants" in the universities of Wapping and Billingsgate'. See Mark Goldie, 'Roger L'Estrange's *Observator* and the Exorcism of the Plot', in Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (eds), *Roger L'Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture* (Aldershot, 2008), p. 71.
[115] Brown, I, 301-3.

training was based on practical experience. In 1678 the Royal Navy established the first exams for lieutenant in Europe, conducted in front of a panel of senior captains. Would-be officers were required to be at least twenty years of age, and to have served for a year as midshipman.[116] Yet while historians have mostly regarded this system as more effective, contemporaries were concerned that the French model of on-shore naval schools was superior.[117] In the 1680s Louis XIV had established naval academies in Rochefort, Brest, and Toulon. The system of *gardes de la marine* involved a standardised programme of education, which taught theoretical seamanship, navigation, gunnery practice, and fortification in a classroom. Additionally, the academies, which also guaranteed instruction in fencing and dancing, were more successful in attracting noble students.[118] Halifax seemingly regarded the French academies, rather than the English volunteer-per-order system, as preferable for educating the sons of gentry. In his youth he had attended a military academy in Paris run by a Huguenot, Foubert, who relocated to England in 1679.[119] His eldest son Henry attended the same academy in 1675, learning many of the theoretical and 'noble' military skills which were taught in the French naval system.[120] These experiences likely contributed to Halifax advocating 'An Establishment to be made of a College, when Boys above 10 years old to be receivd; The officers' sons preferably; There to learn all things belonging to the Sea'.[121] Though no such college was established during Halifax's lifetime, in 1729 the Admiralty created a Royal naval academy at Portsmouth. Influenced by the French model, the founders intended an onshore naval educational establishment exclusively for the sons of nobles and

[116] Davies, *Gentlemen and Tarpaulins*, p. 40.
[117] Evan Wilson, 'Britain: Practising Aggression', in Evan Wilson, AnnaSara Hammer, Jakob Seerup (eds), *Eighteenth-Century Naval Officers. A Transnational Perspective* (Cham, 2019), pp. 15-23.
[118] Olivier Chaline, 'France: Hope and Glory, Pride and Prejudice', in Wilson, Hammer, Seerup (eds), *Eighteenth-Century Naval Officers*, pp. 51-6.
[119] Paley, I, 78.
[120] Foxcroft, *Life*, I, 116.
[121] Brown, I, 309.

gentlemen between the ages of twelve and fifteen. As well as theoretical skills, languages, dancing and fencing were offered in a bid to enhance the social status of naval officers.[122]

Conclusion

The hopes and fears Halifax had and articulated about the role of the Royal Navy were re-expressed throughout the century after he wrote *Rough Draught*. The culmination of family connections, and a political career which gave him significant involvement in naval affairs, his writings are typical of the concern many in the landed elite had over how to reconcile the transformation of naval warfare with traditional ideals of noble leadership. Halifax regarded the leadership of gentleman naval officers as both essential, but by the 1690s, failing. Members of the landed elite, he argued, had lost the virtues which once justified their position as leading citizens. Connecting naval decline and balance to the constitutional situation was not abstract philosophical speculation, but informed by an understanding of European navies which went beyond the simple English dichotomy which connected gentlemen officers to absolutism, and tarpaulins to republicanism. Accepting many contemporary criticisms of some gentleman officers, Halifax sought to reform the education and training of gentlemen in the navy both to improve its performance and reform the nobility more broadly. Practical experience at sea would improve their morality and legitimacy of command, while improved naval education would enable the English fleet to compete effectively with the French. The theoretical underpinnings of his ideas did not mean they were successful. For example, the French-style Royal academy at Portsmouth, in part anticipated by the proposals of Halifax and others, was ineffective and widely regarded as a disgrace by the end of the eighteenth century – 'a sink of vice and abomination', 'a nursery of

[122] F. B. Sullivan, 'The Royal Academy at Portsmouth, 1729-1806', *Mariner's Mirror*, 63 (1977), 312-14.

vice and immorality'.[123] Nevertheless, Halifax's writings on naval matters represented a coherent programme of conserving his traditional ideal of English society through reforming one of its most important state institutions.

[123] N. A. M. Rodger, 'Officers, Gentlemen and their Education, 1793-1860', in Harding (ed.), *Naval History 1680-1850*, p. 539.

Conclusion

> I have now nothing more left to do in the world, but to enjoy, if it is possible in such a stirring Age, the ease and quiet that belongeth to men growing old and unfit to continue upon the Stage.[1]

Halifax's death on 5 April 1695 was sudden, shocking, and by all accounts especially gruesome. Throughout his life various public figures had desired his death. Cromwell had ordered his arrest in connection with a royalist rising in 1655; Shaftesbury had sworn he would have the heads of those (chiefly Halifax) he felt responsible for the dissolution of Parliament in 1679; various MPs suggested he be impeached for arguing against Exclusion in November 1680; some at the court of James II wanted him imprisoned in 1688; after the Revolution the Duke of Bolton had accused him of responsibility for the 'murders' of Essex and Russell in the 1680s; and his old rival Carmarthen sought to link him to Jacobite plotting. Instead, the title of Halifax's killer went to an incompetent cook, whose name has not survived to posterity. The partly raw chicken Halifax ate led to vomiting followed by a ruptured intestine, and his death deprived the opposition of one of its most active members in the House of Lords. Burnet heavily implied that Halifax's last years consisted of an old man foolishly damaging his legacy:

> he had gone into all the measures of the tories; … he studied to oppose every thing, and to embroil matters all he could; his spirit was restless, and he could not bear to be out of business; his vivacity and judgment sunk much in his years, as well as his reputation.[2]

Yet the last five years of Halifax's life were not marked by confusion or aimlessness, but were a period of significant literary creativity and political activity. Many of the works Halifax produced in this period were repeatedly reissued during the eighteenth century, with *Some Cautions* in particular providing a rhetoric of opposition politics which remained

[1] Kent Archives, U1590/C7/27, Halifax to Alexander Stanhope, 21 June 1692.
[2] Burnet, *History*, IV, 268.

attractive to politicians within, and outside of England. Meanwhile, Halifax's correspondence with Robert Harley – 'I am, Sir, like a plant without raine when many dayes passe without seeing you'[3] – is indicative of his continued Country sympathies. One scholar has speculated that 'it would be tempting to assume that the "Trimmer" saw in Harley the heir to his ideology'.[4] Certainly, Harley's efforts to unite those opposed to the court in the 1690s were attractive even to radical commonwealthmen, echoing previous efforts to win the support of republicans over Limitations in 1680, while Halifax had too much personal experience of James seriously to consider Jacobitism as an alternative to the disappointments of the new regime.[5] Many of Halifax's contemporaries – Rochester, Leeds, Sunderland – continued to exercise political influence well into the eighteenth century. Without his sudden death, it seems certain he would have enthusiastically joined the opposition during the standing army debate in 1697-8.

Halifax left no account of his life, nor any meaningful apologia for his political actions in 1680 and 1688. Although, according to his chaplain, Halifax devoted considerable attention to correcting errors in early printed editions of *Character of a Trimmer*, neither he nor Sion left behind a perspective on his own time, or converted the various aphorisms or maxims in his papers into a coherent tract for publication. Accordingly, the contortions of Halifax's life might lead one to sympathise with the writer of a *Letter to Julian* who in 1684 mocked the literary pretensions of his eldest son 'Eland, whose pen as nimbly glides //As his good father changes sides'[6]

Yet as this thesis has shown, Halifax's behaviour was more consistent than many modern historians have acknowledged. From the 1670s to the 1690s he sought to pursue a broadened

[3] Halifax to Robert Harley, 19 Oct. 1693, in *HMC Portland* (10 vols, 1893), II, p. 547.
[4] J. A. Downie, 'Robert Harley and the Press' (PhD thesis University of Newcastle, 1976), p. 29.
[5] Mark Goldie, 'The Roots of True Whiggism, 1688-94', *HistPolT*, 1:2 (1980), 229.
[6] Quoted in John Harold Wilson, *Court Satires of the Restoration* (Columbus, Ohio, 1976), p. 131.

religious settlement, an anti-French foreign policy, and continuously expressed republican sympathies and sought to advance them when he could.

Chapter 1 has demonstrated the centrality of Restoration religious politics to Halifax's career. Rather than holding sceptical religious beliefs which projected forward to deism or free-thinking, he was closely connected to a group of Anglicans who were sympathetic to legislative changes that would allow moderate Dissenters to re-join the Church of England. Reducing the severity of penal laws against Dissent was designed to strengthen, rather than weaken Anglicanism by allowing partial conformists to conform fully. Nevertheless, like other Latitudinarians, he harshly condemned those who chose – unnecessarily in his view – to separate from the Church of England. Halifax was not a theologian. He left behind no detailed account of his view of the legitimacy of a national church, nor what he believed the precise role of the episcopacy or clergy ought to be. Rather, he associated himself broadly with the wing of 'those of the Church of England [that] were Trimmers for enduring you', as he wrote to Dissenters in 1688.[7] As this thesis has shown, Halifax consistently sought to promote moderate Anglican divines. But Halifax's 'moderate' Anglicanism was not meant as a middle-way alternative to the extreme Protestantism of Continental Europe - it was intended as something that would allow England to act to support the Reformed interest on the Continent. His education at Huguenot academies in France profoundly shaped him, his politics and the upbringing he gave his children. Halifax's support of 'balance' in continental Europe was not emblematic of the emergence of a secular approach to questions of foreign policy. Rather, he argued in favour of war with France because he regarded the excessive power of Louis XIV as the main threat to the 'Reformed Interest'.

[7] Brown, I, 262.

Halifax's concern to pass religious comprehension in order to strengthen Protestant unity at home and abroad led to a furious outburst in 1689 when a proposed bill to comprehend sober Nonconformists met fierce parliamentary opposition. The 'Church of England party', he complained, 'hated the Dutch, and had rather turn papists then take in the Presbuterians amongst them'.[8] This hostility to some Anglican clergy was strikingly similar to Whig attacks on them after the rejection of the Exclusion Bill in 1680. One pamphlet asked whether a clergyman was 'so very fearful of the dissenting *Protestants*, that he will adventure the setting up of the *Mass*, rather than shake hands with a *Presbyterian*'?[9] The question of why Halifax would 'abandon' the Whigs over Exclusion in 1680, only to seek enthusiastically to remove James II from the throne in 1689, is central to historiographical discussion of his life and Restoration politics more broadly. Rejecting assessments of Halifax as purely concerned with office, or leading a coherent 'moderate' faction, the thesis has shown the extent and relevance of his republican sympathies. As shown in chapter 3, his solution to the crisis of James's succession would have removed so many powers of the monarch that many republicans considered it preferable to Exclusion. Indeed, his calls in *Character of a Trimmer* for the monarch voluntarily to limit his powers were so strong that contemporaries noted the similarities with other contemporary republican polemics. Jonathan Scott has argued that studies of the Restoration crisis have ignored the role of republican ideas – relegating them to the fringe of politics or depicting them as a figment of paranoid Tory imagination but they have done so only 'by erasing Halifax and his "limitations" scheme from the ranks of serious opposition'.[10] This thesis has shown political divisions cannot be understood without appreciating the distinct and principled role Halifax and those sympathetic to Limitations played.

[8] Reresby, p. 572
[9] Tim Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts. Party Conflict in a Divided Society, 1660-1715* (1993), p. 94.
[10] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, p. 24.

While Halifax's support of restrictions on royal power, and the republican themes in his writing meant he was regarded with horror by James, he nevertheless detested instances of the Whigs engaging in popular politics. Chapter 2 demonstrated why Halifax, along with an important section of Country opinion, abandoned the opposition to Charles II over the issue of Exclusion. While the 3rd Anglo-Dutch War and rise of Danby's management of Parliament through a combination of payments to MPs and rigid Anglicanism pushed Halifax to join with figures like Shaftesbury and Holles, he did not wish for politics to be taken 'out of doors'. Moreover, he associated with a group of MPs who prioritised foreign policy over Shaftesbury's domestic concern with Exclusion. The willingness of the Whigs to launch direct appeals to the people was, for Halifax, something that risked a return to Civil War. Rather than viewing Halifax as someone who accepted political competition and was a moderate force between Whigs and Tories, he saw party organisation as inherently destructive and irrational. His ideal form of politics was backwards-looking, with selection controlled by local elites whose landed wealth meant they were independent from pressure by either Court bribes, or 'mob' politics. Thus, as his cousin Thomas Thynne promised him in 1679, local influence could be used 'as much to keep out Lord Danby's friends, as fanaticks'.[11] Using his power at Court to act as a patron in the remodelling of borough charters and appointment of Lords Lieutenant, Halifax was able to promote local figures who could moderate the excessive partisanship of the Whigs.

Halifax had vigorously opposed preventing James from acceding to the throne – in 1680 he hoped Limitations would reduce the future James II to an English Duke of Venice. Moreover he believed this solution would solve the crisis of a Catholic monarch without causing Civil War through England separating itself from Scotland, and 'provoak[ing]' James to 'joine with the Irish'. Yet in the face of Shaftesbury's rhetorical onslaught in the House of Lords'

[11] Add MS 75376, fols. 11a and 11b, Thynne to Halifax, 9 July 1679.

debate of 15 November Halifax accepted the theoretical legality of Parliament removing James from the succession. 'I Belive the Parliam[en]t Rather has ye power than Nott', he insisted, 'it is a right'.[12] Once the presence of Dutch troops and the rising of the North in 1688 meant conflict was unavoidable, however, there was little to restrain Halifax from leading the effort in Parliament to depose James. As chapter 4 demonstrated, Halifax was never convinced by James's apparent volte face in favour of religious toleration but believed that his efforts to secure the repeal of the Test Acts would likely fail. Instead of planning a Revolution against the king, Halifax spent most of James's reign seeking to bolster his own political image as a reliable Protestant and ally of the Dissenters. His aim in writing *Letter to a Dissenter,* and *Anatomy of an Equivalent* was both to dissuade Nonconformists from cooperating with the king, but it also sought to guarantee on behalf of the Church of England that comprehension, as opposed to mere toleration, would be conceded following the collapse of James's Catholic-dominated administration. Halifax's failure to maintain relationships with, and preserve his reputation among, leading Dissenters had contributed to his political isolation under Charles II. As Algernon Sidney had complained in 1680, 'I could have wished, that intending to oblige above a Million of men, that go under the name of Nonconformists, he had been pleased to consult with one of that number, concerning the ways of doing it'.[13] With his political position eight years later secured, Halifax was willing to contemplate abandoning James earlier than has previously been suggested. Even before the King's first unsuccessful attempt to flee England on 10 December, Halifax was seeking to fulfil his promise to the Williamite Sir Robert Howard that 'he would not act so as to deserve the least censure' in advancing the cause of the Prince of Orange.[14] While there was a strong element of cynicism in Halifax's behaviour during the Revolution, the thesis nevertheless

[12] De Beer, 'The House of Lords in the Parliament of 1680', *BIHR*, 20:59 (1943), 35.
[13] Algernon Sidney to Henry Savile, 31 Oct. 1680, in *Letters of the Honorable Algernon Sidney …* (1742), p. 164
[14] Foxcroft, *Life*, II, 21.

demonstrated that his republican inclinations meant that he supported the most radical constitutional settlement. Making William sole ruler would have both marginalised Tory Anglicans such as Danby who placed their hopes in Mary, while acting as a definitive statement of the right of Parliament to elect monarchs.

While the Revolution ensured that England finally joined the anti-French coalition Halifax had been urging for over a decade, his other goals were frustrated. An effort to allow Presbyterians to return to the Church of England was defeated by the Church party, while it was evident that partisan divisions from Charles II's reign remained. Vehement parliamentary attacks by Whigs contributed to Halifax resigning from government in 1690. Out of power, his disillusionment with the consequences of the Revolution he had helped secure grew. Chapter 5 showed how Halifax's political views and personal interests affected his attitudes towards the fiscal transformations the Nine Years' War required and accelerated. His personal finances required regular sales of life annuities to fund land purchases, which were both damaged by the creation of the Bank of England and National Debt. Moreover the broader consequences of these measures enhanced his fear of a growing 'monied interest', that would undermine the position of the landed nobility, the key to the constitution.

Halifax was similarly alarmed at the growth of a professionalised military, another post-1688 development which threatened to undermine the position and virtue of England's traditional ruling class. As chapter 6 showed, he wrote *Rough Draught* out of a genuine concern that the military virtues of the aristocracy and gentry were decaying in the face of the corruption of the Court and the City. Halifax wrote at a time when the privileges of aristocracies in other European states were being eroded by an alliance between absolutist monarchies and emerging militaries which were not connected to powerful local elites. He hoped instead that by encouraging young gentlemen and nobles to serve in the navy, the constitutionally important ideal of noble leadership based on martial virtue could be preserved.

Halifax's life was dominated by fears that virtue was decaying, and his writing is suffused with a hope that lost ideals could still be recovered. If his political outlook was fundamentally old-fashioned, he was emphatically neither insular nor reactionary. Indeed, Halifax's nostalgia was profoundly European: nostalgia for a time when England engaged with the Continent to maintain a balance of power; nostalgia for a time of greater coordination and understanding between the English and its Reformed sister churches; nostalgia for 'the Roman Vertue [which] was almost extinguish in our days'.[15] Facing religious division, the threat of absolutist or mob rule, and a peerage whose decline could be compared to the Senate's, Halifax's writing and political career struggled – successfully in some regards, less so in others – to preserve his idealised values in changed contemporary circumstances. As he himself rather ruefully wrote, 'A Revolution does not bring things back'.[16]

[15] 'Saviliana'.
[16] Brown, III, 249.

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