Introduction

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This book attempts, as the title emphasizes, to analyze a specific and progressively crucial arena of British political life over the three quarters of a century that saw the gestation of much that is basic to the modern political debate. Between the Seven Years' War and the revolutions of 1830, or in British history between the death of Jacobitism and Toryism in the 1750s and the birth of a Conservative party during the crisis years for the *ancien régime* of 1828 to 1832, the Atlantic world saw the development of modes of political and societal expression which have abided for over two centuries of comment and criticism. As discussed below, the political usage of words such as "conservative" and "liberal," "right" and "left," "ultra" and "utilitarian" originated in Western Europe in these years as terms used to describe philosophical and political tendencies often indeed already in being and hence badly needing some concrete context for discussion. "Right" and "right-wing" (as political expressions) are terms never used extensively, if at all, in England (unlike in France) before 1832. They are used in this book to describe certain political groupings and social and religious attitudes in ways contemporaries might well have found awkward. My only excuse is the horrendous gaucherie which most other terms that did have a contemporary resonance – "Jacobite," "Tory," "conservative," "ultra" – would have if used over the entire 1760–1832 period. "Right" and "right-wing" on the other hand, while they mean something specific to us, would have meant nothing at all in England during the period under discussion and hence as neutral political expressions seem in general an acceptable, if not perfect, nomenclature to use when considering matters high flying.

The usage of "Right" or "right-wing," however, never implies

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my acceptance of some well-definable, homogeneous "British Right," some early equivalent of Disraelian Conservatism or Chamberlainite Unionism, subsisting in the 1760–1832 period. British political history is not so neat. This study merely posits that one can see operating within discrete political or religious groupings or in the ideological stances of specific individuals (or in the press they sponsored), certain tendencies which a later era might well term "rightist." Such a perspective might help to elucidate vexing problems in British history involving parties, political institutions, religion, the churches, and even reform.

There is an obvious danger of anachronism and special pleading in attempting to tie together for the purpose of this discussion figures as diverse as Samuel Johnson and Lord Mansfield, George III and Edmund Burke, S. L. Giffard and J. W. Croker, or tendencies as disparate as late Jacobitism, High Church Anglicanism, Pittite "Toryism," and ultra Protestantism. These individuals especially disagreed on fundamental issues and might scarcely have appreciated any subsequent attempt to unite them under such a specific nomenclature. This author would argue, however, that there are common threads, if at some times more visible than at others, which justify such a designation. Those common threads are: disposition; a peculiar form of rhetoric; a common historical vision; collective likes and, especially, dislikes; and, most important, a marked insistence, increasing by the early nineteenth century, on the spiritual, Christian, Anglican basis of English political life.

If further excuse is needed, let readers refer to the elegant essay by J. M. Roberts on the "French origins of the 'Right,'" where, in seeming anticipation of my own conundrum, he maintains that the "Right" existed before the word was defined: "There is a moment when a historical reality is coming to birth, is perhaps born, when it is not yet named, but when the awareness that there is something that needs to be named is spreading."[1]

To discover the *mentalité* of this English Right – with forays when appropriate into Boswell and Blackwood's Edinburgh and Giffard and Maginn's Dublin – I have used a variety of sources: parliamentary debates, personal and political correspondence, pamphlets, and sermons. Yet the most important source, the parameters of which are discussed in the first chapter, encompasses newspapers,

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[1] J. M. Roberts, "French origins of the 'Right,'" *TRHS*, 23, 5th ser. (1973), p. 33.

journals, and magazines, and involves comment from the Jacobite, Tory, Buteite, Northite, Pittite, Burkeian, ultra, Wellingtonian, and high Anglican press. If one wishes to discover the inner core of the British Right in an age of political and economic revolution, a trip to that sometimes shady, often grubby, and now and then uplifting world where politics intersects with the daily leader and where politicians mingle with journalists and editors might be rewarding. The light such a journey might shed on contemporary attitudes ranging from slavery to parliamentary reform, from the apostolic succession to the poor laws might provide the material for a funda-mental reassessment of certain aspects of British politics during the mid and late Georgian period.

The burgeoning British press of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, catering to various philosophical, religious, regional, and political tastes, is a subject much studied for its consequences for modernization or its relationship to political parties and factions, and little read for its actual content. In this study I hope to remedy that unhappy condition for at least a section of that press by revealing a world by no means only political in its inspiration or concerns, where the greatest of the right-wing poets has taught us that the solitary reaper sings both "For old, unhappy, far-off things, / And battles long ago" and for "some more humble lay, / Familiar matters of today."

<div align="center">II</div>

There has always been a semantic problem, producing anachronis-tic awkwardness, whenever political ideology prior to the French Revolution is under discussion. The terms "right" and "left" or "conservative" and "liberal" are so much a part of our political vocabularies that it is difficult to consider ideological or govern-mental matters without recourse to them, even though the words were the products of a post-1789 world. Hence, it is common for historians of the sixteenth-century Reformation, for example, to portray Melanchthon or Illyricus Flacius as "conservative" or "right-wing," while the antinomian Anabaptists were on the "Left Wing" of the politico-religious spectrum.[2] Historians of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are apt to find "right-

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[2] Clyde Leonard Manschreck, *Melanchthon* (New York, 1958), p. 301. E. Harris Harbison, *Age of Reformation* (Ithaca, 1955), pp. 59–67.

wing" or "left-wing" groupings all over the early Enlightenment.[3] Such linguistic practices reflect the difficulty in attempting any type of meaningful historical discourse without using the language of modern politics. This problem, if indeed it is a problem, becomes even more acute to the student of British history discussing the period from the 1760s through the Reform era of the 1830s, just that epoch when these ordinary terms of modern political discourse were born. The terms traditionally used by contemporaries to describe "Church and King" political groupings – "Jacobite" and "Tory" – (and at any time in the eighteenth century the former is much easier to define than the latter) are for various reasons no longer serviceable. The term "Jacobite" was gone forever when the peculiar loyalty which gave rise to it faded in the aftermath of the Stuart defeat at Culloden. "Tory," however, was to prove much more resilient, though its singular survival needs a more careful discussion and analysis than it has heretofore been given. Nonetheless, between roughly 1760 and 1812, "Tory" is not usually a helpful word.

"Conservative," in a political sense, is a word of the nineteenth century. Some variant of it, however, had been in circulation in England for some time, and the first edition of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* defined "conservative" (from the Latin *conservo*) as "having the power of opposing diminution or injury."[4] Edmund Burke in the "Reflections" nudged the word towards a slightly more political connotation when he discussed the necessity of preserving a "rational and manly freedom ... for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges."[5] Quite possibly the earliest English usage of the word in a starkly political sense occurred in June 1816 in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, where a contributor lauded the Pitt Clubs as supporting "those conservative principles which all good men ought not passively to foster and cherish, but actually to promote, and sedulously, by combining, to perpetuate."[6] In

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[3] Such as David Berman's "The Irish counter-Enlightenment," in Richard Kearney, ed., *Irish Mind* (Dublin, 1985), pp. 119ff.

[4] Neither successive pre-1830 editions of Johnson's *Dictionary* nor Noah Webster's 1828 edition of the *American Dictionary of the English Language* gave "conservative" a more political slant.

[5] Burke, *Works*, III, p. 276. In the same work, Burke also proclaimed that the "idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation ...," III, pp. 274–5.

[6] *Anti-Jacobin Review*, 50 (June 1816), p. 553. Geoffrey Carnall in his important study of Southey's political views, *Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 175–6n, suspected that the poet laureate himself might have been the first to use "conservative" in a modern political context. This would have occurred in a *Quarterly Review* article in July 1816, when Southey acknowledged that "there is a *vis*

Western Europe the *annus mirabilis* of the word was 1818. A Conservative Association was formed at Gloucester.[7] In January 1818, in the *Quarterly Review*, Robert Southey, the poet laureate, was juxtaposing the "struggle between the destructive and conservative principles in society, the evil and the good, the profligate against the respectable."[8] And, perhaps most important, in October 1818, in Paris, Chateaubriand launched a glittering, if short-lived, magazine, *Le Conservateur*, which ultimately secured the aid of notables such as de Bonald and Lamennais.[9] Elie Halévy in the third volume of his *History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century* discussed several additional examples of the political use of the term "conservative" in England between 1819 and 1827.[10] Yet somehow, as an ordinary method of conveying a political message, the word languished in England until suddenly, in January 1830, in one of the most famous *Quarterly Review* essays of the nineteenth century, "Internal policy," by John Miller of Lincoln's Inn, it achieved apotheosis with the suggestion that the Tory party

might with more propriety be called the Conservative party, a party which we believe to compose by far the largest, wealthiest, and most intelligent and respectable portion of the population of this country, and without whose support any administration that can be formed will be found deficient both in character and stability.[11]

conservatrix in the state." See Southey's *Essays, Moral and Political* (Shannon, 1971), i, p. 321. As the *Anti-Jacobin* article, however, came out in June and the *Quarterly* issue bearing the date of July 1816 was postponed in fact until November 1816, Southey might well have seen the *Anti-Jacobin* "conservative" reference before his own article was published. See Hill Shine and Helen Chadwick Shine, *Quarterly Review Under Gifford: Identification of Contributors, 1809–1824,* (Chapel Hill, 1949), pp. 52–3.

7 Thorne, i, pp. 345–6.
8 John Rickman was the ostensible author of the *Quarterly* piece, but Southey prepared the article for the press and the wording quoted here is generally attributed to him. Carnall, *Robert Southey*, p. 176. Eight months later, Southey used the word "conservative" again, in a private letter, when he admitted that reading Clarendon had strengthened his hope in "the conservative principles of society." John Wood Warter, ed., *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey* (London, 1856), Southey to Rickman, September 1, 1818, iii, 95.
9 Strictly speaking, given the above evidence, Karl Mannheim may have been incorrect when he asserted in *Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology* (London, 1953), p. 98, that Chateaubriand first lent "conservatism" its peculiar meaning in *Le Conservateur*. In a grander context, however, Mannheim's point is well taken. Chateaubriand's magazine lasted until March 1820. See Guillaume de Bertier de Sauvigny, *Bourbon Restoration* (Philadelphia, 1966), p. 143, and René Rémond, *The Right Wing in France* (Philadelphia, 1966), p. 67.
10 *Triumph of Reform, 1830–1841* (London, 1950), pp. 66–7n.
11 *Quarterly Review*, 42 (January 1830), p. 276. For the solution to the hitherto vexing question of the identity of the author of "Internal policy," see Wilfred S. Dowden, ed., *Journal of Thomas Moore* (Newark, 1986), iii, p. 1287.

Yet, like the term "Tory" between 1760 and 1812, because of its specific meaning after 1830, it is awkward to use the term "conservative" in a party context before that date.

It is also difficult, as B. T. Bradfield has perceptively pointed out, to rely too heavily upon that strange word "ultra" as a medium of political discussion before the mid or even late 1820s.[12] In France, but not in Britain, at least by the second Restoration, there was a consensus regarding what it meant to be an "ultra." However, English commentators were as confused regarding an acceptation for "ultra" in, say, 1820, as the French had been in the 1790s. For just as the Jacobins had used the term in a left-wing context against the Hébertists,[13] so, as late as 1823, the Dublin Orangeist daily, the *Warder*, was using the term to apply to left-wing rather than right-wing extremism.[14] To further confuse the picture, a modern historian of the pre-1832 British political discourse, J. C. D. Clark, sees the English ultras, quite correctly, as "conservative Whigs."[15]

To describe the environment about which I am writing, I have, like Jeremy Popkin in his work on the French newspaper press of the 1790s,[16] found "Right" or "right-wing" to be valuable expressions. Apparently[17] dating from the summer of 1789 in the French National Assembly, when the nobles took a position of honor on the President's right and the third estate on his left,[18] one historian of the term "Right," J. M. Roberts, maintains that "Right" and "Left" were used in an ideological sense as early as 1790 or 1791.[19] Perhaps so, though Popkin finds little evidence for this usage in the highly ideologized French press of the 1790s. In fact, he titles his book *The Right-Wing Press in France, 1792–1800* fully conscious that the label "right-wing" is an anachronism which is nonetheless helpful "because it sidesteps the polemical element in terms for the period."[20] In England too, between 1789 and 1832, let alone before that period, unlike "Tory," "conservative," or "ultra," I have

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[12] B. T. Bradfield, "Sir Richard Vyvyan and the fall of Wellington's government," *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 22, no. 2 (1968), p. 141.
[13] Rémond, *Right Wing in France*, p. 37.
[14] *Warder*, March 15, 1823. *John Bull* itself termed the *Warder* "ultra beyond all ultras." March 14, 1830, p. 84.
[15] J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832* (Cambridge, England 1985), p. 400.
[16] Jeremy Popkin, *Right-Wing Press in France, 1792–1800* (Chapel Hill, 1980).
[17] It may, then, be just a fortuitous premonition that the *Morning Herald* on May 22, 1782 discussed the old constitutions of England crucified between two thieves, with Jacobite principles on the right and republican ideas on the left.
[18] See *Oxford English Dictionary* under "centre" and Rémond, *Right Wing in France*, p. 22.
[19] Roberts, "French origins," pp. 33–4.   [20] Popkin, *Right-Wing Press*, p. xv.

found no sustained use of "Right" or "right-wing" as part of any political discourse. The only possible exception to this observation is a remark by William Hazlitt in 1818, when, appropriately, during a discussion of the patriarchalist Sir Robert Filmer and the French Legitimists, he refers to "Right-Liners."[21] Hence, like, Popkin, I have tended to use "Right" or "right-wing" freely, finding the terms both politically meaningful and politically neutral *vis à vis* "Tory" and "conservative."

[21] William Hazlitt, *Political Essays* (London, 1819), p. 309. Some Foxites in December 1783, had a limited perception of themselves as the "left wing" of their Coalition. While this probably implies some sense of the Northites as "right wing," I have never seen such a designation actually used. Nor did the notion of "left wing" appear to survive the December crisis. Ian R. Christie, "The anatomy of the opposition in the parliament of 1784," *PH*, 9, pt. 1 (1990) p. 54.

CHAPTER I

The right-wing press from Jacobitism to the Reform crisis: a discussion of sources

It has often been remarked[1] that the early and mid eighteenth century saw the flourishing of a popular, ideologized, hyper-Anglican, xenophobic, humanitarian Jacobite and Tory press. This journalistic genre was not cut up root and branch by the Stuart defeat at Culloden and was, arguably, as important in setting the terms for the political debate in the 1750s (especially in its oppo-sition to Henry Pelham's "Jew Bill" in 1753–1754) as it had been thirty years earlier. Mid-century Jacobite weeklies included John Baptiste Caryll's *True Briton* (1751–1753), and the *Crab-Tree* (1757). A tri-weekly, Richard Nutt's *London Evening Post*, retained a Jacobite orientation until at least 1754 and thereafter exuded a non-dynastic, if high, Toryism. The Jacobite-cum-Tory leanings of the *Post* were echoed by its provincial sympathizers in York (the *Courant*), Oxford (*Jackson's Oxford Journal*), and the West Country (*Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*). The mid-decade saw the birth of two influential non-Jacobite but Tory publications: Richard Beckford's Saturday *Monitor* in 1755[2] and the Smollettian, country-oriented, monthly *Critical Review* in 1756. Some of this Tory press was well subscribed to by contemporary standards. The *London Evening Post*, the most important English newspaper during the period between the admin-istrations of Walpole and North, in its Jacobite period sold over 5,000 copies per issue, more than three times the circulation of the average London daily and almost double that of the average tri-weekly.[3] The *Critical Review*, more than holding its own against its

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[1] In the works, for example, of Paul Kleber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688–1788* (Cambridge, England, 1989); P. M. Chapman, "Jacobite political argument in England, 1714–1766," Ph.D. dissertation (Cambridge University, 1983); H. Erskine-Hill, "Litera-ture and the Jacobite cause," in Eveline Cruickshanks, ed., *Ideology and Conspiracy* (Edin-burgh, 1982).

[2] Marie Peters, "Names and cant," *PH*, 3 (1984), pp. 105–6.

[3] Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* (Rutherford, New Jersey, 1987), p. 190.

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rival the latitudinarian *Monthly*, sold around 3,000 issues per month.[4]

The Jacobite or Tory spirit which animated this controversial press was largely dead by 1760 or 1761, at least in the newspaper and periodical world. It would not be revived in any meaningful way until 1776. Its last gasp might well be discerned in the *British Magazine*, founded in January 1760, under the influence of two tories-of-sorts, Tobias Smollett and Oliver Goldsmith. This periodical attempted in 1761 to spice up the political and religious discourse of the new reign with favorable articles on the late Jacobite Bishop Atterbury and extreme denunciations of infidelity.[5] But whether from lack of any governmental appreciation or from lack of popular acclaim, the *British Magazine* swiftly turned towards a non-aggressive, even anti-Buteite position,[6] and ceased having much comment on politics or religion.

Other magazines that on the face of it might have been expected to display some sympathy for a "Church and King," neo-Tory, high prerogative world view, for example, the ill-fated Dr. Dodd's *Christian Magazine*, Goldsmith's friend Hugh Kelly's *Court Magazine* of the early 1760s or its putative successor the *Court Miscellany* of the later 1760s, did no such thing. All eschewed much political discussion, though Kelly's reputed journals have difficulty restraining a generally pro-Wilkite outlook.[7] The only continuing support for George III and Bute in the periodical press occurred in Smollett's *Critical Review*. The *Critical* was in fact the one example in the entire English press of a Toryish production of the 1750s shifting to substantial support for George III in all the vicissitudes of the first half of his reign.

Between the accession of George III in 1760 and the Declaration of Independence in 1776, the newspaper press endeavor of those political factions or tendencies peculiarly loyal to the king – Buteite, King's Friends, Northite – was generally pathetic. The Earl of Bute, whose influence with the young king was the direct or indirect cause of much of the ministerial instability of the 1760s, made some feeble attempts to influence the London press in 1761 and 1762. Bute may

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[4] Marie Peters, *Pitt and Popularity* (Oxford, 1980), p. 17.
[5] *British Magazine*, 2 (June 1761), p. 71; 2 (March 1761), p. 132.
[6] *Ibid.*, 4 (January 1763), p. 32.
[7] See, for example, *Court Magazine*, September 1763, p. 409. Robert R. Bataille, "Hugh Kelly's journalism: facts and conjectures," *Journal of Newspaper and Periodical History*, 1, no. 3 (1985), pp. 3, 7–8.

indeed have known what he needed. In 1762, his undersecretary of state, Charles Jenkinson, approached the furious Tory and indeed Jacobite journalist, John Shebbeare, to aid a fledgling government press effort. Jenkinson was unsuccessful.[8] A historian of the Buteite propaganda effort suspects that except for the *Chronicle*, founded in 1760, almost the entire London press opposed Bute and supported the Pittite or Newcastle opposition.[9] Yet even this purported approval by the *Chronicle* must be highly qualified. From the king's accession in October 1760 until mid-1761, the general tenor of the paper, as reflected in letters to the editor and the position of articles or political comment, did indeed seem to favor the pacific policies of the king and Bute. Yet by the autumn of 1761, the *Chronicle* was as Pittite and pro-war as the rest of the press.[10]

Bute's lack of both independent press support and a reliable government organ no doubt sent him (or his agents) to two distinguished reporters, Arthur Murphy and Tobias Smollett. From mid-1762 to early 1763, Murphy in the weekly *Auditor* and Smollett in the weekly *Briton* defended Bute and the king from their manifold enemies. The ideological intensity of these journals was not very advanced as compared with the Tory or Jacobite journalism of the previous generation. For example, Murphy, who produced the better weekly, concluded a defense of George III's inclusion of Tories in his administration by assuring the public that such men had now abandoned Filmer and adopted Locke![11] The public response to the Buteite press effort was correspondingly pitiful. For example, only 250 copies of the *Briton* were sold per week.[12]

The post-1763 administrations exhibited no more flair than Bute's for obtaining aggressive press support. The historian of the English press in the period in fact admits to an inability to discover any government press effort in the early days of the second Wilkes crisis.[13] Indeed it did exist, but at an extremely low level of vigor. The vast preponderance of the London press was assertively

[8] John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, England, 1976), p. 222.
[9] John Brewer, "The misfortunes of Lord Bute," *HJ*, 16 (1973), p. 16.
[10] For example, see, *London Chronicle*, March 5–7, 1761; April 30–May 2, 1761; December 26–29, 1761.
[11] *Auditor*, December 25, 1762, p. 407.
[12] Robert Donald Spector, *English Literary Periodicals and the Climate of Opinion During the Seven Years' War* (The Hague, 1966), p. 95n.
[13] Robert R. Rea, *The English Press in Politics, 1760–1774* (Lincoln, 1963), p. 122.