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NEW PERSPECTIVES ON HANOVERIAN BRITAIN

War, state and society in mid-eighteenth-century Britain and Ireland. By Stephen Conway. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. x + 346. ISBN 0-19925-375-7. £55.00.

Georgian monarchy: politics and culture, 1714–1760. By Hannah Smith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xiii + 296. ISBN 0-52182-876-7. £48.00.

Britain, Hanover and the Protestant interest, 1688–1756. By Andrew C. Thompson. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007. Pp. 288. ISBN 9-781-8438-3241-6. £50.00.

Hanover and the British empire, 1700–1837. By Nick Harding. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007. Pp. ix + 292. ISBN 0-90624-529-X. £60.00.

The Hanoverian state can be understood from a number of conceptual angles, each of which affords a wide-angled view as well as the means to zoom in at micro-level to the archives. Four recent volumes enrich our understanding by looking at the implementation of the fiscal-military state in Ireland as well as mainland Britain during the wars between 1739 and 1763; by reinterpreting monarchy and the culture of loyalism, and reintroducing the importance of the court; by directing attention to the relationship between foreign policy and the Protestant interest, particularly its impact on the diplomacy of George I and II; and by exploring the political theory of empire versus classical republicanism during the Personal Union 1714–1837. They re-evaluate the relationship between monarchy and Enlightenment, and yet challenge the case for too early a secularization process, especially in the culture of diplomacy. They are part of the trend to turn attention away from the Atlantic 'empire of goods' to the continental and dynastic dimension of multiple monarchy in the long eighteenth century.[1] One is written by a professor at the height of his powers, while the other three are the first monographs of talented young scholars with a keen eye for challenging received historiography and drawing in a wide variety of sources.

Stephen Conway's *War, state and society in mid-eighteenth-century Britain and Ireland*, is a master-class in conceptual clarity, cogent argument, inter-disciplinary perspectives, and archival research, which not only offers an important interpretation of the Hanoverian state, but also brings great human sympathy to a multitude of individual subjects discovered in national and local archives. In his pages are to be found tenant-farmers joining up to the militia; wives looking at the

[1] To these four volumes can be added Tony Claydon, *Europe and the making of England, 1660–1760* (Cambridge, 2007); Brendan Simms and Torsten Riotte, *The Hanoverian dimension to British history, 1714–1837* (Cambridge, 2007), to which Andrew Thompson, Nick Harding, and the reviewer have also contributed essays; and Brendan Simms, *Three victories and a defeat* (London, 2007).

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impact of war on the imaginative play of sons and daughters; inn-keepers hosting mustered troops and magistrates ruling on their disorderly behaviour; Irish merchants worried about trade embargoes; and Edinburgh councillors trying to slough off the shadow of Jacobitism after Charles Stuart's occupation in the '45 rebellion.

Conway gives us a cogent picture, inter alia, of the growth of the armed forces, examining both the scale and scope of mobilization, and persuasively challenges the view of limited warfare deploying the dregs of society. In economic matters, he measures the impact of loss of manpower on demand, but also argues that higher taxation, rising exponentially between 1748 and 1761, was returned into the system through government spending on recruitment pay, feeding, clothing, and equipping the army and the navy. Even if foreign subsidies took money abroad, this could stimulate trade. In macro terms there was growth; but he also reminds us that at micro level this meant turbulence for many communities, especially those affected by the Highland clearances. As regards society, he concludes that war reinforced gender roles and accelerated social mobility, prompted reform and philanthropy, and fostered a more benign attitude to the army. National heroes would now include soldiers as well as sailors. Gender historians will debate the first point: they have been more prone to stress anxiety and instability over gender difference, fluctuating through the century.[2] As for social mobility, sometimes the most 'driven' individuals were those like Clive of India who believed themselves to be *recovering* the real or imagined higher status of their families, a trajectory historians of class tend to overlook.

In politics, Conway argues that war accelerated the collapse of the old party system as oligarchical politics came under scrutiny for conducting or delaying war. Pressure increasingly came from the people 'out of doors'; there was a line of continuity between Pittites and Wilkites. As to religion, war required more manpower, which led to an easing of restriction on Catholics; papal failure to recognize Charles Edward Stuart after his father died in 1766 helped Jacobitism to wane; but at the same time, greater security for Protestants enabled Dissenters to pose new demands for equality. In looking at war's ability to cement national feeling, his starting point is Colley's thesis about the forging of national unity during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. He ante-dates this, suggesting that the Seven Years War advances a sense of national unity, in contrast with the 40–8 war, where localism is more evident, particularly in Ireland and Scotland. So he sees the willingness of clan chiefs in 1756–63 to mobilize service in the British army as indicative of the compatibility of local and British loyalties. Yet although multiple identities could embrace the Celtic realms, he also acknowledges readiness to blame Irish troops and persistent Scotophobia (i.e. the hostility to Bute), and examines the elision between Englishness and Britishness in Hogarth's era. He also considers how these war decades prepared the way for American independence, provides case studies of Cork, Edinburgh, and Berkshire, and offers

[2] E.g. Philip Carter, *Men and the emergence of polite society, Britain 1660–1800* (Harlow, 2001).

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continental comparisons. There would appear to be no angle this fluent and incisive book has omitted; it is very deeply considered.

Fundamental to Conway's examination of the nuts and bolts of Brewer's fiscal-military state is his intervention in recent debates over the nature of the state. His working definition is that it is essentially a partnership between centre and locality, public and private. The state had a small staff and its administrative apparatus had overlapping jurisdictions, so voluntary co-operation was vital: the dockyards for example could not handle the volume of equipping the navy without drawing on private contractors. However, he recognizes this formula of partnership is not equally applicable to the composite monarchy and its empire: in relation to Scotland, Ireland, and the American colonies it operated on fluctuating terms (pp. 54–5). He wants to examine the machinery of this partnership, noting 'The king's servants constituted the main part of this machinery' (p. 34). He recognizes that parliament had the power to check legislation, but argues that its legislative function in levying taxation makes it a part of the state (p. 36).

Detailed and illuminating though all his discussions are, I have reservations over his account of this partnership for three reasons. First, his analysis seems to err too much toward presupposing a society of contracting individuals in a free market. Yet two essential mechanisms of the Hanoverian state operated not through rational economic choice and clear-cut contract, but on the one hand through patronage, and on the other through the soliciting of subscriptions (to books, opera companies, government bonds, shares in commercial enterprises or charitable endeavours, and so on), often by pressing the levers of patronage. Some of these are mentioned, but they are not as central to his discussion as arguably they should be. For instance, the state was a good customer for military *matériel*; but were not the contracts obtained partly through the mechanisms of old corruption – through the assistance of patrons to intercede and influence? His book provides some clear examples of the role of patronage in recruitment, yet he does not conceptualize this as essential to most aspects of the state mechanism.

Secondly, if the state machinery consists of the *king's* servants, does not this point us back to the need to understand the nature of the monarchy as the lynchpin of the system? It is pertinent that in his sociology of political culture, Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois* (1748), diagnosed honour as the vitalizing principle of monarchies. True, there was a growth in the British state apparatus after 1688: more pen-pushing posts in tax offices, Customs and Excise, the Admiralty, and War office. But the mainspring of action, the focus of loyalty, and the source of reward remained the monarchy. Whether you accepted the Hanoverians or pined for the House of Stuart, monarchy was still essential to the system. The Liverpool Blues were recruited to defend not only Liverpool but 'for the defence of His Majesty's person and government' (p. 197, citing Sir James A. Picton).

Perhaps, then, the metaphor of machinery is not the *mot juste*; perhaps we should conceptualize the monarch and his government not so much as a machine but as a sprawling uneven network requiring constant personal management,

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pulling, tugging, tightening, and patching up. Some of those pulling and pushing this mesh were salaried servants of the state, some were members of the court, some were voluntary participants of independent means, from peers to JPs. Despite the multitude of voices Conway has uncovered in the archives, which give us lots of personal stories, the very language of 'the state' tends to obscure the highly personal nature of power in the eighteenth century. The king was the symbolic focus of both wars; it was the king who could reward the successful servants of this fiscal-military state via pensions, titles, peerage promotions, if they won battles or captured foreign ships; and above all policies of war and peace could only be formulated by ministers who had his confidence and were, in effect, subordinate partners to his direction. If they were disaffected, such ministers looked to the reversionary interest; faction thrived where there were royal rifts. Despite the commercialization of culture, the political and economic power of the aristocracy, and their openness to economic modernity and enlightened improvement, the court was still *at* the centre of national life, if no longer *the* centre, as Robert Bucholz would now put it.[3] Without probing the nature of monarchy and the court, we get a necessary, but not a *sufficient*, account of the whole process.

To be fair, Conway does engage to some extent with a definition of eighteenth-century government as essentially based on crown–elite relationships when he compares continental and British politicians. He argues that the fragmentation of the Whig party and the proscription of the Tories meant that politics was increasingly a matter of factions vying for the king's attention, in the manner of European monarchies which lacked Britain's parliamentary tradition. And he emphasizes that *government* as distinct from *parliament* was mostly about war and foreign policy. Yet this stretches the comparison a little too far, since aside from parliament's legislative role, the clamour of the 'people out of doors' did impact on how ministers could advise the king; and limit what they or their opponents could say in parliament to remain effective. Furthermore, as Philip Woodfine pointed out in 1998, the very fact that the British court went out into the new public spaces of eighteenth-century London to attend plays, operas, masquerades, and concerts, instead of enjoying these pleasures within a much more selective circle and spatially separate court space (as most European monarchies did) meant that it quite literally encountered the popular clamour for war, or public disapproval of ministers.[4]

What historians of Hanoverian Britain need to do, I suggest, is to look a bit more at a triangular set of relationships: between the king and his courtiers; between the monarch and parliament; and between parliament and the king's court. Ministers should be conceptualized more consistently as both politicians and courtiers: some of them held Household positions on the way up or down the

[3] Private communication; see also R. O. Bucholz, *The Augustan court: Queen Anne and the decline of court culture* (Stanford, CA, 1993).

[4] Philip Woodfine, *Britannia's glories: the Walpole ministry and the 1739 war with Spain* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 129–30.

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greasy pole, and MPs could be encouraged to support the king's ministry by holding a court appointment such as Groom of the Chamber, or having a niece appointed as a Maid of Honour. Naturally, also to be factored in is the influence of various overlapping public spheres – Westminster and City opinion, the lobbying from key port-cities and county towns, the power of the pulpit as well as the growth of print culture. It is also important to think spatially, of the geography of urban residences and cathedral deaneries, or the county propinquity of elite local power bases. These spatial factors are often behind the choice of political and personal friends, sporting cronies, spouses, godparents, chaplains, or bear leaders, as well as the source of patronage requests.

Thirdly, Conway's adept citation of individual case studies obscures the extent to which people acted from within families. Not all did: his depiction of naval and military recruitment gives examples of marginal individuals, lacking or escaping from their families, as well as of individuals joining up as part of a family tradition. But his discussion of state and society is mostly couched in terms of how it affects individuals rather than families and their connections. Yet the family dimension is also essential in understanding how the machinery operated, and looking at families results in a richer account of gender. It is also worth considering how politicians were affected by the fact that when they advocated war it might give opportunities for their relatives either to enrich or ennoble themselves, or to lose their lives.

Let me illustrate these three interrelated points by looking at a couple of examples, which both disclose the untidy web of family connections that was at the heart of the mid-eighteenth century state, and the way in which key individuals acted simultaneously in several roles, or moved between ministerial office, the royal household, or diplomacy. Admiral Edward Boscawen was one of the most successful seamen in both wars, esteemed alike by sailors and politicians. When Pitt the Elder had manoeuvred his way back into the cabinet in 1756 after exploiting controversy over the deployment of Hanoverian and Hessian troops in Britain, he updated the leading Bluestocking, Mrs Montagu, as follows:

> Last week the Duke of Newcastle and Mr Fox resigned, and the following are those that came in: the Duke of Devonshire, Mr Legge, Mr Nugent Lord Duncannon and Mr James Grenville for the Treasury; Lord Temple, Mr Boscawen, Mr West, Mr Thomas Pitt, Dr Hay, Mr Hunter, Mr Elliott of Scotland for the Admiralty; Lord Bateman, Treasurer of the Household, Mr Edgecumbe Comptroller of the household, Lord Berkeley the band of pensioners, Mr George Grenville, treasurer of the Navy, Sir Richard Lyttleton, the jewel office: these have all kissed hands. Mr Pitt having the gout at Wickham is not yet Secretary of State. Mr Amyand is to be a Commissioner of the Customs, Sir G Lyttelton and Lord Hillsbury have both kissed hands for peerages.[5]

To Boscawen it is the *whole* Treasury Board that is worth mentioning, not just the first lord, from whose office has evolved the modern prime ministership. Similarly

[5] Admiral Boscawen to Mrs Montagu, 6 Nov. 1756, in *Elizabeth Montagu, the queen of the bluestockings, her correspondence from 1720–1761, by her great-niece Emily J. Climenson* (2 vols., London, 1906), II, pp. 95–6.

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he names the whole Board of Admiralty. Its members were both administrative personnel and political appointments, as was the treasurership of the navy: it will be remembered that Montesquieu correctly highlighted the very imperfect separation of powers in the English system. Boscawen was on the Board from 1751 until his death ten years later, surviving several changes of administration. The next three posts Boscawen mentions do not seem to the modern mind as political, and they have no cabinet function, but they are important ones in the royal household, covering its management, finance, and defence; the monarch therefore needs to feel confident in those who hold them. Cabinet changes – as we would now see them – were not made in isolation from Household reshuffles. Boscawen also mentions a fairly lucrative Household sinecure, Master of the Jewel office, which netted its holder a total of £1,150, and would have been of interest to him because his grandfather, Col. Charles Godfrey, had held this post. Its bestowal also explains how George Lord Lyttelton's dismissal had been cushioned by a peerage for himself and a sinecure for his brother, an army officer whose gout was curtailing his active service.[6]

Thus as well as a different conception of the significant components of a ministerial reshuffle, what this also reveals is the extent to which eighteenth-century office holders would always have been thinking vertically and horizontally about the generational traditions of their families, and, where possible, their progression through the peerage. Boscawen's father was made 1st earl of Falmouth for his work in managing parliamentary elections for George I in 1715 against Jacobite Tory opposition. Edward Boscawen was not only an administrator, and a serving admiral who also had a military rank on several expeditions, but also an MP. Three of his brothers were MPs, too, and one of them was also ADC to George II, and another in the duke of Cumberland's household. His sister Lucy Boscawen was a Maid of Honour to Princess Augusta of Wales before marrying Sir Charles Frederick, an MP and member of the Board of Ordnance, who designed the famous 1748 fireworks celebrating the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Admiral Boscawen's wife Frances Evelyn also had relatives in the prince of Wales's household, helped him network at both King George's and Prince Frederick's courts, entertained his friends and associates in their Admiralty residence (known to its denizens as 'Tree'), and served mulled wine to the Hessian troops as they marched past the Boscawen country estate on their return to the continent in December 1756. If this is a machine, it is one where the personal, social, courtly, and political overlap for *both* sexes.[7] This kind of information is not difficult to find, but do historians 'join the dots' enough?

[6] Lewis Namier and John Brooke, eds., *The House of Commons, 1754–1790* (3 vols., London, 1985), III, p. 75.

[7] Information on the Boscawens has been collated from *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004–8 online); Romney Sedgwick, ed., *The House of Commons, 1715–1754* (3 vols., London, 1970); *Database of court officers 1660–1837*, /www.luc.edu/history/fac_resources/bucholz/DCO/DCO.html; *Office-holders in modern Britain*, www.ihrinfo.ac.uk/office; Cecil Aspinall-Oglander, *Admiral's wife, being the life and letters of the Hon. Mrs Edward Boscawen from 1719–1761* (London, 1940).

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A second example, also from the Admiralty Board, illustrates the interpolation of family pressure into the administrative machine. The 4th earl of Sandwich, one of the Admiralty lords, was a poor peer who needed income from office. His grandmother had been an ardent Jacobite; he chose the navy in honour of his great-grandfather, the 1st earl of Sandwich, who had helped develop the navy for Charles II. The 4th earl tried to improve discipline and eschew influence, to make the Board more a machine, less an untidy mesh, but this was not a rationale accepted by serving officers or all politicians. His younger brother, William, was a naval captain, as was Captain Thomas Grenville, younger brother of George Grenvillle; both officers served directly under Admiral Anson who was on the Board too, but on active service once war began. Both captains wanted their brothers to use their influence to obtain permission to go on small manoeuvres (cruises) to pick up enemy shipping and bring home their prizes. Grenville tried, but Sandwich stopped him, believing the admiral in command should determine when captains should be permitted to cruise, and quarrelled with his unmanageable brother on the same point. Sandwich's sense of duty over family was unusual, and the concept made slow headway in the Admiralty.

Sandwich was also ambassador to the United Provinces during the peace negotiations. Here his official secretaries were his cousin, Edward Wortley Montagu, and Richard Leveson-Gower, the brother-in-law of Sandwich's patron, John Russell, 4th duke of Bedford. Although not completely unqualified for their role – Montagu had studied at Leyden so understood Dutch, which was useful – both secretaries were there at the behest of women. Montagu's mother, the Whig wit Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, was hoping the earl's example of application to the job would improve the character of her wayward son (who would later be charged with criminal extortion over his running of a faro bank); Gertrude Russell, the forceful 4th duchess of Bedford, was similarly hoping this diplomatic stint would get her brother to shape up. Sandwich was therefore saddled with improving the characters of two young men without being able to trust them with the layers of secret diplomacy his role entailed, and with which in theory they had been appointed to assist: consequently he did his own correspondence. One marvels that the eighteenth-century British state managed to achieve so much in war and diplomacy when the king's servants included such unpromising material, but felt so entitled to serve regardless.[8]

Conway explores the growth of nationalism and evaluates the repercussions of Jacobite defeat, but not, specifically, loyalty to the Hanoverians. The welcome he has given to Hannah Smith's stylishly written, extremely important and original book *Georgian monarchy* suggests that he would recognize how her book fills the absent dimensions to his analysis of state and society.[9] But as she writes in

[8] N. A. M. Rodger, *The insatiable earl: a life of John Montagu, fourth earl of Sandwich, 1718–1792, insatiable earl* (London, 1993).

[9] Stephen Conway, review of *George II: puppet of the politicians?*, Jeremy Black (review no. 659): www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/conway2.html, accessed 8 May 2008.

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her historiographical survey, if we accept her contention that a 'flourishing, dynamic and variegated culture of monarchy' existed, it will indeed force historians to 'reconsider – even rethink – the dynamics of politics and society in early Georgian Britain' – not merely fill gaps in a paradigm, nor for only *early* Georgian Britain. Tracing the neglect of the institution of monarchy, she wittily observes 'the case of George I and George II' belies 'the axiom that history is written by the victors. Actually in this instance it was mainly written by the Victorians'(p. 3). They were influenced too much by sentimental Jacobitism, which, along with being appalled by their old corruption, hindered their appreciation of the Hanoverians. So they fell for another, more radical strand of Jacobitism, which deplored the strangling of Scottish and English liberty, in which the two first Georges were supposedly complicit. 'From this standpoint the Georgian monarchy was not only repulsive; it was also wrong' (p. 6).[10]

Smith has therefore had to challenge two significant historiographical trends – first the idea that parliamentary politics mattered more than the monarchy and the court, and secondly the emphasis on popular culture, consumerism, and the public sphere, and its attendant critique by J. C. D. Clark reminding us of the confessional dimension to the eighteenth century, a debate which has underplayed the monarchy too. She has digested and progressed beyond these traditions with admirable conceptual clarity, and drawn on a wide range of sources: national and local state papers, civic and parish records, printed material illustrating high culture as well as popular mentalities, and artefacts from statues to dress.

She shows first the contribution of loyalist writers to creating an image of George I and George II as Protestant soldier-kings, slaying the dragon of popery, following the tradition of William III, but also – in challenging the French – of Edward III. Queen Caroline gained huge kudos for refusing to marry the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, since it would have forced her to convert to Catholicism. In her second chapter, she is perhaps a little less deft in her continental comparisons. Her case is that 'The early Georgian kings adopted a style of monarchy which was frugal, enlightened, and militaristic' (p. 116). She is convincing in aligning the presentation of British monarchy in the Restoration era with the baroque representational ethos whose best exemplar was Louis XIV (p. 61). She traces a shift by the early eighteenth century in northern Europe as well as Britain in which public credit is more important to a royal reputation than *gloire*. But if this was true for Frederick William I of Prussia, she overlooks his ardent pietism as a motive. For northern Europe one might add that Pietism as well as the need to recover from the Gt Northern War (1697–1720) also motivated Danish monarchs and Mecklenburg dukes. The soldier-bureaucrat tradition may have continued in the Prussia of Frederick II, but Sans Souci was an extravagant setting for his frugal routine, especially in its creation of water-terraces in the flat Elbe plain.

[10] Unlike Sellars and Yeatman's Cavaliers – wrong but romantic.

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She convincingly traces frugality and observance of the parliamentary limitations on royal expenditure in George I's reign, and gives us a shrewd account of George II's selective bouts of expenditure and attention to public credit. His parsimony over cultural projects would need to be balanced though by consideration of his wife's activities, which introduced continental habits of collection and display, and included redeploying the treasures already in the royal collection. This will be illuminated in Joanna Marschner's forthcoming book.[11] However, Smith rightly emphasizes that 'official institutions dedicated to promoting the king's image undoubtedly met with considerable alarm in this period … as did systematic royal sponsorship along the French model' (p. 81). This was also a problem for George III when he founded the Royal Academy and was accused of royal despotism.[12] Smith deftly links this caution in sponsoring cultural initiatives to engagement with the Enlightenment via royal patronage, including intervention by the intellectual Queen Caroline in the Newton–Leibniz debate, and her endorsement of inoculation. Smith suggests that when George II did revive ceremonial norms or spend magnificently, it was for dynastic reasons, rather than to continue a sacral or representational kind of royal style. The Hanoverians were indeed sensitive to dynastic themes – had not Matilda of England married Henry the Lion? – a Plantagenet link that could extend farther back than the Stuarts and their troublesome excluded descendants. But how far dynastic right was intrinsically enlightened is a matter of debate, since submission to biological imperative could be seen as the antithesis of rational choice. Instead dynasticism should be seen as integral to all rulers, whether the succession was regulated by divine right theory or other legal adjustments.

The most skilled element of her analysis of loyalist culture is her discussion of how the two kings managed to rehabilitate military monarchy without attracting the opprobrium normally associated with British kings maintaining a standing army. This she sees as the other side to the acceptability of soldier kings who fought for liberty and Protestantism, since their rationale was public security and welfare (p. 107). 'By ensuring that they were the fount of all military promotions, by linking their dynasty with certain regiments, by insisting on a standardized uniform and regimental colours, and by being active in reviewing regiments, [George I and George II] strove to make the monarch the focal point of the army's allegiance' (p. 115). Put another way, the two monarchs established a partnership with their officer corps: 'the army propped up many aristocratic and gentry families by providing a socially respectable livelihood for their younger sons or spurious progeny' (p. 107). The spectacle of military reviews helped cement plebeian support. Finally she suggests some continuities with the reign of

[11] A foretaste is provided by Joanna Marschner, 'Queen Caroline of Anspach and the European princely museum tradition', in C. Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain: royal patronage, court culture and dynastic politics, 1660–1837* (Manchester, 2002).

[12] Holger Hoock, *The king's artists: the Royal Academy of Arts and the politics of British culture, 1760–1840* (Oxford, 2003).

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George III, in contrast with attempts to portray him as 'the bourgeois "patriot king" of the public sphere' (p. 119). This last point could have been made even more firmly: the contrast between public splendour and private frugality he and Queen Charlotte exemplified can be compared with both the British aristocracy or with the smaller princely courts of Germany, in Brunswick, Cassel, or the Saxon duchies, which also mixed domesticity and formality; but it was *not* bourgeois.

In her middle section, Smith explores different ways in which loyalist culture was mediated, a more helpful term I suggest than Conway's partnership. Since the British public was allergic to officially sponsored royal culture, such loyalism was negotiated rather than compelled (pp. 123–4), and often stemmed from voluntary initiatives – the commissioning of a portrait or a statue by elite crown servants or civic loyalists. At the same time, initiatives at parish pump level could be suggested by key patrons: Sussex clergy were weaned off Tory sympathies and fears of Dissenter clamour by the influence of the duke of Newcastle. A town demonstrating its loyalty would in the end expect something in return, as when Glasgow's tradition of loyalism in both Jacobite rebellions was rewarded by government compensation for financial damages. Corporate pride was involved in asserting traditional rights in coronation ceremonies – as a Cinque Port Hastings shared in the holding of the royal canopy. Local funding of celebrations of the Georgian royal calendar (accession days, birthdays) was always tempered by concern over expense and the disorder that might erupt if conviviality got out of hand, or if locally billeted regiments were overbearing to less enthusiastic civilians. She demonstrates that the Jacobites had no monopoly of commissioning drinking glasses or Delftware with symbols of allegiance, and that being a loyalist publican could be good for business. Equally clear is her differentiation of the *regime* – the Hanoverian monarchy – and the *state* – its public servants: a Jacobite inclined church-warden was an agent of the state but not loyal to the regime. Compulsion from the church or the army could be productive of tension, but she suggests a myriad ways in which both professions contributed to fostering loyalty, from archdeacon visitations to check that prayer-books correctly listed members of the royal family to be included in prayers, to Scottish Presbyterians encountering reprisals from Jacobites.

Smith gives us a sustained discussion of the role of the court in the third part of her book. It is an excellent discussion of the whole topic and should be required reading for anyone trying to understand Hanoverian political culture, which must start with comprehending the ins and outs at the top of the social and political pyramid, as its participants would have done. She clearly and helpfully distinguishes between the court as an institution and the court as a venue, gives an account of its character from George I to George II, taking in the fluctuations created by age or royal dissension, and describes the annual and weekly calendar, as well as unique events such as royal marriages. She looks at struggles over status and etiquette, and considers the dynamics of Irish and Scottish loyalism.

All the same, I think it still somewhat underplays the role of the court. Her material could have been pressed a little harder to illuminate the role of families,

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their own hierarchies of utilizing and conferring patronage, their attitude to the court, and its importance for their own sociability. There were a lot of people hungry for office, and a king had approximately ninety positions available for the well-born, and a queen about forty. There was always more demand than could be satisfied, even if you add in the additional royal households for a king's adult children who all offered opportunities for service. It was customary to attend court once anyone had been given a new office – either in a Royal Household, in the government, or at local level such as lord lieutenant of the county. Bishops on appointment, and then translation, from one diocese to another would attend court; so would lesser clerics, and army and naval officers on appointment or promotion, as well as before going on active service and – if they survived – on their return. Ministers going out of town to attend to family or public business would routinely attend a levée once back in London. The king's body language would be attentively observed at levées as a barometer of individual political fortunes: whom did he find time to talk to, whom did he shun? The 1st earl of Falmouth coined the term in 1733 that he had been 'rumped' by George II, when the latter turned his back to him to show his displeasure that the earl had stopped supporting Walpole's ministry.

The role of elite sociability could also have been more developed. Court attendance punctuated the life cycles of the aristocracy: young men were presented before going on the Grand Tour; on getting married when their wives were presented in their marital status; then on the occasion of their children's emergence into society, and *their* marriages. Indeed another function of the court was to act as a marriage market drawing on the whole pool of potential partners, and not just a handful of county connections. Monarchs had a vested interest in the marital suitability and personal character of their pool of courtiers. With the temptation to join the Jacobite court still available until after the defeat of the Jacobites in 1746, it was particularly important for any important family to put in an appearance at a drawing room before leaving the country, to show their loyalty to the regime. Anyone repenting of their Jacobite affiliation and wanting to demonstrate their loyalty would begin by attending court. Frances Boscawen was delighted when her son-in-law the 5th duke of Beaufort signalled his family's move from Jacobite sympathy to Hanoverian loyalty, and was rewarded with the post of lord lieutenant of Monmouthshire, which his family had traditionally held before their equivocal attitude. But it had taken three generations for the Beauforts to get there.

Nonetheless, even if Smith's case for the court as a venue could be made even more strongly, her book is a landmark in eighteenth-century study of the monarchy as an institution. There are limits to what any one book can reasonably accomplish. She has set an agenda for others to explore the implications of the importance of the court for the elite, and how they negotiated their place in relation to it. She has given a very thorough and persuasive account of how 'early Georgian monarchical culture needs to be understood as an integral element of a wider political interchange, which all those who exercised authority – from a

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churchwarden to a royal minister – might, at some level, appropriate and use in order to communicate allegiance, negotiate favour, or express gratitude' (p. 188).

Though Smith's book is about the monarchy as an institution, not monarchs, it contains many glimpses of royal individuals, especially of George II: his conscientiousness over political business, his testiness and grief after Queen Caroline's death, when he only lasted for two minutes at a drawing-room, and his surprising finesse with female as distinct from male courtiers. Jeremy Black's biography[13] also conveys a real sense of the king's personality, gives a helpful account of the role of kings in this period, in Britain and Europe, and recognizes the king's electoral role while concentrating on his monarchical one. However, its propensity to make long-term chronological, and wide geographical comparisons will prove a distracting hurdle for its target audience, the reader needing primary instruction. He or she is unlikely to have the basic knowledge to appreciate these discussions, which only the cognoscenti are likely to relish. This obscures the book's definite merits, such as the attention paid to George II's relations to his ministers, and the overlap between royal household and ministerial positions, all distilled from his comprehensive immersion in the archives.

Now that the present mayor of London, Boris Johnson, is known to be a left-handed descendant of George II's great-grand-daughter, Augusta of Brunswick (sister of the notorious Caroline who married George IV), it is possible that curiosity in this extremely neglected king and his family will increase. The restoration of Kew Palace has provided new material on Frederick prince of Wales's sojourn there; the biography of Frederick by the late Frances Vivian, while eccentric, and uneven on his politics, has provided a good account of his architectural and artistic patronage and of the workings of his household; and a forthcoming collection of essays on the prince edited by Matthew Kilburn and Roger Eagles will augment the excellent assessment Kilburn has given in his Oxford *DNB* article. In *Royal discord, the children of George II* designed for the wider public (while drawing on her scholarly account of Anne of Orange), Veronica Baker-Smith has provided a collective portrait of George II's children, which helps fill in their continental profile and makes the case for rehabilitating the duke of Cumberland. [14]

The Hanoverian dimension to George II will be a feature of Andrew Thompson's forthcoming biography for the Yale British monarch's series. Meanwhile he has cast important light on William III's, George I's, and George II's diplomacy in *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant interest, 1688–1756*. His book is a reinterpretation of the nature of international relations which explores the wider political culture in which rulers and diplomats operated, and also a cogent

[13] Jeremy Black, *George II: puppet of the politicians?* (Exeter, 2007).

[14] Susanne Groom and Lee Prosser, *Kew Palace: the official illustrated history* (London, 2006), pp. 44–55; Frances Vivian, *A life of Frederick, prince of Wales, 1707–1751: a connoisseur of the arts*, ed. Roger White (Lampeter, 2006); Veronica P. M. Baker-Smith, *Royal discord: the children of George II* (London, 2008); idem, *A life of Anne of Hanover, Princess Royal* (Leiden, 1995).

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critique of numerous historiographies which inhibit an adequate understanding of the nature of the state in the eighteenth century. His astringent analysis divorces diplomatic research from its moorings in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century nation-state and makes historians reimagine the eighteenth-century states as they were constituted at the time, as both confessional and multiple monarchies. This reinterpretation draws on the re-evaluation of the Holy Roman Empire that has been the achievement of historians of Germany in recent decades. Thompson argues persuasively that after the Thirty Years War in 1648, religious conflict did not end, but was resolved institutionally through the Holy Roman Empire, and through the pattern of alliances both within and without it. Given the dynastic union, the king-elector was bound to take an interest in confessional disputes, and to challenge leadership of the German Protestant states, normally vested in Saxony. This became problematic when the latter was ruled by Augustus the Strong, a Catholic convert who was also the elected Polish king (r. 1697–1733), followed by his cradle Catholic heir (r. 1733–62). Given these personal unions, Thompson demonstrates how imperative it is for British historians to conceptualize the British Isles as part of eighteenth-century Europe, and especially to understand the German Empire.

He therefore shows how confessional policy was an important motivating force in foreign policy, and had popular resonance in the growing public sphere (p. 2), a thesis which disputes the materialist character of international relations theory and the telos of the nation-state, and makes Protestant dynasticism another strand of foreign policy (pp. 3–4, 10, 16). He argues both that the language of Protestant interest is important in its own right, and not just as a veil for the national interest; and at the same time, as a form of rhetoric, can reveal what people were prepared to believe, and thus become a factor in policy making. Thompson is surely right to stress the Protestant interest as a factor in George I's or George II's outlook as policy makers, irrespective of the exact character or intensity of their personal piety: the point is that they were *dynastically* Protestant, which is why they had become rulers of Britain as well as Hanover in the first place over the claims of fifty-plus Catholic candidates.[15]

He illuminates for his readers the character of the Holy Roman Empire, Hanover's importance within the empire, and its twin legacy of Protestant monarchy and continental involvement (p. 23). Having cleared the historiographical ground, Thompson can then use as a lens Hanoverian participation in the *Corpus evangelicorum* of the Imperial Diet at Regensburg. Protestants still feared the spectre of Catholic universal monarchy, but their efforts to prevent it were managed within a legal framework, in which the balance of power was understood not as a value-free form of *realpolitik*, but a means of protecting the Protestant interest. This diplomatic activity is therefore the hard royal and

[15] This point was debated between Torsten Riotte and Andrew Thompson in Torsten Riotte, review of Andrew C. Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant interest, 1688–1756* (review no. 628): www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/riotte.html, accessed 1 Nov. 2007.

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ministerial graft behind the image of Protestant military kingship which Hannah Smith has invoked in her portrait of Georgian monarchy.

Having set out his stall, Thompson provides a number of case studies which illustrate it. His first, that of the legality of the Protestant church in the Palatine once it was inherited by a branch of the Catholic Pfalz Neuberg dynasty, also challenges another historiographic assumption, the myth of Prussian leadership, by showing that c. 1720 it was Hanover, not Prussia, which was leading the Protestant interest in northern Germany. Hanover pressed the case for liberty of conscience in the Palatinate, as guaranteed by the peace of 1648. Other dimensions of what might seem an arcane dispute over the ecclesiastical politics of the Germanies include George I's leadership in pacifying Sweden at the close of the Gt Northern War, and hindering Russian influence over Mecklenburg, fast becoming a client state of Peter the Great after dynastic marriage with the Romanovs. However, alert though he is to dynastic considerations, Thompson does not consider that Hanoverian electoral anxiety was probably underlined by the Catholic Pfalz-Neuberg dynasty's success not only in acceding to the Palatinate but also in providing an archbishop-elector of Trier, as well as, earlier, consorts to Spain and the Holy Roman Emperor. They presented the spectacle of a prolific family spreading their connections throughout the empire and beyond. He also shows how the Jacobite argument was conducted within Whig parameters. 'The Pretender's Catholicism and associations with France were left unmentioned, precisely because they were so unpopular'. Thompson comments astringently 'Those seeking to attack a whig account of parliamentary triumph have found in the Jacobites a pleasing alternative' but historians should not necessarily prefer the trouble-makers (p. 95).

As this example shows, there are impressive dividends to be gained from understanding the mentalities, institutions, and procedures of diplomacy less instrumentally. Thompson's investigation of George II's sojourns abroad lays the groundwork for a new argument about their consequence for the emergence of the role of PM which his biography will assuredly substantiate. Meanwhile, in the final part of his book, Thompson has to adjudicate the argument that the importance of the Protestant interest was declining by the 1740s. Some elements of his intricate but always clear exposition can be mentioned here. The re-emergence of France as a threat to the balance of power meant reviving the alliance with Catholic Austria was freshly important, especially given the decline of the Dutch, so a North German Protestant confessional alliance was insufficient. He suggests British ministers were slow to realize the depths of Frederick of Prussia's *realpolitik* and thus indifference to the Protestant interest, and that popular enthusiasm for Frederick as a Protestant hero was ill-founded, albeit a real factor in the climate in which decisions were taken. Patriot opposition, from the late 1730s, saw the link with Hanover as representing all that was wrong with the personal union; their 'commercial whiggery' was not a Protestant so much as a secular moralism, in which British liberty and independence were portrayed endangered by a corrupt court. British commercial interests were therefore best

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protected by a bluewater policy and commercial alliances. However, Thompson sets this opposition rhetoric against the fast sermons of the 1740s, and a different picture emerges, in which atheism, irreligion, and luxury were portrayed as hindering national success. There were also continuing worries about French popery. Thompson challenges Pincus's view that fears of universal monarchy since the late seventeenth century could be distinguished from support for Protestantism, since the former would always be understood to threaten the latter. Resistance to universal monarchy was not a secular issue. Thus by 1745 worries about Jacobitism enabled these sermons to picture the British as modern Hebrews needing deliverance from French slavery. Balance of power concepts by themselves were insufficient arguments to counteract universal monarchy and popery; the rhetoric of an elect nation, which should cast out modern vices, was the currency of this resistance to French power. Religious discourse had not disappeared from public life, even if free-thinking Whig nobles presented a contrast with pious Hanoverian ones (p. 218, citing Uriel Dann). This discussion persuasively reinforces his conclusion that foreign policy depended on ideas, not just interests, and that these ideas remained imbued with Protestant sentiment in combating overweening papist states, whether Austria, Spain, or France, depending on the specific context.

Nick Harding also wants to push international relations beyond the discourse of the nation-state, but in order to explore the language of empire, not religion. The term 'Personal Union', only coined by J. S. Pütter in 1760, has, be believes, sanctioned an interpretation of the link between Britain and Hanover in terms of the pre-history of the nation-state – a natural consequence of the professionalization of history during the nineteenth-century apogee of the nation-state.

> Now that historians find themselves explaining the decline of the nation-state rather than its rise, it makes sense to rehabilitate the discourses of transnational integration. These in turn, introduce the European continent to the history of the British empire, and the empire to the history of the European Union.(p. 281)

He sets his exploration of British and Hanoverian convergence into an ambitious historiography of empire, arguing that only the pre-modern period has been discussed in terms of empire: early modernists have preferred to explore states as composite entities, but have still managed to overlook Hanover because that has been subsumed under diplomatic history. His criticism is that diplomatic history is episodic and under-theorized, so has borrowed the concept of personal union from the international relations tribe, 'denoting two states which retain their independence under a common ruler. The effect has been to reinforce an insular reading of the British-Hanoverian dynastic union' (p. 7), further reinforced by the apparent lack of material integration (little trade, little emigration) between Britain and Hanover. But the linguistic turn has shown historians that terms like Personal Union are subjective and have ideological work to do; realizing this frees historians to look at the less familiar discourse of empire, a concept implicit in commentators' comparison of either Britain or Hanover to colonies (p. 9).

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The payoff of all this historiographical excavation is that Harding can then trace a history, for the most part, of ambiguity. Jurists, polemicists, critics, and radicals could not decide which of the two entities was the Imperial one, and whether the relationship was beneficial or harmful: this indeterminacy means that for Harding neither Simm's stress on Britain's benefit nor Black's affirmation of British disadvantage is fruitful. Harding believes that an intellectual history of the relationship can only be done through a series of snapshots which will show which of the various alternative traditions of interpretation to that of personal union were attractive at any one time to their proponents (p. 11).

His book offers this chronological survey and breaks new ground by exploring not only what Britain thought of Hanover, but what Hanover thought of Britain. Here he recognizes that Hanover's public sphere developed later than Britain's, but he has mined archival sources to demonstrate debate within ministerial memoranda prepared for the elector. A disadvantage of this survey is that while he does outline the provisions of the Act of Settlement which governed the inheritance by the Hanoverians of the British crown, he does not fully acquaint his readers of the structure of Hanover, a composite of inherited dukedoms, regulated only between 1687 and 1692 to provide for consolidation through primogeniture (which left its own legacy of disputed, Catholic claims to the composite duchies, raised to electoral status in 1692), which resulted in seven different Estates with legislative power. He says that the new electorate was 'comfortable' with political diversity' (p. 10), while Britain tended to read it as a unitary state predisposed to absolutism, but his readers need a better introduction to Hanoverian political culture. A map and a fuller account would have enabled his readers to see more clearly just how subjective British fears of Hanoverian absolutism really were.

As will be evident from the foregoing, Harding's work is primarily geared to historians of political thought as he tracks through debates on the character of empire. But there is mileage here for historians wanting to explore the nature of multiple monarchy, because in giving us a fuller account of ideological battles *within* either Britain or Hanover he helps correct the oversimplified assumption that either one or the other benefited from the link, an issue mainly explored up till now mainly through foreign policy. Instead he helps us to see how the link exacerbated factional division within either polity.

Harding argues that the relationship between Britain and Hanover was articulated most clearly as a Personal Union whenever Hanover's separate foreign policy was most apparent, as when it made a separate peace with France in 1757 and in 1803. Otherwise there were variants in explaining British dominance over Hanover: it could assist in maintaining civil and religious liberty – as he acknowledges Thompson's book explores; or further Britain's economic interests by guarding the sea-lanes to the Hanseatic cities, which would also distract French attention from Britain. Since the Act of Settlement required electoral residence in Britain and in theory permission to visit it, Hanoverian visitors spending money in London could be seen as, effectively, paying tribute.

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Hanoverians were divided as to whether the link protected Hanover – particularly questionable when France attacked in 1757 and 1803. Both George I and George II regularly visited Hanover and a court was maintained through a council of regents in their absence, partly to prevent any sense that the electorate was subordinate to the monarchy, to stimulate the economy, and train public servants.

British historians are familiar with the arguments over Hanover mostly in the context of the Patriot debates of the 1730s and 1740s. Where Thompson sees various strands in the diplomatic strategy, including as we have seen moral concerns, the Protestant interest, and British providentialism, Harding investigates whether conflicting views deploy the language of empire. This makes him a critic of Black's assessment of the continental connection. In the final section Harding's study breaks new ground in his examination of debates in Restoration Europe between liberals, reformers and radicals, and their ultra opponents. Early nineteenth-century Hanoverian critics compared British social mobility to Hanoverian stasis, and also 'thought electoral absence had exacerbated aristocratic privilege' (p. 11). This stasis helps explain why the Tory ultra, William duke of Cumberland, made such a success of being king of Hanover when the Personal Union ended in 1837, as Abigail Green's study *Fatherlands* has analysed.[16]

These four books, then, stimulate eighteenth-century historians to think in multiple dimensions: to study monarchy and court as well as state; to track elite family strategy, court service, and political activity in both a local and metropolitan context; and to think more consistently of Britain as a part of Europe. Any political historian of eighteenth-century Britain needs also to have some grasp of the main features of the Holy Roman Empire.

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[16] Abigail Green, *Fatherlands, state-building and nationhood in nineteenth-century Germany* (Cambridge, 2001).

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