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**The Political Thought of John Brown: Religion, Reform
and International Relations**

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The Political Thought of John Brown: Religion, Reform and International

Relations

Summary

John Brown (1715-1766) has been portrayed by historians for generations as the archetypal Jeremiah. Depressed about the state of his country, he predicted the collapse of Britain in foreign war or by national bankruptcy. The main negative argument of the *An Estimate of the Manners and the Principles of the Times* (1757) was that effeminacy and luxury sprang from vast wealth and trade and would soon ruin the nation. In this thesis I contend that this idea does not capture the essence of Brown. John Brown's fascinated contemporaries not only because it was a cynical attack on contemporary commercial society. Actually, the *Estimate* is worthy of attention because Brown was a reformer of a particular kind. The central argument of this thesis is that in order to explore the *Estimate* as more than a political worry, as in fact a complicated and positive reform strategy, great attention needs to be paid to his politics and philosophy. None of the studies on Brown have taken his politics sufficiently seriously as a contribution to the reform philosophies of his time. This thesis is the first detailed study of the *Estimate*, its origins, arguments, reception and defence. The analysis of the *Estimate* can cast more light on the understanding of reform strategies during the enlightenment era and also their limits. This thesis indicates that Brown was less radical and more constructive than studies to date have imagined. In this thesis the extent of the impact of Brown's claims is measured, and the manner by which Brown's work served to highlight contrasting reform philosophies is emphasised. Therefore the aim of the thesis is to show the full extent of the reform plan Brown envisaged, unifying the moral, religious and political aspects of his thought.

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Introduction

John Brown was born on the 5th of November, 1715 in Rothbury, Northumberland. In 1732, he was admitted to St. John's College in Cambridge as a sizar and left there with a reputation as a profound scholar in 1735.¹ Brown's father, Rev. John Brown, was a native of Duns, in Scotland and was ordained by a nonjuring Scottish bishop. In 1737 Brown was also ordained as deacon in Wigton as his father's curate. After he had returned to Cambridge to take the degree of Master of Arts, he was ordained priest, made a minor canon and nominated as the lecturer of the Cathedral Church of Carlisle. He was appointed vicar of Morland in 1753 and vicar of Lazonby in 1752. He resigned from the former and relinquished his cathedral lectureship in Carlisle in 1757. Afterwards he was presented to the vicarage of St. Nicholas, Newcastle-on-Tyne, but was unable to rise higher, perhaps because of his controversial writings. By this time Brown was famous, not for being a clergyman, but as an author, political reformer, and moralist. Despite his renown, and seemingly at the height of his powers, Brown committed suicide by cutting his throat on the 23rd of September, 1766.

Brown published a variety of works between 1743 and his death. His first work was a poem entitled *Honour*. His ideas on the spirit of honour and the superiority of reason to the passions, and on the means to attain a rational life are worthy of attention, against a background of concerns about the relationship between the ever-growing commercial society and morality. In 1745 Brown published *An Essay on Satire*, a eulogistic essay about Alexander Pope, the great poet who had died in the previous year. Brown emphasized the role of the passions in corrupting man's character and argued that reason had to be embraced in every aspect of life in order to achieve virtue. In the following year, his *The Mutual Connexion between Religious Truth and Civil Freedom; between Superstition, Tyranny, Irreligion, and Licentiousness* (1746) appeared. It contained two sermons preached at the Cathedral Church of Carlisle after the Jacobite Rebellion had been repressed. They contributed to his fame as a protestant preacher, and

¹ For the most up to date biography, see James E. Crimmins, 'Brown, John (1715–1766)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) (from now on abbreviated to *ODNB*). For more on Brown's biography, see Andrew Kippis and others, eds., *Biographia Britannica, or, The lives of the most eminent persons who have flourished in Great Britain and Ireland*, 2nd edn, 2 (London, 1780), pp. 653–74 (henceforth abbreviated to *Biographia*).

brought him to the attention of Bishop Osbaldeston of Carlisle. In consequence, Brown was appointed as one of his chaplains in 1747. He published another poem, *On Liberty*, two years later. He considered truth and liberty to be identical and stated that freedom was the foundation of a nation and had to be protected if any nation was going to flourish. In 1750, he preached a sermon *On the pursuit of false pleasure, and the mischiefs of immoderate gaming* at the Abbey-Church at Bath. Brown stated that false pleasure would never truly satisfy the mind. In order to produce lasting pleasure and virtue, the appetites should be honest, true and loving, and above all should praise virtuous action. By the time of this sermon, Brown was advocating a line common to numerous contemporaries, and especially Protestant clergymen, who felt that popular morals were in jeopardy because of the events of the age and that the people needed to be enjoined and directed to live a life of virtue. Brown's sermon was republished in his *Sermons on Various Subjects* in 1764 and advertised as a successful sermon that had suppressed the public gaming tables in Bath. His following *Essays on the Characteristics of the Earl of Shaftesbury* was published in 1751. It was a repudiation of moral sense philosophy that had been defended in the Earl of Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* of 1711. The link that was established between truth, virtue and freedom was connected with Brown's notion of a benevolent God. God had created the world so that it was in the interest of all persons to live a godly life, identical with devotion to honesty and self-sacrifice for others. Brown appeared as a utilitarian with this work in the sense that he was arguing that the world had been created so that interest pushed men towards virtue. In 1753 Brown was called upon to preach a sermon at the consecration of St. James's Church as chaplain to the Bishop of Carlisle and he preached *On the Use and Abuse of Externals in Religion*. Brown restated the now regular theme of the necessity of reason and religion, forever tied together in maintaining the social order; only the coactivity of reason and religion could harmonize virtue with the operation of the senses and imagination, which if ungoverned could lead individuals astray and towards a life of vice. Later, Brown wrote a tragedy called *Barbarossa* in 1755 which was performed at Drury Lane theatre. In the following year, he wrote another tragedy, *Athelstan*, but it did not achieve the former's popularity.

In 1757 Brown's *An Estimate of the Manners and the Principles of the Times* was published. A second volume and *An Explanatory Defence* followed next year. These were unquestionably Brown's most successful works, and the ones that brought him to

international attention. These works are the central subject of the following thesis. Brown identified the effeminacy and luxury that emerged from the growth of the commercial society as the core reason for the gross extant corruption in British public life. Brown predicted the collapse of Britain through foreign war or by national bankruptcy, and criticized the exorbitant trade and wealth of the times. In 1760 he wrote *An Additional Dialogue of the Dead between Pericles and Aristides* and reiterated the argument of the *Estimate*. Afterwards he returned to his role as a clergyman and continued to preach. Two sermons were published as *On the Natural Duty of a Personal Service* and *On the Different Provinces of Goodness, Justice, and Mercy*. They aimed to define the moral and civil duties of all people in concrete terms and emphasized the necessity of obedience to civil and moral laws for achieving peace in society. Brown's character as a musician and a poet was revealed after 1763. He published *The Cure of Saul, a sacred ode*, and mentioned the healing powers of music. Furthermore, *A dissertation on the rise, union, and power, the progression, separations and corruptions, of poetry and music* appeared in the same year. Brown analysed music, dance, song, comedy and poetry throughout history, in Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, Ancient Hebrews, European Countries, China, Peru and India. He also suggested the union of poetry and music in this dissertation as a crucial aid to the pursuit of virtue. Moreover, he preached another sermon *On Religious Liberty* and wrote a *Letter to the Principal Inhabitants of British North American Colonies- On Occasion of the Peace* in 1763 immediately after the Seven Years' War had come to a close. He tried to motivate the colonies to be united because he saw their divided character as a threat to the welfare of Great Britain. To this end, he put forward religious principles as the best way to achieve a consistent and harmonious system of policy among the colonies. Brown was afraid of the fatal consequences of territorial expansion and argued that Britain was reliving the history of Rome in over-extending itself. He was certain that despite the victory of 1763 dire perils still faced the state, and that Britain might not survive. Therefore he tried to develop means of uniting together the mother country and the colonies. Only sure measures would prevent the alienation of the colonies from the metropolis and the fate of Rome's generals and their armies turning against the capital. In the following year, Brown published *The history of the rise and progress of poetry, through its several species* and *Sermons on various subjects*. His sermons *On the First Principles of Education* and *On the duty of Charitable Distribution* were published with his older sermons mentioned above. He presented his ideas on education in detail

through these sermons. For him, children should not be left uncontrolled in the governance of ill-directed passions because only a well-directed conscience could instil the principles of Christianity and lead children to labour for the happiness of mankind in their adult lives. In the light of this he stated that education must consist of the regulation of these passions and directing them towards virtuous habits. It was recognised that these sermons were a response to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's educational ideas stated in *Emile* of 1762. In 1765, Brown returned to politics again and published *Thoughts on Civil Liberty, on Licentiousness, and Faction*. He emphasized the relationship between religion, liberty, virtue and the common good shared by all souls. By means of civil and moral laws, man should be induced and motivated, but ultimately compelled if necessary to sacrifice his private interests and desires for the welfare of society. Brown also explained how civil liberty could be produced by means of these levers. It might be thought that liberty was the antithesis of such compulsion and direction, but Brown argued that true liberty could only be enjoyed after the passions had been mastered, and mastery of the passions was so important that individuals had to be compelled to avoid them. Afterwards, Brown published *A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Lowth*. For once this was not a restatement of his political or moral ideas but was rather written directly to Lowth, who had accused Brown of being a slave to William Warburton and his philosophy. Brown defended himself and indicated that he was not an abject follower of Warburton's claims but was of an independent mind. His last publication before his death was *A Description of the Lake at Keswick, in Cumberland* in 1766 and was an appreciation of the dramatic scenery of the Lake District.

After the publication of *An Essay on Satire*, Brown was regarded as a talented writer who might even aspire to be the successor of Alexander Pope.² His *Essays on the Characteristics* became so popular that it went through five editions; in 1751, 1752, 1755 and 1764. His tragedy, *Barbarossa*, was widely seen as the most successful tragedy in his time and contributed to the fame of Brown as a dramatist.³ His sermons established his reputation as a popular preacher of protestant principles. Brown's *A dissertation on the rise, union, and power, the progression, separations and*

² For more information, see Peter William Clayden, *The Early life of Samuel Rogers* (London, 1887), pp. 416-417; S. H., "On reading the Essay on Satire, occasion'd by Mr. Pope's Death" in *Gentleman's Magazine* 15 (June 1745) p. 327.

³ David Garrick, *The letters of David Garrick*, D. M. Little and G. M. Karl (eds) (Oxford University Press, 1963), vol. III, p. 802.

corruptions, of poetry and music was considered as the complete picture of musical history ever to be printed in England and it was translated into German and Italian after his death. Nevertheless, neither of these works gave Brown's name immediate recognition. Rather, it was to the *Estimate* that he owed his singular popularity and renown, as testified by the commonplace sobriquet 'Estimate Brown'. At the same time, it was the widespread recognition that the argument of the *Estimate* was unconvincing that led his broader works and name to be neglected after his death.

The first half of the eighteenth century in England was for Brown a time of acute and perilous decline. Britain became a trans-oceanic commercial and colonial power. It also had experienced the advance of natural science, and political and social improvements. For Brown, however, the growth of commercial society and empire corrupted the nation; the character of the nation became characterised by "vain, luxurious and selfish effeminacy".⁴ The growth of infidelity, self-centred politicians, the ignorance of the clergy and the neglect of their duties, the replacement of martial honour with money in the army and the navy, the passionate desire for a luxurious life and the superiority of selfish interests to the common good were all seen as the reasons that would lead to national ruin and national destruction.

In 1756, the war, later called the Seven Years' War, had broken out between Britain and France. In the beginning of the war, Britain lost Minorca to France. Depressed about the state of his country, Brown published the *Estimate* on the 31st March, 1757 to awaken his nation to the imminent crisis and in the hope of preventing Britain from succumbing to corruption. The book became so popular that it went through seven editions by April 1758. Its popularity did not mean that people agreed with Brown. In fact many critics charged him with driving the nation into despair and indicating the English as falling before the superior genius and power of the French. Britain achieved victory by the end of the war, gained dominance as a global power, and ultimately became the largest empire in history.⁵ This victory seemed to invalidate the predictions of Brown that saw France as a greater state with the resources and will to defeat and possibly destroy

⁴ John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, 2 vols (London, 1757), volume I p. 29. (from now on abbreviated to *Estimate I*).

⁵ Matt Schumann and Karl W. Schweizer, *The Seven Years War: a transatlantic story* (Routledge, 2008), pp. 228-229; Franz A. J. Szabo, *The Seven Years War in Europe 1756-1763* (Routledge, 2008), pp. 431-432.

Britain altogether. Thereafter, Brown's credibility was questioned and he was left as a neglected figure despite his genius, knowledge and ability in various kinds of composition. This neglect may have contributed to his untimely death by suicide.

There are many ways to study Brown; as an essayist, utilitarian, musician, dramatist, writer on education and historian of aesthetics. This is a study in the main of his politics. The major claim of this thesis is that Brown needs to be seen as much as an advocate of reform as a Jeremiah predicting the end of the world. Brown's arguments for reformation that would improve the future of Great Britain were often overlooked in his time. It was easier to lampoon him as a prophet of doom. Yet Brown was not only the author of a critique that was a part of on-going arguments about trade and luxury, but also he was a prudent political reformist who suggested the cure after he had diagnosed the national illness. It is the cure as the much as the illness that this thesis is concerned with.

The main negative argument of the *Estimate* was that effeminacy and luxury sprang from vast wealth and trade and would soon ruin the nation. I argue that Brown was distinctive not because he was the archetypal Jeremiah but because he was a reformer of a particular kind. For him, the selfish passions could be tamed, the worst effects of commerce and luxury could be removed and social and political evils could be combatted. In order to explore the *Estimate* as more than a political worry, as in fact a complicated and positive reform strategy, great attention needs to be paid to his politics and philosophy.

The *Estimate* has always been understood as the most severe attack on luxury and the effeminacy and profligacy of the age. Brown appeared as cynical and as devastating in his criticisms of the contemporary British world as Rousseau was with regard to France. The *Estimate* was recognised as Brown's masterwork; however, it was rarely studied in detail by commentators of his own time. Historians have followed this tendency. In 1971, Donald D. Eddy published *A Bibliography of John Brown* and listed Brown's works in chronological order. He also listed the replies to the *Estimate*, and gave the index of their printers, publishers and booksellers.⁶ In 1994, Peter N. Miller discussed

⁶ Donald D. Eddy, *A Bibliography of John Brown* (New York, 1971).

Brown's account of education and freedom of thought in his book *Defining the common good: Empire, Religion and Philosophy in eighteenth century Britain*.⁷ William Roberts, in 1996, published *A Dawn of Imaginative Feeling* to indicate the contribution of John Brown to eighteenth century thought and literature. The book gives a summary of Brown's life and his works.⁸ Furthermore James E. Crimmins, known today as a leading scholar of Bentham, studied Brown as a moralist and regarded him as a religious utilitarian; namely one of the Anglican advocates of utility.⁹ Francis Dodsworth published a paper on the link between education, virtue and freedom in Brown's works, and studied the meaning of liberty by focusing on Brown's system of education.¹⁰ Most recently, Michael Sonenscher, in *Sans-Culottes*, wrote a section on Rousseau and Brown, pairing them together with regard to their cynicism.¹¹

None of these studies, including those directly concerned with Brown, have taken his politics sufficiently seriously as a contribution to the reform philosophies of his time. This is the first detailed study of the *Estimate*, its origins, arguments, reception and defence. The analysis of the *Estimate* can cast more light on the understanding of reform strategies during the enlightenment era and also their limits. It is necessary to reassess and recognize Brown's place in the intellectual climate of his times and to underscore the profound connection to particular contemporaries, and especially Warburton. Rather than being a shocking figure whose ideas were intended to induce shame and fear among his readers, Brown was less radical and more constructive than studies to date have imagined. The close reading of the works of Brown and many of his contemporaries will support this claim.

The thesis is made up of four chapters. After the introduction, the first chapter presents a close reading of the first volume of the *Estimate*. It also paves the way for an

⁷ Peter N. Miller, *Defining the Common Good: Empire, religion and philosophy in eighteenth-century Britain* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 333-348.

⁸ William Roberts, *A Dawn of Imaginative Feeling: The Contribution of John Brown (1715-1766) to Eighteenth Century Thought and Literature* (Carlisle, 1996).

⁹ J. E. Crimmins, *Utilitarian Philosophy and Politics: Bentham's Later Years*, (New York, 2011), pp. 47, 73; J. E. Crimmins, "John Brown and the Theological Tradition of Utilitarian Ethics" in *History of Political Thought*, 4/3 (1983), pp. 523-50.

¹⁰ Francis Dodsworth, The Subject of Freedom in Republican Thought: Habit, Virtue and Education in the work of John Brown (1715-1766), *Centre For Research on Socio-Cultural Change* (CRESC, 2009), pp. 1-21.

¹¹ Michael Sonenscher, *Sans-culottes: an eighteenth century emblem in the French Revolution* (Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 178-201.

understanding of the reasons for the criticisms of Brown, criticisms that led Brown to make numerous additions and developments of the argument in the second volume. The source and the effect, namely the excessive wealth and forthcoming ruin of the nation are discussed in detail. The role of moral integrity in maintaining the state is also explained.

The aim of the second chapter is to prove that Brown was developing a different reform agenda to that of William Warburton, with whom he was closely related, and who was also trying to preserve Britain in times of national crisis. I argue that the *Estimate* can actually be read as a refutation of Warburton's thought and of the reform strategies developed by members of his circle. Firstly, the main arguments of Warburton are examined in order to provide the intellectual context in which the *Estimate* was written. Warburton's *The Alliance between Church and State* (1736) was part of a complicated programme for reform that Brown was fascinated by. Warburton aimed to preserve Great Britain from the effects of intolerance, superstition, religious enthusiasm and religious division. Briefly, he and his party tried to maintain the Anglican establishment, which was seen to be the central pillar of the British polity. To this end, recognising Brown's gifts as a writer, he introduced Brown into his circle. The chapter examines the details of their relationship and explores the reasons why the *Estimate* ultimately argued against Warburton's reform programme. Furthermore, the analysis of Brown's early works written before 1757 shows the parallels between Brown and Warburton, and this context helps us to grasp the real purpose of the *Estimate*, which was to reveal Brown's own voice as opposed to the ideas he had hitherto been associated with.

In the third chapter, the primary focus is to examine the additions to the second volume published in the following year (1758). The reason for its publication was the reception of the first one, as Brown stated at the beginning of the book. Brown had defended both himself and his ideas by means of the additions to the second volume. Although *An Explanatory Defence* was only the repetition of his former ideas, it is also going to be studied to highlight the defence of Brown and his on-going aspiration of making his reform plans plain to contemporaries.

The fourth chapter is concerned with the reception of the *Estimate*. The much-debated arguments of Brown are examined to grasp the reasons for the severity of the criticisms

launched against him, including those to be found in the leading periodicals of the day. The extent of the impact of Brown's claims is measured, and the manner by which Brown's work served to highlight contrasting reform philosophies is emphasised. In the conclusion, I show the full extent of the reform plan Brown envisaged, unifying the moral, religious and political aspects of his thought.

Chapter One

An analysis of the first volume of *An Estimate of the Manners and the Principles of the Times*

The natural Character of it's [Britain's] landed Ranks, it's Nobility and Gentry, is that of a "vain, luxurious, and selfish Effeminacy".¹²

This bitter definition of Britain's character was the main premise of John Brown's *An Estimate of the Manners and the Principles of the Times*, which concluded that Britain would experience corruption in the future. Published on 31 March 1757 as Britain was engaged in the Seven Years' War against the French, the *Estimate* was criticised for its negative view of the nation. Yet it had actually been published in the wake of the loss of Minorca to the French on 28 June 1756 at the beginning of the Seven Years' War.¹³ This island was regarded as one of strategic importance to Britain, contributing to the valour and vigour of national honour.¹⁴ Alongside its loss, British defeats in North America were signs that the war was going well for the French. The *Estimate's* publication at such a time of pessimism for the British due to the unsuccessful conduct of the war meant the work drew great attention to itself. Consequently, Brown's arguments were opposed for their criticisms of the state of the British nation.¹⁵

It is apparent that the scope of the *Estimate* and the "particularity of Brown's indictment"¹⁶ made the book distinctive among contemporary works, and led to its repudiation and censure. Brown's style, combined with his arguments, triggered severe criticisms towards him. After the publication of the first volume, Brown was accused of arrogance, and his opinions were charged with being misguided. Content aside, a central objection to the work was Brown's "spirit of self-importance, dogmaticalness, and

¹² Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 159.

¹³ Crimmins, "John Brown (1715-1766)", *ODNB*.

¹⁴ Robert Wallace, *Characteristics of the present political state of Great Britain* (London, 1758), pp. 207-208 (from now on abbreviated to *Characteristics*).

¹⁵ Crimmins, "John Brown (1715-1766)", *ODNB*; Andrew Kippis, *Biographia*; David Erskine Baker, *Companion to the Play-House* (London, 1764), p.175.

¹⁶ John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 93.

offentimes arrogance, [that] mixed itself in what he says”.¹⁷ Brown replied to the remarks by arguing that those people who called him arrogant were calling “every Thing Arrogance that is not Servility”.¹⁸ Yet 7000 copies of the *Estimate* were published between 31 March 1757 and 15 April 1758, and it earned Brown the sobriquet ‘Estimate Brown’.¹⁹ He also published a second volume of the book on 8 April 1758, concurrently with the first one’s seventh edition. This much disparaged but popular text was charged with driving the nation into despair, as it appears to despise the British nation and promote Francophilia. Brown’s arguments regarding the reform of a future Britain, however, were overlooked.

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret Brown’s arguments in the first volume while grasping the significance of the political context that influenced them to such an extent. It will pave the way to an understanding of the reasons for the criticisms and the additions to the second volume that are going to be discussed in the following chapters.

I. Brown’s investigation of Britain’s Character

THE publick Effects of our Manners and Principles here enumerated begin now to appear too manifest in our public Miscarriages, to be any longer derided. The Nation stands aghast at it’s own Misfortunes: But, like a Man starting suddenly from Sleep, by the Noise of some approaching Ruin, knows neither whence it comes, nor how to avoid it.²⁰

Brown foresaw an inevitable and impending corruption of England and he enthusiastically engaged in a design to awaken the nation by defining and explaining public problems.²¹ For him, “we [British people] are rolling to the Brink of a Precipice that must destroy us [Britain]”.²² As Brown believed the nation was so close to ruin, it could be asked ‘why the English nation did not foresee such a hazardous future?’ It is

¹⁷ Alexander Chalmers, *The General Biographical Dictionary*, 8 vols (London, 1812-1817), vol. VII (1917), p. 99. The criticisms of Brown’s tone are discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

¹⁸ John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, 2 vols (London, 1758), vol. II, p. 261 (from now on abbreviated to *Estimate II*).

¹⁹ Crimmins, “John Brown (1715-1766)”, *ODNB*.

²⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 149-150.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

apparent in the advertisement of the *Estimate* that Britain was “at a Crisis so important and alarming.”²³ Brown wanted to publish his sentiments on this subject. While the people in the higher ranks of society might have failed to notice the imminent dangers facing the nation, an impartial man (like Brown) could identify them and do something about them. Brown thereby tried to rouse the nation even though such a duty lay “beyond the Sphere of him”²⁴. He clarified what he meant in the following terms, drawing a parallel between his inexperienced yet vigilant eye and that of the able seamen:

...that a common Eye may possibly discover a lurking Rock or Sand, while the able and experienced Mariners overlook the Danger, through their Attention to the Helm, the Sails, or Rigging.²⁵

Defending himself in the expectation of criticism, he added his own ideas regarding the style and the design of the *Estimate*. He was conscious of the fact that neither his manner of writing nor his plan of the work would be viewed favourably. Without considering “the private consequences”,²⁶ Brown aimed to “hold a true Mirror to the Public”.²⁷ He endeavoured to show the people that it was the British nation that was responsible for public misdemeanours. Brown predicted that his proposals would be opposed because of this claim, and declaring that he anticipated the very worst “the private consequences”.²⁸ His defence was that he would not worry about criticisms of the first volume since he believed that the *Estimate* had been written impartially and rationally.²⁹ In quoting the English economist and politician Charles Davenant (1656-1714), Brown made plain his argument that only the wise and virtuous would recognize the calibre of his arguments. Rather than being for a general audience, the *Estimate* was written for such persons:

He who, to the utmost of his Skill and Power, speaks the Truth, where the Good of his King and Country are concerned, will be most esteemed by Persons of Virtue and Wisdom: And to the Favour and Protection of such, these Papers are committed.³⁰

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Brown believed that the *Estimate* was telling the truth about Britain and that he was acting for the benefit of the nation. According to Brown, estimating the possible outcomes of the era of crisis was essential to maintain the country from harm:

For if the previous Estimate, already given, be just; if the Spirit of Liberty, Humanity, and Equity, be in a certain Degree yet left among us, some of the most essential Foundations of abandoned Wickedness and Profligacy can have no Place.³¹

Brown defended himself in the first volume since he was certain that people would ask: “Who gave this Man Authority to speak his Thoughts on national Affairs?”³² The presentation of himself as a national preacher in need of protection in the midst of critical forces of corruption was also marked in the second volume of the *Estimate* and in his *Defence* published a year after the first.³³ Brown noted in the second volume that, “Tis easy to see when an Arch is shrunk; ‘tis quite another Thing to find out the original Cause of its giving Way”.³⁴ For Brown, it was extremely challenging to find the original cause of the nation’s ills, but he believed that he had “a just and extended Discernment of Men and Things” and this made him able to discern the cause of all national ailments.³⁵ He therefore analysed the sources and their effects on Britain’s character, which were memorably described as “vain, luxurious, and selfish EFFEMINACY”.³⁶

This corruption of British character signified a degeneracy of the manners of political and social life and of the principles that lay behind them, and this led in turn to a weakness in the political union. The strength of a state was determined by manners and principles, which Brown called general causes.³⁷ In Brown’s view, the character of the state was not formed by individuals. Furthermore, public insufficiencies did not emerge from the “particular and accidental Misconduct of Individuals”.³⁸ Superficial, zealous

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³² John Brown, *An Explanatory Defence of the Estimate of The Manners and Principles of The Times* (London, 1758), p. 44 (from now on abbreviated to *Defence*).

³³ Brown, *Defence*, p. 44.

³⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 18.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

³⁶ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 29.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

and profligate ‘Scribblers’, however, maintained that this was the case.³⁹ Those people who represented the ruling class, who were the key determinant of the manners of the nation, tried to persuade all that public misfortunes were not their fault, but were caused by the incidental and particular failures of the body politic.⁴⁰ Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755) was quoted in order to illustrate the belief that the present calamities facing Britain had originated from “permanent and established causes”.⁴¹ As Montesquieu claimed:

It is by no means Fortune that rules the World: for this we may appeal to the Romans, who had a long Series of Prosperities, when they acted upon a certain Plan; and an uninterrupted Course of Misfortunes, when they conducted themselves upon another. There are general Causes, natural or moral, which operate in every State; which raise, support, or overturn it.⁴²

Following this “great and amiable writer”, Brown stated that these manners and principles were the most efficient general causes that maintained or destroyed a nation. Each nation had manners and principles peculiar to itself, thus he believed that a detailed investigation was required to find the source of Britain’s national character.⁴³

So why did Brown develop the idea that the character of the nation had become corrupted, effeminate and vain? Firstly, he complained about the education system. For him the youth could not obtain knowledge and wisdom in the universities because the tutors were no longer qualified. Students were not crammed with learning before they joined the social world. Rather, “untutored Youth are carried into the World; where the ruling Objects that catch the Imagination, are the Sallies of Folly or of Vice”.⁴⁴ Dress and fashion had gained a significance that was seen as a sign of effeminacy, while unfashionable people who did not have fashionable dresses, were considered as “low People, whom Nobody knows, and with whom one is ashamed to be seen”.⁴⁵ Brown

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13. That quotation was from Montesquieu’s *Considerations on the causes of the grandeur and decadence of the Romans Greatness of the Romans* that was first published in 1734 and translated into English in 1750. Brown quoted it in French as well and it appears that it was Brown who translated the quotation into English.

⁴³ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 184. Brown admired Montesquieu especially in the latter volume. See John Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 109, 181, 183. See also *Estimate I*, p. 13-14.

⁴⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 31.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

complained about the dominance of unmanly delicacies and compared his own time with that of Queen Elizabeth (r. 1568-1603). As an admirer of Elizabeth, Brown asked:

How would he have been derided in the Days of ELIZABETH, when a great Queen rode on Horseback to St. Paul's, who should have foretold, that in less than two Centuries no Man of Fashion would cross the Street to Dinner, without the effeminate Covering and Conveyance of an easy Chair?⁴⁶

He further stated that an effeminate man had “Warm Carpets ... spread under his Feet; warm Hangings surround him; Doors and Windows nicely jointed prevent the least rude Encroachment of the external Air”.⁴⁷ To Brown, the rule of objects led to vanity in society:

Splendid Furniture, a sumptuous Side-board, a long Train of Attendants, an elegant and costly Entertainment, for which Earth, Air, and Seas, are ransacked, the most expensive Wines of the Continent, the childish Vagaries of a whimsical Desert, these are the supreme Pride of the Master, the Admiration or Envy of his Guests.⁴⁸

Apart from these objects, “High Soups and Sauces, every Mode of foreign Cookery that can quicken Taste, and spur the lagging Appetite, is assiduously employed” also drove voluptuousness.⁴⁹ Those people whose imagination was subjugated by such objects and mired in vanity and luxury could not satisfy themselves. Under these conditions, people were in need of discovering new pleasures once they had finished with the old ones as such pleasures were false and unfulfilling. Consequently, people created new habits like gaming, which were formed by self-interest and the lust for new pleasure.⁵⁰ Brown stated that books, arts, morals, literature and science had lost their significance among men of fashion.⁵¹ He did not say that the habit of reading had vanished in luxurious society; rather, it had come to be viewed “as a gentle Relaxation from the tedious Round of Pleasure”.⁵² People were no longer reading to obtain knowledge. Books whose subjects did not require thought were chosen because people were sunk in alternative pleasures. Instead, they read “weekly Essays, amatory Plays and Novels,

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

political Pamphlets, and Books that revile Religion”.⁵³ A plethora of irreligious books were the product of luxurious society, as these books supplanted works of taste or knowledge as reading, music and painting had been debased by effeminacy.⁵⁴ Brown alleged that it was explicit from his observations that the character of the age was “vain, luxurious, and selfish EFFEMINACY”.⁵⁵ It was difficult, however, to take notice of this negativity within society because “many of them indeed, in Appearance, too trite to merit Notice, and too trifling for Rebuke; were they not, in their Tendency, as fatal to the Stability of a Nation, as Maxims and Manners more apparently flagitious”.⁵⁶

Apart from attributing “Wickedness and profligacy”⁵⁷ to Britain and illuminating the negative side of the present state, Brown also praised Britain:

There never was an Age or Nation that had not Virtues and Vices peculiar to itself: And in some Respects, perhaps, there is no Time nor Country delivered down to us in Story, in which a wise Man would so much wish to have lived, as in our own.⁵⁸

While the character of the nation was presented as degenerated, Brown did not ignore Britain’s virtues. To him some worthy manners were still left even in such a degenerated era: namely the spirit of liberty, the spirit of humanity and of the civil administration of justice subsisted in Britain.⁵⁹ Yet they had lost the “genuine Vigour” that had made Britain distinctive in former ages,⁶⁰ and Brown analysed these spirits in detail to show the reasons for their debility.

His lifelong passion for liberty explicit from his early works, led Brown to pay more attention to the spirit of liberty among these virtues. Although its former vehemence had been depleted, it still took its strength “from the united Voice of a divided People”.⁶¹ The British nation did not realise the decrease in liberty because it “gained Strength in

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-22.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Words”.⁶² That is, although the underlying freedom of Britain had been affected, the rhetoric of freedom had grown stronger. Brown believed that the British were not able to protect their freedom because its corrupted manners and principles had devastated the spirit of liberty “secretly and securely”.⁶³ Accordingly, the spirit of liberty’s potency was not only subject to the “Great”, as it had become so powerful that any particular man could not harm it. In the same way, people could not save it when it was totally extinguished:

A Nation can neither be surprised nor compelled into Slavery: When this is extinguished, neither the Virtue nor Vigilance of Patriots can save it. In the Reign of JAMES the Second, Great Britain was free, tho' a despotic Prince was on the Throne: At the Time when CESAR fell, Rome was still enslaved, tho' the Tyrant was no more.⁶⁴

In this light, he indicated that the corruption of the age was the responsibility of the whole nation. In addition to this he stated that liberty found in Britain a “natural Climate, Stock, and Soil”.⁶⁵ Hence it “produced more full and complete effects in our own country, than in any known nation that ever was upon earth”.⁶⁶ Brown emphasised the natural character of liberty in order to mention the impossibility of altogether extinguishing liberty among the British. As long as it had such roots, external danger would not destroy its liberties easily. A foreign source could only harm it temporarily but would not extinguish it permanently. The only danger left was within the nation, namely the “Degeneracy or Corruption of the Manners and Principles of the People”.⁶⁷ This meant that only manners and principles could be regarded as acting violently towards the spirit of liberty.⁶⁸

Like the spirit of liberty, the British nation still possessed a spirit of humanity which was natural to it.⁶⁹ For Brown, humanity meant “that Pity for Distress, that Moderation in limiting Punishments by their proper Ends and Measures, by which this Nation hath

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

always been distinguished.”⁷⁰ Regarding it as an effect of the spirit of liberty, Brown believed it to be related to the punishment of criminals rather than the manners of the people. He illustrated the reasons why it was natural:

The many noble Foundations for the Relief of the Miserable and the Friendless; the large annual Supplies from voluntary Charities to these Foundations; the frequent and generous Assistance given to the Unfortunate, who cannot be admitted into these Foundations; all these are such indisputable Proofs of a national Humanity.⁷¹

While he had changed his mind in the second volume in asserting that humanity was not natural to Britain, he stated in the first volume that humanity existed in all ranks, even among the elite where liberty was at its weakest.⁷²

The last virtue that had deteriorated but still existed in Brown’s opinion was the administration of justice.⁷³ It had remained because it was fuelled by the spirits of liberty and humanity. It is remarkable that Brown’s opposition to commerce firstly appeared in this argument, as this spirit was related to private property. Yet commerce had made people more egocentric, directing them to protect their selfish interests over the common good. The spirit of commerce had therefore harmed this spirit of justice (equity).⁷⁴

The spirits of liberty, humanity and equity were not totally extinguished in contemporary British society according to Brown, and he was hopeful accordingly that these spirits could be revived if the nation was awakened. Brown began his investigation in order to comprehend the effects of manners upon the state. Since Brown’s aim was to analyse the elements that contributed to the maintenance of the state, he questioned “How far the present ruling Manners and Principles of this Nation may tend to its Continuance or Destruction”.⁷⁵ Manners determined the strength of the nation, but it was reasonable to emphasise that the manners he had analysed were not those of common people. Rather, they were of the “Great” because:

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

⁷² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 37.

⁷³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 22.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* p. 24.

...the Manners and Principles of those who lead, not of those who are led; of those who govern, not of those who are governed; of those, in short, who make Laws or execute them, will ever determine the Strength or Weakness, and therefore the Continuance or Dissolution, of a State.⁷⁶

Clearly for Brown the common people were in need of a leading mind to give them direction, for it was the manners and the principles of this “superior intelligence” that could determine the strength of the nation.⁷⁷ In summation, after he had analysed the remaining manners Brown stated that the character of the nation had been “abandoned [to] Wickedness and profligacy” and the nation was in need of revitalisation.⁷⁸ The ‘great’ were the source of this degeneracy.

II. Brown’s opposition to the corruption of national manners

To Brown’s mind, the nation would be inevitably obliterated unless the source of this calamitous situation was found. He briefly stated that the reason of the corruption of the great was due to exorbitant wealth and commerce.⁷⁹ Brown argued against the common belief in eighteenth-century Britain that supposed trade and wealth to be obligatory for achieving a powerful, happy and secure state. Before becoming Prime Minister, the Duke of Newcastle (1693-1768) had stated in a letter to Robert Keith that:

The power and influence of this country depends upon the extent of our trade. It is that consideration that engages us in the support of the continent; and it is for that reason that we are so strictly and I hope ever shall be united to the House of Austria.⁸⁰

In this light, the ruling attitude of the age could be summarised in these words:

That vast Trade and Wealth, above all things make a Nation powerful and invincible, as they increase its Numbers, enable it to pay it’s Fleets and

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p. 25.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁸⁰ Letter written by Duke of Newcastle to Robert Keith (20 April, 1753). NA.SP.80/191, quoted by Jeremy Black, *America or Europe?: British Foreign Policy, 1739-63* (UCL Press, 1998), p. 129.

Armies, provide continual Supplies for War; and thus, in the End, tire out and defeat every Enemy, whose Wealth and Commerce are inferior.⁸¹

Brown argued against this apparent dominant philosophy for three reasons. Firstly, he was opposed to the idea that to be populous meant to be powerful for a nation. Brown stated that population was required for the cultivation of lands and the manufacturing of products. Similarly, the exchange of these products for foreign goods necessitated more labour and “a fresh Demand of Artificers of new and various Kinds”.⁸² Britain was at a high-point regarding trade, however, and did not require an increasing population. Instead it should be more concerned about the time it took for money to be exchanged for foreign products. That is to say, the tendency of trade was the growth of luxury, and luxury entailed foreign trade above all else:

And as this kind of Trade will always grow and predominate, in proportion as a Nation becomes more luxurious and effeminate, so for this Reason the highest Stage of Trade is not naturally attended with the highest Increase of Labour, nor consequently of Numbers, as is commonly imagined.⁸³

The invention of machines had enabled production by fewer men. During this period of flourishing trade the number of marriages had decreased, just as disease among the lower ranks increased. Commerce was weakening the manners and the health of the nation:

This is universally confirmed by Fact: Villages abounding with Health; commercial Cities with Disease. So that an Army taken from the Villages, with equal Commanders, Arms, and Discipline, would drive the same Number of debilitated Gin-drinkers, like a Flock of Geese before them.⁸⁴

Debility and disease had shortened life expectancy and stultified the desire to have children.⁸⁵ As Brown said, Britain’s population was less than it was fifty years before, despite its trade doubling over the same period.⁸⁶ Augmented trade could not contribute to the strength of the nation by increasing the size of the population; rather, manners determined the size of the population. Moreover, territorial expansion was justified in

⁸¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 183.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 186-187.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

the given age in order to achieve commercial virtues. The search for new commercial markets was seen as necessary to be durable against the threat of the growing power of France. Brown did not ignore this fact, but emphasised the significance of manners and principles in the discussions on Britain's strength. A nation with a corrupted character and an increased territory and population would "at best, only resemble a large Body, actuated (yet hardly actuated) by an incapable, a vain, a dastardly, and effeminate Soul".⁸⁷

His second objection was to the idea that trade contributed to the strength of the nation by paying for the war economy. The overflow of wealth did not make all people richer because:

The Increase of Wealth is by no means equally or proportionally diffused: The Trader reaps the main Profit: after him, the Landlord, in a lower Degree: But the common Artificer, and still more the common Labourer, gain little by the exorbitant Advance of Trade.⁸⁸

Thus only a few people became wealthier, and it was not reasonable to expect those men to spend their money for the supplies of war which aimed at the public good.⁸⁹ Wealth was essential to pay for war, but it was not sufficient to gain victory, as Davenant had made clear⁹⁰:

The whole Art of War is in a Manner reduced to Money; and now-a-days, that Prince who can best find Money to feed, clothe, and pay his Army, not he that hath the most valiant Troops, is surest of Success and Conquest.⁹¹

Money was considered by Brown as an engine for war, but it also suffocated the martial ardour. Davenant was quoted again to highlight this: "If a trading and rich People are grown soft and luxurious, their Wealth will invite over to them Invaders from Abroad, and their being effeminate will make the Conquest easy."⁹² The increase of wealth,

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁹¹ Charles Davenant, "An Essay upon Ways and Means" (London, 1695), in *The Political and Commercial Works of Charles Davenant*, Charles Whitworth (ed), 5 vols (London, 1771), vol. I, p. 16.

⁹² Charles Davenant, "Discourses on the Public Revenues, and on Trade" (London, 1698), in *The Political and Commercial Works of Charles Davenant*, Charles Whitworth (ed), 5 vols (London, 1771), vol. I, p. 353.

therefore, would not account for victory and not support defence as long as the national character was effeminate and vain.⁹³

Brown was certain that such an overflow of wealth brought an increase in voluptuousness. The expenses faced by the people had increased as well as their income, so the wealth of the individuals consisted “not in ‘what they have,’ but ‘what they can Spare?’”.⁹⁴ This was especially true of the higher ranks who considered luxuries as vital for their lives.⁹⁵ People became obsessed with luxurious life and the “Great” did not try to limit their luxury despite the public debt. Although the public debt was far less than the overflow of wealth, it necessitated additional taxes: “No Ministry dares to provoke and exasperate a luxurious and selfish Nation, by demanding such Sums, as every one has the Power had he but the Will, to bestow”.⁹⁶ Brown criticised the policies of Robert Walpole and claimed that the exorbitance of trade and wealth did not make the British nation prosperous. On the contrary, the massive wealth would result in the pauperisation as “a Nation may be at once very rich, and poor; rich in Income, but poor thro’ Extravagance”.⁹⁷ The increase in trade and wealth could not make the nation stronger. Instead, it enfeebled the state by corrupting the manners and the principles of the nation.

III. Trade, wealth and the character of the nation

Montesquieu claimed that “Commerce polishes Manners, but also corrupts Manners”.⁹⁸ Agreeing with him, Brown stated that commerce was beneficial in its first and middle stages but became dangerous for society at the period of highest development. Brown had explained the effects of commerce on manners in each stage briefly. For him, in the

⁹³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 202.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁹⁸ Charles Baron De Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws* (New York, 2011), p. 316. *The Spirit of Laws* was first published in 1748 and translated into English two years later (London: Nourse, 1750). The second edition in English was published in 1752. However, Brown gave references to book’s French edition therefore it is highly probable that Brown read the French edition and translated the quotes into English for his book. In this thesis, the quotes by Montesquieu come from Charles Baron De Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws* (New York, 2011).

first stage, “it supplies mutual Necessities, prevents mutual Wants, extends mutual Knowledge, eradicates mutual Prejudice, and spreads mutual Humanity”.⁹⁹ In the middle period, it served the public good again because it increased population, led improvements in arts and sciences, favoured equity and spread wealth and happiness for all.¹⁰⁰ Yet its character had changed in the last stage, becoming harmful to the public good as it brought “Superfluity and vast Wealth; [begetting] Avarice, gross Luxury, or effeminate Refinement among the higher Ranks, together with [a] general Loss of Principle”.¹⁰¹

How did vast trade create avarice, luxury and effeminacy? Brown argued that it engendered avarice by increasing the love of wealth and money (mammon). The love of money, the passion for which was not found in the senses, instigated the habit of saving money. This habit was nourished by a desire for endless gratification.¹⁰² Ultimately the money was spent and the resulting massive wealth caused luxury and effeminacy since, “Additional Wealth gives the Power to gratify every Desire that rises, Leisure improves these Desires into Habits; thus Money is at length considered as no more than the Means of Gratification; and hence the genuine Character of a rich Nobility or Gentry, is that of Expence and Luxury”.¹⁰³ This wealth and extended territory transformed the character of the state into one that was “vain, luxurious, and selfish Effeminacy”.¹⁰⁴ Brown did not consider the overflow of wealth and vast trade to be a guarantee for a durable state. For him, only manners and principles could ensure the unity of the state. He inculcated that the harmful effects of the spirit of commerce on manners had led him to encourage the necessity of principles that directed manners towards the public good for the sake of society. Furthermore, Brown stated that:

Principles, early and deeply ingrafted in the Mind, may grow up with Manners; may be at variance with Manners; may yield to Manners; or, gathering Strength by Cultivation, may check, controll, or destroy them.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 153.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29, 159.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

Accordingly, people at first gained manners and then acquired principles justifying their manners. They were acting in accordance with particular manners before they acquired the habit of thinking in their infancy.¹⁰⁶ Despite the foundation of manners prior to these principles, the latter had the ability to direct the former towards public good. That is, “principles were to counterwork the selfish passions”.¹⁰⁷ Brown regarded the principles as the elements that could make a nation great;¹⁰⁸ namely, the principles of religion, honour and public spirit.

As was made clear in his early works and sermons, the principle of religion was the essential cement in Brown’s theory to maintain society. In this light, he opposed “the general Contempt of Religion among the fashionable World”.¹⁰⁹ The present age was the “Age of Irreligion”,¹¹⁰ and this inclination to irreligion must be controlled for the sake of the society as,

Irreligion knows no Bounds, when once let loose: and Christianity herself hath been obliquely insulted within those consecrated Walls, where Decency and Policy, in the Absence of Reason and Virtue, would for ever have held her in legal Reverence.¹¹¹

Brown did not engage in attacking irreligious people in the first volume of the *Estimate*. While Brown regarded deists and atheists as perils to society, he did not condemn them in the *Estimate*, as he had in previous works. He only stated that the works of Lord Bolingbroke (1678-1751) and David Hume (1711-76) would not attract much attention because men of fashion no longer had any interest in such works.¹¹² For Brown “no Allurements could engage the fashionable Infidel World to travel through a large Quarto”.¹¹³ Thus as Brown stated, Hume had omitted irreligious discussions in the second edition of his book to aid its sale.¹¹⁴ Such comments did not mean that irreligion could be ignored. Rather, it had to be countered as part of the national malaise.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Brown believed that if the age was obsessed with the fashionable, and directed by false delicacies and trifle pleasures, irreligion was a consequence and something that needed to be addressed. Thus, he stated that “Civil Times are Times of Atheism”.¹¹⁵ Britain was a mixture of commercial and landed interests.¹¹⁶ In such a state trade enervated religion as people ruled by effeminacy pursued unmanly delicacies.¹¹⁷ Luxury could only subsist under the protection of irreligion because religion condemned it.¹¹⁸ In other words, “where Manners and Religion are opposed, nothing is so natural, as that the one should bear down the other. If Religion destroy not the ruling Manners, these will gather Strength, and destroy Religion”.¹¹⁹

According to Brown this was the situation in Britain. Apart from the effects of trade, other factors were fostering irreligion, and especially the advance of natural philosophy and science that were accompanied by an irreligious rationality. The stress on rationality and its attempt to find the basis in knowledge and nature from facts and experiments, challenged the power of religious beliefs and the authority of the Bible. Imbued with Lockean philosophy and Newtonian science from his education at Cambridge, Brown dedicated himself to justifying Protestantism as a religion that was compatible with the age of reason.¹²⁰ But at the same time it had to be a form of Protestantism that supported public order. Religion served to maintain the social order, while irreligion conversely dissolved the bonds of society. The excessive trade and wealth in Britain extinguished the principles of religion because not only was the active Principle “lost, but Religion itself (if such a State be free) [was] publickly insulted and derided”.¹²¹

The second principle used for rectifying selfish passions and protecting common good was the one of honour.¹²² By honour Brown meant “The Desire of Fame, or the Applause of Men, directed to the End of public Happiness”.¹²³ The spirit of trade, however, weakened the rational esteem of the nation as well.¹²⁴ The valuable outcomes

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

of honour were replaced by pride in equipage, title, dress and fortune. Such pride and vanity corrupted virtue in the souls of men.¹²⁵ The loss of ideas about virtue led to the loss of ideas about serving the public, and thinking about the common good was no longer an object of pride. Instead, advocacy of the common good was considered to be indicative of being an unreasonable citizen who cared for something that did not belong to him.¹²⁶ People did not pay attention to their honour because the truth was what “we can see and own our Vices and Follies, without being touched with Shame: a Circumstance which ancient Times justly regarded as the strongest Indication of degenerate and incorrigible Manners”.¹²⁷ Yet the principle of honour was not eliminated entirely. For Brown, it still subsisted but was perverted into effeminate vanity,¹²⁸ as Brown put it:

That Wealth, Titles, Dress, Equipage, Sagacity in Gaming or Wagers, splendid Furniture and a Table, are the sole Fountains, from which we desire to draw Respect to ourselves, or Applause from others: We aspire to Folly, and are proud of Meanness. Thus, the Principle of *Honour* is perverted, and dwindled into *unmanly Vanity*.¹²⁹

People wanted to be appreciated through these trifling objects.¹³⁰ Brown added that the situation of honour in a state like Britain was better than in a commercial state like Holland. He focused on the difference between the ruling elite’s manners in each state. The manner of the commercial state was the predominant character of Holland, whereas in Britain there were two distinct manners which influenced each other. That is to say in Holland “Industry and Love of Gain form the Character of the secondary Ranks; Dissipation and Effeminacy, of the higher”.¹³¹ He differentiated these states because he thought that Britain had an advantage due to its mixed character. The British were not solely a commercial people. In light of this he mentioned his hopefulness about the revival of the principle of honour. For him, the principle of honour was entirely destroyed in a completely commercial state, such as Holland, because people were motivated only by the love of gain: “The Lust of Gold swallows up every other

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

passion”.¹³² As long as people pursued money, they lost their fear of shame and did not take the objects of honour into account. Brown quoted the Roman poet Horace (65 BCE - 8 CE), to highlight his point:

Populus me sibilat; at mihi plaudo
Ipse Domi, simulac Nummos contemplor in Arca¹³³

This could be translated to “the public hisses at me, but I applaud myself at my own house while I am contemplating the money in my chest”. The love of money brought avarice into being and removed the desire of rational esteem in a commercial state.¹³⁴ In this light, Brown asserted that the situation of Holland and China were proofs of this because the former one was “the most mercenary, the other the most thieving of all Nations”.¹³⁵ At least Britain still had the principle of honour, notwithstanding the fact that it was being tainted through the commonplace pursuit of fashionable objects.

The third principle that had lost its power was the principle of public spirit. Its ruin was predictable for Brown since it required salutary manners, religion and honour to exist.¹³⁶ Among other principles this was the most damaged because “the Love of our Country is no longer felt; and that, except in a few Minds of uncommon Greatness, the Principle of public Spirit EXISTS NOT”.¹³⁷ The aim of this principle was to direct people to behave according for the welfare of the country.¹³⁸ Brown felt that disproportionate trade and wealth naturally tended “to turn all the Attention of Individuals on selfish Gratification”.¹³⁹ The idea of the common good was replaced by the idea of gratification via selfish pleasures, and consequently the love of country was extinguished.¹⁴⁰ Brown’s opposition was linked to his antagonism towards the Third Earl of Shaftesbury. For Shaftesbury “Love of *one’s* country, and Love of *Mankind*, must also be *Self-Love*”.¹⁴¹ Brown opposed Shaftesbury’s ideas in his book published six years before the *Estimate*. He believed that Shaftesbury represented a danger to religion and society

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 171.

¹³³ Horace, *Satires*, 1.1.66-7.

¹³⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 172-173.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (London, 1732), 5th edition, p. 74 (from now on abbreviated to *Characteristicks*).

itself for stating that there was no natural affection between men except for self-preservation. People were therefore in need of the principle of the public spirit in order to behave according to the common welfare.¹⁴²

Like the principles of religion and honour, public spirit was also destroyed by the rapacious trade and wealth since people sacrificed the common good to their selfish interests. Effeminacy in Britain created “a new Train of Wants, Fears, Hopes, and Wishes: All these terminating in selfish Regard, naturally destroy every Effort of generous and public Principle”.¹⁴³ The state ruled by egocentric pleasures, would become corrupted sooner or later, but it would take longer than in any commercial state ruled by avarice.¹⁴⁴ In Holland, love of gain had produced its effects immediately and its destruction would be swifter than in Britain.¹⁴⁵ Fortunately, in Britain only the elite experienced an increase of wealth, allowing the majority of the population to remain immune from the corruption. The overflow of wealth brought luxurious effeminacy, and would ultimately spread it to the entire population, but it needed time “because Manners, once got into a certain Track, are not at once thrown out of it. There must be a short Period”.¹⁴⁶ Brown claimed in consequence that “HENCE a neighbouring Republic [Holland] seems to have well nigh filled up the Measure of its Iniquities; while ours, as yet, are only rising towards the Brim”.¹⁴⁷ Brown was convinced that Britain had still time to avoid a Dutch future. Destruction was approaching, but could be avoided.

Besides, Brown added that his observations on the character of the nation were not valid for all people. Vanity, luxury and effeminacy were growing in strength, but many people still possessed a manly character and principles identical to the common good. The point was that although some people had salutary manners and principles, the general character of the nation was contaminated:

From the general Combination of Manners and Principles, in every Period of Time, will always result one ruling and predominant Character; as from a

¹⁴² Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 63.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

confused Multitude of different Voices, results one general Murmur, and strikes the distant Ear.¹⁴⁸

Brown asserted that the selfish inclinations of men had to be sacrificed for the common good. Only this would preserve societal well-being. The three principles discussed above rectified the selfish interests of men according to Brown. Among these rectifying principles, religion had been derided, honour had been perverted and public spirit challenged by exorbitant trade and wealth. Brown asserted that correcting the character of the elite would restore the “ruling colour of the manners and the principles”.¹⁴⁹ If manners and principles could be fixed, then character could be fixed. Thus the principles of religion, honour and public spirit were essential to ameliorate manners and to restore a healthy national character.

IV. Further reasons for the state’s corruption

In addition to these principles Brown also mentioned the role of what he termed the ‘spirit’ of national capacity, defence and union in determining the durability of the state. Similar to other bonds of society, they were also weakened by the effeminacy and false delicacy of the manners and principles at that time.¹⁵⁰

Brown charged luxurious effeminacy, the “Great” and the clergy with destroying national capacity and consequently the strength of Britain. To Brown, luxury and effeminacy reduced the capacity of individuals to obtain useful knowledge. Fashionable men preferred sleeping and spending time on dress rather than reading. Those men were left in ignorance as Brown asked “How can he get Wisdom, whose Talk is of Dress and Wagers, Cards and Borough-jobbing, Horses, Women, and Dice?”¹⁵¹ Their indulgences led them to read novels instead of history books, party pamphlets instead of legislation, and irreligious books instead of philosophy.¹⁵² It was the duty of the Great to protect the

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 75.

nation from the effects of the effeminacy, at the same time as they were its source.¹⁵³ Brown stated, however, that the men who had the right to determine the public measures were no different from the fashionable men described above. Therefore, as he said, the present situation of Britain resembled the declining state of the Roman Republic in which, as Cicero put it, “nulla cognitione rerum, nulla scientia ornati”.¹⁵⁴ The Great should have wisdom and knowledge in arts and sciences, as men in public life should gain the ability for action while they “laboured and shone in a College”.¹⁵⁵

In Brown’s view the clergy also were damaging the national capacity of the British.¹⁵⁶ Religious principles had lost their significance particularly among the higher ranks, and this led the clergy to lose their role in the maintenance of the state. The pursuit of fashion and luxury by the higher clergy “rendered this order of Men altogether useless.” The only hope lay with the clergy “in middle Life, where they still maintain a certain Degree of Estimation”.¹⁵⁷ Brown stated that it was reasonable for the clergy to complain about religion but argued that there was a “wide Difference between the Remonstrances of Reason, and the Insults of Malice or Contempt”.¹⁵⁸ Brown attacked Hume, whom he regarded as responsible for the extent of contemporary attacks upon religion. Hume was the source of the irreligious arguments prevalent in the present state.¹⁵⁹ In his *Essays*, Hume had stated that “the Clergy have lost their Influence”; this was not a problem in Hume’s eyes but for Brown it represented a national disaster.¹⁶⁰ Brown affirmed that, “When the English Protestant Clergy, and that Christianity which they teach, were most honoured and respected at Home, England was then most honoured and respected Abroad”.¹⁶¹ By contrast, unmanly and luxurious tendencies in national culture were infecting the clergy themselves:

In their Conduct, they curb not, but promote and encourage the trifling Manners of the Times: It is grown a fashionable thing, among these Gentlemen, to despise the Duties of their Parish; to wander about, as the

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁵⁴ This could be translated as “with no knowledge of things and not graced with learning”. Brown quoted it from Cicero, *De Oratore*, 3.33.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁶⁰ David Hume, “Of Practical Consequences of Natural Religion” in *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1748), p. 56.

¹⁶¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 83.

various Seasons invite, to every Scene of false Gaiety; to frequent and shine in all public Places, their own Pulpits excepted.¹⁶²

No longer interested in the welfare of the people and the country, many of the clergy slumbered “in a Stall, haunt Levees, or follow the gainful Trade of Election-jobbing?”¹⁶³ Since they were ruled by effeminacy and selfish passions, Brown added that it was not possible for them to allow religion and Christianity fully into their hearts.¹⁶⁴ Brown’s account of clerical degeneracy caused a stir; Robert Wallace took it upon himself to refute Brown’s claims.¹⁶⁵ In response Brown clarified his remarks in the second volume of the *Estimate*, making a correlation between particular ranks of the clergy and the extent of their corruption.¹⁶⁶

Brown was equally convinced that the national spirit of defence was being destroyed by excessive wealth and irreligion. He repeated several times the claim that money had a negative effect on military ardour.¹⁶⁷ Since the spirit of defence was formed by these principles, it had become defective. Brown accepted that there were “no better fighting Men upon Earth. They seldom turn their Backs upon their Enemy, unless when their Officers shew the Way.” Gradually, however, the present unmanly character would generate fear among the soldiery and prevent them from “enduring Toil, or facing Danger”.¹⁶⁸ That is, living luxuriously meant being pusillanimous, and so luxury suffocated martial honour and enervated the state.

Brown stated that during the Jacobite rebellion the people had given their support to the fleets and armies that resisted the invasion.¹⁶⁹ This was proof of a healthy national spirit of defence. Brown believed that things had altered for the worse since 1745. It was now the case that “Cowardice, at least as soon as Courage, [will] part with a Shilling or a Pound, to avoid Danger? Brown quoted a letter as evidence from an Englishman fearing a French invasion at the beginning of the Seven Years’ War. The Englishman had

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

¹⁶⁵ Robert Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 189-190; Soame Jenyns, *Some Doubts occasioned by the second volume of an Estimate of the manners and principles of the times* (London, 1758), p. 36 (from now on abbreviated to *Doubts*).

¹⁶⁶ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 116.

¹⁶⁷ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 88.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-90.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

written that, ‘I am no Soldier; and therefore think it no Disgrace, to own myself a Coward. Here is my Purse, at the Service of my Country: If the French come, I’ll pay’.¹⁷⁰ In other words, money had sapped national valour. The question for the nation was ‘Not who shall Pay, but who shall Fight?’¹⁷¹

According to Brown, men of fashion obsessed with dress, gaming and entertainment would not acquire military virtue as they were in fact “defenseless and Money getting Cowards”.¹⁷² As in so many of his arguments Brown was following Davenant’s view that “in succeeding Times our Manners may come to be depraved; and when this happens, all Sorts of Miseries will invade us: The whole Wealth of the Kingdom will not be sufficient for its Defence”.¹⁷³ In order to reinforce this point, Brown compared Rome with Britain, asseverating the absent spirit of defence in Britain:

The Roman killed himself, because he had been unfortunate in War; the Englishman, because he hath been unfortunate at Whist... The Roman was impelled to Self-Destruction by the Strength of warlike Honour; the Briton, by despicable and effeminate Vanity.¹⁷⁴

Brown was convinced that a lack of national ardour explained Britain’s loss of Minorca. At the same time he made the point that courage, hardiness and strength could be restored through a proper military education.¹⁷⁵ But, it was not possible in the present conditions of Britain because “The young Men designed for the military Profession are bred up to the same effeminate Maxims and Manners, which their Fathers are proud of”.¹⁷⁶ Additionally, current manners weakened the character of armies and navies within schools because:

Land Officers in the Capital are occupied in Dress, Cards, and Tea; and in Country Towns divide their Time between Millners Shops and Taverns; and Sea Officers, even in Time of War, instead of annoying the Enemies Fleets, are chiefly busied in the gainful Trade of catching Prizes;—in such a Case,

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁷³ Charles Davenant, “Discourses on the Public Revenues, and on Trade” (London, 1698), in *The Political and Commercial Works of Charles Davenant*, Charles Whitworth (ed), 5 vols (London, 1771), vol. II, p. 76.

¹⁷⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

the Army must of necessity be the School, not of Honour, but Effeminacy; the Navy the School of Avarice, to the Ends of Effeminacy.¹⁷⁷

Brown considered such evidence “acknowledged fact.” In such circumstances military defeat was to be anticipated. As a consequence Brown was sure he could explain the loss of Minorca.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, the early history of the war was for Brown confirmation of his arguments: “HOW far these general Reasonings are confirmed by a Series of recent Events, the World is left to judge”.¹⁷⁹ Since these words were written in 1757, when Britain was in a disadvantageous position during the war, for Brown the superiority of French forces over Britain was not surprising. The idea of a weakened and near impotent spirit of defence was expanded in the second volume of the *Estimate* published in 1758. Again Brown was convinced that the events of the war confirmed his opinions, had continued to prove successful for the French until 1759. British losses in war were also due to the effect of irreligion, which had also weakened national ardour:

ENTHUSIASTIC Religion leads to *Conquest*, rational Religion leads to rational *Defence*, but the modern Spirit of Irreligion leads to *rascally* and abandoned *Cowardice*. It quenched every generous Hope that can enlarge the Soul; and levels Mankind with the Beasts that perish.¹⁸⁰

The third spirit that Brown considered was the national spirit of union. This was the only factor that Brown saw as largely independent of corrupt manners. Rather, it depended upon forms of government.¹⁸¹ For instance, it was strong in absolute monarchies where everything depended on the absolute power of the prince. The force of the spirit of union was provided only by the monarch.¹⁸² Conversely in free countries like Britain, divisions were inevitable. This weakened the spirit of union unless they were protected by healthy principles governing public life. In other words Brown reiterated his argument that the principles of religion, honour and public spirit should protect the national union against the threat of selfish interests. People would be directed by these principles to sacrifice their interests for the common welfare.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Agreeing with Montesquieu's belief that factions were essential and natural in free societies, Brown saw divisions as both inevitable and healthy in British political life.¹⁸⁴ The issue was whether these divisions were dangerous or not for governments; the source of the factions determined the character of the division. In Brown's view factions were salutary for the government if they emerged "from the Variety and Freedom of Opinion only; or from the contested Rights and Privileges of the different Ranks or Orders of a State, not from the detached and selfish Views of Individuals".¹⁸⁵ The divisions caused by the selfish interests of the individuals were harmful to society.¹⁸⁶ Brown was certain that the policies of Robert Walpole (1676-1745) in giving posts and funds to placement and flatterers exemplified the latter kind of faction. Such factions could be traced to William III (r. 1689-1702) who had given places and pensions in order to satisfy their selfish interests and gain their support.¹⁸⁷ The consequences were dangerous for free governments:

New Principles of Self-Interest began to work deeper every Day in its Effects. As a Seat in Parliament was now found to be of considerable selfish Importance, the contention for Gain, which had begun in Town, spread itself by Degrees into the Country. Shires and Burroughs, which in former Times had paid their Representatives for their Attendance in Parliament, were now the great Objects of Request, and political Struggle.¹⁸⁸

A chain of self-interest was formed because the representatives made their demands upon the crown and the constituents made demands upon the representatives.¹⁸⁹ The cobbler in a borough, alderman, representative and King's first minister were all part of this temporary chain.¹⁹⁰ As soon as people ceased to receive rewards from their masters the chain would break:

There is no Cement nor Cohesion between the Parts: There is rather a mutual Antipathy and Repulsion; the Character of Self-Interest being in a peculiar Sense, that of "teres atque rotundus" wrapt up wholly in itself; and unconnected with others, unless for its own Sake.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Brown claimed that this chain of interest and bribery in ministers, politicians and the public was deadly to the state if, and only if, the people were corrupted.¹⁹² Brown clarified this through the words of Machiavelli: “an evil disposed Citizen can do no great Hurt, but in an ill-disposed City”.¹⁹³

Sir Robert Walpole was called by Brown the “noted minister”.¹⁹⁴ Brown claimed that his aim was neither to justify Walpole nor to defend him.¹⁹⁵ In fact the condemnation was clear. Walpole had undermined the virtues within the nation by propagating two maxims: “every Man had his Price” and “he was obliged to bribe the Members, not to vote against, but according to their Conscience”.¹⁹⁶ Brown saw these maxims as the reasons of Walpole’s long tenure as Prime Minister, because they were used “to secure present Expedients, to oblige his Friends and Dependants, and provide for his own Safety”.¹⁹⁷ Brown censured Walpole for contaminating the nation and asserted that “while he [Walpole] seemed to strengthen the Superstructure, he weakened the Foundations of our Constitution”.¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, this did not mean that Walpole was the only person responsible for the unfavourable situation. Instead, the whole nation was at fault. If people behaved in a cowardly and selfish fashion, they could not blame the minister for damaging the nation:

And tho' this Work is not intended either as a Defence or an Accusation of Ministers; yet for the sake of Truth it must be said, that the eternal Clamours, of a selfish, and a factious People, against every Ministry that rises, puts one in Mind of those Carthaginian Armies, which being at once cowardly and insolent, ran away at Sight of an Enemy, and then crucified their General, because he did not gain the Victory.¹⁹⁹

Obviously for Brown one particular man could not generate destruction. Yet Walpole was a symptom of the malaise.²⁰⁰ Walpole was of course one of the “Great” responsible

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

¹⁹³ Nicholas Machiavelli, *The works of the famous Nicholas Machiavel: Citizen and Secretary of Florence* (London, 1720), 3rd edition, p. 392. It is not highly probable that Brown might have quoted Machiavelli from this edition. Actually we do not know which edition of Machiavelli in English was available to Brown and it is not clear whether Brown read it in the original.

¹⁹⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 114.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

for the calamitous situation of Britain because “in every Period of every State, the influence of the leading People, soon or late, will form its leading Character”.²⁰¹ Taking advantage of inflated trade and wealth, the great were enjoying “their unbounded and unwarranted Pursuit of lucrative Employments”.²⁰² Parliamentary interest became “the Business of Election-jobbing, of securing Counties, controuling, bribing, or buying of Burroughs”.²⁰³ In a word, the situation in Britain was that of “the Public gasping and expiring under the Tugs of opposed and contending Parties?”²⁰⁴

V. The Danger of France

As Robert Wallace recognised, the *Estimate* owed its popularity to its arguments about the character of the nation and dire predictions as to its future.²⁰⁵ Key to this was the expectation of defeat at the hands of the French:

If the Nation be warlike, and the Spirit of Defence be strong, the Danger will generally arise from within. If the Nation be effeminate, and the Spirit of Defence be weak, the Danger will generally arise from without.²⁰⁶

Brown believed that France was the greatest danger for Britain. In order to reinforce his argument, he compared France and Britain. Praise of France was the outcome. For Brown, although the French had the same effeminate and vain manners as the British, unlike the British they still preserved their unity, national capacity and the spirit of defence.²⁰⁷ Brown explained the reasons for France’s superiority. Firstly, he stated that the manners of the French maintained the internal strength of the polity because they were “checked and counteracted in their Effects, by a variety of Causes and Principles wholly dissimilar.”²⁰⁸ France’s national capacity was not weakened by selfish interests because the French had trained and educated people. Such people fully capable of filling

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 118.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

²⁰⁵ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 165.

²⁰⁶ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 123.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

public offices and of putting into practice policies that accorded with the common good.²⁰⁹

In Britain, by contrast, public positions were filled by fashionable men instead of men of virtue and of honour.²¹⁰ Education had lost its influence and role in Britain. It was no longer necessary for a youth to be submitted “to the Drudgery of Schools, Colleges, Academies, Voyages, Campaigns, Fatigues, and Dangers, when he can rise to the highest Stations by the smooth and easy Path of Parliamentary Interest?”²¹¹ These positions should be filled by men of virtue, honour and courage ensuring the dominant character was courageous and honourable. The effeminate and selfish character of the time, however, provided those positions to the “most vain, most selfish, most incapable, most effeminate” in Britain.²¹² The hegemony of selfish interests and the insolence of fashionable men in the highest stations was beginning to dominate society. Brown did not give any examples for this situation as he thought that it was “needless, perhaps dangerous” to do so. Any honest observer could see them.²¹³ Britain was ruled by the selfishness of the “Great” while the French were ruled by people who were:

...assiduously trained up for all public Offices, civil, naval, military, in Schools provided at the national Expence: Here the Candidates for public Employ go thro' a severe and laborious Course of Discipline, and only expect to rise in Station, as they rise in Knowledge and Ability.²¹⁴

France also differed from Britain because their military honour was able to control their spirit of defence. Effeminacy did not dilute the French spirit of defence because martial valour was such a strong principle within the nation:

[Martial valour] hath been early instilled into every rising Generation; and is at length become so strong and universal, as to form the national Character. It spreads through every Rank; inspires even the meanest in the Kingdom; and pervades and actuates the whole Machine of Government, with a Force little inferior to that of public Virtue.²¹⁵

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 131.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

In Brown's opinion this was remarkable because "in no other Country did this Principle ever subsist in it's Strength, when other Principles were weakened, and Manners lost".²¹⁶ In order to illuminate his idea, he gave the example of the Battle of Spurs when England invaded France in 1513;

The Body of the French Army giving Way thro' some sudden Panic, the Officers kept their Ground, and rather chose to be slain or taken Prisoners, than give Countenance to such an ignominious Flight.²¹⁷

In his early works Brown had argued that the honour gained from the principles of Catholicism could not be true honour. It did not appear reasonable, therefore, for Brown to recognise the strength of the ethic of honour within France. Brown was aware of the inconsistency and argued that the French state was strong because of "false honour".

To Brown, false pleasure would never satisfy the mind. In order to produce lasting pleasure and so virtuous action, the appetites should be honest, true and loving. That is, not the passions but the reason should direct men toward virtue, and virtuous honour means for Brown the superiority of reason. Since Protestant principles were superior to passion and impulse they could make the subjects honourable. However, for Brown, the honour which was gained under the light of the principles of Catholicism could only be a false honour. Brown meant by this that honour in France was "plausible, polite and splendid", but altogether antagonistic to other nations. Briefly for Brown "the Honor, like the Religion of France, is not void of Benevolence, but confines its Benevolence, within a certain Pale. 'Tis false Honour, as it regards other Nations; as it regards their own Country, it is true".²¹⁸ True honour entailed benevolence towards all nations, but at least false honour strengthened France.

The third factor that explained the strength of France was the monarchy. As was mentioned in the previous section, in Brown's view divisions were natural and inevitable in free countries. By contrast, absolute monarchy provided the state with singular unity.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-138.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

It was also significant that inordinate trade and wealth did not corrupt the unity of France because trade was limited and controlled in order to eliminate hazardous effects. To this end, while the people were encouraged to engage in commerce the nobility were prohibited from engaging in it. The poverty of the nobility kept their military honour alive.²²⁰ Since they could not engage in commercial endeavours, they focused on pursuing military glory. This naturally contributed to the stability of their monarchy. For Brown, France would have been imperilled if the nobility had been allowed to trade because “their effeminate Manners, now controlled by Oeconomy and the Love of Glory, will, like ours, degenerate into Profusion and the Love of Gold”.²²¹ Despite similarities in the character of France and Britain, France was able to protect its principles from the ruinous effects of a vast trade. In Brown’s words, “while the French vie with us in Trade, they tower above us in Principle”.²²² Brown once more had bitter words for Walpole in his comparison of France and Britain:

While we are poorly influenced by a sorry and mercantile Maxim, broached by a trading Minister, ‘that the Interest of a Nation is it's truest Honour;’ the French conduct themselves on an opposite and higher Principle, ‘that the Honour of a Nation is its truest Interest’.²²³

France was a lesson to Britain because it had been able to keep its unity despite the growth of commercial society and the appetite for luxury goods. France was remarkable because it had:

...found, or rather invented, the Art of uniting all Extremes: They have Virtues and Vices, Strengths and Weaknesses, seemingly incompatible. They are effeminate yet brave: insincere, yet honourable: hospitable, not benevolent: vain, yet subtle: splendid, not generous: warlike, yet polite: plausible, not virtuous: mercantile, yet not mean: In Trifles serious, gay in Enterprise: Women at the Toilet, Heroes in the Field: profligate in Heart; in Conduct, decent: Divided in Opinion, in Action united: In Manners weak, but strong in Principle: Contemptible in private Life; in public, Formidable.²²⁴

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

²²² *Ibid.*, p. 207.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

The singular nature of French character made the state supreme both on land and at sea. Brown was certain that the wealth and attractiveness of Britain would lead France to use its military superiority to take control of British territories:

My Enemies, are rich, luxurious, and effeminate; my Troops are valiant and hardy; my Officers brave and honourable; they shall plant my Standard in my Enemy's Country, and then my Enemy shall pay them.²²⁵

As a result, France would drive Britain from the Mediterranean and America.²²⁶ In this light, Brown also compared the colonial policies of France and Britain in India while praising the former. Their monarchy, their spirit of honour and their popish principles led them to be more successful as governors of colonies.²²⁷ The self-love and irreligion of the British did not allow these colonies to be treated as converts or friends, by contrast with the policy and zeal of the French.²²⁸

Brown stressed that France was planning to destroy Britain, while the British distracted themselves with false delicacies and unmanly pleasures:

By a gradual and unperceived Decline, we seem gliding down to Ruin. We laugh, we sing, we feast, we play: We adopt every Vanity, and catch at every Lure, thrown out to us by the Nation that is planning our Destruction; and while Fate is hanging over us, are sightless and thence secure.²²⁹

Britain was blind and ignorant, failing to realise when the forthcoming danger would arrive and more especially how to avoid it.²³⁰ In order to highlight this point, Brown quoted Alexander Pope's stanzas on a lamb facing death:

The Lamb thy Riot dooms to bleed to Day,
Had he thy Reason, wou'd he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry Food;
And licks the Hand that's rais'd to shed his Blood.²³¹

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

²³¹ Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man* (Glasgow, 1768), p. 3. The poem was first published between 1732 and 1734.

Brown believed he could identify the factors that made France the central threat to Britain. Among them, the advantages of Catholicism were highlighted. It should not be forgotten that Brown was a passionate defender of Protestantism. His early sermons were written to defend the liberty he associated with Protestant principles against the enslavement that accompanied Catholicism. He also accentuated the link between Protestantism, truth, virtue and liberty in his works published before the *Estimate*. Brown never preferred Catholicism to Protestantism; yet in the *Estimate*, he praised Catholicism because of its ability to maintain the state. It is not hard to understand why Brown was seen as a desperate person driving the nation into despondency. For Brown however, the *Estimate* would “naturally lead them to a rational and lively Hope”²³² because he set out the cure as well as identifying the disease.

VI. Brown's Reforms

Brown clung to the view that “no incidental Events can make a Nation little, while the Principles remain that made it great”.²³³ It was clear in the situation with France that longstanding British principles might well be able to survive an unsuccessful war or reverse the negative effects of exorbitant trade. A weaker nation might result but one which was not so threatened by imminent demise. Equally, the strength of France, derived from a superior national character, had to be acknowledged.²³⁴ After a defeat France was rejuvenated by the power of the principles underlying French culture. Brown stated that the principles associated with the common good in Britain had to be restored. He added, however, that it was not possible to revitalise a state once it had been altogether corrupted. As he made clear, “you see States, which, after being sunk in Corruption and Debility, have been brought back to the Vigour of their first Principles: But you must have recourse to Fables, for medicated Old Age, restored to Infancy or Youth”.²³⁵

²³² Brown, *Defence*, p. 55.

²³³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 209.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

Reform was required in Britain before it was too late. For Brown, a reformation was possible but difficult. The important issue was to find the right cure for the disease.²³⁶ Brown sought to counter the view that “if our Trade and Wealth are but increased, we are powerful, happy, and secure”.²³⁷ At the same time Brown questioned whether limiting this wealth and commerce would bring the principles back and empower the nation.²³⁸

The power of France was the main reason for Brown’s opposition to the restriction of trade. He again quoted Davenant, supporting the latter’s view that France was likely to become a universal monarchy. When a universal empire falls, another one is built “which in time may grow to equal what went before, in strength, extent, symmetry and height”.²³⁹ Since the French were prosperous, restrictions on British trade would make them wealthier and this would increase the threat of France.²⁴⁰ Such a restriction would destroy Britain.

France had become more powerful after the Peace of Nijmegen in 1678, as it usurped the position of Spain in Europe. Davenant stated that a nation had to “interrupt the growth of [its] neighbour” in order to secure itself.²⁴¹ It was the duty of Britain to maintain the balance of power in Europe and prevent France from becoming a universal empire.²⁴²

Brown took Davenant’s account of the East India Trade into consideration while he was investigating the possible outcomes of a restriction in trade. For Davenant, “whatever country can be in the full and undisputed Possession of it [East India Trade], will give Law to all the Commercial World”.²⁴³ Agreeing with Davenant, Brown believed that lessening British trade would contribute to the power of France.²⁴⁴ At the same time Brown was certain that Britain should not follow the French in limiting the capacity of

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 215-216.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 180, 216.

²³⁹ Charles Davenant, *An Essay Upon Universal Monarchy* (London, 1756), pp. 22-23 (from now on abbreviated to *Universal Monarchy*).

²⁴⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 216.

²⁴¹ Charles Davenant, *An Essay Upon the Probable Methods of Making a People Gainers in Balance of Trade* (London, 1699), p. 5.

²⁴² Davenant, *Universal Monarchy*, p. 26.

²⁴³ Charles Davenant, *An Essay on The East-India Trade* (London, 1696), p. 18.

²⁴⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 217.

the nobility to be involved in trade.²⁴⁵ Remedies to the malaise of the nation had to be compatible with existing manners.

While Brown frequently commended the French, he believed Britain to be remarkable due to its “spirits” of liberty, honour and passion for the common good. The despotism of the French monarchy and the dominance of Catholic principles naturally made France inferior. The virtues of liberty, honour and public spirit in Britain were to be the basis of a remedy for the disease of corruption.²⁴⁶ Brown described two different remedies. The first one was radical but would solve the problem completely; however, it was impossible in Brown’s opinion because it necessitated the alteration of manners and principles.²⁴⁷ The second remedy was particular and would solve the problem only temporarily. Being convenient for the given age, it would address but not remove the problems faced by the nation either by opposing healthy passions to corrupt passions or by destroying “the Opportunities or Occasions of Evil”.²⁴⁸ It would be successful if, and only if, the degeneracy had not spread to the body of the state.²⁴⁹ Since the leading ranks were effeminate and vain, this palliative remedy could not be applied except by means of coercive power. Brown’s difficulty was that of finding a sufficiently powerful coercive power for reformation.

In a nation composed of selfish pleasures, the love of money and luxurious living, the idea of private good was always more powerful than that of the common good. Under these conditions reform would take place only in particular circumstances. Firstly, the abused people might rise up against the Great and lead a general reformation. Alternatively, reformation would occur when the state ruled was on the brink of the precipice and actually began to topple. In conditions of acute crisis reform was most likely.²⁵⁰

So long as degenerate and unprincipled Manners can support themselves, they will be deaf to Reason, blind to Consequences, and obstinate in the long established Pursuit of Gain and Pleasure. In such Minds, the Idea of a Public has no Place; and therefore can never be a Curb to private

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

Gratification: Nor can such Minds be ever awakened from their fatal Dream, till either the Voice of an abused People rouse them into Fear; or the State itself totter, thro' the general Incapacity, Cowardice, and Disunion of those who should support it.²⁵¹

When the crisis facing the nation was recognised, Brown expected a national leader to step forth to save the nation. Rather than the Patriot King imagined by Bolingbroke, Brown put his faith in a Patriot Minister:

Virtue may rise on the Ruins of Corruption; and a despairing Nation yet be saved, by the Wisdom, the Integrity, and unshaken Courage, of SOME GREAT MINISTER.²⁵²

Conclusion

Brown was regarded as a pessimist in Britain by contemporaries. My contention is that Brown was not as negative and despairing as many of his readers imagined. He drew a picture of Britain in black firstly, and tried to give it colour afterwards. For him both manners and principles could be rectified, and all of the spirits or principles that had long underpinned national health could be restored to vigour once more.²⁵³ His delineation of degenerated manners and weakened principles did not mean that the British nation was destitute of genius and ability. He endeavoured to show that it was a great error to see the wealth and the spirit of commerce as the only way of securing the national future.²⁵⁴ Brown was hopeful that Britain could become a great nation again if the correct cure for the disease was found.²⁵⁵ This was the argument of the second volume of the *Estimate*. Before examining how and why it appeared, it is necessary to consider the ideas of Brown in context. To this end, the next chapter focuses on William Warburton as a significant figure in Brown's life, and the one Brown was engaging with in the second volume of the *Estimate*.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-221.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 221.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

Chapter Two

Brown's *Estimate* and the Warburton Circle

Warburton reigned the dictator and the tyrant of literature.²⁵⁶

Warburton was a powerful man: so powerful that when he is most in the wrong, he makes you respect him.²⁵⁷

William Warburton was born at Newark in 1698. He practised law in Newark from 1719 until 1723, and was ordained as a priest at St Paul's on 1 March 1727 by Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London. In 1753 he became prebendary of Gloucester, in 1754 chaplain to the king, and in 1755 prebendary of Durham. After becoming dean of Bristol, he was appointed as the bishop of Gloucester in 1759. He died at Gloucester in 1779.²⁵⁸

Aside from his clerical career, Warburton came to prominence as a religious controversialist. His literary power, his account of toleration, his insistence on reasoned argument and his ability in convincing others to support his views, made him a leading figure in eighteenth-century Britain. Warburton's significance stems from the fact that any analysis of his works reveals his relevance to the intellectual thought of that period. As one of Warburton's biographers, A. W. Evans, claimed:

Its didactic and argumentative temper; its rationalizing philosophy; its prudential ethics; its self-confidence, its intellectualist conception of religion; its distrust and dislike of everything that it called 'enthusiasm'; its cultivation of the spirit of inquiry; its growing toleration- Warburton reflects these and other beliefs and tendencies of his age with so much fidelity that he almost epitomizes the mid-eighteenth century.²⁵⁹

In this thesis, however, Warburton is significant because of his influence on John Brown's works. This chapter will study the enlightenment associated with the works of

²⁵⁶ Edward Gibbon, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Edward Gibbon*, 2 vols (London, 1830), vol. I, p. 204.

²⁵⁷ Robert Southey, *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey*, edited by John Wood Warter, 4 vols, (London, 1856), vol. II, p. 132.

²⁵⁸ For more on Warburton's biography, see Brian W. Young, "Warburton (1698-1779)", *ODNB*.

²⁵⁹ Arthur William Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians: a study in some eighteenth-century controversies* (O. U. P., 1932), pp. 2-3.

Warburton to provide a political, social and intellectual context for Brown's *Estimate*. A further objective of this chapter is to indicate how the *Estimate* worked as a refutation of the Warburton Circle's ideology. To this end, the works of Brown and Warburton will be examined to underscore the relationship between them.

I. William Warburton as a preeminent figure of the Anglican Enlightenment

It is evident that after the Glorious Revolution in 1688 the authority of the monarchy became limited by the law and by parliament, and in the process its spiritual authority began to be questioned.²⁶⁰ The subordination of the Church by the state under the terms of the 1689 settlement led the Church to lose its (legal) monopoly over religious issues. In addition to this, the outcome of the Revolution also eliminated many of the prohibitions against worship beyond the Established Church.²⁶¹ Freedom of worship became a widespread claim of right, especially among the dissenting minority. At the beginning of the eighteenth century religious society was viewed, in the words of John Locke, as "a free and voluntary society".²⁶² Locke of course meant a society of Protestants rather than Catholics or Atheists. This meant that many expressed the view that they had a right to join any particular church and worship according to their own beliefs. This idea created a plurality of religious beliefs within the Protestant community and undermined any idea of sovereignty associated with a particular religion or specific religious beliefs. From now on, the government could be maintained by means other than religion and subsequently religion was perceived to have started to lose its power.

At the same time, the growth of what can broadly be termed 'rationalism' had contributed to the decline of religion's influence. The idea of God as an interventionist was challenged by the idea of a God who gifted reason to human beings. God came to be regarded as "a beneficent Newtonian hero who had designed the world as a system of

²⁶⁰ For more information see Norman Sykes, *Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century* (C. U. P., 1934), p. 285; Jeremy Black, *Convergence or Divergence? Britain and the Continent*, (Basingstoke, 1994), p. 144.

²⁶¹ For more information see Steven C. A. Pincus, *England's Glorious Revolution: a brief history with documents* (New York, 2006), p. 26.

²⁶² John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (London, 1740), p. 11.

benevolence”.²⁶³ Religion, it was argued, could be made more rational and non-mysterious. The attempt to question the fundamentals of religion and to use reason to test the revealed truth harmed its position.²⁶⁴ This age of reason could be “characterised by a general decay of religious sensibility”.²⁶⁵ Furthermore, numerous assertions were made that religion had lost its power in maintaining the social order of the state. Under these circumstances what might be termed an anti-clerical enlightenment arose in Britain. This was in turn, challenged by the belief that Christianity was more than capable of reforming itself and adapting to the new circumstances of politics and society. The religious nature of English enlightenment could not be ignored²⁶⁶ since its goal was to maintain the Anglican establishment. That is, this Anglican Enlightenment was to preserve the British Constitution from the effects of intolerance, superstition, religious enthusiasm and animosities.²⁶⁷ Since both the church and the enlightenment aimed to preserve England from these effects in order to provide durability both for the church and the state, it could be said that, in J. G. A. Pocock’s words, what dominated England was a conservative clerical enlightenment.²⁶⁸

Warburton became the representative figure of the Anglican Enlightenment in Britain. His aspiration was to lead Britain to religious tranquillity, as he believed that the only way to eliminate disorder, and thereby to establish civil peace, was to end religious

²⁶³ Martin Fitzpatrick, “The Enlightenment, politics and providence: some Scottish and English comparisons” in *Enlightenment and Religion- Rational Dissent in eighteenth-century Britain*, Knud Haakonssen (ed)(C. U. P., 1996), p. 64.

²⁶⁴ Charles John, Abbey and John Henry Overton, *The English Church in the Eighteenth Century* (Longmans, 1887), p. 78; Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 169.

²⁶⁵ Justin Champion, *Republican Learning: John Toland and the crisis of Christian culture, 1696-1722* (Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 5.

²⁶⁶ Brian, W. Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth Century England: theological debate from Locke to Burke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 15.

²⁶⁷ On the challenges faced by the Anglican Church see Knud Haakonssen, “Enlightened Dissent: an introduction” in *Enlightenment and Religion- Rational Dissent in eighteenth-century Britain*, Knud Haakonssen (ed) (C. U. P., 1996), pp. 2-3; Paul Langford, *The eighteenth century, 1688-1815* (Oxford, 2002), p. 76, 99; Roy Porter, “The Enlightenment in England” in *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Roy Porter and M. Teich (eds) (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 1-18 and Sheridan Gilley, “Christianity and Enlightenment: a historical survey”, *History of European Ideas*, I (1981), pp. 103-121.

²⁶⁸ For more on J. G. A. Pocock’s conservative enlightenment see “Clergy and Commerce. The Conservative Enlightenment in England” in *L’Eta dei Lumi: Studi Storici sul Settecento Europeo n Onore de Franco Venturi* edited by R. Ajello (Naples, 1985), pp. 524-62; “Conservative Enlightenment and Democratic Revolutions: The American and French cases in British perspective”, *Government and Opposition*, 24 (1989), pp. 81-105; “Post-puritan England and the problem of the Enlightenment” in *Culture and Politics from Puritanism to the Enlightenment*, edited by Perez Zagorin (Berkeley, CA, 1980), pp. 91-111.

controversy.²⁶⁹ The aim of defending a “HEROIC MODERATION” was central to his first work, *A critical and philosophical enquiry into the causes of prodigies and miracles, as related by historians*, published in 1727. It criticised Thomas Hobbes, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, and Bernard Mandeville for their materialism and antagonism towards religion. Following this, Warburton published *Alliance between Church and State*, published in 1736 as a controversial defence of the established church. In 1738 he wrote *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated on the Principles of a Religious Deist* to defend the necessity of belief in a Christian future for moral and social order in a political body. He advocated revealed religion against Lord Bolingbroke in *A View of Lord Bolingbroke’s Philosophy, Compleat, in four letters to a friend* in 1756. In 1757 he criticised David Hume’s natural history of religion and published *Remarks on Mr. DAVID HUME’s Essay on the Natural History of Religion*.

The religious nature of the Anglican Enlightenment can be revealed by means of the debates encompassed by those works. Warburton had endeavoured to defend the reasonableness of Protestantism and religious toleration based on natural law. He believed that what he termed the happy establishment of Britain was going to be destroyed by political and moral disintegration caused by fragmentation within the church.²⁷⁰ He saw the preservation of the Anglican Church as the duty he owed to his country.²⁷¹ He and his party formed what later historians have called the Warburton Circle, aiming to defend Anglicanism as the established church of Britain. The circle encompassed John Towne, Thomas Balguy, Jonathan Toup, Richard Hurd, William Mason and John Brown, although they later fell out. John Towne (1711-1791) was a religious controversialist who was seen as the rational member of the circle by Warburton²⁷². His main works were in support of Warburton’s ideas.²⁷³ Thomas Balguy

²⁶⁹ William Warburton, “Dedication to the Edition of Books IV, V, VI of the Divine Legation of Moses, 1765” in *The Works of the Right Reverend William Warburton*, with some account of the life, writings, and character of the author by Richard Hurd, 12 vols (London, 1811), vol. IV, p. 12 (from now on abbreviated to *The Works of Warburton*).

²⁷⁰ Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion. Being an Earnest Exhortation to a manly defence of our Happy Constitution in Church and State* (London, 1745), p. 16.

²⁷¹ William Warburton, “Advertisement” in *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving for the Suppression of the Late Unnatural Rebellion* (London, 1746).

²⁷² William Warburton, *Letters from a late eminent prelate to one of his friends*, ed. R. Hurd, 3rd edn (1809), p. 49.

²⁷³ John Towne, *A Critical Inquiry into the Opinions and Practice of the Ancient Philosophers, concerning the nature of the Soul and a Future State, and their method of teaching by the double doctrine* (London, 1747); John Towne, *The Argument of the Divine Legation, fairly stated and returned to the*

(1716-1795) was an English churchman whose criticisms were seen as significant for Warburton since it is clear that his remarks contributed to Warburton's *Divine Legation*.²⁷⁴ The other member of the party, Jonathan Toup (1713-1875), dedicated his book, *Epistola Critica*, to Warburton and elevated him as an admirer of him.²⁷⁵ William Mason (1725-1797) was a poet who was influenced by Warburton and inspired by him to pursue a literary life combined with ecclesiastical interests.²⁷⁶ Richard Hurd (1720-1808) who was made Archdeacon of Gloucester and preacher at Lincoln's Inn by the influence of Warburton was a loyal disciple of Warburton²⁷⁷ and published an edition of Warburton's works, in seven volumes, and *Letters from an Eminent Prelate to One of his Friends*. Like other members of the party, he admired and flattered Warburton through his works. All these disciples had attempted to harness religion as a political tool and use the Anglican Church as the state church to maintain the national unity of Britain.

This idea of Warburton had its roots in the basis of the 1688 Revolution settlement supported by the Whigs. After James II had lost his throne due to his Catholicism, the protestant succession was acknowledged as a necessity for the social order and liberties of the English church and the society.²⁷⁸ Being aware of this fact, and as the chief spokesman for the rationalist Whig established church, Warburton held that the whole security of religion, laws and liberties of England depended on the Protestant succession and the exclusion of non-conformists from the throne. According to him:

The Papist makes the State a Creature of the Church; the Erastian makes the Church a Creature of the State: The Presbyterian would regulate the Exercise of the State's Power on Church Ideas; the Free-Thinker, the Church, by Reasons of State: and, to compleat the Farce, the Quaker abolishes the very Being of a Church; and the Socinian suppresses the office of the Civil Magistrate.²⁷⁹

Deists, to whom it was originally addressed (London, 1751); John Towne, *Remarks on Dr. Lowth's Letter to the Bishop of Gloucester. With the Bishop's Appendix, and the second Epistolary* (London, 1766).

²⁷⁴ Isabel Rivers, "Thomas Balguy (1716-1795)", ODNB.

²⁷⁵ Jonathan Toup, *Epistola critica ad celeberrimum virum Gulielmum (Warburton) Episcopum Gloucestriensem* (London, 1767).

²⁷⁶ Jules Smith, "William Mason (1725-1797)", ODNB.

²⁷⁷ Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians*, p. 183; Overton, J. H. and Relton F. A *History of the English Church from the accession of George I to the end of the eighteenth century, 1714-1800*, edited by William Richard Wood Stephens and William Hunt (Macmillan, 1910), p. 169.

²⁷⁸ John Selby Watson, *The Life of William Warburton* (London, 1863), p. 58.

²⁷⁹ William Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State* (London, 1736), p. 20 (from now on abbreviated to *The Alliance*).

Unity and order under Anglican Church alone could make Britain powerful. The atheists, deists, and non-conformists were seen as threats that weakened the constitution. The internal divisions within the church were responsible for the religious chaos within Britain that Warburton perceived around him first half of the eighteenth century. Considering Anglicanism was not only the most fitting theology for contemporary Britain but also one of the most important pillars of the British constitution. Warburton believed that Anglican thought alone would preserve national unity. This was the basis for Warburton's argument in favour of the necessity of an alliance between the Anglican Church and the state.

II. Warburton's Alliance

To furnish every Lover of his country with reasonable principles, to oppose the destructive Fancies of the Enemies of our happy Establishment. Not to reform the fundamental Constitutions of the State, but to show they needed no reforming.²⁸⁰

This passage explains the aim of Warburton in publishing *The Alliance between Church and State*. The relationship between the state and the church in Warburton's theory reflected his view of Hanoverian Britain:

Rather a copy of the church and state of England, than a theory, as indeed it was, formed solely on the contemplation of nature, and the unvariable reason of things: and had no further regard to our particular establishment, than as some part of it tended to illustrate these abstract reasonings.²⁸¹

Warburton stated that both religion and government were "ordained to one end, to perfect HUMANITY".²⁸² However, as he stated in a later sermon, a policy to govern the Church was required in order to direct it towards the end of the government.²⁸³ This idea, for Warburton, rationalised the necessity for an alliance between church and state.

²⁸⁰ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 8.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² William Warburton, *The Alliance between Church and State* (London, 1766), 4th edition, p. iii.

²⁸³ William Warburton, *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving for the Suppression of the Late Unnatural Rebellion*, (London, 1746), p. 3.

Warburton attempted to establish a strong link between state and church in order to secure the well-being of civil society.

To Warburton, the civil magistrate gained ecclesiastical supremacy when the law-giver pursued his interest in association with a particular church.²⁸⁴ When their church allied with the state, it sought the protection of the law-giver, the clergy became dependent on the state and could not follow contradictory interests.²⁸⁵ This alliance served to eliminate the risk of contradiction between church and state because it unified their interests. Furthermore, public misfortunes could be eliminated and the order achieved when the church assisted the state.

According to Warburton, ‘Nature has made [The Appetite of Self-Preservation] the strongest of all.’²⁸⁶ This appetite which was identified as the ‘most indispensably necessary’²⁸⁷ had motivated mankind to behave selfishly. Due to the weakness of human nature, man in the state of nature had a tendency to pursue every need more than was necessary for his own preservation. Since he ‘never thought he had sufficiently provided for his own Being, till he had deprived his Fellows of the free Enjoyment of theirs’,²⁸⁸ an establishment was necessary to ensure the welfare of all rational animals. However, without religion civil societies were equally unable to achieve this balance among all human beings. Moreover, prior to the establishment of civil society, religion alone was not capable of preventing men from acting according to their own interests and pleasures. Similarly after it was established, the state could not be successful without the aid of religion. As Warburton claimed, in a state of nature ‘RELIGION alone was an ineffectual Remedy to moral Disorders, so now SOCIETY, without other Assistance, would be equally insufficient’.²⁸⁹

Apart from the deficiency in human nature, Warburton explained the insufficiency of civil laws to reinforce the necessity of co-operation between church and state. Firstly, he said that civil laws did not pay attention to virtues like gratitude, hospitality and charity since they could not affect the society directly. Secondly, established laws could not be

²⁸⁴ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 74.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

extended to restrain the violation of rights such as fornication, so another sanction was required to regulate the moral lives of subjects. Thirdly, civil laws could not replace the principle of self-love in the state of nature with the love of country in a society that was essential for the preservation of the country. Fourthly, societies inflamed by inordinate appetites were difficult to satisfy and this led to social disorders. Lastly, Warburton talked about the crucial role of sanctions. For him society had the sanction of punishment only, whereas one of reward was also necessary for a peaceful order.²⁹⁰ Since only religion could provide this promise of rewards it played an essential role in society.²⁹¹ To highlight this point Warburton stated that:

There is no other than the Power of Religion; which teaching an over-ruling Providence, the Rewarder of good Men, and the Punisher of ill, can oblige to the Duties of imperfect obligation, which human Laws overlook; and teaching, also, that this Providence is omniscient, that it sees the most secret Actions and Intentions of Men, and has given Laws for the perfecting their Nature, will oblige of those Duties of perfect Obligation, which human Laws cannot reach, or sufficiently enforce.²⁹²

The unwritten laws were also necessary in Warburton's theory. A civil magistrate could force people to obey written laws. Yet it was necessary for the subjects to believe that it was also the right of the sovereign, not only its power, that led them to obey. For this reason Warburton claimed that:

When Society was established it was necessary that human Laws should be enforced on a Principle of RIGHT as well as POWER; that is, on a Principle which would make them obeyed for conscience sake.²⁹³

Thus the state was in need of a partnership with the church "as the necessary Means to improve the Usefulness, and to apply the Influence of Religion in the best Manner".²⁹⁴ The Church secured the well-being of the state and preserved the Church "by all lawful ways, from outward Violence".²⁹⁵ Since the church had no coercive power, it needed to be protected by the state. The state "not only promises not to injure the Church, but to serve it; that is, protect it from the Injuries of other Religious Societies, which exist or

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

may arise in the same State”.²⁹⁶ This was reinforced in a sermon published ten years later which summarized Warburton’s claims:

For by the Equity of our Civil Constitution the Consciences of Men are not only left in Freedom, but protected in it; and by the Truth and Power of our Religious, the Rights of Citizens have been more than once supported, when threatened with arbitrary and illegal Power.²⁹⁷

Instead of staying in an independent condition, the state should ally with the church and use religion to prevent social disorders.²⁹⁸ Every sect considered itself as the true one and wanted to introduce a party into the governing administration. To this end, the state should determine which religion or sect should be the established one and accordingly it would decide which should play a role in formulating legislation. Other religions would be tolerated, but they could not have voice in government:

An Alliance is the most effectual remedy: by establishing one Church, and giving a full Toleration to the rest, but excluding their Members from the public Administration; from the Admission into which these Disorders arise.²⁹⁹

According to Warburton any religion could not be established by depending on its religious truth. Rather, the civil power should determine which religion to ally with. As the true faith did not offer a foundation the Church needed another basis to maintain their co-operation. For Warburton, this was the test law that had been “made to provide for the safety of the national church; a provision not for the sake of religion, but of civil peace”.³⁰⁰

The Test Law was introduced by Warburton to prevent the disturbances of different sects or religions upon the established religion of the state. When threats arose in the civil society, “the Established Church demands the promised Aid of the State; which gives her a TEST-LAW for her security”.³⁰¹ In order to prevent the dissenters from

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion*, p. 6.

²⁹⁸ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 63.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

³⁰⁰ Letter written by William Warburton to the Earl of Chatham, 14 November, 1762. It was published in William Pitt, *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, William Stanhope Taylor and Captain John Henry Pringle (eds) (London, 1838), vol. II, p. 190.

³⁰¹ William Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 115.

injuring the allied society, the test law was used to exclude them from the political arena. Warburton's theory thereby justified the exclusion of non-conformists as a compulsory act for providing peace and liberty of the establishment. Warburton claimed that:

For if one church is to be established, and all the rest tolerated, it is for the peace, as well as honour of the state, that the tolerated should be debarred the power of disturbing the established, in the enjoyment of the legal rights of an establishment.³⁰²

The authority should uphold a particular religion and justifiably impose restrictions on the members of other religions or sects depending on their idea of social utility, and its relationship with public order, rather than the true faith. Dissenters were not seen as trustworthy because it was believed that they had a tendency to follow their own beliefs and to set up their own faith as the established religion. Since their ideas and beliefs were inimical to peace, the dissenters had to be debarred from civil offices by means of the test law.³⁰³ For Warburton, there were two undeniable facts; the civil state had to provide political and moral order for its members and every person had a right to worship according to his own conscience. Having indicated the reasons why it was essential to have an established religion, these two premises led him to introduce toleration to members of other religions or sects than the established one. For him, "all States, of all Times, had an ESTABLISHED RELIGION; which was under the more immediate Protection of the Civil Magistrate, in Contradiction to those that were only TOLERATED".³⁰⁴

In summary, Warburton emphasised the necessity of an alliance to prevent violence and strengthen the British establishment. In the eighteenth century, the *Alliance* was worthy of attention with regard to the connexion of religion and government to the idea of toleration. According to the noted dissenter and Socinian Joseph Priestley (1733-1804),

³⁰² Letter written by William Warburton to the Earl of Chatham, 14 November, 1762. It was published in William Pitt, *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, William Stanhope Taylor and Captain John Henry Pringle (eds) (London, 1838), vol. II, p. 190.

³⁰³ According to Robert William Greaves, the ideas of dissenters, for Warburton, were harmful for peace and therefore he treated dissenters as "exceedingly ill-disposed to the Church of England". See Robert William Greaves, "The Working of the Alliance, A Comment on Warburton" in *Essays in Modern English Church History, in memory of Norman Sykes*, G. V. Bennett and J. D. Walsh (eds) (London, 1966), p. 180.

³⁰⁴ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 69.

the *Alliance* was “the best defence of the present system of church-authority”.³⁰⁵ It was so well structured that in 1790 Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), an English churchman, claimed that it was “one of the finest specimens, that are to be found perhaps in any language, of scientific reasoning applied to a political subject”.³⁰⁶

III. Warburton’s criticisms of Atheism and Deism

God is to the soul of man what the sun is to the earth, without whose existence it would be shut up in eternal night, and without whose influence it would be locked up in eternal frost.³⁰⁷

According to Warburton, people could not be sceptical about the existence of God. In one of his sermons he indicated that it was apparent in nature that:

The power, wisdom, and goodness of the Author of the System to which we belong, is so clear and evident from every obvious configuration of Matter surrounding us, that it cannot escape the notice of the most inattentive, or lie concealed from the most ignorant. Hence a GOD, the maker, preserver, governor of the world, is the concurrent voice of Nature.³⁰⁸

Moreover, he believed that God’s being was evident in the history of Britain:

The total destruction of the English constitution, and the sudden and surprising recovery of it, when things were most desperate, have been ever considered by all serious men, as a manifest indication of the hand of GOD, which first in justice smites, and then, as mercifully heals.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵ Joseph Priestley, *Considerations on Church Authority; Occasioned by Dr. Balguy’s Sermon* (London, 1769), p.vii.

³⁰⁶ Samuel Horsley, *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters with Reference to the Corporation and Test Acts* (London, 1790), p. i.

³⁰⁷ William Warburton, “A Charge on the Study of Theology” in *A Selection from Unpublished Papers of the Right Reverend William Warburton*, Rev. Francis Kilvert (ed) (London, 1841), p. 362.

³⁰⁸ William Warburton, “The Nature and Condition of Truth” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, 2 vols (London, 1753), vol. I, p. 34.

³⁰⁹ William Warburton, *The Lord Bishop of Gloucester’s Sermon Preached before the Right Honourable the House of Lords* (London, 1760), pp. 2-3. For Richard Hurd, this sermon “is one of the best he ever wrote, and the best, without question, that ever was preached on that day”. For more information, see Richard Hurd, *A Discourse, by way of General Preface to the Quarto Edition of Bishop Warburton’s Works* (London, 1794), pp. 86-87.

According to Warburton, religion was “an Intercourse with the universal Cause” and the object of all rational beings.³¹⁰ It was therefore essential to explain the social order from a religious perspective. Moreover, religion was required in the world because it served as a political tool to preserve the stability of the state in Warburton’s theory, as he claimed “[t]oward keeping Mankind in Order it is NECESSARY there should be some Religion professed and even ESTABLISHED”.³¹¹

Warburton advocated God’s being as the moral governor of humanity.³¹² In this sense he believed that irreligion was a direct attack to social and moral order in Britain and it needed to be refuted for the sake of the public good. Correspondingly, deism was considered to be as hazardous as atheism and had to be negated. In *A View of Lord Bolingbroke’s Philosophy*, Warburton stated that:

Atheists were not the only enemies that Divines had to deal with. There was a set of men, who allowed an intelligent first Cause, endowed with those moral attributes, which Divines had demonstrated: and, on that account, called themselves DEISTS.³¹³

For Warburton, like the existence of God, the principles of revealed religion were comprehensible through the Gospel. Faith and obedience rested on a personal relationship between God and man to “make men wise unto salvation”.³¹⁴ However, deists tried to find the basis of God in the nature of man not in the Bible, attempting to achieve a reasonable account of Christianity in the constitution of human nature. In other words, they tried to derive the knowledge of God from the empirical facts without paying attention to the Gospel. Warburton opposed this replacement of revealed religion and saw criticisms of doctrinal religion as a dangerous threat to Christianity itself. Consequently he had attacked Lord Bolingbroke.

Lord Bolingbroke advocated the superiority of human knowledge and experience over religious doctrine. He opposed the idea of revealed religion and was sceptical about the

³¹⁰ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 35.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

³¹² For the discussions on God as the moral governor and the link between religion and morality, see the section on the Earl of Shaftesbury of this thesis.

³¹³ William Warburton, *A View of Lord Bolingbroke’s Philosophy, Compleat, in four letters to a friend* (London, 1756), p. 17.

³¹⁴ Warburton, “The Nature and Condition of Truth”, p. 36.

publication, renovation and preservation of the Scriptures.³¹⁵ Although Warburton similarly paid attention to the supremacy of reason like them, he argued that the authority of reason without the idea of God and revealed religion could only harm the existing order. He attacked deism and published *A View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy* in 1756, claiming that:

The final purpose against Atheism is to prove the BEING AND ATTRIBUTES of GOD; the final purpose against Deism is to prove a FUTURE STATE: For neither natural nor revealed Religion can subsist without believing that God is, and that he is a REWARDER of them that seek him.³¹⁶

Warburton underlined the necessity of a future state in his attacks on deism while defending God's being as the moral governor against atheism. Accordingly, "the unequal distribution of good and evil among men"³¹⁷ in God's moral government led Warburton to enshrine a future state, whereas Bolingbroke used this principle to support naturalism and to discredit the idea of a future state and God's being as the moral governor.

Bolingbroke was against the idea of gaining knowledge by *a priori* reasoning, and so he neglected the role of God in any moral order. For him, moral values were not to be found in the idea of God but rather they were invented by mankind.³¹⁸ According to Warburton this meant that Bolingbroke viewed God's moral attributes as false "because the conceiving of them by human goodness and justice leads to the question of the origin of evil, considered morally".³¹⁹ Apart from Bolingbroke's threat of discrediting moral values, Warburton criticised Bolingbroke's naturalism and attacked him by

³¹⁵ Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, "Concerning the true use and advantages of it" in *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, (London, 1752), vol. I, p. 101.

³¹⁶ William Warburton, *A View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy, Compleat, in four letters to a friend* (London, 1756), p. 18.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

³¹⁸ Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, "On the Spirit of Patriotism" in *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism: On the Idea of a Patriot King and on the State of Parties at the Accession of King George the First* (Dublin, 1749), p. 14; Henry St. John Bolingbroke, "Concerning the true use and advantages of it" in *Letters on the Study and Use of History* (London, 1752), Vol. I, p. 96; Henry St. John, Bolingbroke, *The Philosophical Works of the Late Honourable Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke* (London, 1754), vol. IV, p. 486.

³¹⁹ William Warburton, *A View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy*, p. 101.

arguing that ‘he had long threatened, on all our metaphysics and theology; in other words, on natural and revealed religion’.³²⁰

Warburton refuted David Hume’s account of natural religion because he believed it also threatened the moral order. Natural religion was not sufficient to teach morality and required reason to be accompanied by revelation. After Hume’s *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (1757) was published Warburton wrote a letter to the publisher, A. Millar, and indicated his opposition to Hume’s ideas introduced in that book. He claimed that

[t]he design of the first essay is the very same with all Lord Bolingbroke’s, to establish naturalism, a species of atheism, instead of religion; and he [Hume] employs one of Bolingbroke’s capital argument for it. All the difference is that, it is without Bolingbroke’s abusive language.³²¹

To Warburton the most significant point in the book was Hume’s attempt to establish atheism. He believed that every line of the book discredited Christianity.³²² According to Hume, reason could not comprehend God’s existence, instead men derive the idea of God only from “their own Conceit and Imagination surely”.³²³ Man never could “have Reason to infer any Attributes, or any Principles of Action in him”.³²⁴ It was not possible to suppose or infer the existence of any attributes of God as the cause of everything since such reasoning went “beyond what has immediately fallen under our Observation”.³²⁵ Yet by reasoning, people secured the belief that virtue, honest, wisdom and power were the most valuable qualities and they adapted them to the idea of God.³²⁶ Hume added that those attributes of God could only be “mere Conjecture and Hypothesis”³²⁷ because they were not supported by reason. Warburton asserted that

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³²¹ William Warburton, “Thoughts on Various Subjects” in *A Selection from Unpublished Papers of the Right Reverend William Warburton*, Rev. Francis Kilvert (ed) (London, 1841), p. 309.

³²² *Ibid.*, pp. 309-310.

³²³ David Hume, “Of Practical Consequences of Natural Religion” in *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1748), p. 219.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

Hume's rejection of *a priori* reasoning and the being of God as the author of nature revealed that he did not believe in Christianity.³²⁸

In order to secure the Church against infidelity and the replacement of revealed religion by a natural one, Warburton published *Remarks on Mr. DAVID HUME's Essay on the Natural History of Religion* and argued that Hume's naturalism was not against religion, but was rather an attempt to create a new religion. Since Hume tried to rely on arguments entirely founded on experience, Warburton accused him of establishing "NATURALISM on the ruins of RELIGION".³²⁹ Warburton claimed that "[i]f man be rightly defined a rational animal, then his Nature, or what our Philosophers calls human Nature, must be a rational Nature".³³⁰ Therefore, the foundation in reason and human nature should be one and the same thing. Nevertheless for Warburton, Hume did not recognize this point and tried to provide an alternative natural history. Additionally, the religion that Hume used to give a natural history was "nothing but Superstition and Fanaticism, having its origin in human Nature; that is, in the imagination and the passions only".³³¹

It is clear that for Warburton, natural religion would harm society because it would not procure moral order in society without the idea of God. In his sermons Warburton also argued against the idea of separating the spheres of faith and reason on the grounds of God. At the beginning of the century the French philosopher Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), stated that human justice was the basis of human virtue. Bayle claimed that the fear of God only could be replaced by the honour and virtue of humans, so religion would not be necessary for social order. To Bayle, believers avoid being unjust due to the laws of God but it is possible that their sins "are restrain'd by the hard Laws of Honor".³³² That is, an atheist could act morally because morality and religion were independent spheres.³³³ Strongly opposing him, Warburton stated that "it was the Dispensation of Faith, which taught us that the true foundation of Morality was compliance to the will of

³²⁸ William Warburton, *Remarks on Mr. DAVID HUME's Essay on the Natural History of Religion* (London, 1757), p. 15.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³³² Pierre Bayle, *Miscellaneous Reflections, Occasioned by the COMET which appeared in December 1680. Chiefly tending to explode Popular Superstitions Written to a Doctor of the Sorbon*, v.II (London, 1708), p. 334.

³³³ *Ibid.*

our Creator and sovereign Lord”.³³⁴ Since Christian religion and the morality of the Gospel were superior, it was hard to “animate, connect and ennoble the whole System of intelligent nature”³³⁵ without the idea of God. As discussed above, in Warburton’s theory a peaceful social order under a civil magistrate could only be achieved through religious doctrine and morality.³³⁶ He also therefore disagreed with Bayle and claimed that “the Morality of the Atheist must be without any true Foundation, and consequently weak and easily shaken”.³³⁷

It is evident that Warburton advocated the link between the material and spiritual world, and considered any attempt to separate them as detrimental to the happiness of society. Moral obligation was the main pillar of natural law, and God was the one of natural religion. Both the natural laws and natural religion were the foundations of Christianity. Thus morality and the existence of God were interrelated. In this light, Warburton also wanted to refute the Third Earl of Shaftesbury’s scheme of virtue and his elimination of God in moral theory. The Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713) had been concerned with the problem of the separation of doctrine and morals in a systematic way. For Warburton, this created a vital threat to the social order. Shaftesbury’s theory needed to be discredited in eighteenth century Britain, and Warburton assigned John Brown for this significant task.

IV. John Brown’s first appearance in Warburton’s world

In 1745 Brown published a eulogistic essay about Alexander Pope, entitled *An Essay on Satire: occasion’d by the death of Mr. Pope*. The essay clarified the role of the passions in corrupting man’s character. Brown introduced the necessity for the guidance of reason in human action, arguing that reason rectified the character by motivating

³³⁴ William Warburton, “The Edification of Gospel Righteousness” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, (London, 1754), vol. II, p. 7.

³³⁵ William Warburton, “The Love of God and Man” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons* (London, 1753), vol. I, p. 73.

³³⁶ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 21.

³³⁷ William Warburton, “Remarks on Several Occasional Reflections” in *The Works of the Right Reverend William Warburton*, (London, 1788), vol. VI, p. 314.

passions to serve the public good.³³⁸ This main argument served as opposition to Shaftesbury's moral theory, and attracted the attention of Warburton a year after its first edition. Warburton wrote to the publisher of Brown's works, Robert Dodsley, on 12 April 1746:

I saw, by accident, on the road a Poem called "An essay on Satire, occasioned by the Death of Mr. Pope;" and was surprised to see so excellent a piece of poetry, and, what was still more uncommon, so much good reasoning. I find it has been published some time. If it be not a Secret, I should be glad to know the Author. If I have leisure, I shall give some account of it for the literary news of your Museum. It will be a better ornament to it than the dull book of Travels in the Second Number.³³⁹

After Warburton had learnt that the author was Brown, Warburton asked Brown for permission to publish it in his edition of Pope. In a letter to Brown dated 24 December 1746 Warburton wrote:

I own I was much surprised at your Performance. To say it is the only piece of poetry that has appeared since his Death would be giving it a very low and invidious commendation. For I think it is a masterpiece. The long note on Ridicule is admirable. I am preparing a complete and very fine Edition of all Mr. Pope's works, & would by your leave, & if it be agreeable to your inclinations, place it before his works, & discard those insipid pieces wrote in his commendation, to give it room. Had poor Mr. Pope been alive, I know how much he would have esteemed such a poem & your author of it, & in this I should be glad to supply his place, & take any opportunity of showing how much I am.³⁴⁰

Brown accepted the invitation, and subsequently the essay was published in Warburton's edition of the collected works of Alexander Pope.³⁴¹ 22,250 copies of the *Essay on Satire* were printed in eleven editions of *The Works of Alexander Pope*.³⁴² The poem became "an impressive figure for the 1750's and 1760's"³⁴³ and achieved

³³⁸ John Brown, *An Essay on Satire: Occasion'd by the Death of Mr. Pope* (London, 1745), p. 8.

³³⁹ John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the eighteenth century*, six vols, (London, 1812), vol. V., p. 587.

³⁴⁰ Bodleian M.S. Eng. misc. c. 390, folio 398, quoted by Donald D. Eddy, *A Bibliography of John Brown* (New York, 1971), pp. 9-10.

³⁴¹ Alexander Pope, *The Works of Alexander Pope, in Nine Volumes complete, with his last corrections, additions, and improvements, together with all his Notes*, published by William Warburton, with occasional Notes (London, 1751).

³⁴² Donald D. Eddy, *A Bibliography of John Brown* (New York, 1971), p. 12. The nine volumes of *The works of Alexander Pope* has 12 editions but the number of copies in the seventh edition is not known.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

undeniable success. According to Samuel Jackson Pratt, an influential character in literary Britain:

[i]t is written in many parts with an elegance, correctness, spirit, and harmony, which rival the best productions of that illustrious bard, whom he characterises with great justice, and in a splendid strain of panegyric.³⁴⁴

In addition to this, Thomas Green the author of *Extracts from the diary of a Lover of Literature*, said that *Essay on Satire* contained the best verses he had encountered. However he also added that their excellence was uniform until it “dipped afterwards into Pope's Essays”.³⁴⁵ It is believed that the essay achieved success by means of Pope's works because it became “infinitely more diversified, and delights with a thousand varied charms”.³⁴⁶ It is not possible to know whether the *Essay on Satire* would have achieved the same success had it not been published in the edition of Pope's works. But it is certain that Brown entered the world of literature by means of Warburton's guidance. Moreover, while the edition was being prepared for publication, Warburton encouraged Brown to expand his ideas on *Essay on Satire* into a more general critique of Shaftesbury's deism and moral theory. In January 1750 a letter written to Richard Hurd a loyal member of Warburtonian circle, Warburton stated that:

Mr. Brown has fine parts: he has a genius for poetry, and has acquired a force of versification very uncommon. Poor Mr. Pope had a little before his death planned out an epic poem, which he began to be very intent upon. The subject was Brute. I gave this plan to Mr. Brown. He has wrote the first book, and in a surprising way, though an unfinished essay. I told him this was to be the work of years, and mature age, if ever it was to be done; that, in the mean time, he should think of something in prose that might be useful to his character in his own profession. I recommended to him a thing I once thought of myself — it had been recommended to me by Mr. Pope.³⁴⁷

It is apparent that Brown's ability in literature made him, for Warburton, the best person to write a refutation of Shaftesbury's account of religion and morality. Besides, Brown had been chosen because Warburton wanted to utilise the assistance of others to “extend

³⁴⁴ Samuel Jackson Pratt, *The Cabinet of Poetry*, six vols, (London, 1808) vol. V, p. 333.

³⁴⁵ Thomas Green, *Extracts from the Diary of a Lover of Literature* (Ipswich, 1810), p. 53.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁷ William Warburton, *Letters from a late eminent prelate to one of his friends* (London, 1809), p. 36.

the scope of battle” against the attacks on the Anglican establishment.³⁴⁸ No matter what Warburton may have thought, the above letter indicated that it was Alexander Pope who recommended Warburton to comment on it.

In the 1720's Warburton was a member of the Theobald Circle. Lewis Theobald (1688-1744) was a literary editor who attacked Pope's edition of Shakespeare published in 1725. He answered to Pope by publishing *Shakespeare Restored, or a Specimen of the many Errors as well Committed as Unamended by Mr Pope* in the following year. Pope made a counter-attack and published the second edition of Shakespeare in 1728. Afterwards, Theobald produced another edition of Shakespeare in 1733 and worked with Warburton for this edition. At this point, Warburton concurred with Theobald in his criticism of Pope. In a letter dated the second of January 1727, Warburton claimed that “Dryden borrowed for want of leisure, and Pope for want of genius”.³⁴⁹ Pope, who died in 1744, had not known of this letter because it was first published by Mark Akenside in a note to his ‘*Ode to Thomas Edwards*’ in 1751. Warburton also contributed anonymous articles against Pope in the *Daily Journal* in March and April 1728. He considered the *Essay on Man* to be a poem collected “from the worst passages of the worst authors”.³⁵⁰ As Bishop Law stated, Warburton considered it to be “rank atheism”.³⁵¹ Many years later in a letter dated January 1757, Warburton stated that he proclaimed his opposition to Pope in Theobald's edition of Shakespeare and added that “Pope knew this, and had the justice to own to me that I fairly followed appearances, when I thought well of them, and ill of him”.³⁵²

In his *Examen de l'essai de Monsieur Pope sur l'homme* (1737), a Swiss divine Jean Pierre de Crousaz (1663-1750) identified the argument of Pope's poem with Leibnizianism and criticised its religious and moral views, accusing him of espousing unorthodox ideas. In 1738 Warburton read Crousaz's criticisms and decided to write a vindication of the poem. Afterwards Warburton published a defence of Pope's *Essay on Man* called *A Critical and Philosophical Commentary on Mr. Pope's Essay on Man*.

³⁴⁸ William Darby Templeman, “Warburton and Brown Continue the Battle over Ridicule”, *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 17/1 (1953), p. 30.

³⁴⁹ John Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the eighteenth century*, 8 vols (London, 1817), vol II, p. 195.

³⁵⁰ Thomas Tyers, *An Historical Rhapsody on Mr. Pope* (London, 1782), p. 78.

³⁵¹ Edmund Law, *An Essay on the Origin of Evil by Dr. William King* (London, 1781), p. xvii.

³⁵² William Warburton, *Letters from a late eminent prelate to one of his friends* (London, 1809), p. 224.

Warburton had refuted the charges of atheism and fatalism and accused De Crousaz of possessing a lack of charity:

I leave it with Mr. De Crousaz to think upon the different Effects which Excess of Zeal in the Service of Religion, hath produced in him... he became guilty of a deliberate and repeated Act of the highest Injustice; the attempting to deprive a virtuous Man of his honest Reputation.³⁵³

Actually, Pope's tendency in the poem and Warburton's defence of his theology were inconsistent. Pope had derived the philosophical principles of the poem from Lord Bolingbroke. As discussed, Bolingbroke argued for deism and so he was one of the greatest adversaries of Warburton. Yet Warburton proved that Pope was Christian in the defence. Regardless of Pope's thoughts on religion, it is evident that Pope had appreciated the support of Warburton and wrote a letter to him on 2 February 1738/1739: "I am, Sir, with a due esteem for your Abilities and for your Candor (both which I am no stranger to, from your other writings as well as this)".³⁵⁴ This occasioned a sincere friendship between Pope and Warburton.

Warburton was an influential theologian and a philosophical apologist for Pope, and Pope was a well-connected writer for Warburton. Pope introduced him to the good offices of William Murray, later Lord Mansfield (1705-93), a barrister and a politician, and especially Ralph Allen who was an entrepreneur and philanthropist, and later became Member of Parliament. Warburton was promoted to the Dean of Bristol and afterwards he was consecrated the Bishop of Gloucester through Allen's influence. It could be stated that Pope provided a golden opportunity for Warburton by introducing him into the literary world that led to important positions in the Church.

As an executor of Pope's will after his death, Warburton wanted to pay his tribute to Pope by preparing the edition of his works and a refutation of Shaftesbury. In one of his letters written to Richard Hurd, Warburton stated that Pope had told him that the "*Characteristics* [Shaftesbury's book published in 1711] had done more harm to

³⁵³ William Warburton, "A Critical and Philosophical Commentary on Mr. Pope's Essay on Man" in *The Works of Warburton*, vol. XI, p. 144.

³⁵⁴ British Museum Department of Manuscripts (Egerton MSS), 1946, f. 3, quoted by Arthur William Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians: a study in some eighteenth-century controversies* (O. U. P., 1932), p. 79.

Revealed Religion in England than all the works of Infidelity put together”.³⁵⁵ Warburton asked Brown to undertake an examination of Shaftesbury’s *Characteristiks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (under his superintendence). Brown’s *Essays on the Characteristics of the Earl of Shaftesbury* was published in 1751. Its success meant it had reached fifth edition by 1764, and as a result, Brown gained a reputation in literary world and he also was admitted into Warburton’s circle.

Although there is no evidence regarding Brown’s perspective on Warburton’s party, it is possible to make some assumptions from clues in letters and evidence from those around him. It has been stated that in eighteenth century Britain, that men from humble origins had a chance to become a bishop on the condition that they were supported by an influential patron.³⁵⁶ In that sense Warburton could be considered as a powerful patron in the Church. He was also ambitious to gain a title in the Church. To this end, he wrote letters to members of the government after the death of bishops and deans and asked them to put his name forward. He also wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury for a doctor’s degree, and obtained that degree.³⁵⁷ He possessed the power to assist other people in obtaining good positions in the Church. Many young clergymen wanted to be introduced into the Warburtonian circle because becoming a Warburtonian was “a position that enabled one to occupy positions of authority in the first decades of George III’s reign”.³⁵⁸ In a letter written by the Anglican cleric William Gilpin to the famous poet Samuel Rogers, Warburton’s duty was described as follows: “Warburton’s practice was to write civil letters, and do civil things, to ingenious young men to list them in his service”.³⁵⁹ It was argued Richard Hurd became Archdeacon of Gloucester and Preacher at Lincoln’s Inn through the influence of Warburton.³⁶⁰

It is reasonable to argue that a relationship with Warburton would be beneficial in pursuing a career as a bishop. In an anonymous letter, it was stated that Brown wrote in

³⁵⁵ Warburton, *Letters*, p. 36.

³⁵⁶ Geoffrey S. Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680- 1730* (London, 1982), p. 91.

³⁵⁷ *Letters from the Reverend Dr. Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, to the Hon. Charles Yorke, from 1752-1770* (London: privately printed, 1812), p. 9, quoted by, William Roberts, *A Dawn of Imaginative Feeling: The Contribution of John Brown (1715-1766) to Eighteenth Century Thought and Literature* (Carlisle, 1996), p. 28.

³⁵⁸ Simon During, “Church, State and Modernization: English Literature as Gentlemanly Knowledge after 1688”, *MUSE*, p. 178.

³⁵⁹ Peter William Clayden, *The Early Life of Samuel Rogers* (London, 1887), pp. 416-417.

³⁶⁰ Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians*, p. 183.

the hope of receiving a bishopric.³⁶¹ Warburton also believed the same thing. In a letter written in 1754 he stated that “I believe he [Brown] might as well think of erecting a third Archbishoprick”.³⁶² If Brown’s aim was to get a bishopric, he must have known that Warburton could be a patron for him. However Brown may have entered into the Warburton Circle through his passion to become a literary figure. It is not possible to know what Brown may have aspired to, but being a member of Warburton’s circle and the publication of the *Essays on the Characteristics* (or both facts) contributed to Brown’s fame as a prominent literary figure.³⁶³

V. Shaftesbury as a threat to ‘public happiness’

A Man is by nothing so much himself, as by his Temper, and the Character of his Passions and Affections.³⁶⁴

For Shaftesbury, what made each individual different from others were their passions. People could “find Redress and Improvement in this case, by reflecting justly on the manner of [their] Motion, as guided by Affections which depend so much on Apprehension and Conceit”.³⁶⁵ In Shaftesbury’s theory, passions were regarded as a judicial faculty. The ultimate test of an action was measured by its tendency to promote the human happiness. Accordingly, people should know where their happiness and advantage lay. To reinforce this point, he emphasised that “[w]here else can it lie, than in my Pleasure; since my Advantage and Good must ever be pleasing; and what is pleasing, can never be other than my Advantage and Good”.³⁶⁶

Self-love was a criterion for moral evaluation. It is not hard to claim that for Warburton, Shaftesbury’s innate sense of virtue and moral relativism were viewed as harmful to social order and common welfare. Although Warburton used self-love in his theory, his

³⁶¹ Anonymous, *Letters Concerning the Present State Of England: Particularly Respecting The Politics, Arts, Manners, And Literature Of The Times* (London, 1772) p. 344.

³⁶² Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, p. 212.

³⁶³ Donald D. Eddy, *A Bibliography of John Brown* (New York, 1971), pp. 25-33. The number of copies in the fourth edition is not known.

³⁶⁴ Cooper, *Characteristicks*, p. 76.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

aim was different, as self-love was a step towards the love of God and common happiness;

that first and strongest passion of his nature, SELF-LOVE; from whence all the other appetites derive their force, and to which they direct their aim. Its use is to assist the heart to awaken Virtue, and to push out and develop the great principle of BENEVOLENCE.³⁶⁷

Contrariwise to Shaftesbury, the individual's passions did not have a role in society. Instead, they were to be assimilated by the common interest as self-love became a love of country.³⁶⁸ Warburton attracted attention for his association between self-love and religion by stating that self-love was "gradually rising from the individual to the whole ... to the DIVINE BENEVOLENCE".³⁶⁹ That is, self-love was used to achieve benevolence which was the source of all the virtues, even in religion:

the last great effort of benevolence produces what we call, RELIGION; whose end all agree to be HAPPINESS. This is the true account of the rise and progress of UNIVERSAL LOVE: which as it regards man, our holy faith calls CHARITY; as it regards God, PIETY.³⁷⁰

For Shaftesbury, "Love of one's country, and Love of Mankind, must also be Self-Love".³⁷¹ So, self-love in Shaftesbury's theory indicated the dominance of individual happiness, but in Warburton it served for public happiness as being followed by love of country and God.

In addition to this, Warburton was against Shaftesbury's account of law. Shaftesbury argued that as the starting point of social thinking, individual passions were adequate for acting towards the well-being of themselves and of the country in general.³⁷² Shaftesbury therefore believed that there was no need for written or unwritten laws to motivate man to be good. While Shaftesbury opposed civil laws due to his account of human nature, Warburton treated them as essential because of the weakness of human nature. To Warburton, man had to be directed towards the good of the state by means of

³⁶⁷ William Warburton, "The Love of God and Man" in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, (London, 1753), vol. I, p. 77.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

³⁷¹ Cooper, *Characteristicks*, p. 74.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 107, 224.

civil laws as well as the moral ones. Government by means of civil laws aimed “to improve the Mind and accommodate the Body, so as to make a rational Life comfortable”.³⁷³ If the people were to their own devices, men would grow “wanton by Prosperity, abuse[d] the Liberty of Thinking, and the Fruits of Industry, to the Indulgence of all the extravagant Appetites both of Mind and Body”.³⁷⁴ Laws were thereby necessary to motivate men to behave positively for themselves and society.

Moreover, while Shaftesbury argued against the idea of a Law “which was never humanly conceived, but divinely dictated and inspired”, Warburton insisted that the greatest happiness principle had to be reconciled with the idea of God and the immortal life in mind in order to be effective.³⁷⁵ Shaftesbury’s attempt to search for the foundation of ethics in the constitution of human nature alone without co-operation with God was considered to be a direct threat to moral order. In Warburton’s opinion, this kind of morality stood apart from theology and did not provide a common frame for welfare. This separation of morality and religion led Warburton to see Shaftesbury with “inveterate Rancour”.³⁷⁶ Shaftesbury believed that the fear of God had no role in providing public welfare because it induced a visionary and groundless panic. The principle of future rewards and punishments had no function for him, because the idea of God did not give rise to virtue in men by means of rewards or the fear of punishment.³⁷⁷ As long as people obeyed the laws due to their fear of God they could not be virtuous; rather obedience or duty should emerge naturally in Shaftesbury’s moral theory.

For Warburton, by contrast, the fear of God was more effectual than civil laws for the maintenance of the society.³⁷⁸ Since men’s passions and appetites had concurred with the weakness of human nature, faith should “enable [men] to surmount all the opposition of the appetites, by holding out to [men] an infinite reward”.³⁷⁹ He indicated

³⁷³ William Warburton, *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving*, p. 20.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ Cooper, *Characteristicks*, p. 67.

³⁷⁶ William Warburton, “Dedication” in *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated on the Principles of a Religious Deist* (London, 1738), p. xxiii.

³⁷⁷ Cooper, *Characteristicks*, p. 80.

³⁷⁸ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 152.

³⁷⁹ William Warburton, “The Edification of Gospel Righteousness” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, (London, 1754), vol. II, p. 8.

the rationality of justification by faith.³⁸⁰ The premises of Gospel, the expectation of rewards and the fear of punishments were all necessary due to the weakness of human nature and the inefficacy of civil laws. That is, having a belief in the afterlife was necessary to maintain social order. Warburton had published his *The Divine Legation of Moses* in 1738 in order to prove “whatsoever Religion and Society have no future State for their Support, must be supported by an extraordinary Providence”.³⁸¹ Briefly he argued that “A future State [was] necessary, as it supports Religion; Religion is necessary, as it supports Morality; and Morality, as it supports Society”.³⁸² However Shaftesbury’s system disregarded the role of God in moral theory, inevitably leading to impiety and the ruin of the state:

IMPIETY, which consists in a contempt of the sanctions of Religion, removes the first and strongest pillar of Society, the fear of divine punishment, for falsehood and wrong. From hence arises a disregard to the outward tye of oaths, the great security of the MAGISTRATE; and a disregard to the inward tye of conscience, the great security of the people.³⁸³

By way of summary, it could be stated that for Warburton both the Christian doctrine which “annexes the rewards of the Gospel-covenant to a System of FAITH or belief”³⁸⁴ and the faculty of reasoning which enabled “examination into the truth and reasonableness of such a System”³⁸⁵ were essential in preserving the moral and political integrity of the society. For this reason, Warburton regarded the ideas of Shaftesbury as reasons for a future corruption, and he encouraged John Brown to engage in a comprehensive refutation of Shaftesbury’s theory.

³⁸⁰ William Warburton, “Salvation By Faith Alone” in *The Works of the Right Reverend William Warburton* (London, 1788), vol. V, p. 381.

³⁸¹ William Warburton, *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*, 2 vols, (London, 1837), vol. II, p. 531.

³⁸² William Warburton, “Remarks on Several Occasional Reflections” in *The Works of William Warburton*, seven vols (London, 1788), vol. VI, p. 313.

³⁸³ William Warburton, “A Fast Sermon occasioned by the late rebellion” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, (London, 1754), vol. II, p. 35.

³⁸⁴ William Warburton, “Of Church Communion” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, (London, 1754), vol. II, p. 173.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

VI. Brown's pursuit of Warburton's line of argument

Warburton tried to draw attention to the superiority of reason while he was defending religious principles, submission to God and the essential link between morality and religion. Warburton favoured reason as the sole guide.³⁸⁶ Man could have different interests and pleasures but they should rely on their faculty of reasoning to examine what was true and virtuous by comparing and cultivating their ideas.³⁸⁷ Reason could direct individual interests and eliminate the controversies between selfish pleasures and common welfare. Similarly, Brown underlined the rectifying character of reason in motivating passions to serve the public good. His *Essay on Satire* clarified that a supremacy of the passions led to corruption in a man's character. At this point, he introduced the necessity of the guidance of reason in human nature.³⁸⁸ In his *Characteristics*, Brown defined man as "compounded of Imagination, Passion and Reason",³⁸⁹ although he believed the senses and passions to be fountains of derivation for all our ideas were vital in understanding human nature. He claimed that the guidance of reason was required to correct selfish nature.³⁹⁰ That is to say, he thought that man could not determine what is true, false, good or evil and fix "out Opinions and Passions on their proper Objects" without the faculty of reason.³⁹¹ Reason directed the unbridled passions towards the common good.

As both of them advocated the use of reason as the test of truth, they defended Protestantism by means of an emphasis on reason, and later they both discussed the relationship between Protestantism and liberty. Warburton placed an emphasis on this relationship to argue against the idea that religion enslaved the people. At this time, it had been argued that religion Christianity chained the people and "recommended only

³⁸⁶ William Warburton, "A Critical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Causes of Prodigies and Miracles, as related by Historians" in *Tracts by Warburton, and a Warburtonian* (London, 1789), p. 81.

³⁸⁷ Warburton, "Of Church Communion", p. 173.

³⁸⁸ Brown, *An Essay on Satire*, p. 8.

³⁸⁹ John Brown, *Essays on the Characteristics* (London, 1751), p. 16 (from now on abbreviated to *Characteristics*).

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13, 41.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

passive courage and suffering”.³⁹² To clarify this point, as a supporter of this idea Hume stated that:

WHERE the deity is represented as infinitely superior to mankind, this belief, tho’ altogether just, is apt, when joined with superstitious terrors, to sink the human mind into the lowest submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, penance, humility and passive suffering, as the only qualities, which are acceptable to him.³⁹³

For Warburton there was an established link between Protestantism and liberty. He reconciled civil and religious liberties and claimed that the former could only be produced by true religion.³⁹⁴ Protestant principles and civil liberty impacted on one another; when civil liberty was destroyed, superstition replaced it because arbitrary power required superstition’s support in order to be effective. Similarly, when true religion was gone the annihilation of civil liberty necessarily followed it.³⁹⁵ In order to reinforce this point he stated in a sermon preached after the Jacobite rebellion that,

True Religion be auspicious to Civil Liberty by the similar Principle on which both are established; by the same Maxims on which both are administered; by the like End to which both are directed; and by the same Enlargement of the human Faculties, which both naturally produce; it will then follow, that Civil Liberty is equally auspicious to true Religion.³⁹⁶

This link between religion and liberty was so well established that when one of them was achieved it would introduce the other one on the condition that all the external threats were swept away.³⁹⁷ Contrariwise to irreligion which left “a gloomy unsatisfying Indulgence of the grosser Appetites”,³⁹⁸ religion rescued man from slavery to the passions and encouraged enquiry and a spirit of liberty.³⁹⁹ Protestantism was the true religion which produced the greatest human good, plus civil and religious freedom.⁴⁰⁰ In his sermons that were preached during the Jacobite rising, Warburton particularly

³⁹² William Warburton, *Remarks on Mr. DAVID HUME’s Essay on the Natural History of Religion* (London, 1757), pp. 41-42.

³⁹³ David Hume, “Of Liberty and Necessity” in *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1748), p. 65.

³⁹⁴ Warburton, *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving*, p. 15.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³⁹⁹ Warburton, *Remarks on Mr. DAVID HUME’s Essay*, p. 43.

⁴⁰⁰ Warburton, *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving*, p. 27.

favoured Protestant principles to motivate the people's suppression of the rebellion and preservation of their true religion, to maintain their natural and civil rights as well as liberty of their happy constitution.⁴⁰¹ In *A Critical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Causes of Prodigies and Miracles*, Warburton defined the liberty that was achieved by means of Protestant principles as "the Balm of human Misery, the Quintessence of human Felicity, and the best Recompence for the Loss of a Terrestrial Paradise".⁴⁰²

At this juncture, it should be stated that Brown mentioned similar arguments in his sermons in 1746 that were preached before he met Warburton. He focused on the relationship between liberty and religion. He stated that a nobler foundation of liberty could only be found through Christianity.⁴⁰³ It was the "the Knowledge of pure Religion" that made mankind free.⁴⁰⁴ Brown thereby tried to find "the Liberty and Happiness of this Kingdom on the solid Basis of Religion and Virtue".⁴⁰⁵

In order to indicate the relation between Protestantism and liberty Brown defined the era after the Glorious Revolution as:

The religious Principle of Protestant Christianity seems to have taken the Lead, even of the Love of civil Freedom. The Dread of Popery was, at least, equal to That of arbitrary Power: The national Honour and Conscience coincided with, and confirmed the Christian Principle: These three united Powers raised Liberty to the brightest Throne she ever sat on.⁴⁰⁶

In Britain, Protestantism provided "a surer and nobler Foundation of Liberty than any ancient Heathens were ever possessed of".⁴⁰⁷ Protestant principles assisted by reason "gave Mankind a juster [sic] and more enlarged Conception of each other's Rights".⁴⁰⁸ In other words, the principle was superior to passion and impulse, and people respected the rights of other's due to Protestantism.⁴⁰⁹ For Brown, people could only achieve

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3, 15.

⁴⁰² William Warburton, "A Critical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Causes of Prodigies and Miracles, as related by Historians" in *Tracts by Warburton, and a Warburtonian* (London, 1789), p. 93.

⁴⁰³ John Brown, *The Mutual Connexion between Religious Truth and Civil Freedom; between Superstition, Tyranny, Irreligion, and Licentiousness* (London, 1746), p. 18 (from now on abbreviated to *The Mutual Connexion*).

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17, 25.

⁴⁰⁵ Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 191-192.

⁴⁰⁶ Brown, *Thoughts on Civil Liberty, on Licentiousness, and Faction* (Dublin, 1765), pp. 93-94.

⁴⁰⁷ Brown, *The Mutual Connexion*, p. 18.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

freedom in the possession of their rights.⁴¹⁰ He therefore came to the conclusion that only the knowledge of pure religion (Protestantism), would make the subjects free.⁴¹¹

Since both Warburton and Brown agreed on the connection between Protestantism and liberty, they also acknowledged the liberty of enquiry as a keystone of Protestantism. In his later sermons preached in 1754, Warburton defended Protestantism against criticisms that religious principles were obstacles to the development of science. He claimed that “[t]he Gospel [as] a Covenant or Transaction of God with Man”⁴¹² could also be regarded as the method to achieve truth. He believed that religion provided the liberty of inquiry and served for the advancement of natural knowledge. For him, “men [had] been apt to regard it [the Gospel] as a treasury of Science; and to apply to their Bible for all the principles of human knowledge”.⁴¹³ There was no contradiction between scientific knowledge and religious truth. Instead, religion provided the liberty of enquiry and advanced natural knowledge. The improvements in scientific knowledge did not mean that man should not believe in God’s existence as both the scientific and religious knowledge had equal significance and validity.⁴¹⁴

If the Newtonian philosophy (which is built on Science) has revealed and demonstrated the powers of Nature amidst all that darkness; how can we doubt of seeing God in his Gospel, though surrounded with the impenetrable depths of infinity?⁴¹⁵

Like Warburton, Brown discussed the freedom of liberty, invention and commerce in Protestant principles and claimed that “the free principle of Protestantism, not working by Terror, encourages the Mind to range abroad in Quest of Truth”.⁴¹⁶ It is evident that for both Protestantism provided civil liberty, freedom of inquiry and the elevation of the mind; and for Warburton happiness, and Brown the common good.⁴¹⁷

Their emphasis on a liberty that emerged from Protestant principles led them to attack Catholicism for its lack of freedom. Contrary to atheism, which made people licentious

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴¹² Warburton, “The Nature and Condition of Truth”, p. 20.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴¹⁴ Warburton, “Of Church Communion”, p. 193.

⁴¹⁵ Warburton, “The Nature and Condition of Truth”, p. 21.

⁴¹⁶ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 131-132.

⁴¹⁷ Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion*, pp. 3-4.

and vicious,⁴¹⁸ Brown stated that religious truth could “elevate the human Soul, and raise it to a Love of Freedom”.⁴¹⁹ Catholic principles could only be the instruments of oppression, as the head of the Catholic Church, was “the great Enemy of Truth and Freedom, the great Patron of Tyranny and Falsehood”.⁴²⁰ Brown censured Catholicism for its superstition, regarding it as the source of licentiousness. For him, it “invert[ed] all the Dictates of Morality”,⁴²¹ enslaved its votaries, and promoted corruption by destroying the virtuous and just.⁴²² In order to strengthen his point, Brown stated that France “so often the unworthy Object of our Envy and Imitation, is in a state of deep and confirmed slavery.”⁴²³

While Protestant liberty flourished alongside commerce,⁴²⁴ Catholicism destroyed the rights of men, their occupations and “thin’d the Land”.⁴²⁵ In the case of the replacement of Protestantism by Catholicism, subjects would have lost their rights and privileges and become the subjects of the master, exorbitant taxes, vile policy and calamity. In Brown’s opinion:

You [Great Britain] must have been doomed to be regarded as so many Drovers of Cattle, the Property of a giddy and despotic Master, who would only have watched the Opportunity of selling your Lives to his own Advantage, and then dragg’d you forth to the Slaughter.⁴²⁶

Unlike the liberties Protestantism had provided, Catholicism discouraged freedom of thinking. Warburton similarly praised the “principle of free inquiry and the liberty of private judgment” in Protestantism,⁴²⁷ and stated that for the Church of Rome,

...when men had once left the centre of unity, and would seek truth by a liberty of thinking, which authorized private judgement, there would soon be as many false opinions as free Inquirers: And as many Sects as both.⁴²⁸

⁴¹⁸ John Brown, *The Mutual Connexion*, p. 29.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁷ William Warburton, “Of Church Authority” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons* (London, 1754), vol. II, pp. 119-120.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121.

Catholic superstition did not allow people to enquire freely and discouraged freedom of thinking in order to prevent social division within the religious sphere. As Catholic tyranny made people unable to use the liberty of nature and religion and turned them into slaves,⁴²⁹ Warburton felt that Protestantism guaranteed both religious and civil freedom.⁴³⁰

In this light, when Britain was faced with the threat of Catholicism, through Jacobitism or French ambition, Warburton defended Protestantism by emphasising the slavery of Catholicism:

Instead of Freedom of inquiry and uncontrolled Exercise of Conscience; instead of making the End of Religion human Happiness, instead of an equitable Administration of Church Policy; instead of that Elevation of Mind and conscious Dignity of human Nature; we are presented with a blind Submission of the Understanding, and a forced Compliance of the Will; with absurd Superstitions concerning God's despotic and capricious Government, imitated, in its own, by an ambitious and corrupt Clergy, administered under the awful name of HIERARCHY; the whole concluding in Narrowness of Thought, in Lowness of Sentiment, and base and abject Conceptions of Man, created after God's own Images.⁴³¹

Furthermore, Warburton regarded Catholicism ("Popery"), "as an impious and impudent combination against the sense and rights of mankind than as a species of religion".⁴³² Contrary to Catholicism, Protestant subjects were free to obey the king. Under Catholicism a tyrant "regard[ed] his Subjects but as SLAVES, ordained for the Execution of his Will and Pleasure".⁴³³ Warburton's sermon about the Jacobite Rebellion clarifies this point:

...the King becomes honoured as the common Judge, and Avenge of Wrong and Oppression. On the other hand the Tyrant, by making his Will and Pleasure the Direction of his Government, confiscates and imprisons without legal Forfeiture or Conviction, which rendering Liberty and

⁴²⁹ William Warburton, "A Critical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Causes of Prodigies and Miracles, as related by Historians" in *Tracts by Warburton, and a Warburtonian* (London, 1789), p. 82.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴³¹ Warburton, *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving*, p. 4.

⁴³² Letter written by William Warburton to the Earl of Chatham, 14 November, 1762. It was published in William Pitt, *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, William Stanhope Taylor and Captain John Henry Pringle (eds) (London, 1838), vol. II, p. 190.

⁴³³ Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion*, pp. 13-14.

Property a Prey to Court Sychophants, reduces all Honour to a servile Fear.⁴³⁴

Protestantism appeared as preferable to Catholicism because it promised liberty. Britons should prefer the rights of free-born Englishmen to obedience to arbitrary power, freedom of conscience to blind submission, piety to superstition, virtue to fanaticism and sense to non-sense.⁴³⁵ Clearly Warburton and Brown held common ideas on the supremacy of reason, and both defended Protestantism with regard to liberty introducing religion as a political tool.

When Warburton discussed the necessity of an alliance between church and state, he placed an emphasis on the idea “CHURCH SHALL APPLY ITS UTMOST INFLUENCE IN THE SERVICE OF THE STATE; AND THAT THE STATE SHALL SUPPORT AND PROTECT THE CHURCH”.⁴³⁶ The Church and religion should contribute to the durability of the state, as religion was required as a cornerstone of society.⁴³⁷ The fear of God and the sanctions of rewards and punishments supported the civil laws and the moral order in Warburton’s theory. The authoritative character of divine reason by means of the “Truth and Purity of Faith”⁴³⁸ would enforce the hearts and minds of the people. Religion was to “teach Men subjection on Motives of Piety and true Holiness, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake”.⁴³⁹ Thus civil laws could be enforced on a principle of right as well as power by the aid of the religious laws.⁴⁴⁰ Religion would impart the necessity of legal obedience to men’s consciousness, reinforcing the conformity of people while contributing to the stability of the commonwealth.

Similarly to Warburton, Brown employed the same arguments in his sermon *On the Natural Duty of a Personal Service* preached in 1761. This sermon defined the moral and civil duties of people, and accentuated the necessity of obedience to laws for

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴³⁶ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 72.

⁴³⁷ Warburton, “Remarks on Several Occasional Reflections” in *The Works of William Warburton*, vol. VI, p. 313.

⁴³⁸ Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion*, p. 5.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁴⁰ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 25.

achieving wealth and peace in society.⁴⁴¹ Like Warburton, he claimed that people were commanded to obey the king and common laws because “the sacred Scripture...given us the most express Commands; enforcing our Obedience to the established Constitution, on the Principles of Religion”.⁴⁴² He defended the view that the people should not resist the ordinances of God and had to obey the civil laws as well as the moral ones. They had to obey “not only for Wrath (not only from the Fear of civil Punishment) but also for Conscious Sake”.⁴⁴³ Religious laws served for the same purpose, namely for directing people to obey the laws.

Brown’s sermon *On the Use and Abuse of Externals in Religion* was preached during their friendship in 1753 and it indicated the same underlying reasons for the necessity of religion in society. To Brown, men could be prevented from relapsing into state of barbarism if they listened “to the warning Voice, which bids them return to the right Way, and walk in it.”⁴⁴⁴ This is possible only through religion. In the sermon, he also stated that “[t]here is a strong and mutual Connexion between the Body and the Soul; between the Senses and Imagination, the Passions and the Reason of Mankind”.⁴⁴⁵ Religious principles were compulsory in order to achieve harmony between them. This is the reason why he believed that irreligion was a direct attack to the common good and needed to be refuted. Religion was required in the world to prevent contradiction between passions and reason, namely the selfish appetites and common good of society.

In his critique of Shaftesbury Brown mentioned the necessity of religion in leading self-love to rise to the love of a country, God and thus the common good.⁴⁴⁶ Brown treated self-love as the motive for individual actions to achieve common good. Likewise, Warburton used self-love to achieve the love of God and happiness in general. Self-love therefore became the love of one’s country and served for achieving benevolence, which was the source of all the virtues, (including religious virtues).⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴¹ John Brown, “On the Natural Duty of a Personal Service” in *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London, 1764), p. 208.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-210.

⁴⁴⁴ John Brown, *On the Use and Abuse of Externals in Religion* (London, 1753), pp. 7-8.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁴⁶ Brown, *Characteristics*, p. 216.

⁴⁴⁷ William Warburton, “The Love of God and Man” in *The Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occasionally opened and explained in a Course of Sermons*, (London, 1753), vol. I, p. 79.

Furthermore the fear of God was significant in Brown's and Warburton's moral theories. For Warburton, Catholicism caused moral disintegration in the society by eliminating the fear of God. How had Catholicism swept the fear of God away? According to Warburton, firstly, Catholicism undermined the relation between god and man "by transferring much of the Worship due to the Creator upon the Creature, in their Idolatrous Adoration of dead Men".⁴⁴⁸ Idolatry banished the fear of God by turning the idea of God into a worthless man-like creation in the imaginations of men. Secondly, the "Doctrine and Discipline of Penitence" of Catholicism led religious reverence to lose its power in keeping man to behave according to their duty. Men were no longer afraid of God since they believed that their sins could be forgiven according to Catholic principles.⁴⁴⁹ Thirdly, God's rule and power lost its vitality in Catholicism since they were transferred to a Man who assumed "to himself all Power both in Heaven and in Earth".⁴⁵⁰ For Warburton no one, not even the civil magistrate had a right to possess such a spiritual power because, "[a] jurisdiction in matters of Faith is what no human authority is capable of administering; as all human authority is subject to error and mistake".⁴⁵¹ Catholicism's dualist conception of the two spheres of authority inevitably removed God's authority. Fourthly, Catholicism assuaged the fear of God due to "its Tyranny over Conscience, called Submission to the Holy See".⁴⁵² While the judge of conscience was God, Catholicism replaced it with tyranny and damaged the true idea of God. As a result, the Pope (tyrant) gained the authority of God, as the only "Guide of human Life".⁴⁵³ These four reasons removed the fear of God from society and turned Catholicism into a direct threat for British constitution. For Warburton, man had the tendency to behave according to their selfish interests and required religion to "frighten [him], by the Terror of an invisible Judge, from those Crimes which escape the Notice of the Magistrate".⁴⁵⁴

In his *Characteristics* Brown, like Warburton, drew attention to the fear caused by God and represented it as a political instrument to maintain national unity. For him, the fear of God compelled men to devote their personal interests to public interest, and it was

⁴⁴⁸ Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion*, p. 9.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁵¹ Warburton, "Of Church Authority", p. 113.

⁴⁵² Warburton, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Present Unnatural Rebellion*, p. 11.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁵⁴ William Warburton, *A Sermon Preached on the Thanksgiving*, p. 32.

“absolutely necessary to his Happiness”.⁴⁵⁵ As a reply to Shaftesbury, Brown underlined that the fear of God was real.⁴⁵⁶ Shaftesbury claimed that the idea of God was unable to give rise to virtue by means of sanctions. Brown opposed him by emphasising that God and the religious principles could not be mean, slavish and unworthy as long as they were considered in their true light.⁴⁵⁷ The fear of God as the sure basis of human ethical behaviour did not degrade human beings as Shaftesbury had stated; rather, for Brown, it prevented men from doing evil.⁴⁵⁸

According to Brown (and Warburton) religious laws were more authoritative than the civil laws. In *The Mutual Connexion*, he stated that religion should also be used to resist the solicitations of the senses and passions.⁴⁵⁹ Brown put special emphasis on the enforcement of religious sanctions as he believed that they were “infinitely more powerful than these [human laws]; because the Good it promises, and the Evil it threatens, are infinitely greater and more lasting”.⁴⁶⁰ Therefore, religion and “the Sanctions of future Rewards and Punishments, from which it derives its Force, must be very strongly impressed on the human Mind”⁴⁶¹ in order to maintain social and political order. He clarified his ideas five years later, stating that internal enforcement of religious laws allowed the people to achieve virtue and thus the common good because:

As human Laws cannot reach the Heart of Man; as they can only inflict Punishment on Offenders, but cannot bestow Rewards on the Obedient; as there are many Duties of imperfect Obligation which they cannot recognize; as Force will sometimes defy, and Cunning often elude their Power; so without some further Aids, some Motives to Action more universally interesting, Virtue must still be betrayed and deserted.⁴⁶²

Likewise, Warburton regarded civil laws as insufficient and claimed that the inadequacy of civil laws lay in the absence of the sanctions of rewards.⁴⁶³ For him, only the religious laws were able to provide these sanctions, and he stated that religion, saw “the most secret Actions and Intentions of Men, and [had] given Laws for the perfecting

⁴⁵⁵ Brown, *Characteristics*, p. 251.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 213-214.

⁴⁵⁹ Brown, *The Mutual Connexion*, p. 33.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

⁴⁶² Brown, *Characteristics*, pp. 209-210.

⁴⁶³ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 10.

their Nature, [it would] oblige of those Duties of perfect Obligation, which human Laws cannot reach, or sufficiently enforce.⁴⁶⁴

To conclude, the necessity of religion, moral laws, the fear of God, the sanctions of rewards and punishments all serve for the preservation of the national unity. Both Warburton and Brown considered the separation of ethical world and religious world as perils for the society. Since they believed that selfish passions of people were stronger than the idea of common good, they introduced those necessities discussed above to direct men to behave in accordance with their desire for general happiness. They strengthened the link between the moral world and God and used religion as an object of fear and as an instrument of policy.

VII. Brown's *Estimate* as a work independent from Warburton

If we disregard Brown's arguments mentioned in the *Estimate* and consider only the similarities discussed above, we will mistakenly deduce that Brown also suggested the preservation of Anglican Church as a guarantee to eliminate future threats. It is clear in Brown's early works, his morality centred analysis offered a well-established relation between virtue, truth, liberty and religion; a relationship strengthened by the Protestant principles in his sermons. Like Warburton, Brown also saw Protestantism as one of the most important pillars of the society. The sermons that were preached during the Jacobite rebellion asserted Protestantism's position as the true religion, defending it as the source of virtue, truth and freedom in Britain.⁴⁶⁵ In 1746 he stated that Britain needed to overcome the threat of superstition and tyranny, namely the enemies of liberty, by means of the laws of the Gospel.⁴⁶⁶ Prior to the *Estimate*, therefore, Britain was portrayed as a peaceful and free kingdom on the condition that Protestantism was preserved. To reinforce this he claimed that,

If we practice those Truths we know, and rightly use that Freedom we enjoy, we shall be established as on a Rock; we shall still rise above the

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁶⁵ Brown, *The Mutual Connexion*, p. 35, 42.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

Waves that threaten us; tho they toss themselves, yet shall they not prevail;
tho' they roar, yet shall they not pass over us.⁴⁶⁷

We could easily assume that as a member of Warburton Circle, Brown had promulgated the same remedy as Warburton. However, he had not. The publication of the *Estimate* in 1757 offered a different cure for the ills of Britain. Instead of advocating unity under the Anglican Church, Brown had defended the need for a moral regeneration that revealed the differences between his theory and that of Warburton. The *Estimate* amounted to Brown making clear his own voice.

First of all, and against Warburton, Brown argued that the situation of religion and the resulting divisions within the Church was not the only reason for the corruption in society. He did not believe that the preservation of Anglican Church as the established church would provide national unity. As the moral part of the body, its manners and the principles were able to maintain the durability of the state, so their restoration alone could protect the state from corruption. As was discussed in the section on the *Alliance*, neither the state nor the church was adequate to achieve public wealth in Warburton's theory. Since "RELIGION alone was an ineffectual Remedy to moral Disorders, so now SOCIETY, without other Assistance, would be equally insufficient".⁴⁶⁸ Warburton explained that it was necessary to have an established link between the church and the state. Firstly, he stated that although security was provided against violence in civil society, "the inordinate Principle of Self Love being still the same". Secondly, civil laws could not restrain a violation of right; for example no state could punish fornication. Thirdly, civil laws remained ineffectual because they did not give attention to gratitude, hospitality and charity as they did not affect society directly. Fourthly, Warburton asserted that society produced new duties like the love of one's country which were unknown in the state of nature, giving rise to the need of another motivation for people to act according to the common good of the society. Lastly, the establishment of civil society created inordinate appetites and unreal wants and caused contradiction between individual interests and common interest of society.⁴⁶⁹ As a result of this, he concluded that society alone was not sufficient to accomplish social order without the assistance of religion. The coordination of civil and moral laws was essential to keep

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴⁶⁸ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 7.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

people in order and force them to behave according to common welfare. Religion served to support morality and thus society.

Disregarding the necessity for such an alliance, Brown focused on the moral structure of the state. According to him, nothing could cause disorder as long as the manners and the principles were upright. Religion was vital in Brown's theory, but he did not defend an alliance between state and church. Instead he indicated that political integrity would be preserved by manners and principles *per se*. The following words of Montesquieu that Brown quoted in *Thoughts on Civil Liberty, on Licentiousness, and Faction* indicate Brown's view:

More States have perished, thro' a Violation of Manners, than thro' a Violation of Laws... [because] He who violates established Manners, strikes at the general Foundation; he who violates Law, strikes only at a particular Part of the Superstructure of the State.⁴⁷⁰

Brown regarded moral principles as the soul and security of the state.⁴⁷¹ Thus the durability of the state and the happiness of the subjects depended on the preservation of moral unity. In order to reinforce this point he used the example of France. For him, the internal harmony of France had not been destroyed since the spirit of liberty, honour and defence were maintained. Although its character was effeminate and vain like Britain, it succeeded in protecting its integrity and France had become stronger than Britain in principle.⁴⁷² That is to say, even external threats could not subdue the nation as long as its internal unity survived.

In this light, Brown opposed what he identified as the ruling maxim of the day, and emphasised the significance of moral integrity in making the nation strong. The maxim he derided was that "if our Trade and Wealth are but increased, we are powerful, happy, and secure".⁴⁷³ For Brown, believing that wealth and the spirit of commerce were the only ways of securing the nation was a great error. This maxim was the reason for corruption of Britain.⁴⁷⁴ What strengthened the nation would not experience an increase

⁴⁷⁰ Brown, *Thoughts*, pp. 68-69.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴⁷² Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 135-141.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

in trade and wealth, but rather a salutary moral structure.⁴⁷⁵ It could be stated that the cause of the forthcoming threat was the religious controversies in Warburton's theory, while it was the corruption of the moral character for Brown.

Warburton and Brown also pursued different approaches in their view of Protestantism. In Warburton's theory the interdependence of the state and the church served public utility.⁴⁷⁶ At the same time, he stated that "By the Law of Nature every Man has a Right of worshipping God according to his own Conscience".⁴⁷⁷ In this light, not every church could be chosen as the established faith. Actually the interests of the state regarding the church had nothing to do with the abstract truth of particular religion. Therefore, only the utility of religion could determine which religion was going to ally with the state. As Warburton claimed "THE TRUE END FOR WHICH RELIGION IS ESTABLISHED IS, NOT TO PROVIDE FOR THE TRUE FAITH, BUT FOR CIVIL UTILITY".⁴⁷⁸ In a letter written to the Earl of Chatham, he stated that "the state has nothing at all to do with errors in religion, nor the least right so much as to attempt to repress them".⁴⁷⁹ The state should therefore prefer the largest of the existing religious bodies in its alliance with the church because,

[T]he larger the religious Society is, where there is an equality in other points, the better enabled it will be to answer the ends of the Alliance. It is scarce possible it should be otherwise, because the two Societies being composed of the same individuals, the greatly prevailing Religion must have a majority of it's members in the assemblies of State, who will naturally prefer their own Religion to any other. Hence we see the reason why the Episcopal is the established Church in England; and the Presbyterian the established Church in Scotland".⁴⁸⁰

This led him to conclude that the state could transfer its allegiance if the church lost its majority support. Public utility and religious truth always coincided in Warburton's alliance. It is clear that Warburton did not defend Protestantism only because it was the true faith, but it was also the largest religious group. His concern was more political

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁴⁷⁶ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 74.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁴⁷⁹ Letter written by William Warburton to the Earl of Chatham, 14 November, 1762. It was published in William Pitt, *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, William Stanhope Taylor and Captain John Henry Pringle (eds) (London, 1838), vol. II, p. 190.

⁴⁸⁰ William Warburton, *A View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy, Compleat, in four letters to a friend* (London, 1756), pp. 308-309.

than religious. What he emphasised was not the truth of Protestantism, but a convenience that emerged from the numerical superiority of Protestants. He would have accepted a possible alliance between the British establishment and Catholic Church (or any other church than the Anglican Church), on the condition that this church had become the greatest and the most advantageous one in future. Alternatively, Brown believed that the Protestant Church had to be preserved because it was the true faith,⁴⁸¹ and because of its (numerical) advantages in public life. However, it is clear that the truth of its doctrine preceded its civil utility in Brown's theory.

Unlike Warburton, Brown never favoured the establishment of any religion for the sake of the society. While he was criticising the harmful effects of irreligion and the necessity of religious principles, he mentioned Protestantism particularly. He stated that "WITH REGARD to our own Country, the Principles of Protestantism have lost their Influence",⁴⁸² and he worried about the destruction of Protestantism rather than religion in general. Consequently he aimed to preserve Protestantism in his works. Especially after his sermons entitled *The mutual connexion between religious truth and civil freedom* which appeared before he met with Warburton, he became regarded as a popular preacher of protestant principles.⁴⁸³ Brown affirmed Protestantism to be religious truth, because true Christianity was Protestantism.⁴⁸⁴ Catholic principles could only be the instruments of oppression and could not be seen as true Christian Principles. According to Brown the head of the Catholic Church was "the great Enemy of Truth and Freedom, the great Patron of Tyranny and Falsehood, he may at least in a secondary and figurative Sense be justly accounted Anti-Christ".⁴⁸⁵

Brown attacked Catholicism by emphasising its harmful effects on the English liberties. Nevertheless Warburton laid more emphasis on the elimination of the fear of God since he saw its damage to moral and political order. Brown prioritised the liberty of society, while Warburton drew more attention to the security of Britain. This brings us to state that, for Warburton, the permanency of the state was more significant than the liberties of subjects. In Warburton's defence of Anglicanism, it was more essential to establish

⁴⁸¹ John Brown, *Thoughts on Civil Liberty*; John Brown, *Characteristics*.

⁴⁸² Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 138-139.

⁴⁸³ James E. Crimmins, "Brown, John (1715-1766)", ODNB.

⁴⁸⁴ Brown, *The Mutual Connexion*, p. 18.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

political unity than guaranteeing the freedom of the subjects. However, it appeared that the liberty of people was both essential and sufficient, for Brown, to guarantee the nation's stability. Warburton used Protestantism to preserve the state and Brown considered it as the true faith that was necessary to make people free. Protestantism had a political justification in Warburton's theory and it had a theological justification in Brown's. According to Brown the church was also engaged in the political sphere, although he endeavoured to maintain its ecclesiastical power and the role of the clergy as well, while Warburton tried to preserve it as a political party of alliance. Brown was in consequence a more zealous defender of Protestantism than Warburton.

In addition to this, Brown's established link between virtue, truth and liberty was also different to Warburton's sense of these issues. Brown's defence of the relationship between liberty and religion was supported by virtue and truth. It provided more solid basis than Warburton's. For Brown, men should be induced, compelled and motivated to sacrifice their private interests. By means of the restraints of law to compel them to behave according to the common welfare, men could achieve freedom. In order to accomplish the liberty of the subjects, laws had to curb, fix and oblige the desires of individuals to yield the common good. Thereby civil liberty could be produced by law, and law only through means of religion. Religion made the laws more authoritative and it directed men to the public happiness under which people gained civil liberty.⁴⁸⁶

Unlike Warburton, Brown gave a detailed analysis of virtue as well. Warburton mentioned "virtue" but only stated that self-love "is to assist the heart to awaken virtue" but he did not expand his ideas. However, Brown made an analysis on the nature of virtue as his aim was to "establish the public Happiness of Mankind on the solid Basis of Virtue".⁴⁸⁷ The main object of his very first work, *Honour: A Poem* was to indicate the relationship between truth and virtue. In order to do that, he first of all investigated the foundation of honour. For him, everyone wanted to find honour but only discovered it in different situations: "The Soldier views her in shining Blade; The Pedant 'midst the Lumber in his Head".⁴⁸⁸ However, honour could only be found in truth, virtue and

⁴⁸⁶ Brown, *Thoughts*, p. 8, 38.

⁴⁸⁷ Brown, *Defence*, p. 69.

⁴⁸⁸ Brown. *Honour: A Poem* (London, 1743), p. 6.

honesty.⁴⁸⁹ In addition to this, Brown defended reason's ability to motivate people towards behaving according to the common good. His ideas on the spirit of honour and the dominance of reason worth attention since they paved the way for Brown to introduce social virtue and its necessity into his ideas about national unity at a later date. He asserted that men should use reason as their guide to find honour in virtue. Passions could deceive mankind as people "fall down and worship what themselves have made [by passions]".⁴⁹⁰ Therefore, people should "discard Self-Love; set Passion's Glass aside" to find true honour.

After defending the superiority of reason over the passions, he talked about virtue and stated that "Where'er she treads she leaves her Footsteps bright, In radiant Tracts of never-dying light".⁴⁹¹ For Brown, virtue and truth were the same but they differed in name.⁴⁹² According to Brown, men would achieve truth by means of virtue.⁴⁹³ In his another poem, *On Liberty* (1749), he stated that freedom aided the heart, truth refined it and together they "warm the Heart with Virtue's Flame divine".⁴⁹⁴ This induced Brown to claim that anything vicious could not be true. Furthermore, Brown considered truth as eternal, and virtue to be stable and immortal. This meant that honour found in virtue had a fixed nature like truth because all of them were discovered through reason in Brown's theory.

According to Brown people should discard from the chains of passions to become virtuous and guided by reason. As he reiterated in his *Essay on Satire*:

But thou whose eye, from passion's film refined,
Can see true greatness in an honest mind;
Can see each virtue and each grace unite,
And taste the raptures of a PURE delight.⁴⁹⁵

Selfish pleasures would not lead people to be virtuous, and his sermon *On the pursuit of false pleasure, and the mischiefs of immoderate gaming* (1750), focused on the

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁹⁴ John Brown, *On Liberty: A Poem* (London, 1749), p. 9.

⁴⁹⁵ Brown, *An Essay on Satire*, p. 6.

necessity of virtue for experiencing pleasures. He claimed that “no true or lasting Pleasure is, or can be obtained, without the Practice of VIRTUE”.⁴⁹⁶ In other words, any vice would not lead people to pleasure. It seems that he tried to prevent men from acting according to their selfish desires to gain pleasure. In the following year Brown strengthened the link between virtue and common good in his *Essays on Characteristics*. Against Shaftesbury’s moral theory that led to contradiction between selfish pleasures and the common good, Brown defended virtue as retaining permanent realities.

The nature of vice and virtue should not differ from people to people as public happiness was the only goal.⁴⁹⁷ To Brown, “certain Actions, under the same Circumstances, must universally produce Happiness or Misery”.⁴⁹⁸ For example, virtues like humanity, fidelity, truth, temperance and mutual benevolence produced happiness, whereas vices like cruelty, treachery, lying, intemperance, inhumanity, adultery and murder caused misery in all ages and nations.⁴⁹⁹ The common good was taken into consideration in Brown’s theory of virtue; “the Idea of Virtue hath never been universally affixed to any Action or Affection of the Mind, unless where this Tendency to produce Happiness was at least apparent”.⁵⁰⁰ An action would be morally worthy if and only if it did not contradict with the greatest public happiness. Brown regarded everything that contributed to the happiness for all as virtuous and saw everything that was harmful to the common good as vice:

Whatever tends to the Good of all, is by the consent of all, denominated Virtue; that whatever is contrary to this great End, is universally branded as Vice; in the same Manner, as whatever nourishes the Body is called Food; whatever destroys it, Poison.⁵⁰¹

Concerning the question of virtue, Brown’s goal was not to explain which actions were virtuous and which ones were vice, but rather he tried to answer the question “what makes Virtue to be what it is”.⁵⁰² Briefly, virtue was “the Conformity of our Affections

⁴⁹⁶ John Brown, *On the Pursuit of False Pleasure, and the Mischiefs of Immoderate Gaming* (Bath, 1750), p. 3.

⁴⁹⁷ Brown, *Characteristics*, p.141.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.142.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 112.

with the public Good: Or the voluntary Production of the greatest Happiness”.⁵⁰³ It would be reasonable to argue that Brown had enlarged Warburton’s ideas on virtue and sought to define social virtue.

In a later sermon published three years after his *Essays on Characteristics*, Brown focused on virtue again and indicated it was the main aim of religion,⁵⁰⁴ and made the argument again that religion was necessary for men to be virtuous. In his early sermons Brown asserted that when the [commands] “of God are swallowed up and lost in the Traditions of Men”, man was left with his selfish desires and unsatisfied pleasures, hence he could not be virtuous.⁵⁰⁵ It was religion which directed them to be virtuous and made them free subjects.⁵⁰⁶ Opposing the atheism which led people to be licentious and vicious,⁵⁰⁷ Brown stated that religious truth could “elevate the human Soul, and raise it to a Love of Freedom”.⁵⁰⁸ The interrelation between freedom, truth, virtue and religion in Brown’s theory provided a well-established moral system resting on Protestant principles. However, Warburton attempted to combine freedom of the subjects with their subjection to the Anglican establishment. For this end, he used the Anglican Church to justify the obedience of free subjects to the state.⁵⁰⁹ Protestantism was used to guarantee the freedom of the subjects under their submission to the state for Warburton while its main aim was to make people virtuous in Brown’s theory.

At this point it is necessary to underline the fact that the unity of Protestantism and the preservation of the Anglican Church did not play the same role for both men. Brown was regarded as a popular Protestant preacher after the Jacobite rebellion and dedicated himself to defend Protestant principles. Although he did not use the word ‘Protestantism’ in his *Estimate*, he called it a “rational religion” when discussing how the spirit of defence differentiated from one religion to another. Moreover, he used the word “protestant clergy” once when he was criticising the clergy as they extinguished the national capacity of the British nation.⁵¹⁰ Unlike Warburton, Brown considered the clergy to be mired in effeminacy, accusing them of forgetting their duties. The clergy

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

⁵⁰⁴ Brown, *On the Use and Abuse of Externals in Religion*, p. 25.

⁵⁰⁵ Brown, *The Mutual Connexion*, p. 32.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41, 48.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁰⁹ Warburton, *The Alliance*, p. 82

⁵¹⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 82.

had a fashionable contempt,⁵¹¹ and such a defect of religion “hath rendered this order of Men altogether useless, except among those in middle Life, where they still maintain a certain Degree of Estimation”.⁵¹² Brown added that the clergy could complain about religion, but this should not make them sink to false behaviour that disrespected religion and their duties. That is, “[t]here is a wide Difference between the Remonstrances of Reason, and the Insults of Malice or Contempt”.⁵¹³ In this regard he put emphasis on the Protestant clergy in particular and stated that “When the English Protestant Clergy, and that Christianity which they teach, were most honoured and respected at Home, England was then most honoured and respected Abroad”.⁵¹⁴

Nevertheless, for Brown, the clergy no longer desired to eliminate unmanly and luxurious tendencies. Rather they sought after them:

In their Conduct, they curb not, but promote and encourage the trifling Manners of the Times: It is grown a fashionable thing, among these Gentlemen, to despise the Duties of their Parish; to wander about, as the various Seasons invite, to every Scene of false Gaiety; to frequent and shine in all public Places, their own Pulpits excepted.⁵¹⁵

Unlike Warburton, for whom Anglicanism was everything, Brown did not refer to Anglicans in the *Estimate*. This underscored the differences between the men.

While Brown used religion as a political tool and defended the cooperation of morality with religion, he did not attack deists and atheists in the same manner as Warburton. Brown accused Hume, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Tindal and Mandeville of eroding the principle of religion,⁵¹⁶ but did not see their ideas as the key source of contemporary corruption. In Warburton’s view, religious debates were the sole source of social disorder and therefore these people needed to be opposed. Atheism and deism had become widespread through such people, whereas for Brown “Civil Times are Times of Atheism”⁵¹⁷ because the age was directed by false manners and trifling pleasures. Religion had lost its power and influence because of atheists, deists, non-conformists

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 57; Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 86.

⁵¹⁷ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 163.

and Catholics for Warburton. Yet, in Brown's theory the exorbitant trade and wealth had obliterated the principle of religion; because of the spirit of commerce "not only active Principle is lost, but Religion itself (if such a State be free) is publicly insulted and derided".⁵¹⁸

The last difference between Brown and Warburton was their argument regarding France. Both saw France as a major threat to Britain and criticised its Catholicism. As discussed in the previous sections, for Warburton Catholicism enslaved people and corrupted the moral order by eliminating the fear of God. Brown put forward similar arguments concerning the enslavement of Catholic principles but in the *Estimate* he also focused on the great difference between Protestantism and Catholicism in terms of the spirit of national defence. For Brown "ENTHUSIASTIC Religion leads to Conquest"⁵¹⁹ and the religious principles of France strengthened their military spirit and led them to be more successful than Great Britain in military terms.

Brown also introduced reasons other than Catholicism that made France more powerful than Britain.⁵²⁰ Firstly, Brown stated that the spirit of union was stronger in some forms of government and weaker in others, regardless of the manners.⁵²¹ For instance, it was strong in absolute monarchies where everything depended on the absolute power of the prince.⁵²² Since absolute monarchy prevented the divisions that emerged naturally in free countries it gave more unity to the state.⁵²³ By contrast, in free countries like Britain divisions were inevitable. This would weaken the spirit of union unless they were protected by principles of manners that fostered national unity. The principles of religion, honour and public spirit had to protect national unity against the threat of selfish interests.⁵²⁴ These principles were, however, being destroyed by the spirit of commerce in Britain. This explained the events of the war. Brown did not prefer French monarchy to the free government of Britain, but was ready to acknowledge its superiority in terms of the spirit of union.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁵²² *Ibid.*

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

The second advantage of the French was that they could maintain their internal strength despite becoming effeminate and vain because their manners were “checked and counteracted in their Effects, by a variety of Causes and Principles wholly dissimilar.”⁵²⁵ France’s national capacity was not weakened by selfish interests because it trained and educated people to rise in public offices.⁵²⁶ While men of fashion were powerful in civil, naval and military offices in Britain, the men of wisdom and capacity were the rulers of France.⁵²⁷ Brown’s criticism of clerical establishments, and the clerical bent of education is clear here, as he believed that the educational system in France was more geared to producing agents of the public good, whereas in Britain people who were selfish and neglectful of the public good came out of the universities.

Thirdly, the spirit of union of France was stronger than in Britain’s because their military honour was able to control their effeminate manners and bolster their spirit of defence. The martial honour of France was their peculiar principle because it:

...hath been early instilled into every rising Generation; and is at length become so strong and universal, as to form the national Character. It spreads through every Rank; inspires even the meanest in the Kingdom; and pervades and actuates the whole Machine of Government, with a Force little inferior to that of public Virtue.⁵²⁸

Being their main interest, the military honour in France kept its vigour.⁵²⁹ Although Brown saw honour gained under the light of the principles of Catholicism as a false honour, he added that “This false Honour, as it regards other Nations; as it regards their own Country, it is true”.⁵³⁰

Fourthly, France was stronger than Britain because exorbitant trade and wealth could not harm their unity. Since the nobility (and the gentry) were prohibited from commerce by the laws of *dérogeance*, their poverty led them to pursue military glory. This limitation on trade thereby contributed to the unity of their monarchy.⁵³¹ Fifthly, their monarchy, their spirit of honour and their Catholic principles led France to treat their

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

colonies either as converts, miniature versions of France, or as friends.⁵³² Thus they were more successful in their governors of colonies and this made them more powerful than Britain overall as a state.⁵³³

Warburton was never as concerned with the French threat as Brown was. The five reasons mentioned above made France a gargantuan danger to Britain. Despite their Catholicism, they kept their unity because their principles were preserved. This moral integrity made France powerful and Brown indicated the significance of manners and principles in maintaining their unity. For Brown, being Catholic or being Protestant alone could not preserve national unity. If Warburton had been right in considering the maintenance of the Anglican establishment as the only way to public happiness, Catholic France would have been in a miserable situation and on the brink of defeat in the war. In Brown's theory, therefore, the preservation of the Anglican Church as the established was not introduced as the only way to secure Great Britain.

These are the points that made Brown an independent character within the Warburton circle. Brown tried to find an answer to the question of how Britain could be a virtuous and free association, and he considered moral regeneration as the way towards it. The vulnerability lay in "Degeneracy or Corruption of the Manners and Principles of the People."⁵³⁴ This main argument could be considered as a direct confutation of Warburton's Anglican centred system. It could also be seen as the reason of Brown's breaking away from Warburton's party.

VIII. The friendship of Brown and Warburton

The supervision by Warburton of Brown's *Essays on Characteristics* gave rise to an intimacy between them and also led Brown's membership of the Warburton Circle. In the letters and memoirs of people who knew Brown, he was depicted as a troubled character with a propensity towards melancholy. His suicide was regarded as a result of

⁵³² *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

his depression and a tendency to oversensitivity that made interaction with him difficult.⁵³⁵ Moreover, Warburton was often described as untrustworthy, arrogant and sarcastic.⁵³⁶ His domineering attitude was criticised⁵³⁷ and he was regarded as a tyrannical patron who fed “upon the adulation of a subservient clique”.⁵³⁸ It is not hard to assume that a friendship between these two figures would not last long, and it did not in practice. My contention is that the success of the *Essays on Characteristics* and afterwards the disapproval of Warburton regarding the publication of Brown’s tragedies caused coldness between them. Finally, the publication of the *Estimate* ended it completely.

As highlighted in a (sarcastic) letter by Warburton (1754), his feelings about Brown after the success of the *Essays on Characteristics* altered:

Our honest friend Brown is fertile in projects: He has a scheme to erect a Chaplain and Chapel in the Castle of Carlisle, and to be himself the man. Inter nos, I believe he might as well think of erecting a third Archbishoprick.⁵³⁹

Furthermore, in a letter written to David Garrick, the playwright and theatre manager (1717-79), he explained his disapproval of Brown securing a significant position in the church. For Warburton, Brown had “too much honesty for a successful court chaplain, and too much sense and sobriety for a city preacher”.⁵⁴⁰ Any closeness was further damaged during the publication process of *Barbarossa, a tragedy*. After hearing Brown’s idea of printing this tragedy, Warburton wrote a letter to Richard Hurd and stated that Brown should not have published the tragedy and in doing so was motivated by the pursuit of money alone:

⁵³⁵ Andrew Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 673. For more information see also; Thomas Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick* (London, 1784), pp. 213-215.

⁵³⁶ Paul Harvey, *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1946), p. 834; Isaac d’Israeli, *Quarrels of Authors; or some memories for our Literary History* (London, 1814), p. 108. For more information, see Lowth’s letter to Warburton: Robert Lowth, *A Letter to the Right Reverend Author of The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated* (Oxford, 1765).

⁵³⁷ Edward Gibbon, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Edward Gibbon*, 2 vols, (London, 1830), vol. I, p. 204.

⁵³⁸ Samuel Rogers and William Gilpin, *Samuel Rogers and William Gilpin: Their friendship and correspondence*, Carl Paul Barbier (ed) (Oxford, 1959), p. 58.

⁵³⁹ Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, p. 212.

⁵⁴⁰ David Garrick, *The private correspondence of David Garrick: with the most celebrated persons of his time* (London, 1832), p. 71.

Brown has told me the grand secret; and I wish it had been a secret still to me, when it was none to every body else. I am grieved that either these unrewarding times, or his love of poetry, or his love of money, should have made him overlook the duty of a Clergyman in all times, to make connexions with Players. Mr. Allen is grieved. You are sufficiently grieved, as I saw by your postscript in a letter to him, where you reprove him for an advertisement. We told him, that we should both have dissuaded him from his project had he communicated it to us. As it was, we had only to lament that state of these times that forced a learned and ingenious Clergyman into these measures, to put himself at ease”.⁵⁴¹

For Warburton, both he and his party should concentrate on writing for the preservation of the Anglican Church against the dangers caused by free thinkers, atheists, deists and Catholics. Warburton tried to discourage not only Brown but all his clerical protégés from pursuing other literary projects. To Warburton they needed to pay attention to their clerical duties only. The (institutional) reason was that, “the profession was a ‘sacred one’ and that its business ‘lay elsewhere’ than literature”.⁵⁴² Since there was a danger caused by the pressures both of free-thought and Catholicism during the eighteenth-century, Warburton wanted to direct his circle to give their attention to the maintenance of the public good. However, Brown insisted on having *Barbarossa* produced on the stage in 1755. Although Warburton disapproved of the idea, he helped Brown in its production and asked Garrick to use his best efforts in favour of his friend. Moreover, he tried to make peace between Garrick and Brown when Brown threatened their relationship, as clarified in a letter written by Warburton to Garrick:

I love and esteem Dr. Brown: he vexed me; but I find he must be treated like a mistress as well as a friend- ‘Be to his faults a little blind’- and I make no doubt of his always approving himself a man of honour and virtue, and a warm and grateful friend.⁵⁴³

While Warburton saw *Barbarossa* as “too cheap”⁵⁴⁴, it achieved success under the management of Garrick and “long remained what is called a stock-piece”.⁵⁴⁵ The success of *Barbarossa* outraged Warburton, and Brown’s production of another (less

⁵⁴¹ Warburton, *Letters*, p. 142.

⁵⁴² During, “Church, State and Modernization”, p. 184.

⁵⁴³ Garrick, *The private correspondence of David Garrick*, p. 71.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁵⁴⁵ Alexander Chalmers, *The General Biographical Dictionary*, 8 vols (London, 1812-1817), vol. VII (1817), p. 98.

successful) tragedy *Athelstan* in 1756 irked Warburton and severely damaged their friendship.

In the following year, Brown had published his famous book, the *Estimate* and praised Warburton in the following words

TRUE it is, that amidst this general Defect of Taste and Learning, there is a Writer, whose Force of Genius, and Extent of Knowledge, might almost redeem the Character of the Times. But that superiority, which attracts the reverence of the few, excites the envy and hatred of the many: and while his works are translated and admired abroad, and patronised at home, by those who are most distinguished in genius, taste, and learning, himself is abused, and his friends insulted for his sake, by those who never read his writings, or, if they did, could neither taste nor comprehend them.⁵⁴⁶

Brown had criticised the literary taste of the age while praising Warburton. This panegyric on Warburton attracted the attention of the nation and led to much criticism of Brown.⁵⁴⁷ According to a critic, Warburton did not write poetry and his works were not translated into other languages, therefore he did not deserve Brown's praise.⁵⁴⁸ Brown's words were seen as exaggerated and led people to think that he "had Obligations to him [Warburton]".⁵⁴⁹ Brown was attacked as being Warburton's buffoon,⁵⁵⁰ his jackanapes,⁵⁵¹ and his "obsequious parasite".⁵⁵² In addition to this, he was delineated as a member of the Warburton school who "possessed too much of the spirit of his master to submit, without murmuring, to his dictates".⁵⁵³

Many years later, an anonymous author emphasised the obsequiousness of Brown:

A vast COLOSSUS made of brass,
By flatt'ry's hand design'd,
WILL stands on high to shew his —,
And thence befoul mankind.

⁵⁴⁶ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 43.

⁵⁴⁷ Andrew Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 657.

⁵⁴⁸ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age. In a letter to the Rev. Dr. Brown* (London, 1757), p. 19.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁵⁰ S. S., *Letters to the Estimator of the Manners and the Principles of the Times*, 3rd edition (London, 1758), p. 13.

⁵⁵¹ Horace Walpole, *The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford*, Peter Cunningham (ed) (London, 1906), vol. III, pp. 134-135.

⁵⁵² John Taylor, *Records of my Life*, 2 vols, (London, 1832), vol. I, p.85.

⁵⁵³ Charles Churchill and William Tooke *The Poetical Works of Charles Churchill*, 2 vols, (London, 1804), vol. II, p. 44.

To keep the figure clean and neat,
 Let B—N in daily visit,
 Come with a sheet of ESTIMATE
 To wipe the part, and kiss it.⁵⁵⁴

As Brown treated Warburton as a Colossus, the author showed the weakness of this Colossus in a sarcastic manner. The publication of the *Estimate* led Brown to be seen as a flatter of Warburton and this instigated severe attacks against him. After the success of the *Estimate* their intimacy ended, and Warburton wrote a letter to Garrick mentioning his ideas on the book:

I perceived that the success of his Estimate had turned his head. I from time to time, and by degrees, insinuated to him that his success was partly owing to the critical juncture, partly to his clear and popular way of writing, and partly to the chance that attends these sort of things: that, as to the rest, he had told the world no news, nor indeed any thing else but what had been retailed to them for this last twenty years in newspapers. All these hints he bore with the utmost patience, and once, particularly, left me in great resentment, and I dare say considered me as one of the enemies of his glory.⁵⁵⁵

Obviously for Warburton, Brown did not say anything that had not been said before, and he rephrased what people had discussed over the last twenty years. It could also be stated that the fame that Brown gained by the *Estimate* and his appearance as a self-determining figure displeased Warburton. In a letter to Hurd dated the 19 September 1757, when the *Estimate* was in its sixth edition in less than six months, Warburton stated that,

Brown is here; I think rather pertier than ordinary, but no wiser. You cannot imagine the tenderness they all have of his tender places: and with how unfeeling a hand I probe them. It seems he said something to them of another Estimate. My wife told him, he must take care of carrying the joke too far. To me he has mentioned nothing of it, nor have I given him an opportunity.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵⁴ Anonymous, "Epigram on a famous Allusion in Dr. Brown's Estimate" in *St. James's Magazine* (December 1763), pp. 232-33.

⁵⁵⁵ Garrick, *The private correspondence of David Garrick*, p. 86.

⁵⁵⁶ Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, p. 214.

Warburton's envy and disapproval towards Brown were apparent among the literary world as well. In 1758, Horace Walpole wrote to George Montague that:

What is delightful; in the first volume [of *Estimate*] he had deified Warburton, but the success of that trumpery has made Warburton jealous, and occasioned a coolness — but enough of this jackanapes.⁵⁵⁷

It could be concluded that the *Estimate* was the reason for the breaking down of their friendship. In the following year Brown published the second volume and he did not say any word on Warburton. In *The Monthly Review* this was seen as Brown's breaking away from Warburton. According to the critic, Brown "no longer pays homage to the superior Genius whom he professed to adore: he has now out-topped the Colossus himself, and bestrides the literary Republic, sole Arbiter of the religious, moral, and political world".⁵⁵⁸ Brown had not only become a self-directed author, but he had undertaken the duty of Warburton as a controversialist, and it could be argued that Brown had toppled Warburton from his throne.

With the appearance of the second edition of the *Estimate*, Brown began the domineering attitude of Warburton towards his protégés. He complained about Warburton's "overbearing temper and tyrannical behaviour".⁵⁵⁹ A letter stated that: "I cannot bring myself to give up the freedom of my mind to Warburton, and therefore we do not agree, but Dr. Hurd will never quarrel with him".⁵⁶⁰ According to the author of *The Life of William Warburton* in a letter written two years before his death, Brown specified that he was sorry for having targeted Warburton.⁵⁶¹ Similarly, Warburton also indicated his regret in introducing Brown into the world of politics. In a letter written to Hurd following Brown's death in October 1766 he mentioned his feelings:

I did him hurt in bringing him out into the world, and he rewarded me accordingly. More words would now be lost upon him; but not more lost than those which I conveyed to him by way of advice from time to time.⁵⁶²

⁵⁵⁷ Horace Walpole, *The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford*, Peter Cunningham (ed) (London, 1906), vol. III, pp. 134-135.

⁵⁵⁸ "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II" in *The Monthly Review; Or, Literary Journal* 18 (April 1758), p. 355. Hereafter *MR*.

⁵⁵⁹ Davies, *Memoirs*, p. 206; Taylor, *Records*, p. 85.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶¹ Watson, *The Life of William Warburton*, p. 586.

⁵⁶² Warburton, *Letters*, p. 381.

Conclusion

While it can be argued that Brown owed Warburton a debt of gratitude and paid it in the *Estimate*, considering the *Estimate* as a book written to flatter Warburton is both an underestimation and misunderstanding. The *Estimate* delivered sagacious observations on the nature of the political body, and challenged contemporary arguments concerning the future of Britain. The primary goal of both of Brown and Warburton was to maintain the state. In this light, both argued for the superiority of reason over passions, the necessity of religion in social order and the strong positive relationship between liberty and Protestantism. Their arguments and ideas were often similar, but Brown separated from Warburton by publishing the *Estimate*. He wrote it not as a member of Warburton's party, but as an independent political reformist. This chapter examined how the *Estimate* replaced Warburton's national church with moral integrity as the basis of a political society.

Chapter Three

The Meaning of the Second Volume of the *Estimate* and John Brown's *Defence*

Had the first Volume of this Work had met with a less favourable Reception in the World, a second had not been offered to its Perusal.⁵⁶³

Brown's aspiration to add to the argument of the *Estimate* was declared by means of these words in the beginning of the second volume. Since the first volume was criticized heavily, Brown needed to publish the second one in order to reply to them and to clarify his arguments in a detailed fashion.

In 1758 when the second volume was published, it was stated in *The Annual Register* that the *Estimate* had met both with a warm reception and severe accusations. This had not stemmed only from discontentment accompanying the loss of Minorca. Rather, it was stated that "Its great success arose partly from the circumstances of the time when it appeared, partly from its own merit".⁵⁶⁴ It was clear from the comments of the reviewers that the merit of the book was associated with Brown's perspective upon the state of the British nation and his identification of national weaknesses.

His arguments apart, Brown's style caused annoyance and displeasure among his readers. The main objection regarding the style was Brown's perceived arrogance. His tone and the severity of his style in places led him to be advised to "study elegance of phrases".⁵⁶⁵ Although one reviewer regarded his style as "elegant, pointed and lively",⁵⁶⁶ it was also claimed that many people "have observed that a certain air of arrogance and superiority prevails through the whole work".⁵⁶⁷ This added to the criticism of Brown's arguments.

⁵⁶³ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 9.

⁵⁶⁴ *The Annual Register or a View of the History, Politicks and Literature for the year 1758*, 4th edition (London, 1764), p. 444 (from now on abbreviated to *The Annual Register*).

⁵⁶⁵ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 173.

⁵⁶⁶ *The Annual Register*, p. 445.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

After the publication of the *Estimate*, many readers accused Brown of exaggerating the situation of England and the threat of French invasion. It was apparent that the main argument of the first volume had been to indicate how manners and the principles determined the strength of the nation. Brown's conclusion was that France was a direct threat to Great Britain and was likely to defeat Britain in war. Exorbitant trade had destroyed the principles of religion, honour and public spirit; such principles could no longer be relied upon to direct selfish interests towards the common good. At the beginning of the Seven Years' War, Brown considered France as superior to Britain both at sea and on land. He expected France to drive the British from the Mediterranean and America.⁵⁶⁸ Apart from the French threat, Brown's account of the character of the age, and his attack on luxury and trade drew the attention of the public. The extent of the criticism of the first volume of the *Estimate* led to the second. This volume was criticized in turn for being a volume full of Brown's praise of himself.⁵⁶⁹

A number of points are raised by the publication of the second volume. Firstly, in the second volume Brown aimed to rectify what he saw as mistakes in the first edition. Secondly, he gave proofs to reinforce some points. Thirdly, he added some illustrations. He supported his claims by means of historical examples and the quotations from preceding great writers like Machiavelli and Montesquieu. Fourthly he replied to some objections; and fifthly, he emphasised the consequences of some points that he disregarded in the previous volume.⁵⁷⁰ Brown's character, which he declared to have been "convinced both from Books and Observation",⁵⁷¹ was unveiled by the publication of the second volume. In order to have a foundation of facts and theory, he applied both Machiavelli's observations and Montesquieu's system. Brown considered Machiavelli and Montesquieu to be writers who "did ever fully comprehend or penetrate" the internal springs of Government.⁵⁷² According to Brown, Machiavelli built his system on what he saw, whereas Montesquieu "drew his first Principles of Politics from what he read".⁵⁷³ Both were great writers for Brown, as Machiavelli applied theoretical knowledge from books to his observations and Montesquieu added observations to his

⁵⁶⁸ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 143.

⁵⁶⁹ "Some Account of an Estimate of the manners and principles of the Times, Vol. II" in *The Gentleman's Magazine* 28 (April, 1758), p. 174; S. S., *Letters to the Estimator of the Manners and the Principles of the Times*, 3rd edition (London, 1758), p. 23.

⁵⁷⁰ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁷¹ Brown, *Defence*, p. 2.

⁵⁷² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 183.

⁵⁷³ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 110.

knowledge. This tendency of Brown was criticised as he “sometimes differs from Montesquieu, and with superior Judgement corrects Machiavel”.⁵⁷⁴ The critic implied that Brown had differed even from these two great writers since he regarded himself as the most infallible author. Moreover, Brown’s appreciation of Machiavelli and Montesquieu was seen as owing to the fact that he had not read any other political writers.⁵⁷⁵

The *Estimate* was created serendipitously by Brown. Brown had planned a more detailed book and the *Estimate* was only a small part of it. “A History and Analysis of Manners and Principles in their several Periods” was the planned project in which Brown would analyse the evolution of a state from savage times to its end.⁵⁷⁶ Every period of a state was to be examined in terms of arts, science, religion, plus their virtues, vices, manners, principles, strength and weaknesses by introducing remedies for preserving the state under the dominance of reformed manners and principles. Most importantly, his arguments would be supported by historical facts.⁵⁷⁷ Despite this main project, Brown narrowed the book’s focus and published the *Estimate* when the war between France and Britain erupted.⁵⁷⁸ He published only the parts that were related to the present state of Britain because:

The Source of our public Miscarriages did not lie merely in the particular and incidental Misconduct of Individuals; but in great Part in the prevailing Character of that Period in which we live; that is, in the Manners and the Principles of the Times.⁵⁷⁹

That larger work was never published although Brown requested it to be in his will. It is clear in *Estimate* that his analysis of manners and principles and the reasons of possible decline were finished. However, it seems that the part on the remedy is incomplete. Brown, before his death, was planning to go Russia to participate in an educational reform there. It could be stated that Brown would indicate the role and the significance of educational reform in maintaining a peaceful state. Unfortunately it is not possible to read the continuation of the *Estimate*.

⁵⁷⁴ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 3.

⁵⁷⁵ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 361.

⁵⁷⁶ Brown, *Defence*, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Brown published the second volume on 8 April 1758; one week before the seventh edition of the first volume. As with the first volume the latter met with similar criticisms, and the periodical critics and objections led him to retire into the country for a while.⁵⁸⁰ Whilst it was stated in the *Monthly Review* that Brown was willing and able to withstand the attacks, this retirement could be seen as a response to his discontentment at the criticisms. It was argued that for Brown, “the patience, the perseverance, the happy indifference with which he hath learned to bear a beating, as effectually baffle the designs of his opponents, as if he were clad in an iron doublet”.⁵⁸¹ His *An Explanatory Defence of the Estimate* was written to answer the objections towards the second volume and was published on 19 June 1758.⁵⁸² It is reasonable to state that the second edition did not augment his reputation.⁵⁸³ In fact, neither the second volume nor the *Defence* drew the attention of the former work, as 7000 copies of the first volume were sold but only 4000 copies of the second volume and 1000 copies of the *Defence* were published. The number of copies can be considered as proof that Brown’s reiteration of the previous arguments was becoming increasingly less effective.

The *Estimate* can be summarised as a book that contemplated the general causes of society to explain its strengths and weaknesses. Although Brown used religion as a political tool to achieve stability in society, his system was ultimately religious. The role of manners and principles, the relationship between truth, virtue and freedom that were established in the *Estimate* and the emphasis on reason in the defence of Protestantism led Brown to promote a common-sense morality. For him, a well-established moral system could create a long-lasting society. By means of a moral system, therefore, Brown tried “to establish the public Happiness of Mankind on the solid Basis of Virtue, which is the End of Religion itself”.⁵⁸⁴

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the purpose of the first volume was to refute the Warburtonian defence of Anglicanism as the main means to preserve the British establishment. The aim of the second volume was to strengthen Brown’s moral system

⁵⁸⁰ Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 658.

⁵⁸¹ “Political Logic displayed; Or a key to the Thoughts on Civil Liberty, Licentiousness, and Faction” in *MR* 33 (August, 1765), p. 163.

⁵⁸² Brown, *Defence*, p. 2.

⁵⁸³ William Clarke Robert and Shelton Mackenzie, *The Georgian Era: Memoirs of the most Eminent Persons*, 4 vols (London, 1834), vol. III, pp.328-30.

⁵⁸⁴ Brown, *Defence*, p. 69.

and to stress the necessity of moral regeneration. Brown also aimed to indicate the significant roles of national capacity, the national spirit of defence and the national spirit of union in maintaining society. Differently from the first volume, he wrote on the inhumanity of the Italians, on the effects on marriage on the manners and the principles, on the improper education of youth and on modern travelling. He also expanded his views on the different genius and permanency of Catholicism and Protestantism, and on a national militia, the army, and the navy. Furthermore, he enlarged his criticisms on ‘famous minister’, gave details on the characteristics of a great minister and talked more about the making of parliaments.

Considering his additional remarks, Brown needed to expound his ideas on the public effects of manners and principles. In the first volume, he had explained the sources of these manners and principles, analysing the effects of the exorbitant wealth on the principles of religion, honour and public spirit. In the second, however, a special emphasis was placed on the effects of manners and principles on defence and the national spirit of union. The criticisms of Robert Walpole and the observations on the coercion of parliaments were to show their effects on national capacity and national spirit of union. While it seems that the *Estimate* owed its popularity to its criticisms of luxury, after the analysis of the second volume it can be stated that its significance lay in the arguments about the public effects of particular manners. The design of this chapter is to examine the additions made to the second volume. It was altogether a response to the furore created by the first volume.

I. John Brown’s Defence

Brown was accused of exaggerating the misfortunes of Britain and representing the nation as infected with a remediless disease. After earlier criticisms, in the second volume Brown stated that ‘he would be charged by scribbling Sychophants with plunging a Nation in Despair’.⁵⁸⁵ He claimed that his *Estimate* had not thrown the nation into despair because he had introduced the remedy as well as diagnosing the

⁵⁸⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 262.

reasons for Britain's social evils. For him, the *Estimate* "naturally led them to a rational and lively Hope: For, together with the ruling Evils, the natural Remedy was pointed out".⁵⁸⁶ He believed that the reception of his work was proof that the British were "convinced of the general Truth and Utility of the plan",⁵⁸⁷ and pointed to the sale figures of his book as an indication of people's appreciation. According to Brown, the description of the national misfortunes would not harm Britain or encourage its enemies as it and its neighbours knew the defects of the British character.⁵⁸⁸ The *Estimate* declared them because "no Man can expect to hear the frank Opinions of the World, from the World itself".⁵⁸⁹

After the publication of the first volume Brown was also objected to because he had presided over state affairs as a quasi-national preacher. He defended himself by proclaiming it was his duty to investigate the causes of the ills of Britain.⁵⁹⁰ He wanted to awaken the nation that he had "ever held his chief Interests to lie in a Perseverance in the Paths of Duty",⁵⁹¹ although he knew that this task would "bring no Favour to the Individual who undertakes it".⁵⁹² he wrote on political issues for the well-being of society. Since "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto",⁵⁹³ he claimed to have the right to analyse society and mentioned that people in higher ranks may not notice the danger while an impartial man like himself could realise it. He implied that he did not have any connections and was impartial and thus able to examine Britain independently of personal interests.⁵⁹⁴ He also added that "Tis easy to see when an Arch is shrunk; 'tis quite another Thing to find out the original Cause of its giving Way".⁵⁹⁵ For him, it was more than difficult to find the original cause peculiar to the present state. He believed that he had "a just and extended Discernment of Men and Things as they exist, but as they unite, act, or acted on, as Causes and Effects".⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁸⁶ Brown, *Defence*, p. 55.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁵⁹³ This is a saying by Terence, a dramatist of the Roman Republic who lived in the second century B.C and it could be translated as: "I am a human being, I consider nothing that is human alien to me". Brown quoted it from Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, line 77.

⁵⁹⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 23-24.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

Brown wanted to reply to all objections and stated he had read them all. He also described the second volume as a piece of self-criticism:

These Gentlemen, [the critics] it seems, profess themselves the Servants of the ungrateful Public, it must needs be agreeable to them, than an Author should alleviate their despised Labours, and set himself to criticize his own Writings.⁵⁹⁷

One of his supporters regarded the lack of criticism against Brown to be proof of the truth of his arguments, and in a letter written to Brown stated that:

’Tis true, I cannot hear of any Member who has discovered more truth in the rest of your remarks, than in those you have so generally retracted. Yet certainly if they had been true, or had carried but the smallest appearance of truth, some of them would have been impartial enough to see, and ingenuous enough to own it. Their silence, indeed, may be thought to import the contrary, but it is clear to me, that they are all either idle, or too busy to defend themselves, or else to polite to contradict you.⁵⁹⁸

Brown wrote that he could not answer the reproaches he had not read, yet according to Kippis Brown must have read them all because he called Robert Wallace his only candid adversary.⁵⁹⁹ Wallace was a Church of Scotland minister and a writer on depopulation,⁶⁰⁰ and his censures of Brown were supported in detail by historical facts. Despite his attacks on the *Estimate*, it seemed that Brown appreciated his style and knowledge and regarded Wallace to be a worthy opponent.

Wallace excepted, Brown complained about the lack of any rational and written confutation of the *Estimate*, and he took some criticisms into consideration before summarising them at the beginning of the second volume. He claimed that his opponents had called him assuming, imprudent, republican, tory, and a supporter of monarchy and democracy. Some attacked him for ignoring his own selfish interests while defending the common good, while others considered him to be “an insolent Abuser of those in Power, a servile Flatterer of those who have none”,⁶⁰¹ and other

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵⁹⁸ Anonymous, *A Letter to the Author of the Estimate* (London, 1758), p. 2.

⁵⁹⁹ Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 658.

⁶⁰⁰ For more on Wallace’s biography, see B. Barnett Cochran, “Robert Wallace (1697–1771)”, *ODNB*.

⁶⁰¹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 10.

opponents declared him to be subjective, effeminate, and politically servile.⁶⁰² Brown wanted to defend himself against the “undeserved Honour” attributed to him.⁶⁰³ He stated that he was “right glad to be SO CONFUTED”.⁶⁰⁴ He had expected to receive various criticisms “because it was his determined Purpose, to combat these Enormities”,⁶⁰⁵ although he believed that the first volume was complete, “the Public requested to give him a second Sitting”.⁶⁰⁶ He used the metaphor of a painter to describe what was missing in the first volume. Brown stated that people saw the first volume as the ‘dead colour’, so he wanted to:

...add those particular, characteristic, and finishing Touches of Light and Shade, which escaped his Eye; and at the same Time smooth off some of those Asperities which might possibly remain upon the Canvas, from the Rudeness of his first Pencil.⁶⁰⁷

For Brown, the critics did not understand the convenience of his plan and his well-intentioned mind. In the first volume Brown stated that the spirit of union was naturally strong under absolute monarchy. For this he was censured as being a friend of arbitrary power and attributing advantages to despotism while despising the freedom of Britain.⁶⁰⁸ He was also attacked as an enemy of revolution due to his accounts of the factions that arose from selfish interests after the 1688 Revolution. Moreover, his belief that the abuse of freedom destroyed religious principles led him to be vilified as an enemy of freedom. He claimed to have expected denigration “with the Infamy of being a Papist in his Heart”⁶⁰⁹ because he specified aspects of Catholic superiority. Brown replied that he was saving the state from corruption:

So blind are these QUIXOTS in their Adoration of Liberty, that they accuse her Physician of Disaffection to the favourite Fair, merely because he declares her to be mortal; tho’ at the same Time he holds forth the Medicines that might prolong her Life.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

⁶⁰⁴ Brown, *Defence*, p. 81.

⁶⁰⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶⁰⁸ Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 203, 212-213.

⁶⁰⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 191.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191.

Brown defended himself but criticisms continued and ended after the second volume, and as a consequence Brown retired to the country. He again spent his time replying to the criticism and wrote the *Explanatory Defence of the Estimate* - which was criticised as the "Explanation of Explanation"⁶¹¹ - which was published only two months later. The *Monthly Review* of the same year regarded this retirement of Brown's as one:

...within the flattering circle of self-applause, while he sends forth Peers of the land to collect the objections of the Town, and furnish him with materials for further Explanations of his own darling Dogmas.⁶¹²

This denunciation wrote sarcastically that "our Author is a genius of an order too sublime to be governed by common rules".⁶¹³ By publishing the *Defence* Brown had:

...endeavoured to involve the Reader in the windings of Subtlety, and has conjured up some objections which were never made to his writings, while, he has chosen to overlook other valid and material ones, which have been made.⁶¹⁴

Brown needed to review the *Estimate* "with greater Circumspection" and wrote his *Defence* in a series of letters to a noble friend who did not exist in reality.⁶¹⁵ After the second volume, he was said to have taken "too much upon himself in his Censures on the Great, that he is insolent, dogmatical, arrogant, assuming".⁶¹⁶ In the *Defence*, Brown asserted that he desired his book to be read because he wanted to tell the truth to the world. While he believed that he had succeeded in offering the truth without attacking particular people, he stood "guilty of the Charge" if he was still accused of being insolent, arrogant and dogmatic.⁶¹⁷ In the second volume, as a reply to the objections that he offended the Great, Brown stated that if it was grasped in this way "he cannot help it".⁶¹⁸ He made general observations on man and general accusations on the character of the age and nation, so "he may arraign the Vice, and yet preserve due

⁶¹¹ "An Explanatory Defence of the Estimate of the manners and principles of the times" in *MR* 18 (June, 1758), p. 609.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, p. 610.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁵ Brown, *Defence*, p. 2.

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

Respect to the Man”.⁶¹⁹ In the *Defence*, he implied that he would not write to flatter authority, hence his lack of restraint when criticising the “Great”. He also argued that he was not driven to be a “favoured writer among the Great”.⁶²⁰ According to him, this inevitably made him impartial because in political matters, “what he writ in this Kind, was the pure Result of his preferring Truth and public Utility to the Favour of any Ranks or Individuals whatever”.⁶²¹ Degenerated people who were directed by their selfish interests, however, disregarded the common good. They naturally roused a clamour against the *Estimate*⁶²² as these people:

...seeing their own plans of selfish Interest obstructed by the open Avowal of the Truths thrown out so freely to the Public in this *Estimate*, must naturally rise against the Author, and fasten upon him like a Nest of Hornets.⁶²³

For Brown, a political writer should “chuse an untrodden Path of Politics, where no Party-man ever dared to enter”.⁶²⁴ He dared to write on a dangerous subject that no one had encouraged him to write on. He implied that he was broadminded because a political writer should be “disliked by Party-bigots of every Denomination”.⁶²⁵ Reproached by the critics for being arrogant, Brown answered that a political writer “would be called arrogant by those, who call every Thing Arrogance, that is not Servility”.⁶²⁶ For Brown a political writer could be accused of throwing a nation into ferment after he had indicated a fatal future.⁶²⁷ It is evident that Brown talked about the natural defects of free government and was charged with being an enemy of freedom. Bearing this in mind he stated that “WHILE he [a political writer] pointed out the Abuses of Freedom, and their fatal Effects, he would be blackened by designing Whisperers, as the Enemy of Freedom itself”.⁶²⁸ Since his depiction of the clergy as sunk in effeminacy attracted the hatred of the profession, he stated that he cared little because for a political writer “The worthless of every Profession would be his sworn

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁶²⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 260.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*

Enemies; but most of all, the worthless of his own Profession".⁶²⁹ A political writer would be despised by the "Great", but must sacrifice his interests and the interests of his friends to truth, virtue and the common good. Such a writer could produce other literary works too, but he should consider political works more important than all others.⁶³⁰ He indicated that he would focus on political writing rather than being a playwright or author as he considered himself to be a competent political writer striving for the happiness of his country.

II. The morals of modern Britons

There never was an Age or Nation that had not Virtues and Vices peculiar to itself: And in some Respects, perhaps, there is no Time nor Country delivered down to us in Story, in which a wise Man would so much wish to have lived, as in our own.⁶³¹

This quotation provides an example of Brown's praise for Britain in the first volume. His unequivocal representations of its defective manners and principles, however, attracted much more attention. The British were despondent over the unsuccessful beginning of the war and regarded Brown's delineation of public misfortunes as despising his own nation. Brown was accused of embellishing the threats towards Britain by promulgating "dastardly representations".⁶³² Yet Brown felt that he was presenting the reality of the situation, and his works all stressed his impartiality:

The Writer hath acted with a blameable Partiality, in painting the ruling Follies and Vices of the Times with the utmost, and even aggravated Severity; but hath given few or no Virtues to compensate: whereas an Estimator of the Times ought to have been impartial; and should have commended, as well as blamed.⁶³³

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁶³¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 15.

⁶³² Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 14.

⁶³³ Brown, *Estimate*, p. 35.

Despite this he was nowhere considered to be an objective writer. Since his aim was to “spare not” but to awaken the nation,⁶³⁴ he believed that “[t]his could not be done by dwelling on obsequious Representations. Soft and gentle Touches had been ineffectual”.⁶³⁵

Brown was criticised for not praising the virtues of Britain. For Wallace, Brown denied the fact that a wise man wished to live in Britain because “there is no time nor country, delivered down to us in story, in which the body of the people have lived in such plenty liberty, and security”.⁶³⁶ As a reply, Brown needed to explain “some respects”⁶³⁷ that made Britain distinctive and illustrate the praiseworthiness of the nation in the second volume:

A political Constitution, superior to all that History had recorded, or present Times can boast: A religious Establishment, which breaths universal Charity and Toleration: A Separation from the Continent, that naturally secures us from the Calamities of Invasion, and the Temptations to Conquest: A Climate, fertile in the substantial Comforts of Life: A Spirit of Liberty yet unconquered: a general Humanity and Sincerity, beyond any Nation upon Earth: an Administration of Justice, that had even silenced Envy. These are Blessings which every Englishman feels, and ought to acknowledge.⁶³⁸

This view of Brown as despising his own nation prompted him to underline the superiority of Britain. Apart from its internal strengths, he believed that Britain possessed a geographical advantage that made invasion difficult for other countries. Brown agreed with Machiavelli’s view on the motives for attacking a country, and that a country would attack another “either to conquer it, or to secure [itself] against it: And by the aforesaid Expedient, [the geographical advantage of Britain] both these Motives are prevented”.⁶³⁹ Under the light of Machiavelli’s observations, Brown explained Britain’s advantage as its separation from the continent. For him, the union of Britain was so superior that he could write a whole volume to prove it.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁴ Brown, *Defence*, p. 37.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁶ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 167.

⁶³⁷ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 15.

⁶³⁸ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 24-25.

⁶³⁹ Nicholas Machiavelli, *Discourses on the first decades of Titus Livius* (London, 1883), pp. 27-30.

⁶⁴⁰ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 26.

Opponents defended the nation against the criticisms of Brown and stated that the British nation had virtue, understanding, capacity and genius.⁶⁴¹ As a reply to these types of criticism, Brown specified that “The Genius of our Country, above all others, is particularly distinguished from that of its Neighbouring Nations”.⁶⁴² This provoked him to assert that the British nation should impose its political, moral and religious maxims on taste and habits to the youth of the country.⁶⁴³ The remarkable genius of Britain would not eliminate the danger for Brown because, “the Manners and Principles that are taking Root among us, will soon poison these generous Plants, and in the End destroy them”.⁶⁴⁴ Brown needed to enlarge his ideas on manners and principles for two reasons. Firstly, his accusation of general causes on the degeneracy of the age had been misunderstood by people and needed to be clarified. Secondly, it was clear to him that they were not seen as a solid foundation and thus he wanted to reinforce his ideas by means of the observations of Machiavelli and Montesquieu.

In the first volume Brown stated that the source of public misfortune could not be found “in the particular and accidental Misconduct of Individuals”.⁶⁴⁵ This premise was misinterpreted because it turned into this statement: “no Individuals were delinquent in their respective Stations”.⁶⁴⁶ He explained it by adding that public miscarriages could not be rectified by a particular person, rather they “arose from permanent and established causes”.⁶⁴⁷ Brown believed that some people wanted to charge particular characters for the sake of their selfish interests. These scribblers endeavoured to impose the idea of “if certain Individuals were but removed from the public Administration, our Affairs would of course go well”.⁶⁴⁸ To Brown these people were self-centred:

...who ply their wretched Oar for Bread, hire themselves out to whoever offers them a Fare; and then, like true Thames-Watermen, abuse every Man that passes who is better dressed than themselves, or their Retainers.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴¹ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 167; St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age. In a letter to the Rev. Dr. Brown* (London, 1757), p. 12.

⁶⁴² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 70.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁶⁴⁵ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 11.

⁶⁴⁶ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 15.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Such people strove to defame people like Brown and flatter authority in order to pursue their own selfish interests. Despite this, Brown did not aim to target any particular man because it was:

The Manners, the Principles, the Characters, the Conduct, of the higher Ranks and leading Members of the Community, from whence alone every State will for ever derive its particular Colour and Complexion, Strength or Weakness.⁶⁵⁰

This meant that the degeneracy of the nation was not caused by any particular error of an individual, so replacing one man with another in public office would not solve the problem. Brown added that “this Failure or Delinquency is not merely personal or accidental...and it cannot probably be rectify’d effectually, by any Change of Men”.⁶⁵¹ In the first volume Brown stated that each nation possessed manners and principles peculiar to itself for good or ill,⁶⁵² and highlighted this point by quoting Montesquieu:

We see that for near two Centuries the Land Armies of Denmark have been almost always beaten by those of Sweden: Setting aside the natural Courage and the Weapons of the two Nations, there must be some internal Defect in the military or civil State of Denmark, which could be sufficient to produce that Effect.⁶⁵³

Referring to the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713), this idea was applied to France as it could be stated that, “It was the Fate of France to be always beaten by the Allies in the general War which ravaged Europe”.⁶⁵⁴ From that time, however, the situation in France had changed and it was now in an advantageous position in the current war due to the degenerated manners and principles of Britain. It was not the fate of France, but the character of Britain that determined the conduct of the present war. In order to reinforce this point Brown mentioned that these manners and principles that contributed to the strength of the nation were more powerful than the laws. Even if the laws were ill designed, the upright manners and principles could maintain the state.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶⁵² Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 13.

⁶⁵³ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 18. Brown quoted it from Charles Baron De Montesquieu, *Montesquieu's Considerations on the causes of the grandeur and decadence of the Romans Greatness of the Romans*. The book was published in French in 1734 and translated into English in 1750. Brown might have read its French edition since he gave reference to that one.

⁶⁵⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 19.

Nevertheless, the best laws could not provide the stability with a state if the manners and principles were not salutary.⁶⁵⁵ As he stated:

For salutary Principles and Manners will of themselves secure the Duration of a State, with very ill-modelled Laws: Whereas the best Laws can never secure the Duration of a State, where Manners and Principles are corrupted.⁶⁵⁶

For Brown this point had been neglected by Machiavelli, David Hume and Bolingbroke,⁶⁵⁷ although he saw Machiavelli as “the greatest political Reasoner upon Facts, that had appeared in any Age or country”⁶⁵⁸ he showed Machiavelli’s error in this subject. According to Machiavelli, “For as good customs have need of laws for maintaining themselves, so the laws, to be observed, have need of good customs”.⁶⁵⁹ Brown agreed with Machiavelli on the latter part of the sentence, but on the former part did not make sense for Brown as he believed that good customs were not in need of laws to be supported. Customs could determine the security of the state without the laws, as “good Manners preserve themselves without Laws, or with bad Laws. Good Laws are only necessary, as the Means of Prevention, when corrupt Manners or Customs take Place”.⁶⁶⁰

At this stage, Brown’s aim was to explain the reason for France’s superiority in the present war. By mentioning these points he concluded that France was able to retain its unity and stability by means of its manners and principles even under the authority of iniquitous laws and absolute monarchy.⁶⁶¹ Their internal security, namely their manners and the principles gave “the French many of the Blessings of Liberty; while their mere political Constitution favours as much of Despotism as that of many of their Neighbours, who feel all the Rigours of Oppression”.⁶⁶² Brown clarified his ideas on the manners and principles in the second volume and advocated that they be taken into

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶⁵⁹ Nicholas Machiavelli, *Discourses on the first decades of Titus Livius* (London, 1883), p. 72. The work of Machiavelli which includes *Discourses* was published in 1695 in England and its third edition appeared in 1720. It is highly probable that Brown might have read this edition; *The Works of the famous Nicolas Machiavel: Citizen and Secretary of Florence* (London, 1720). In this thesis, the quotes by Machiavelli’s *Discourses* come from *Discourses on the first decades of Titus Livius* (London, 1883).

⁶⁶⁰ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*

account as the original cement for the state's wellbeing. Since Britain was in a "calamitous Situation"⁶⁶³ he suggested investigating the leading manners and the principles as the source of this situation.

III. Healthy Manners in Britain

For Brown it was not reasonable to assume that such a prosperous nation had lost all of its virtues, even if the age had degenerated. The spirit of liberty, spirit of humanity and the civil administration of justice still subsisted in Britain,⁶⁶⁴ even if they were not in the "genuine Vigour" that had made Britain distinctive in the former ages.⁶⁶⁵ The most essential virtue for Brown, the spirit of liberty, was found in "natural Climate, Stock, and Soil".⁶⁶⁶ The destruction of liberty could only be temporary, and there would be a chance for the recovery of its spirit. Wallace attacked this point and stated that on the one hand Brown claimed that liberty was destroyed and the nation was headed for corruption, while he conversely offered hope that the liberty and glory of the nation would be revived.⁶⁶⁷ Wallace asked "Who can be happy in foreseeing the grandeur and felicity of their country in succeeding ages".⁶⁶⁸ Brown did not reply to this objection directly but enlarged his ideas on the natural character of Britons. For him, any external threat would never inhibit the spirit of liberty because:

This Climate will for ever from the Complexion of it's Inhabitants. Degenerate Englishmen, though free, may be subdued by Foreigners, though Slaves: But the Climate will conquer in it's Turn; the Posterity of those Slaves will throw off the Yoke, and defy the servile Maxims of their Forefathers.⁶⁶⁹

In order to reinforce this point he turned to Montesquieu again.⁶⁷⁰ In *The Spirit of Laws*, Montesquieu claimed that "Slavery is ever preceded by sleep. But a people who find no

⁶⁶³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 14.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-22.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶⁶⁷ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 173.

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 35.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

rest in any situation, who continually explore every part, and feel nothing but pain, can hardly be lulled to sleep”.⁶⁷¹ At this point Brown added an observation to underline what Montesquieu had stated. For him, the cause of French slavery was “the gay, cheerful, and contented Turn”⁶⁷² of their mind, since they were happy, they did not want to change their situation. Yet the British people had liberty in the soil, food, winds and climate of their lands. Brown was so confident about the root of liberty that in comparing France with Britain he claimed that, “Shift the Inhabitants of each Kingdom into the other’s Place, and, in another Generation, the Posterity of the Slaves would become Freeman; and those of the Freeman, Slaves”.⁶⁷³ In this light, he established a further link between liberty and happiness and quoted William Temple⁶⁷⁴ in order to show how France managed to be happy despite their enslavement:

And if a Paisan of France thinks of no more than his coarse Bread and his Onions, his Canvas Cloaths and wooden Shoes; labours contentedly on Working-Days, and dances or plays merrily on Holidays; he may, for ought I know, live as well as a Boor of Holland, who is either weary of his very Ease, or whose Cares of growing still richer and richer, waste his Life in Toils at Land, or Dangers at Sea; and perhaps fool him so far, as to make him enjoy less of all Kind in his Riches, than t’other in his Poverty.⁶⁷⁵

It is evident that for Brown the French could be happy under absolute monarchy, although the British would not be content under despotism as liberty was rooted in their nature. To him an absence of liberty for the British would lead them to experience extreme servitude,⁶⁷⁶ and he used a quotation of Montesquieu to support his claim:

The English, to favour their Liberty, have abolished all the intermediate powers of which their monarchy was composed. They have a great deal of reason to be jealous of this liberty; were they ever to be so unhappy⁶⁷⁷ as to lose it, they would be one of the most servile nations upon earth.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷¹ Charles Baron De Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws* (New York, 2011), p. 232.

⁶⁷² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 31.

⁶⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁶⁷⁴ Sir William Temple (1628-1699) was a diplomat and author. He is not the same as the critic of Brown who was called William Temple (1705-1773). For more on Temple’s biography, see J. D. Davies, “Sir William Temple, (1628–1699)”, ODNB.

⁶⁷⁵ William Temple, *The Works of Sir William Temple*, 2 vols, (London, 1737), vol. I, p. 92.

⁶⁷⁶ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 33.

⁶⁷⁷ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 20.

⁶⁷⁸ Charles Baron De Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws* (New York, 2011), p. 15.

Apart from finding the basis of liberty in the soil of Britain and being hopeful about its recovery, Brown was also opposed to the coexistence of effeminacy and liberty there. He questioned how effeminate people could still retain the spirit of liberty in such a degraded age?⁶⁷⁹ He explained that the spirit of liberty had remained in the middle and lower ranks despite being extinguished in the higher ranks due to their effeminacy.⁶⁸⁰ Furthermore Brown was objected to because of the following statement; ‘this Spirit [liberty] has grown weak in Deeds, it has gained Strength in Words; and of late run out, into unbounded Licence’.⁶⁸¹ The second volume sought to clarify his analysis of why the spirit of liberty was weak because of degeneracy in the higher ranks whose duty was to act for the public good. It still subsisted in the middle ranks, however, since the middle had “only the Privilege to speak”, the spirit of liberty became stronger.⁶⁸²

While Brown defended his ideas regarding the spirit of liberty, he changed his depiction of the spirit of humanity. In the first volume, Brown stated that the spirit of humanity was natural to the British nation⁶⁸³ whereas in the second volume he asserted that it was not. He illustrated the case in ancient times to support his claim. To him, “in ancient Times, before Christianity came among us, tho’ the Spirit of Liberty was strong, yet the ruling Character of the Nation was barbarous and inhuman”.⁶⁸⁴ Yet in modern times, humanity existed in all ranks even among the highest where liberty was weakened.⁶⁸⁵ How did the spirit of humanity arise if it was not natural? To Brown the first reason was Protestantism. Despite the condemnation of religion in the period, it still assisted humanity. At this point, Brown used the “Mode of Christianity” to praise the excellence of religion, and implied that religious toleration in Britain was the supreme mode that “every other religious sect esteems and loves it, next to their own”.⁶⁸⁶ it is reasonable to assert that he was talking about Anglicanism’s role in producing humanity.

Despite religion, the leniency of the laws and even effeminacy could also produce humanity in Britain.⁶⁸⁷ In the second volume Brown introduced two kinds of humanity:

⁶⁷⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 29.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁶⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶⁸³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 21.

⁶⁸⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 41.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

one was “regular, extensive and consistent” and the other one was “partial, irrational and confined”.⁶⁸⁸ If humanity emerged from effeminacy it would be one of the latter kind, but if it stemmed from pure religion it was one of the former. After changing his mind regarding the natural character of humanity, he aimed to defend it in Britain by claiming that the effeminacy of the nation was responsible, and was why “partial, irrational and confined”.⁶⁸⁹

IV. The effects of corrupted Principles

In the first volume, Brown claimed that the principles of religion, honour and public spirit controlled the manners “to counterwork the selfish passions”.⁶⁹⁰ In the second volume he explained this necessity:

Honour will prevent small Crimes, and produce great Actions: Religion will prevent great Crimes, and produce good Actions: The Love of our Country, as it seldom rises unless built on Honour and Religion, has commonly the Force of the other two united; will prevent Crimes great and small, will produce Actions great and good.⁶⁹¹

Brown elucidated how these principles were weakened by the effects of excessive trade and wealth in the first volume. Regarding the principle of honour, Brown claimed that it was not extinguished totally, but it was perverted into effeminate vanity by the spirit of commerce,⁶⁹² so the rational esteem of the nation was weakened.⁶⁹³ In an age when honour became inferior to wealth, Mandeville had stated that, “So silly a Creature is Man, that, intoxicated with the Fumes of Vanity, he can feast on the Thoughts of the Praises that shall be paid to his Memory in future Ages”.⁶⁹⁴ Honour had become regarded as a “shadow”, and people preferred pleasures that emerged from wealth as more real than honour. In the second volume, Brown argued against this idea that the objects of honour would similarly affect the mind as did objects of wealth. The latter

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 52-53.

⁶⁹¹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 100.

⁶⁹² Brown, *Estimate*, pp. 61-62.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁶⁹⁴ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees; or, Private Vices, Public Benefits* (London, 1795), p. 127.

could be perceived by senses, whereas the former were present in the imagination. The applause of men could also give pleasure to men as much as the objects of wealth.⁶⁹⁵ In addition to this, there was another objection regarding the Brown's principle of honour, which was that wealth was more able to give pleasures to man than the principle of honour could not give.⁶⁹⁶ Brown answered that the pleasure which wealth provided to men could never be sated because its gratification was in imagination.⁶⁹⁷ To Brown, this made pleasure emerging from the principle of honour worthier than those of wealth. He also made a comparison between the objects of honour and wealth in terms of the common good. For him, the common good could only arise from the objects of honour. In the first volume he claimed that "the salutary Principle of virtuous Honour is perverted, and dwindled into unmanly and pernicious Vanity".⁶⁹⁸ The objects of luxury like dress, gaming, and titles were considered as perils to the common good, and Brown thereby argued against a compatibility of the objects of wealth with the commonwealth. He highlighted this point in the second volume:

The Sense of Honour is the Desire of Applause, through Means whose End is public Happiness: Vanity is the Desire of Applause, through Means which are often, if not generally, destructive of the public Happiness.⁶⁹⁹

Wealth was seen to beget vanity, which could never serve the common good. Preferring the objects of wealth to ones of honour was to despise honour and destruct the nation in Brown's theory. It is clear that Brown's account of honour enshrined the preservation of the common good. He also claimed that rapacious wealth had suffocated military honour and led Britain to become disadvantaged in a time of the war, so it is not hard to understand why this point came in for criticism.

In the second volume, Brown expanded his ideas on the impotence of the spirit of defence. All of them focused on the effects of wealth and effeminate manners on the spirit of defence which would be summarised in the following words by a country gentleman:

⁶⁹⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 92.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁸ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 61.

⁶⁹⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 93.

We have destroyed the Principle, which was the Source of our Glory. We have misguided the Ambition of our Seamen; we have tempted them with Wealth instead of Reputation; and we have substituted Avarice to Honour.⁷⁰⁰

In the first volume Brown had stated that trade extinguished military honour, and Britain had lost its superiority both on land and sea. Money became the engine of war and the question turned into “not who shall pay, but who shall fight?”⁷⁰¹ In the second volume, he supported his ideas by claiming that the love of glory was required to be successful in a war because, “it is the Love of Glory only, that can urge a Leader to great and dangerous Attempts”.⁷⁰² In the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) British troops were like lions, whereas they were now like “timorous Hares” in the war with France.⁷⁰³ He gave the examples of Dettinghen and Fontenoy where the leaders “were inspired and actuated by the generous Love of Glory”.⁷⁰⁴ Both were battles in the War of the Austrian Succession; the former in 1743 ended with the victory of Britain, and the latter in 1745 ended with Britain’s defeat.

Brown introduced two reasons why the lion had turned into a hare: the prohibition regarding the Commons and the domination of effeminate manners. Firstly, Brown stated that the Commons were a part of the military before the war of that time. The Commons were used to bring the British militia into the field and unite the people as a ‘leader’. However, as Brown claimed, the absence of their leadership harmed the unity of the military and prevented it from acting as a united power.⁷⁰⁵ Secondly, luxury and effeminacy ruined the spirit of defence, hardiness and courage and thus eliminated military valour. It is apparent that any military force could not achieve victory without union and valour, and even when unity was provided it could not be successful because “without national Valour, Union is a dead and inactive Quality”.⁷⁰⁶ Hence, Brown claimed that the conduct of Britain in the war was an expected situation: “The Armies of this Kingdom were more grossly vicious in Queen ANN’s Reign then at present. I

⁷⁰⁰ “To the Proprietors of the Universal Magazine” in *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* vol. 22 (January, 1758), p. 72.

⁷⁰¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 80.

⁷⁰² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 157.

⁷⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

need not point out the Consequence”.⁷⁰⁷ While Brown tried to provide a basis for this account of the principle of honour by means of historical facts, his arguments concerning military honour were opposed as being generalisations based on too few examples.⁷⁰⁸

Apart from the principle of honour, the principle of religion also had a significant role in maintaining the stability of the state. In order to preserve religion as a pillar of the society, Brown firstly criticised the debasement in religion and attacked irreligious men. Secondly he severely censured clergy for weakening national capacity. In the first volume Brown stated that excessive wealth and avarice destroyed the active religious principle.⁷⁰⁹ He enhanced the rationale in the second volume by claiming that, “[t]aste has now generally supplanted religious Principle”.⁷¹⁰ In order to clarify the meaning of religion at this point he quoted Machiavelli:

Among all excellent and illustrious Men, they are most praise-worthy, who have been the chief Establishers of Religion and divine Worship: In the Second Place, are they, who have laid the Foundations of a Kingdom or Commonwealth. On the other Side, they are infamous and detestable, who are Contemners of Religion, and Subverters of Government.⁷¹¹

Nevertheless in Britain, whoever despised religion in Britain was seen as praiseworthy and Brown complained that these irreligious men were honoured and regarded as heroes in a degenerated age.⁷¹² Instead of being considered as infamous and detestable (as Machiavelli had stated), they turned into “Oracles and Heroes of the Time” due to the influence of fashion and luxury that was raised in the last fifty years.⁷¹³ To reinforce this point, Brown cited Temple and showed that these irreligious men were often seen as men of wisdom, who endeavoured “to dissolve the very Bonds of all Society”.⁷¹⁴

⁷⁰⁷ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 172.

⁷⁰⁸ Jenyns, *Doubts*, pp. 40-41.

⁷⁰⁹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 164.

⁷¹⁰ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 84.

⁷¹¹ Nicholas Machiavelli, *The Works of the famous Nicolas Machiavel: Citizen and Secretary of Florence* (London, 1720), 3rd edition, p. 281.

⁷¹² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 89.

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁴ William Temple, *The Works of Sir William Temple*, 2 vols, (London, 1750), vol. I, p. 5.

Bearing this in mind, Brown labelled these irreligious men as a “Herd of dull Scribblers” and attacked them.⁷¹⁵ In the first volume when he discussed the role of religion in maintaining society he criticised David Hume without naming him. Similarly in the second volume he continued to criticise Hume but referred to him directly by stating that he was carrying on a “Trade of Essay-writing”.⁷¹⁶ In these essays Brown claimed that “he had not only misrepresented, abused, and insulted the most essential Principles of Christianity, but, to the utmost of his Power, shaken the Foundations of all Religion”.⁷¹⁷ To Brown, irreligion in Hume’s *History* prevented the book from being sold. After the failure of his first volume, Hume’s second volume appeared without the irreligious material mentioned in the former,⁷¹⁸ and Brown believed that Hume had realised that religious men would not buy his book unless he changed his discussion of religion. “Gain [had] produced Godliness” for Hume,⁷¹⁹ therefore, and Brown declared that:

In these forty Essays he had no Fear of offending the Godly, because he knew the Godly were not to be his Buyers: But when he finds that his History must sell among the Godly, or not sell at all; then comes the Panic upon him; then, forsooth, he will not offend the Godly. Here, therefore, a Character is clearly developed. With St. Paul, Godliness was Gain: But with this Man, Gain produces Godliness.⁷²⁰

At this juncture, Brown referred to a verse in the Bible that spoke of Godliness with contentment as great gain. The Apostle St. Paul (who was not opposed to wealth), saw wealth as dangerously seductive. He had exposed the error of those who would pray or preach the gospel for the purpose of getting rich and consequently stated that ‘Godliness was Gain’.⁷²¹ By mentioning the words of St. Paul’s and indicating the contradiction between him and Hume, Brown criticised the evil effects of Hume’s infidelity. Besides Hume, Brown attacked Shaftesbury (1671-1713), Bolingbroke (1678-1752), Tindal (1657-1733) and Mandeville (1670-1733). Brown asserted that the elimination of God in moral theories of Shaftesbury and Mandeville, and the arguments of Tindal and Bolingbroke on deism had undermined the principle of religion and allowed the

⁷¹⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 89.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87; Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 57-58.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷²¹ Bible. New Testament. 1 Timothy, chapter 6, verse 6.

passions to dominate men freely. For Brown, it was expected that such devastation in principle would lead to “Pick-pockets, Prostitutes, Thieves, Highwaymen, and Murderers”,⁷²² and he saw these irreligious men as an explanation for the profligacy prevalent in society.⁷²³ Moreover Brown did not forget to censure the publishers of their books and regarded them “as bad as an Apothecary, who should sell Arsenic with an Intent to kill”.⁷²⁴

With regard to the preservation of the principle of religion, Brown pointed out the significance of the clergy to Britain. In the first volume, Brown charged the effeminate manners, the “Great” and the clergy with destroying the national capacity and consequently the strength of Britain.⁷²⁵ In order to reveal the significance of the clergy he affirmed in the first volume that “When the English Protestant Clergy, and that Christianity which they teach, were most honoured and respected at Home, England was then most honoured and respected Abroad”.⁷²⁶ After its publication, this statement attracted the attention of his antagonists and the question of when this was had been asked. In the second volume, Brown answered that during the reign of Elizabeth, the prosperous era of Queen Ann (r. 1702-14) and at the abdication of James II (1688), England had experienced such honour.⁷²⁷ He quoted Bolingbroke to show the situation of religion in the reign of Elizabeth. Brown agreed with Bolingbroke, who stated that in this period “the reformation was established, not only in outward Form, but in the hearts of men”.⁷²⁸ Moreover, Brown added that Protestant principles were superior even to the spirit of civil liberty and had role in reforming the period during the abdication of James II.⁷²⁹ The religious principles of these periods were so powerful that they made England (Britain) unique, although their distinctive role had been replaced by irreligious fashions.

In the first volume, Brown accused the clergy of neglecting their duties because “It is a grown a fashionable Thing, among these Gentlemen (the Clergy) to despise the Duties

⁷²² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 86.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁷²⁵ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 82.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁷²⁷ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 115.

⁷²⁸ Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England* (London, 1747), p. 155.

⁷²⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 139-140.

of their Parish”.⁷³⁰ In the second volume, he expanded his views on the clergy by stating that the virtuous clergy were subject to hatred according to their rank.⁷³¹ Vice in the clergy was not condemned since the predominant culture of the time was also vicious. The degeneracy of the clergy was the predictable situation for Brown because the clergy was naturally subject to selfish pleasures as well. This can be clarified by Brown’s words: “the Clergy are neither better nor worse than other Men, but are naturally carried along the general Stream of Manners”.⁷³²

For Brown the clergy among the middle ranks had “more Regard to Duty, more open and undesigning Hospitality, more unaffected Generosity, as well as Charity and Piety, than in any other Order of Men now in Being”.⁷³³ Therefore, those were more remarkable than the ones in the higher ranks. Yet the clergy was regarded as a threat to the national capacity because its young members from the higher ranks were engaged in pleasure, and the elder in gain.⁷³⁴ While this did not mean that every clergyman was a malefactor, the ones who were appointed to higher positions in church had degenerated overshadowing its worthy members: “the Humble, the Pious, the Learned, the Virtuous, are lost to the unworthy and contemptuous World, in the Obscurity of a peaceful Retreat”.⁷³⁵ He also questioned whether it was possible to reform the clergy, and it is apparent that Brown believed many unworthy clergy were in the leading positions. Thus firstly it was necessary to reform the people who appointed them in order to reform the clergy.⁷³⁶ Since the elite appointed the clergy, they appointed men who had the same character as themselves, and this led Brown to claim that the clergy would only be vicious under the conditions of the time. It seemed impossible to begin reforming the clergy, and even if they were reformed it would not act as a cure for Britain because whatever it corrected would be present in the middle and lower ranks. In other words, the clergy would not reform the elite because “a Clergy, tough reformed, will always despised, where Manners are luxurious, and religious Principle extinct”.⁷³⁷

⁷³⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 85.

⁷³¹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 116.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

At this time, the degeneracy among the clergy was accepted to a certain degree. Brown's charges, however, were seen as exaggerated and so he was opposed. In order to defend himself in the second volume as he belonged to that profession, Brown stated his impartiality in criticisms towards clergy. Since "every Man's sphere of Observation and Experience should be, as far as possible, of the same Extent with the Objects of his Attention",⁷³⁸ Brown believed that he was assessing the clergy justly. He also added that "he neither despises nor neglects the Duties of his private Station",⁷³⁹ but had to criticise this profession for the welfare of the nation in general. Afterwards, in his *Defence*, he defended the clergy at certain points because he believed that good intentions would produce bad results under some conditions. Most of the clergy were not causing pernicious consequences intentionally. Sometimes the consequences of these actions appeared dangerous although seeming innocent at the beginning. This immoral situation arose from the inattention of the clergy rather than "from moral Depravity of Heart".⁷⁴⁰ In this way, he tried to indicate his own impartiality against such criticisms.

Up to this point the principles of honour and religion were examined and now it is time to talk about the last one; the principle of the public spirit. In the former volume, Brown stated that the public spirit was extinguished inevitably because the principles of religion and honour were weakened.⁷⁴¹ The idea of a common good was replaced by the selfish interests (particularly of the elite), and consequently the public spirit was eroded. Reacting to these principles, a view emerged that championed the love of country as natural to man and claimed it could not be subject to destruction. Brown opposed this opinion, and replied to it in the second volume. Brown had previously refuted this point that was mentioned in Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* seven years before the publication of the second volume. In the *Estimate*, he did not explain in detail why the love of country could not exist naturally. He claimed that those people who were arguing for this idea were dreamers because the only affection essential to human nature was self-preservation. It was not credible that the public spirit could exist in human nature; rather, it needed culture, habit and education. He quoted a letter of Ninon de L'Enclos to reinforce this point; "Our passions are, as it were, a Part of our Solid Substance;

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-125.

⁷⁴⁰ Brown, *Defence*, p. 26.

⁷⁴¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 174.

whereas our Virtue is only inlaid".⁷⁴² Virtue, at this point referred to public spirit and needed to be cultivated. Since the humanity of the British was produced from the effeminacy of the nation, the love of country could not be implanted. It was therefore reasonable for Brown to contend that it was not possible for public spirit to exist, when honour and religion were perverted or weakened in a country.⁷⁴³

It is therefore evident that Brown augmented his ideas on the principles of religion, honour and public spirit in the second volume. Since he endeavoured to indicate the reasons for Britain's defeat in the war with France, he explained the effects of corruption in these principles on national basis. In Brown's theory the destruction of these principles left the selfish passions uncontrolled and so it paved the way to national disaster. Brown also established a link between the structure of government in Britain and the strength of the public union, and reinforced the necessity of these principles to remove the natural defects of the state.

V. The Defects of Britain's Free Government

According to Brown, apart from the spirit of trade and dominance of selfish interests, free government had negative effects on the spirit of public union as it had become weak.⁷⁴⁴ Being a free-state Britain had natural factions, and in the first volume he used Montesquieu's view that these factions were both essential and natural in free societies.⁷⁴⁵ For Brown, such factions in a society were not harmful as long as they arouse from the freedom of opinion. Divisions, however, caused by the selfish interests of the individuals were dangerous to society⁷⁴⁶ and the dominance of the passions and pleasures in society would soon overwhelm society. This point attracted the attention of opponents which was not unexpected for Brown. He had not foreseen that he should apologise for designating the weaknesses and defects of a free government. Instead, he

⁷⁴² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 96. Brown translated the quotation from Ninon de L'Enclos, *Lettres de Ninon de L'enclos au Marquis de Seigne* (Amsterdam, 1750), p. 66. Ninon de L'Enclos (1620-1705) was a French author. The *Lettres de Ninon de L'enclos au Marquis de Seigne* was published in 1750 and translated into English in 1761.

⁷⁴³ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 95.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

avowed it was beneficial to know these defects because “the more evidently these Weaknesses and Defects were explained, their proper Guards and preventive Securities would with the greater care and Caution be applied”.⁷⁴⁷

The criticisms led him to clarify his points in the latter volume. While Brown considered Bolingbroke to be a poor reasoner who did not pay attention to interior causes, he appreciated his ability as an historian⁷⁴⁸ and quoted him to reinforce his point:

As long as the Spirit of Liberty prevailed, a Roman sacrificed his own, and therefore, no Doubt, every other personal Interest, to the Interest of the Commonwealth: When the latter succeeded (the Spirit of Faction) the Interest of the Commonwealth was considered no otherwise, than in Subordination to that particular Interest, which each Person had espoused. The principal Men, instead of making their Grandeur and Glory consist, as they formerly had done, in that which the Grandeur and Glory of the Commonwealth reflected on them, considered themselves as Individuals, not as Citizens; and each would shine with his own Light.⁷⁴⁹

Brown censured the effects of the governance of selfish interest and pleasures in society. In this sense he discussed the origin of making parliaments in England in the reign of William III, but he was attacked as he “perversely misinterpreted into a Satire on King William”.⁷⁵⁰ Brown did not give the name of the opponent but it is reasonable to state that he was replying to Robert Wallace. Wallace affirmed that in order to praise King William, Brown had stated that, “parliaments had never actually been made till the reign of King William”.⁷⁵¹ Brown himself advocated that he did not mean that the attempts for making parliaments had not existed before. Rather, he meant that it was the first time that a parliament was seen as a requirement for government, which “was the necessary Consequence of lessening the Prerogative, where Parliaments were selfish”.⁷⁵² There was no need for making parliaments, when the crown was powerful and had extensive prerogative power. Rather it was required when the government was

⁷⁴⁷ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 189.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁷⁴⁹ Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, pp. 25-26

⁷⁵⁰ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 192-193.

⁷⁵¹ Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 79-80.

⁷⁵² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 194.

weak and thus in the reign of William III, “the Practice of Making Parliaments was now first laid down as a necessary Principle of Government”.⁷⁵³

He also added that William III “silenced all he could, by Places or Pensions: And hence the Origin of MAKING PARLIAMENTS”.⁷⁵⁴ To Brown, this parliament of William III was so perverse due to its selfish factions, that these factions could highlight the defects of free government.⁷⁵⁵ For Brown “[t]he Defects of an arbitrary Government ceased: The Defects of a free Government arose”.⁷⁵⁶ He was attacked on this point too because the critics believed Brown was representing the power of parliament negatively. As Wallace stated:

The deliverer of Britain from popery and arbitrary power is celebrated for wisdom in counsel, bravery in war, hatred of tyranny, or love of liberty: but, in the Estimate, appears in the obscure light of an election-jobber, distributing places and pensions, in order to the making of parliaments.⁷⁵⁷

To return to Brown’s observations on the parliamentary system, it should be stated that in the first volume, he described a chain of self interest in parliament which “extended from the lowest Cobbler in a Borough, to the King’s first Minister”.⁷⁵⁸ The parts were connected to each other only to secure their own selfish interests. In the second volume, to clarify his arguments he claimed that the Commons had the privilege of raising money and it “gives that House so great a Weight in all Determinations of Importance”.⁷⁵⁹ For Brown, this privilege was only in name, although it seemed that the Commons was elected by people and so they were representatives of them: “a great Part of them, no more than the commissioned Deputies of their respective Chiefs, whose Sentiments they would give, and whose Interests they would pursue”.⁷⁶⁰ To Brown, the power was not in the House of Commons but in the House of Lords and this situation would have fatal consequences. To illustrate, he added that “the Consciousness of such an increasing and exorbitant Power, which the Lords might acquire in the House of

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁷⁵⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 109.

⁷⁵⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 194-195.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁷⁵⁷ Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 76-77.

⁷⁵⁸ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 111.

⁷⁵⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 213.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

Commons, would destroy all honest Ambition in the younger Gentry”.⁷⁶¹ Since they could only be a deputy of a Lord, the men of knowledge and public spirit would not prefer to take part in the House of Commons, as they would choose another occupation freely rather than being a puppet of a Lord in a County or Borough.⁷⁶² According to Brown in the House of Commons “Not useful, but servile Talents would be applauded; and the ruling Pride would be, not that of Freemen, but of Slaves”.⁷⁶³ Moreover, degenerated manners and principles swayed the elections as well because the fashionable men were appointed to important stations instead of men of ability and virtue. For Brown, the privileges of the House of Lords (or nobility) would destroy the nation, as the parliamentary influence in Britain harmed the privileges of people. Therefore people would become the objects of oppression. Brown stated that the selfish interests of people who governed the state resembled “the drunken Crew of the Ship, who were squabbling about the Brandy Cakes, while the Vessel was splitting on a Rock”.⁷⁶⁴ While the rulers were pursuing their selfish gains, they would eradicate the body of the state and this was the natural conclusion of free government for Brown.

With regard to the parliamentary system in the *Defence* Brown added that this constitutional defect emerged from its own nature.⁷⁶⁵ After the 1688 Revolution, parliamentary influence turned into a necessity but it was affected by the corrupted manners and principles as Parliament:

...had conspired with the Luxury and ruling Manners of the Times, to weaken the national Powers, by raising many Men to Places of the most important Trust, who were in some Respect or other unequal to the Task: And hence the accumulated Danger to the Stability of the Commonwealth.⁷⁶⁶

The desire of gaining pleasure had corrupted the nature of parliamentary system in Britain, as highlighted by this point:

The very private Virtues of the Man have given Birth to the Vices of the Politician; and a misguided Love to Sons, Daughters, Friends, and

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 217.

⁷⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁷⁶⁵ Brown, *Defence*, p. 9.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Dependants, been the Source of political Servitude and Attachments, which, in their unseen or unregarded Effects, have been of the most fatal Consequence to the Commonweal by raising Men to public Offices of Trust and Importance, who were unequal to their Station both in Capacity, public Spirit, and other necessary Qualifications.⁷⁶⁷

To sum up, Brown had condemned the parliamentary system by underlining the pursuit of selfish interests and pleasures at the expense of the common good.

VI. The Genius of Catholicism and of Protestantism

In order to indicate the superiority of France over Britain, Brown focused on this subject in the first volume. Its publication after the loss of Minorca, his arguments on the supremacy of Catholic principles on the French national spirit of defence drew public attention. He explained the reasons in detail that made Catholicism an overwhelming danger to Protestantism. For Brown, Britain enjoyed a free government and was subject to factions, while the absolute monarchy of France provided unity to its state. Despite this he praised British liberty and the revolutionary settlement, but also found defects that made Britain appear inferior to France. Attacking Brown, the critics alleged it was more reasonable to state that British liberty would provide advantage when it was compared with the monarchy of France. Beside the absolute monarchy of France, Brown believed that Catholic principles also had a greater tendency to sustain the durability of those principles than Protestantism. The freedom prevalent in Protestantism had damaging effects on its ability to preserve both the principles and the state. In this light it could be asserted that the enslavement of Catholic principles made France more durable, whereas British liberty led along the path to ruin. For the critics Brown admired absolute monarchy while despising the liberty of Britain.⁷⁶⁸ Furthermore, Brown's argument on the ability of France to preserve national unity in its full vigour was also opposed.⁷⁶⁹ For Brown, although France had effeminate and vain manners like Britain, "they tower above us in Principle".⁷⁷⁰ In the *Estimate* Brown

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁷⁶⁸ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 203.

⁷⁶⁹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 140.

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

discussed how a national spirit of defence had been destroyed by excessive wealth and he explained how the strength, hardiness and courage of British men were replaced by effeminate and unmanly principles.⁷⁷¹ This was one of the reasons for Britain's present situation and disadvantageous position in the war. Yet this was objected to, and critics claimed it was senseless to indicate the superiority of France to Britain in that sense since they had the same character.⁷⁷² Since both were effeminate, it was more reasonable to state that they should have equal honour, public spirit and valour.⁷⁷³

After this Brown needed to emphasise the characteristics of Catholic principles to indicate how they served to support the state. In the second volume, he introduced six reasons that explained the vigour of the military spirit of Catholicism. In the first volume, Brown claimed that "ENTHUSIASTIC Religion leads to Conquest; rational Religion leads to rational Defence".⁷⁷⁴ He did not, however, provide further details but in the second volume clarified it to be the first characteristic that made Catholicism more powerful than Protestantism in terms of national defence. Firstly, Catholicism led to conquest because it fed on eliminating the enemies of God, while Protestantism aimed only at the rational defence of itself as it did not regard people as the enemy of God.⁷⁷⁵ Catholicism was fed by passions which made men over-zealous, while Protestantism was ruled by reason which disposed men to be indifferent to religion.⁷⁷⁶ As Brown ventured:

For Popery, in it's Nature tending to inflame a Passion, lays hold of the ruling Weakness of Man: While Protestantism, working only on his nobler Part, his Reason, whose Dictates he but seldom regards, is apt to fall away into Neglect and Coldness.⁷⁷⁷

Secondly, for Brown, Catholicism was more advantageous than Protestantism regarding the effects of degenerated manners. The corruption of manners would not damage the principles of a Catholic because the persecuting principle was "the best Atonement for Vice".⁷⁷⁸ However, the degeneracy of principles would be followed by the destruction

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁷⁷² Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 177.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

⁷⁷⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 90.

⁷⁷⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 128.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

⁷⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

of Protestant principles because “without Morals, Religion is Mockery of God” in Protestantism.⁷⁷⁹ The persecuting principle of Catholicism did not have any relation to its manners, so was not affected even if manners were corrupted. Nevertheless, in Protestantism the principle of religion was connected to manners, and if the manners were corrupted it was inevitably followed by degeneracy.

Thirdly, Catholicism chained “down the Mind in intellectual Darkness” and did not release it, whereas the free principle of Protestantism encouraged “the Mind to range abroad in Quest of Truth”.⁷⁸⁰ Liberty in Protestantism allowed passion to “allure and misguide it [Mind] into the pleasurable Path of Unbelief”.⁷⁸¹ The enslavement of Catholicism thereby prohibited the mind search other paths than provided by Catholicism and thus this restriction fuelled its Catholic principles. Fourthly, the principle of making proselytes in Catholicism made their principles more permanent than Protestantism, as the later did not persuade or compel people to proselytise.⁷⁸² Fifthly, unlike Protestantism, Catholicism had civil power and could check ‘the Progress of Impiety’ to a certain extent.⁷⁸³ Lastly, the principles of Catholicism could not be extinguished like that of Protestantism, as the former was dominated by passions, the weakened principles could still be found in its heart. It could not be extinguished rather exhausted, and therefore it could be revived. Protestant principles were not “overwhelmed, but extinguished” and it was hardly possible for them to gain their former liveliness.⁷⁸⁴ For Brown, this described the situation of Britain:

Reason is easily betrayed or corrupted by Passion: and where rational Principle is not rooted in some opposite Passion of equal Strength with that which bears it down, as soon as Reason is corrupted, the Principle is of Course extinguished, and lost.⁷⁸⁵

As it is clear in Brown’s early works published before the *Estimate*, he was a competent writer on the nature of the passions and the contradiction between them and reason. Although Brown was arguing for the superiority of reason over the passions, he was

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133.

⁷⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

aware of the power of the passions in men's character. For him, passion "is the Soul of Action, and the great Spur that has ever urged Mankind to all that is Good or Wicked".⁷⁸⁶ This reflected a further danger of Catholicism in relation to Protestantism.⁷⁸⁷

Besides these six reasons mentioned above Brown discussed French superiority due to Catholic principles. In the first volume, Brown mentioned that France had a more powerful colonial policy than Great Britain.⁷⁸⁸ In order to clarify it in the second volume he stressed the different features of Protestants and Catholics. Contrary to Protestants who were "cold, indifferent, and neglectful", the Catholics were "zealous, watchful, and assiduous".⁷⁸⁹ This meant that France was impelled by passion to go to India, whereas Britain being indifferent to religion meant it was compelled by necessity.⁷⁹⁰ He claimed that the French "make Zeal subservient to Policy. They reason, they persuade, they cajole, they terrify the poor INDIAN Nations; and by every Means of Truth, or Falsehood, draw them to their Party".⁷⁹¹ People in the British colonies, however, disregarded religion while giving themselves up to gain and pleasure like the British,⁷⁹² and to Brown this made France more successful in governing their colonies.

For Brown, the unity among Catholic countries against the independence of the Protestant world was another reason for considering Catholicism as an overwhelming danger. In order to attract more attention to this danger, he wanted to mention the Catholic countries ability to be united.⁷⁹³ To this end he quoted Bolingbroke's *History of England* to describe the political situation during the reign of James I (1603-25), which resembled the present situation and required mention:⁷⁹⁴

The cause of Ferdinand was the cause of all popish countries. Poland, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, France was united against the king of Bohemia. However, even the Elector of Saxony, the most powerful

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁷⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁷⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 148-151.

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

protestant prince of the empire, could not unite with other protestant princes under the cause of the Frederic of Bohemia.⁷⁹⁵

Catholic countries had a proclivity to unite against the danger of Protestantism due to the nature of Catholicism. For Brown, it was reasonable to claim that the benefits of Catholicism lay in its character because “the Genius of Popery is active, insinuating, furious, unalterable, permanent; [whereas] the Genius of Protestantism, calm, rational, indolent, fluctuating, perishable”.⁷⁹⁶ Although Brown favoured Protestantism (especially in his early writings) for its basis in liberty, he introduced the advantages of Catholicism in the *Estimate*. Yet he was neither a supporter of Catholicism nor an enemy of Protestantism. The point he tried to make was regarding the danger of Catholicism over the favourable principles of Protestantism, hence why he believed that Britain had to be vigilant in protecting its Protestant principles and its “invaluable Blessing”.⁷⁹⁷

Brown detailed the debilitated principle of religion, of honour, the degeneracy of the clergy and he indicated the benefits of Catholic principles. After its publication, Brown wrote the preface of the George Walker’s *Memoirs of the Siege of London-Derry*. Walker was a Protestant clergyman who defended and preserved Londonderry in favour of William III when it was besieged by James II from 18 April to 28 July 1689. Afterwards he wrote a diary to show how Protestants had unified as a body against the Jacobites. In 1758 the diary was published again “as a useful Lesson to the Present Times”.⁷⁹⁸ Brown wrote a “Prefatory Address to the Public” that claimed that the diary could be seen as a proof of the power of the Protestant principles. In the second volume of the *Estimate*, Brown praised the time of the Glorious Revolution:

Protestant Principle took the Lead, even of the Spirit of civil Liberty; and effected the most glorious Revolution that History had recorded: A Revolution, which might justly be styled religious rather than political.⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁵ Bolingbroke, *Remarks*, p. 289.

⁷⁹⁶ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 152-153.

⁷⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁷⁹⁸ George Walker, *The Power of Protestant Religious principle in producing a national spirit of defence, exemplified in a Diary of the Siege of London-Derry* (London, 1758), cover page.

⁷⁹⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 139-140.

Walker's diary indicated the truth of this statement, and proved Brown's idea that Catholic superstition was more proactive than Protestant principles as it annihilated the enemies of God. It also exposed how Protestants retained its proper influence in the minds of man,⁸⁰⁰ underlining the validity of Brown's ideas mentioned in both volumes. This explains why Brown's additional remarks on the manners and the principles and their public effects on national defence, capacity and union were analysed.

VII. Brown's condemnation of Robert Walpole

Following the publication of the *Estimate*, Brown was criticised for arguing that particular men were responsible for the present situation.⁸⁰¹ Yet for Brown no individual could be censured for damaging the age, since no one was capable of doing so. Instead degeneracy had been caused by the entire nation, and when he talked of the spirit of liberty, he said that the virtue to secure the freedom "in its full vigour and vigilance"⁸⁰² was not subject to the tyrants or governors because "a Nation can neither be surprised nor compelled into Slavery".⁸⁰³ This is the reason why the despotic James II could not enslave Britain.⁸⁰⁴ According to Brown no individual, including a tyrant, was able to harm the manners, principles and virtues of the age. Nevertheless, this point was heavily criticised. For Brown, those people pursuing gain and pleasure tried to taint him with the charge that particular men were responsible for corruption.⁸⁰⁵ Brown regarded those men as flatterers of authority, vilifying other people due to their own selfish interests.⁸⁰⁶ In order to answer them, the second volume claimed that "this Failure or Delinquency is not merely personal or accidental".⁸⁰⁷ In his *Defence*, he also added that he did not accuse any men of damaging the society as it was clear that he did not give specific names.⁸⁰⁸

⁸⁰⁰ Walker, *The Power of Protestant Religious principle*, pp. vi-vii.

⁸⁰¹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 15.

⁸⁰² Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 18.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁸⁰⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 15.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸⁰⁸ Brown, *Defence*, p. 21.

He defended himself by maintaining that his delineation of the era as effeminate, vain and luxurious did not mean that manners had degenerated with everyone. As was mentioned in the first volume, “in manly Ages, some will be effeminate, so, in effeminate Times, the manly Character will be found”.⁸⁰⁹ Since manly character could subsist even under effeminacy, it seems that for Brown it was possible to find someone who was not corrupted by the character of the time. In the following year, however, he added that “none are exempt from some Degree or other of those ruling Manners”.⁸¹⁰ While these statements seemed contradictory, he defended himself by claiming that even a manly character had some degree of effeminacy as people were all schooled in an environment of degenerated manners and principles, including Brown. Those manners and principles were implanted in the nature of men and “by early Habit, we are all necessarily doomed to a Participation of these Defects”.⁸¹¹ In order to highlight his point Brown quoted Pope’s *Essay on Man*:

Virtuous and vicious ev’ry Man must be,
Few in th’ extreme, but all in the Degree:
The Rogue and Fool by Fits is fair and wise;
And ev’n the best, by Fits, what they despise⁸¹²

While Brown stated in his *Defence* that “I am not cooking up a new System in my own Defence, different from the Principles of the Estimate”,⁸¹³ he added some important points that came into criticism. Brown discussed the different degrees of effeminacy and showed how effeminacy could be named as guilty or guiltless depending on its degree. He arrived at the conclusion that everyone possessed a degree of effeminacy and their profligacy depended on this degree. In other words, someone could have manly characteristics despite his effeminacy, so long as it was not at a dangerous level. This point of view was strongly criticised in *The Monthly Review*, which stated that “if there is really guilt in Effeminacy, then the least degree of it must be guilty, though a greater degree may be more guilty, and so on to the superlative”.⁸¹⁴ Brown was condemned

⁸⁰⁹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 65.

⁸¹⁰ Brown, *Defence*, p. 12.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁸¹² Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, II. 231-5.

⁸¹³ Brown, *Defence*, p. 14.

⁸¹⁴ “An Explanatory Defence of the Estimate of the manners and principles of the times” in *MR* 18 (June, 1758), p. 611.

because of this coexistence of a manly character with effeminacy, because at a lower level it seemed self-contradictory.

It is evident that Brown was accused of seeing all people as profligate due to the character of the age. By introducing the significance of degrees of effeminacy in determining moral worth, he wanted to provide a solid basis for his defence. His consideration of the higher ranks as sunk in effeminacy was severely criticised after the publication of the first volume. But after claiming that everyone (inevitably) retained a degree of effeminacy, he stated that this did not mean that all of them were guilty and immoral:

believes them involved, from their Situation, in a System of Manners, and in very various Degrees of these Manners, which, if not attended to, and curbed in their Excess, will soon or late endanger the Stability of the Commonwealth.⁸¹⁵

Having a degree of effeminacy did not make people immoral but its fatal effects on the state did, and for Brown this effeminacy should not be left unchecked.⁸¹⁶

Apart from assessing effeminacy as guilty or guiltless according to its degree, Brown discussed the relation between people's intention and guilt. For him, men sometimes could behave perniciously without intention and this would not make him immoral.⁸¹⁷ Men having a degree of effeminacy would not be morally guilty unless he harmed the common good deliberately. However, if he produced ill consequences by pursuing gain and pleasure, then he would definitely be guilty as: "moral Guilt is chargeable on the Delinquents".⁸¹⁸ Nonetheless, this did not mean that well intentioned people would be guiltless if they had contaminated the common good. It did not matter whether an act arose from innocent causes or a wicked intention, rather its effects were significant; for example, a virtuous person would rise in public offices of importance without capacity and knowledge. This person would be morally worthy and have good intentions, although this appointment would be destructive for the common good. Moral worth of someone or an action could be determined by focusing on the consequences. It is

⁸¹⁵ Brown, *Defence*, p. 22.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

reasonable to state that Brown's aim was not to "estimate the moral Merit or Demerit of private and personal Characters",⁸¹⁹ and charge people accordingly. Rather, his aim was "to estimate the Consequences of those Manners and Principles, in which the particular State of the Times hath naturally, in some Degree or other, involved himself, his Friends, and his COUNTRY".⁸²⁰

It is obvious that Brown was viewed as charging people with moral guilt since at least some degree of effeminacy was indulged to all people in his theory. His arguments were perceived to be attributing the defects and vices to particular men whereas they belonged to time, rank and profession alone. In regard to Robert Walpole, Brown did make direct accusations and clarified his condemnations in the latter volume:

THERE was a noted Minister in this Kingdom, whose Character, perhaps, might be drawn in these few words, that while he seemed to strengthen the Superstructure, he weakened the Foundations of our Constitution.⁸²¹

For Brown, Walpole had two maxims. The first one was every man had his price, the second one was Walpole "was obliged to bribe the Members, not to vote against, but according to their conscience".⁸²² While he was discussing the dominance of selfish interests in the making of parliaments, it was clear that Brown was condemning Walpole once more. However, he also added that 'that minister' did not corrupt the nation on purpose since "he makes a Parliament by indirect and corrupt Means".⁸²³

Brown's account of Walpole was attacked and the critic claimed that "it is not in the power of any ministry, in the present times, by the highest offers to bribe either the representatives or their constituents".⁸²⁴ Brown did not reply to this criticism directly, but expanded his attacks on Walpole in the second volume.⁸²⁵ Firstly, Brown clarified his view of liberty to explain his sentiments on the minister and his policies in the second volume. As long as man despised God and religion without being punished, he believed that he could censure Walpole.⁸²⁶ For him "nor surely it can be amiss in that

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁸²¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, pp. 114-115.

⁸²² *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁸²³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 114.

⁸²⁴ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 82.

⁸²⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 204.

⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

Nation, to criticize a dead Minister, where every Man with Impunity can insult LIVING GOD”.⁸²⁷ In the *Defence*, he mentioned how natural it was to condemn Walpole. Since there was religious toleration it should be applicable to politics. As it was natural to believe in different religions, it should be natural to have different opinions among people. Brown asked; “the Friends of this Minister will find it equitable to make Allowance for Difference in Opinion. What they contend for in Religion, will they deny in Politics?”⁸²⁸ Brown also quoted Walpole for support, that “My Fellow Citizens, equally free, will vote according to their Opinions.”⁸²⁹ Brown believed that “every Man forms an Opinion peculiar to himself”.⁸³⁰ He also asserted that he did not have “any personal Dislike to this Minister, his Friends, or Adherents”,⁸³¹ although he possessed the right to criticise people according to his own opinion.

In addition to this Brown mentioned the rightness of his accusations against Walpole. For him, if they had been wrong, people would have refuted his claims and published them since “[t]he Press is open to every body”.⁸³² In the second volume, it is apparent that Brown saw his criticism as more appropriate than others. He was decrying Walpole from a different point of view than his supporters or opponents because he did not have “any interested Views of pleasing any Party”.⁸³³ Walpole was objected to by his antagonists for two reasons which did not make sense, and Brown wanted to highlight their mistakes so he introduced his reasons why Walpole’s policies were wrong. Firstly, Walpole was accused of corrupting the nation. For Brown, Walpole was not powerful enough to corrupt the nation on his own because no individual could create a general corruption or reformation, but it was true to claim that Walpole “put the Wheels in Motion” towards degeneracy.⁸³⁴ Secondly, Walpole’s antagonists censured him with deliberately corrupting the country. Yet Brown believed that Walpole was peaceful who wished the well-being of his country and could not cause corruption intentionally.⁸³⁵ Disagreeing with these reasons, Brown mentioned his own observations regarding Walpole.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁸ Brown, *Defence*, p. 67.

⁸²⁹ Horace Walpole, *A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England* (Edinburgh, 1796), p. xv.

⁸³⁰ Brown, *Defence*, p. 73.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁸³² *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁸³³ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 204.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 206-207.

Primarily, Brown regarded the friendly nature of Walpole to be the basis of his errant policies. As a second reason, Brown believed that this friendliness led Walpole to sacrifice the public interest to the individual interests whom he loved. Instead of using men of virtue, knowledge and ability, he filled positions with men serving his interests in parliament. Thirdly, Walpole ran the risk of ruling by corruptive maxims in order to preserve his power, “He preferred the immediate Interest of his Friends, to the future and distant Welfare of his Country”.⁸³⁶ Fourthly, Walpole was not able to see these remote effects, and could only see the immediate effects of wealth that were favourable for Britain. He could not foresee, however, the harmful effects that could be emerged in the long run, and Brown added that Walpole would not change the system even if he could predict the fatal consequences of wealth “against the natural Bent of his own partial and confined Affections”.⁸³⁷ Fifthly, Walpole ignored the significance of the ruling manners and the principles of the time in preserving the state. Since only the upright manners and principles were able to check the vice, he left the state uncontrolled and caused it to sink in vice. Sixthly he encouraged the “Growth of these pernicious Manners and Principles”.⁸³⁸ For Brown, this was not caused by Walpole’s “natural Love of vice”, but by his desire to maintain his power. Brown believed that Walpole considered these corrupted manners and principles as “favourable to that Parliament Influence, without which he found he could not both gratify his favourite Ends, and maintain himself in Power”.⁸³⁹

These reasons aside, Brown expanded his criticisms on the policies of Walpole while he was discussing the necessity of factions in governments. In the first volume, he stated that these factions would be harmful if they arose from selfish interests. In the second volume he added a crucial cause for these divisions: as the selfish interest of the governor gave rise to “erroneous Conscience; when the unalienable Right of governing is supposed to be inherent in any particular Man, or Race of Men”.⁸⁴⁰ Even rebellions could come into existence from such self-centeredness, although he did not give Walpole’s name at this point, it is reasonable to state that he was criticising Walpole

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

once more. Considering the nature of free government, Brown's argument on its natural defect drew attention of the nation, and also mentioned the defects of Walpole. For Brown, Parliament was a necessary principle after the 1688 Revolution; even though it first arose from necessity Walpole voluntarily brought it to a crisis:

For that first Necessity arose from the State of the Times, when a new modelled Government, like a new planted Tree, had not yet taken Root in the Minds of the People; and therefore the Storms of Parliamentary Faction were of more dangerous Consequence to its Rise and Growth. But after this System of Self-Interest had been riveted by one Minister, in the Minds of the People, and the higher Ranks throughout the Nation, and all Men of all Ranks in Boroughs, were taught to expect and demand the utmost Penny for their Vote or Interest.⁸⁴¹

Under the ministry of Walpole the dominance of self-centred interests began to control the Crown, as everyone mired in selfish interest focused only on his own pleasures rather than the common good. This system was not prolonged as a necessary principle by Walpole, but the parliamentary system was viewed as serving the satisfaction of selfish pleasures.

While Brown's accusations against Walpole were not so severe and clear in the first volume, it is apparent that the reception of the first volume and the criticisms of his ideas on Walpole led Brown to expound these points mentioned above in the second volume. After he criticised the policies of Walpole, he also detailed the characteristics of a great minister.⁸⁴² Brown maintained that a great minister should be honourable and religious. He should have wisdom, courage, knowledge, virtue, and the ability to unite the interests of the public and the people. He had to prohibit selfish parliamentary influence among the great, and encourage men to conform to the common wealth.⁸⁴³ He should preserve manners and principles and be able to replace the degenerate men in public offices with those of greater virtue and knowledge.⁸⁴⁴ The only motive of a great minister should be the commonwealth of Britain, and he should have the courage to resign if he could not achieve it.⁸⁴⁵

⁸⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁸⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 252.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 252-254

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 255-257.

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 258-259.

Brown never wrote directly that Walpole was not a great minister, but by indicating the characteristics of a great minister in the light of severe criticisms towards Walpole, he indicated that Walpole was at fault. By way of summary it could be stated that for Brown Walpole:

...gave a temporary Motion to the Wheels of State; while the natural, and internal Master-Springs of Government were losing their Elasticity and Power: And thus he greatly contributed to reduce us to that State of political Dissolution and Non-Entity, under which we groan at present.⁸⁴⁶

VIII. Brown's Remedy for Britain

Having described the detrimental situation in Britain and explained the characteristics of a great minister, Brown introduced the necessity for such a minister to remedy the situation. In the first volume, Brown had claimed that there were two antidotes: radical and particular. The radical was impossible because it necessitated the alteration of manners and principles.⁸⁴⁷ In the second volume he explained that it was more effectual to stop the progress of the nation towards ruin rather than changing the manners and the principles entirely. As he claimed "The Motion of the Ship must be gradually changed and relaxed, if we would wind her safely into Port: Too sudden a Check, thro' the Violence of the concussion, might be fatal".⁸⁴⁸ Since it was not possible to alter manners and principles completely, he suggested slowing down the corruption caused by them. Yet he did not give further details or examples like he did before. Brown's second remedy was the particular, which was more convenient for the age. It could solve the problem either by means of opposing the passions or by obviating their debauched character. It would only be successful, however, only if the degeneracy had existed in the body of the state.⁸⁴⁹ This remedy could not be applied without a coercive power because the ruling character of the elite ranks was effeminate and vain. As he reiterated in the second volume, it was very difficult to find such a coercive power.⁸⁵⁰ In

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁸⁴⁹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 219.

⁸⁵⁰ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 244.

this light he asserted that this compelling power could only be “necessity”.⁸⁵¹ This kind of remedy depended on two conditions: the corruption should exist in the body and it should be necessary.

Brown’s “necessity” referred to an obligation to perform the act of renovation. At this point he explained this “necessity”. For Brown there were two kinds. The first one was external “necessity” which took place when “The Enemies of our country will pour in upon us; till the blindest and incorrigible will be awakened to a Sense of Danger and impending Ruin”.⁸⁵² Clearly, this one was not appropriate for the situation of Britain. The second “necessity” was the internal. As he claimed in the former volume, this necessity came into being “when the Voice of an abused People rouse the Great into Fear”.⁸⁵³ Actually the misused people united against the “Great”, and this would lead to reform. In the second volume, he elucidated this point and explained how it was possible for the body of the nation to unite and lead a reformation. For Brown, people were less corrupted than the “Great”, therefore they were able to “awaken the Great from their dream of Folly, and lead them to adopt those salutary Manners and Principles, which, in a State of too prosperous Security, they had blindly forsaken”.⁸⁵⁴

At this point, Brown needed to answer the question of how the people could have more salutary manners and principles than the “Great” (elite) in such an effeminate period. He asserted that corruption had started in the higher ranks first and then descended to the lower ranks, as “the higher Ranks will, in the natural Course of Things, be farther gone in the ruling Evils than the lower; and therefore, the less to be relied on”.⁸⁵⁵ Moreover, Brown mentioned another reason to explain the difference in the point of views of the people and the “Great”. With regard to state affairs, the body of the state was not partial like the “Great”. It was the interests of the “Great” that led them to pursue selfish pleasures, whereas the body’s “object of desire” was the common welfare.⁸⁵⁶ It could be clarified in Brown’s words; “private interests naturally throw a Bias on their Judgments, and destroy that Impartiality which the general Body of an uncorrupt People doth

⁸⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 245; Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 220.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 246.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

naturally possess”.⁸⁵⁷ It was therefore possible that the united voice of the least degenerated people could give rise to reform.

When defending his ideas in the second volume emphasising his good intentions, Brown proposed the *Estimate* as a scheme of reform that could be regarded as “chimerical”.⁸⁵⁸ In order to indicate the slight possibility of its success, Brown quoted Sir William Temple:

Quarrels with the Age, and Pretences of reforming it, end commonly like the pains of a Man in a little Boat, who tugs at a Rope that is fast to a Ship. It looks as if he meant to draw the Ship to him; but the Truth is, he draws himself to the Ship, where he gets in, and does like the rest of the Crew.⁸⁵⁹

The ship referred to the ruling manners and the principles that were effeminate, vain and luxurious in the given age. The boat referred to the salutary manners and the principles, or the less degenerate ones although it was seen that the more upright people drew the corrupted towards themselves. The great fear was that the corrupt principles would gradually corrupt the good until corruption had infected everyone.⁸⁶⁰

According to Brown “Though it were Folly to expect, that any Work of this Kind can effect a general Reformation (a Thing which the Author was never so ignorant as to dream of) yet it wants not it’s real Use”.⁸⁶¹ He was hopeful regarding the success of reform, since he saw the leading part as responsible for the unfavourable situation of Britain and believed that:

If the Flame should chance to strike upon a few great and generous Minds, may possibly conspire to rouse a Spirit of public Virtue in this degenerate Kingdom, where it is now weakened or extinct.⁸⁶²

The united voice of the people would call for a great minister and the nation would be saved only “by the Wisdom, the Integrity and unshaken Courage, of SOME GREAT

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

⁸⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁸⁵⁹ William Temple, “An Essay Upon the Advancement of Trade in Ireland” in *The Works of Sir William Temple* (London, 1814), p. 28.

⁸⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶¹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 28.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

MINISTER”.⁸⁶³ Simply, Britain could become a great nation again if a great minister was found.⁸⁶⁴

The effeminacy of the “Great”, its ignorance and luxurious life paved the way for the corruption of the nation. In the same way, the manners and the principles of a great minister could improve those of the whole nation. The manners and the principles that determined the duration of the nation and the character of the “Great” influenced the leading character of the nation. The permanency of the nation, therefore, became dependent on the character of the great, rectifying the “Great” meant repairing the state:

If we can fix the leading Character and Conduct of the Great, in that State, which has been remarkably and eminently of the longest Duration; it follows, that such a leading Character and Conduct ought, above all others, to be the Object of Imitation among those of high Rank in our own Country.⁸⁶⁵

Having explained the role of the elite in reviving the nation, Brown detailed the characteristics of the “Great”. The “Great” should protect the state because “If the Shepherds are watchful; the Flock is easily kept within the Fold”.⁸⁶⁶ In order to maintain the state, the leader should have knowledge of science and the world of men. Brown gave the example of China to reinforce this point, where the body of the state was composed of illiterate people. Yet its rulers learned moral and political virtues, plus the significance of the common good through the works of Confucius. The men of knowledge alone could be the rulers in China and this made the nation permanently stable.⁸⁶⁷ The great should replace selfish interests, avarice and ambition by political knowledge and virtue to make the nation strong. This reinstatement was “in Effect to cut off the corrupted Members of the State, and to restore it to its first Principles”.⁸⁶⁸ For a minister to be great, the man of virtue was required to be appointed “without regard to Wealth, Family, Parliamentary Interest, or Connexion”.⁸⁶⁹

⁸⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁸⁶⁴ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 216.

⁸⁶⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 105-106.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁸⁶⁷ William Temple, “An Essay Upon The ancient and Modern Learning” in *The works of Sir William Temple* (London, 1750), p. 156.

⁸⁶⁸ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 243.

⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

In addition to this, a great minister should have the trust of the people that “the united voice of an uncorrupt People will restore him to the Favour of the Sovereign; especially in Time of Danger”.⁸⁷⁰ In order to be great, he had to recognise the body of the nation and “honour the People, and listen to the united Voice”.⁸⁷¹ His intentions or plans should be open to the people either as the means or the ends of measures that should be publicly known. Brown gave the example of “a great Queen and her great minister”⁸⁷² which referred to Queen Elizabeth, “whose Policy was deep, and the Means she employed were often very secret; but the Ends to which this Policy and these Means were directed, were never equivocal”.⁸⁷³ Furthermore, a great minister should do what he knew as true regardless of objections,⁸⁷⁴ as he should possess the courage to sacrifice his duty on the condition that he did not succeed in preserving common good: “he will not struggle for a Continuance in Power, but bravely and peaceable resign”.⁸⁷⁵ For Brown, such a minister would be noticeable “If ever such a Minister appears, he will best be seen by his own Lustre”.⁸⁷⁶

Despite Brown’s inauspicious representation of the nation’s character, he indicated the possibility of restoring the state to its first principles in both volumes of the *Estimate*. He also explained what was necessary for reform in Britain and afterwards in the *Defence* he stated that this great minister had been found:

That united Voice, steady, not factious—loyal, yet courageous—was heard and approved by a GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN: The expected Minister was found; and a coercive Power hath thus appeared from the Throne, sufficient to controul the Blindness and Folly of the dissolute and thoughtless among the higher Ranks, and to lead them to salutary Measures and their own Safety.⁸⁷⁷

People whose character was more upright than the “Great” had united and called for a great minister for national revival. Clearly for him the situation of the nation had been changed when he was writing *Defence*:

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁸⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁷ Brown, *Defence*, p. 82.

the national Strength is awakened, and called forth into Action: The GENIUS of BRITAIN seems rising as from the Grave: he shakes himself from the Dust, assumes his ancient Port, and Majesty of Empire, and goes forth in his Might to overwhelm our Enemies.⁸⁷⁸

In the *Defence*, he showed his rightfulness by proving that “by proper Exertions and well-directed Applications, the ruling Evils of an effeminate Period may be controuled”.⁸⁷⁹ He indicated that the great minister was located by the unified voice of the people just as he said in the *Estimate*. Nevertheless, he was criticised in *The Monthly Review* that:

The reverend Writer arrogating prophetic merit for having promulgated a truth as old as the creation, that ‘Necessity alone could bring back effeminate and unprincipled minds from their attachments to gain and pleasure.’⁸⁸⁰

Regardless of these criticisms, it is reasonable to state that Brown saw William Pitt as the great minister and leader for a national regeneration. For him, his observations on Britain were truthful and the remedy was appropriate for the situation. According to Brown, “the Nation saw the Remedy; they have claimed it, and already feel its powerful Effects.”⁸⁸¹

As was discussed above, it was not possible for Brown to rectify the nation by changing an individual since any particular man was not capable of degenerating the nation on his own. This is the reason why the renovation that would arise from William Pitt would not be lasting although he was seen as the remedy for the calamitous situation in Britain:

The Tree may blossom, and yet be blasted. The ruling Defects and Evils of the Times are for the present controuled indeed, but not extirpated. The Remedy, tho' it begins to take Effect, is yet no more than temporary: The Distemper lurks, tho' the Symptoms begin to vanish. Let those who wish well to their Country, then, be watchful, and prepared against a Relapse. 'Tis

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁸⁸⁰ “An Explanatory Defence of the Estimate of the manners and principles of the times” in *MR* 18 (June, 1758), pp. 613-614.

⁸⁸¹ Brown, *Defence*, p. 56.

something, to have check'd the Disease at its Crisis; the perfect Cure will require the Attention and Labour of an Age.⁸⁸²

Despite his hopefulness about William Pitt, Brown had summarised his ideas on the responsibility of the whole nation by stressing the “Attention and Labour of an Age.”

Conclusion

The second volume of the *Estimate* was published in order to clarify and reinforce Brown's ideas mentioned in the first volume. The *Defence* appeared for the same reason as well, although it also aimed to reinforce Brown's position in introducing the necessity of a great minister as the remedy for national corruption in Britain.⁸⁸³ When the war broke out between France and Britain, the nation became desperate after the loss of Minorca and Brown published the *Estimate* to indicate the invisible reasons for the defeat. The second volume did contain the same arguments but was written after the publication of the first one, being “[i]n the Year seventeen hundred and fifty-seven, when these Tracts were written”.⁸⁸⁴ The *Defence* was published two months later than the second volume. It is reasonable to state that Brown was writing while William Pitt was proving to be successful in defence of foreign policies as the Secretary of State in the Newcastle-Pitt ministry that came into being in June 1757.

If popularity meant success for the *Estimate*, the first volume's success could be seen in William Cowper's words:

The inestimable Estimate of Brown
Rose like a paper kite and charmed the town

However, the rest of the poem indicated the reason of the oblivion towards the latter works and revealed why Brown's arguments became unsound by the end of the Seven Years' War:

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

⁸⁸⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 57.

But measures, planned and executed well,
 Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell
 He trod the very self-same ground you tread
 And Victory refuted all he said.⁸⁸⁵

Obviously the victory of Britain was regarded as the confutation of Brown's arguments. Yet as Brown reiterated many times in both volumes, a promising future did not depend on victory in particular cases or a great minister. Rather the ruling character of the nation had to be changed by restoring the nation to its first principles, in other words the (original) manners and principles had to be rectified.

In a nutshell the second volume served to clarify the former arguments by focusing on the significance of moral integrity and internal components of the political body. In his early works written prior to 1757, Brown had established a link between truth, freedom, virtue and reason. Protestantism also had an essential role in this chain due to its emphasis on reason, and in Brown's system they were all interrelated on the basis of common good. Virtue in his theory was civil virtue, and the spirit of liberty that he was arguing for was civil liberty. Having examined each one in detail, it can be argued that Brown came to the conclusion that one could be free, morally worthy and honourable only on the condition that one's actions were conformable to the common good. As long as the soul of the society was preserved, the body could not be destroyed. Only the manners and principles could make the body politic durable, as reflected by Brown's words: "the most effectual Way to render Kingdoms happy, great, and durable, is to make them virtuous, just, and good".⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁸⁵ William Cowper, *Table Talk*, ll. 384-9.

⁸⁸⁶ Brown, *Defence*, p. 70.

Chapter Four

Reception of the *Estimate*

This [the *Estimate*] roused the sensibility of the English nation, and produced the following consequences. They attacked, almost at one and the same time, all the sea-coasts of France, and her possessions in Asia, Africa, and America.⁸⁸⁷

His work [the *Estimate*] can serve no other purpose than to create a despondency or dissatisfaction at home, and give encouragement to our enemies abroad.⁸⁸⁸

As is made clear by Voltaire's words, the *Estimate* could be regarded as an influential work that drove Britain to victory in the war with France. Yet there is another point of view, one that saw the *Estimate* as a dangerous book which depicted Britain as a prey for France. This chapter aims to investigate these different receptions of the *Estimate* in order to unveil the significance and influence of the book at the time. Criticism will also be analysed according to the topics examined in the *Estimate* and the previous chapters of this thesis. The *Estimate* was a popular book and the first volume had 7000 copies printed while the second volume had 4000 copies published between March 1757 and April 1758. Brown was proud of the success of his book,⁸⁸⁹ particularly as he despised the literary taste of the time and valued his own ability to produce a successful book regardless of this. *The Monthly Review* accused him of being "reduced to this unlucky dilemma: he must either retract his character of the age, as a false one, or give up the merit of his performance".⁸⁹⁰ Yet a vital question is raised: could such popularity be deemed as a success in this period? To answer the question it will be necessary to examine how the *Estimate* was perceived within the political and literary arenas in eighteenth-century Britain.

⁸⁸⁷ François-Marie Arouet, *The Works of M. de Voltaire*, translated by T. Smollett and M. D. T. Franklin and others (London, 1764), p. 183.

⁸⁸⁸ "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II" in *MR* 18 (April 1758), pp. 373-374.

⁸⁸⁹ Brown, *Defence*, p. 10.

⁸⁹⁰ "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II" in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 356.

An anonymous author stated that Brown had published the first volume by “preferment”, while the latter only emerged from a “love of fame”.⁸⁹¹ It was seen as a “recapitulation of the first”,⁸⁹² which was also clear in Brown’s explanation of the reasons behind its publication.⁸⁹³ According to *The Monthly Review*, Brown’s struggle to elucidate his aims in writing the second volume could be interpreted as follows:

Gentlemen, I wrote a book in which I committed mistakes; in which I affirmed things without proving them; in which I hinted things without explaining them; and in which I took no notice of any thing which had been said before upon the subject.” In few words, I made you pay three shillings and six pence for the first volume, in which I imposed upon you, and if you will give me four shillings more for the second, I will tell you where I cheated you.⁸⁹⁴

For the anonymous St. C. L. who replied to the first volume of the *Estimate* in a letter written to Brown, its popularity despite an unpopular design was proof that people were open to criticism. By reading the *Estimate*, people had shown “that this Effeminacy has reached neither their Understandings, nor their Hearts; they have discerned the Caused and Consequences of Things, and their Remonstrances have been the Voice of Liberty”.⁸⁹⁵ To him, although Brown had “judged unfairly of the English People”, people saw “an honest Meaning” in it and so it became popular.⁸⁹⁶

Unlike Brown who regarded the sales of the book as an indication of “the general Truth and Utility of the plan”,⁸⁹⁷ the critics did not consider it to be an indication of the veracity of the arguments. It was seen as a “superficial performance” whose popularity did not indicate that Brown had been successful.⁸⁹⁸ For another anonymous critic, “IT is the nature of little minds to be inordinately inflated with popular applause, and ever to attribute the measure of success to their own extraordinary merit”.⁸⁹⁹ Popularity was

⁸⁹¹ Anonymous, “The Estimators Estimated” in *London Chronicle* (10 May 1760), p. 450.

⁸⁹² “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 355.

⁸⁹³ Brown, *Estimate II*, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁹⁴ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 357.

⁸⁹⁵ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age. In a letter to the Rev. Dr. Brown* (London, 1757), p. 6.

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁷ Brown, *Defence*, p. 10.

⁸⁹⁸ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 373.

⁸⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

seen as temporary worth of the authors as appeared as “Oracles one winter, who have been despised as Blockheads the next”.⁹⁰⁰

According to William Temple (1705-1773), a political economist who denounced Brown’s criticisms of trade, the sale of the *Estimate* could not be interpreted as a confirmation of Brown’s arguments. He stated that, “people out of curiosity give money to see monsters; and that they preserve toads, moths, spiders, and other vermin; not for their worth, but because of some remarkable oddities, they perceive in them”.⁹⁰¹ For Wallace the *Estimate* was popular, but what made it popular was its pessimism. In order to reinforce his view he added that, “Few things are more popular, than severity against national vices. Those divines, who paint their audience blackest, raise the most dreadful spectres, and speak the worst of the times and of human nature, are frequently the most popular”.⁹⁰² Similarly, according to S. S. who published a letter to criticise the *Estimate*, Brown misunderstood the popularity his book. For him, Brown had mistaken British “compassion for applause, and their contempt for approbation”.⁹⁰³

Regardless of the real meaning of its popularity, the timing of the *Estimate* should be considered a favourable factor for its success. As Andrew Kippis, the dissenting minister and critic of Brown stated, after the loss of Minorca the people “were the more ready to listen to the melancholy, and, perhaps, too just representation that was given of the manners and principles of the nation”.⁹⁰⁴ Likewise it was claimed in the *Annual Register*, that “even a severe national satire was not then disagreeable to the public disposition”.⁹⁰⁵ Such a successful book that went through seven editions in wartime would draw many criticisms. It was stated that Brown must be one of the important authors of eighteenth century Britain if he was to be “estimated by the temporary popularity of his works, and the able antagonists they raised up against him”.⁹⁰⁶

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 355.

⁹⁰¹ William Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts* (London, 1758), p. 105. For more on Temple’s biography, see K. H. Rogers, “William Temple (1705-1773)”, ODNB.

⁹⁰² Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 193, fn.

⁹⁰³ S. S., *Letters to the Estimator of the Manners and the Principles of the Times*, 3rd edition (London, 1758), p. 45.

⁹⁰⁴ Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 656.

⁹⁰⁵ *Annual Register*, p. 445.

⁹⁰⁶ William Clarke Robert and Shelton Mackenzie, *The Georgian Era: Memoirs of the most Eminent Persons*, 4 vols, (London, 1834), vol. III, p. 328.

I. The Criticisms of Brown's *Estimate*

Whatever Subject he is upon, Himself is the Cause and the End. He and Himself are the Beginning, the Middle and the Conclusion of the second Volume, and give life and colouring to the whole. There are very few pages, in which he forgets himself, or if he does, he takes due Care that his Reader may not forget him.⁹⁰⁷

Criticisms of Brown's style in the *Estimate* could be summarised by the above words of the author of *Some doubts occasioned by the second volume of an estimate*. As Kippis claimed, the reception of the *Estimate* was "highly flattering to the vanity of the writer".⁹⁰⁸ After it had become popular, the opponents charged Brown with being vain and arrogant. In *The Monthly Review* Brown was depicted as a poor writer influenced by selling his book. Referring to Brown, it was declared that "nothing sooner intoxicates a weak brain, than the strong fumes of literary fame".⁹⁰⁹ Similar objections emerged from the publication of the first volume; critics continued to condemn Brown's self-importance and arrogance after the latter volume had been published.

Before the appearance of the second volume, the author of *The Real Character of the Age* accused Brown of having "distempered Sight" and being a lover of paradox.⁹¹⁰ Moreover, the historian Ralph James (d. 1762) had attacked Brown and described him as the "egregious Author of a late chef-d'oeuvre".⁹¹¹ Temple also criticised Brown as malicious, and argued that "although he delivers himself with great importance, yet he is no oracle".⁹¹² Many years later, in the *Public Advertiser*, Brown was defined as:

Had some small merit, and more confidence;
So spruce he moves, so gracefully he cocks.⁹¹³

It is apparent that firstly, his confidence in his writings and his style had created many enemies regardless of the content of his books. His vanity and arrogance particularly

⁹⁰⁷ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 11, 43.

⁹⁰⁸ Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 656.

⁹⁰⁹ "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II" in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 354.

⁹¹⁰ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 43.

⁹¹¹ Ralph James, *The Case of Authors by profession or Trade* (London, 1758), p. 13.

⁹¹² William Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts* (London, 1758), p. 104.

⁹¹³ A. E., "A Character" in *Public Advertiser* (April, 1765).

made Brown “disgusting to others, and a torment to himself”.⁹¹⁴ Brown’s “dictatorial, dogmatic air with which he delivers his sentiments” was the proof of his “Pride of Opinion”.⁹¹⁵ His biographer, Kippis, regarded Brown’s vanity as dangerous for his reputation. According to him, vanity “lessens their [learned men] acceptance and merit. The Pains they take to shew the high opinion they entertain of themselves and their works, defeat the end they have in view, of exciting the same opinion in others”.⁹¹⁶ By means of his self-centred style Brown had attracted the attention of detractors towards his style rather than the content of his works. These condemnations made people ignore the positive side of the *Estimate* and focus only on the challenging points.⁹¹⁷ His negative presentation of the situation in Britain and his praise of the French character juxtaposed with his arrogant style, led him to be virulently castigated. Critics like Jenyns and Temple implied that they had right to judge Brown harshly because Brown had treated the nation in the same way.⁹¹⁸ This attitude of Temple towards Brown was seen as an attempt to avenge David Hume. As was discussed in the second chapter, Brown severely rebuked Hume while he was discussing the place of religion. It seems that as a supporter of Hume, Temple confronted Brown in the same manner that Brown had with his idol.⁹¹⁹

In returning to Brown’s arrogance, Alexander Chalmers, in *General Biographical Dictionary* also stated that Brown’s style:

...did more towards sharpening the pens of his numerous adversaries, and raised more disgust and offence at him, than the matter objected to in his work, for it may be added that those who wrote against him were not men of the first rank in literature, and could have done little against him without the aid of those personalities which arise from the temper of an author.⁹²⁰

While Chalmers praised Brown as an author who had extensive knowledge regarding the world and the nature of human beings, he could not ignore the disadvantages of his

⁹¹⁴ Charles Churchill and William Tooke, *The Poetical Works of Charles Churchill*, 2 vols, (London, 1804), vol. II, p. 174, 75n.

⁹¹⁵ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 372.

⁹¹⁶ Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 660.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 658.

⁹¹⁸ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 137.

⁹¹⁹ A letter of Josiah Tucker to Lord Kames, dated 6 July 1758 in Alexander Fraser Tytler, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the honourable Henry Home of Kames*, 2 vols, (Edinburgh, 1807), vol. II, p. 6.

⁹²⁰ Alexander Chalmers, *The General Biographical Dictionary*, 8 vols (London, 1812-1817), vol. VII (1917), p. 99.

style. Similarly, in the *Catalogue of the most celebrated writers*, Brown was mentioned as a “writer of abilities, and in some of his works entertaining; but in all is a sacrificer at the shrine of party, and has in every page too much of the coxcomb in him”.⁹²¹ Kippis further applauded Brown’s observations due to their “sagacity and ingenuity”, yet he added that Brown wrote with “too great an air of self-importance”.⁹²² After the publication of the latter volume, the author of the *Letters to the estimator of the manners and the principles of the times* reiterated the negative side of Brown’s style and disapproved of Brown. Although he firstly regarded Brown as a patriot he later changed his mind, and defined Brown as “most ridiculous of all human characters, a coxcomb”.⁹²³

His assertive style often antagonised readers who did not agree with him. The second volume was published because his ideas in the first were in need of greater explication. Similarly, the *Defence* built on his ideas and arguments in these previous works as he believed that people had not grasped his meaning, making it necessary to review what he said before. When he reiterated his main aim in writing the *Estimate* he specified that it had been:

...the Effects of present Manners and Principles on the Duration of the State. This the Writer insisted on so strongly, and repeated so often, that he thought his Readers would certainly carry it along with them: yet he finds, he was mistaken.⁹²⁴

He thereby implied that the readers were incapable of understanding him. He stated in the *Defence*, that “GIVE the Author Leave now, my Lord, to apply this Truth fairly and candidly in his own Defence: A Use, which he little dreamt, when he writ it, that he should ever have Occasion to apply it to”.⁹²⁵

A similarly severe tone was evident when dealing with criticism levelled against him:

⁹²¹ Anonymous, “Catalogue of the most celebrated Writers of the present Age, with Remarks on their Works” in *Letters concerning the present State of England: Particularly Respecting the Politics, Arts, Manners, and Literature of the Times* (London, 1772), p. 344.

⁹²² Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 657.

⁹²³ S. S., *Letters*, p. 27.

⁹²⁴ Brown, *Defence*, p. 7.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

WHAT Foundation this particular Displeasure of Individuals may have had in Reason, and what in Passion and Self-Partiality, I will now calmly consider; in weighing those Objections which your Lordship hath laid before me.⁹²⁶

After assessing the criticisms by arguing that they were based on the selfish interests of his opponents, he accused such people of being subjective because “no candid Reader, sure, will charge the Writer with imputing this Profligacy to any particular Character, unless where it is PARTICULARLY AFFIRMED and IMPUTED”.⁹²⁷

In both of the volumes Brown believed that those who did not grasp his good intentions and ideas were insipid, and his opponents were generally not candid. For Jenyns, this was defined as an “uncommon Candor”.⁹²⁸ He addressed sarcastically Brown’s definition of himself as a national preacher and introduced him as “this perfect Character, this great national preacher of Virtue”.⁹²⁹ For him, Brown was not a national preacher but preached only for himself.⁹³⁰ While Brown saw himself a person of superior capacity able to discern what others could not see,⁹³¹ St. C. L. derided Brown by saying that “Let us search deeper than common Eyes see”.⁹³²

II. The Criticisms of Brown’s representation of British morals and manners

The grand claim that trade had caused the corruption of manners by creating a “vain, luxurious, and selfish Effeminacy” was widely condemned. Brown’s representation of Britain was seen as too severe. He was described as “ignorant of our Constitution”⁹³³ and the *Estimate* to be filled with “half-conscious pieces of quackery”⁹³⁴ that engendered a corrupt nation. While Brown had claimed to be holding a mirror to the public, for Wallace the principles and manners of the British people were not as

⁹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁹²⁸ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 3.

⁹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁹³¹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 14.

⁹³² St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 2.

⁹³³ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 364.

⁹³⁴ George Saintsbury, *A History of English Literary Criticism* (London, 1911), pp. 209-10.

despicable as Brown had delineated.⁹³⁵ For Wallace British manners were still admired by all other nations, and Brown was wrong to degrade them.⁹³⁶ Likewise, St. C. L. implied that Brown had exaggerated the situation in Britain. Brown had been desperate to depict the manners prevalent among people, the character of the rulers and the conduct of the war. He claimed, however, that none of the ills identified by Brown were fatal: “All we have suffered therefore may be remedied; all the Prosperity that can attend a Nation may be yet within our own Reach; and you and I may yet see this distinguished Island rival Greece and Rome”.⁹³⁷ Brown’s bitter charges regarding the body politic were seen by him to be wrong because “they [the political body] have been neither blind to the sad Incidents, nor dumb Spectators of the Ruin”.⁹³⁸ The author of another letter written as a response to Brown regarded the *Estimate* as a “frivolous book”.⁹³⁹ For this anonymous author “the Body of the British Nobility are not so void of Manhood, Virtue, and Understanding”.⁹⁴⁰

With regard to the character of the nation, Brown insisted that effeminacy would inevitably lead to the ruin of Britain. Benjamin Hoadly alone supported Brown’s view. Hoadly (1676-1761), the famous controversialist and senior churchman, published *Friendly Admonitions to the Inhabitants of Great Britain* in 1758 and covered all of the arguments in the *Estimate*.⁹⁴¹ His pamphlet is significant as it was the only response to the *Estimate* which reinforced the alarming situation of Britain and the difficulty of its convalescence mentioned by Brown. According to Hoadly, “A selfish and an effeminate spirit have taken entire possession of their hearts, and banished every generous purpose, every manly sentiment from their breasts”.⁹⁴² He defined the British as mired in luxury and effeminacy, emphasising their need for help,⁹⁴³ although it was hard for him to rectify the character of Britain because:

To contend with strong habits of luxury, effeminacy, and selfishness; to moderate the rage of pleasure; to check the daring spirit of licentiousness; to

⁹³⁵ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 204.

⁹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁹³⁷ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 5.

⁹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁹³⁹ S. S., *Letters*, p. 46.

⁹⁴⁰ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 12.

⁹⁴¹ For more on Hoadly’s biography, see Stephen Taylor, “Benjamin Hoadly (1676–1761)”, ODNB.

⁹⁴² Benjamin Hoadly (Britannicus), *Friendly Admonitions to the Inhabitants of Great Britain* (London, 1758), p. 4.

⁹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

stem the torrent of profaneness and immortality; in a word, to draw back a degenerate and selfish people to virtue and public spirit, is an arduous undertaking.⁹⁴⁴

Echoing Brown, he stated that luxury had replaced the idea of a common good with the selfish interests of the people, and so the nation had become venal and effeminate. This inevitably led Britain to be assailed by corruption.

Most of the authors did not agree with Brown's account of the vain and effeminate character of Britain. He was censured as he "resolved every thing into one principle, which he stiles that of Effeminacy".⁹⁴⁵ Brown's account of effeminacy was criticised in two ways. On the one hand, some critics thought that the character of the British people was not effeminate. On the other hand, Britain was seen as an effeminate nation that did not manifest the corruptive effects of this effeminacy. In a commentary on the *Estimate* in 1782, John Wesley argued that luxury and sloth were not characteristics of British character.⁹⁴⁶ Since he tried to prove the irreligious character of the age, he discussed the *Estimate* and argued that atheism not luxury was the main feature of the time. However, according to St. C. L. there was a difference between appearance and reality:

Vanity which disgraces their Deportment has not fastened on the Heart; and that the Effeminacy you have named, though their great Foible, is not the Characteristics of the English Nation.⁹⁴⁷

So, while Britain appeared to be effeminate in reality neither the manners nor the body of the nation was effeminate. Brown had condemned men of fashion as being interested in dress in the mornings while he was discussing the effects of effeminacy. As a reply to him, St. C. L. claimed that this was nonsense "as no Man of Fashion dines till Five, he that does not get up till Afternoon, may have three Hours good Morning".⁹⁴⁸

Some critics opposed every point of the *Estimate* while accepting the effeminacy of the nation; however, some thought that there was no need to rectify the effeminate character of the nation due to its contribution to the state. According to the anonymous writer of

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁵ "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II" in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 366.

⁹⁴⁶ John Wesley, *The Works of the Reverend John Wesley*, translated by John Emory, seven vols (London, 1782), vol.VI, p. 349.

⁹⁴⁷ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 2.

⁹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

The Prosperity of Britain, Brown was wrong to see the root of all vice as effeminacy. For him, “it is easy to prove he who is effeminate is profuse, he who is luxurious is beggared, and he who is beggared is venal”.⁹⁴⁹ Effeminacy could not be harmful for society and Brown was wrong as he introduced it as a disease that needed to be cured. For a state to be prosperous it was believed that wisdom and virtue were required. According to the anonymous author, if Brown was right and Britain was void of wisdom and virtue, then there must be a superior force that made Britain wealthy. This element was effeminacy as it was the “preserving quality” in Britain.⁹⁵⁰ Actually it was “that superior quality to which we owe a degree of prosperity greater than other nations have acquired by wisdom and by virtue”.⁹⁵¹

In his criticisms of effeminacy, Brown specified that the activity of riding as a manly occupation had lost its importance. Jenyns replied to him that riding was not a manly exercise as Brown stated, rather it “was invented, partly for Ease, and partly for Expedition; and is no farther manly, than as every useful Invention of Reason is so.”⁹⁵² The critic tried to show that Brown’s admiration of Queen Elizabeth’s riding habit while lamenting the effeminacy of fashionable men of the age was meaningless. Generally, in Brown’s theory, effeminacy and luxury emerged from vast wealth and trade. For Wallace, it was not true that Britain was experiencing the disadvantages of trade. In the last seventy years, he stated that Britain had become wealthier, secure and enjoyed the benefits of trade and luxury.⁹⁵³ Since people tended to live in better conditions when they became richer, it was clear for Wallace that the increase of luxury indicated the increase of wealth;⁹⁵⁴ “great luxury is the effect of great riches”.⁹⁵⁵ However, he agreed with Brown that virtuous life was preferable and that luxury had corrupted virtue in the political and moral arena.⁹⁵⁶ Virtue could make people vigorous and trustworthy, although it could not make a nation wealthy, it could strengthen the nation.⁹⁵⁷

⁹⁴⁹ Anonymous, *The Prosperity of Britain, proved from the Degeneracy of its People* (London, 1757), p. 5.

⁹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁹⁵² Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 15.

⁹⁵³ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. xv.

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

Nevertheless, for him, luxury “enervates a people. Yet, where it runs through all ranks, it can only be supported by superior riches”.⁹⁵⁸

Temple was also opposed to Brown’s notion of the relationship between trade, luxury, and the vicious character of the nation. According to Temple, Brown’s idea that the excess of wealth arising from trade led the nation to be vicious and effeminate, was a chimera. Temple went one step further and stated that this idea was the product of Brown’s “addled brains”.⁹⁵⁹ Vice for Temple, did not emerge from trade, wealth or luxury. Instead, all these vices “have reigned at all times in all free states, and will reign in such as long as the world endures”.⁹⁶⁰ Brown strongly believed that commerce made people avaricious, cowardly, effeminate, and dishonourable. Temple accused Brown of having “a distempered imagination”⁹⁶¹ because for him the Athenians, Corinthians, and Syracusians were all competent in war, arts and commerce at the same time.⁹⁶² There was only one supporter of Brown’s account of trade as the reason for corruption. The historian, poet and Cambridge lawyer Thomas Grey, stated that the only part of the *Estimate* that he appreciated was the representation of trade as the reason for corruption.⁹⁶³ Grey’s was a rare voice however.

In addition to the discussions on the degenerate character of the nation and the effects of commerce and luxury, Brown’s preference for the past when he was making comparisons with the present drew criticism as well. Brown especially praised the reign of Elizabeth I by emphasising the manly character both of the queen and the people. An anonymous critic and supporter of effeminacy stated that it would not harm the respect of Britain among other nations. Referring to the past times mentioned by Brown, he declared that “we were feared throughout the world for our bravery at that time; and we are now respected for our politeness. Is there a man that would prefer the fear of others to their respect? If there be, he is no modern Briton”.⁹⁶⁴ He represented Britain as “a more polite, a more learned, and more respected” than it was during the reign of the first

⁹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁹ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 126.

⁹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁹⁶² *Ibid.*

⁹⁶³ Thomas Gray and William Mason, *Correspondence of Thomas Gray and William Mason*, John Mitford (ed) (London, 1853), pp. 76-77.

⁹⁶⁴ Anonymous, *The Prosperity*, p. 13.

Elizabeth.⁹⁶⁵ Furthermore, Temple placed an emphasis on the luxurious life in the days of Elizabeth. In order to refute Brown, he had quoted William Camden (1551-1623) who gave a detailed account of the reign of Elizabeth the First. It was clear in his works that, luxury in eating, drinking, dress, furniture and building were all allowed by royal authority.⁹⁶⁶ For Temple, there was “no period since, that has been more luxurious and bauch than her days”.⁹⁶⁷

Brown’s propensity to applaud the virtue of the past and denigrate his own time was seen by Temple as a “custom of mankind in all ages”.⁹⁶⁸ According to Temple, Brown “pathetically copied the follies of antiquity in praising past times and slandering his own”.⁹⁶⁹ In order to criticise Brown’s tendency, he quoted an epistle of Horace:

How black the Guilt! He cries, of modern times,
Because he sees not ancient Frauds and Crimes:
Deny’d Preferment, crost, and peevish grown,
Past Times he praises, and he damns his own.⁹⁷⁰

For the same reason Wallace had used Ovid’s quotation in the cover of his book:

Prisca juvent alios, ego me nunc denique natum
Gratulor⁹⁷¹

It could be translated to “Let others praise ancient times; I am glad I was born in these”. According to the *Annual Register* for the year 1758, the *Estimate* had reviewed two points. The first one was the question over the preference of ancient and modern times, and the second was the question about virtue. Firstly, it was stated that people had a propensity to “lament those periods of our lives which we have passed, and the ages that have passes before us”.⁹⁷² The second tendency of the people lay in the idea that the world was degenerating, therefore virtue could only truly be found many years ago.⁹⁷³ Therefore, as a reply to the *Estimate*, the critics aimed to indicate the pleasant side of

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁹⁶⁶ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 118.

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 97. Temple translated Horace into English and also quoted its Latin version from Horace, *Epistles* 1.15.29-30.

⁹⁷¹ Wallace, *Characteristics*, cover page. Wallace quoted it from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 3.121-2.

⁹⁷² *The Annual Register*, p. 444.

⁹⁷³ *Ibid.*

the nation in the given time and defend the luxury and wealth by showing that they did not have fatal effects on the manners of the British people.

III. Criticisms of the Role of Manners in the Body Politic

Brown's idea concerning the role of manners and principles in determining the character of the state was introduced in the first volume and supported in the second. Since the manners and principles stood at the centre of the body politic, it could be stated that their reform provided a potential nostrum. Brown added, however, that "a general Reformation, under our present Circumstance, is an idle project".⁹⁷⁴ For Jenyns, this notion made the *Estimate* "an idle Book",⁹⁷⁵ as Brown stressed the significance of the character of the leaders:

...the Manners and Principles of those who lead, not of those who are led; of those who govern, not of those who are governed; of those, in short, who make Laws or execute them, will ever determine the Strength or Weakness, and therefore the Continuance or Dissolution, of a State.⁹⁷⁶

After the publication of the first volume, St. C. L. claimed that this statement made the body politic innocent since it seemed that only leaders were responsible for the unfavourable situation. Apart from them, "the rest are Rabble, mere Mob, Number without Weight; whose Principles and Manners have found no Place in the Account".⁹⁷⁷ Yet as was discussed in the previous chapter, Brown gave a more detailed account of the power of the nation and its possible role in rectifying the defects of national character in the second volume.

Having discussed manners in a general sense, the anonymous critic in the *Monthly Review* talked about the manners of liberty, humanity and public spirit in detail. Since he defined all of them as weakened, the critic accused Brown of representing these

⁹⁷⁴ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 241.

⁹⁷⁵ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 62.

⁹⁷⁶ Brown, *Estimate*, p. 25.

⁹⁷⁷ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 10.

national manners “in a false, and everywhere in an unfavourable light”.⁹⁷⁸ Among these spirits, his account of the spirit of liberty most strongly opposed. While Wallace also thought that liberty was losing its vigour, he did not arrive at the same conclusion as Brown that liberty degenerated into licentiousness. For Wallace, Brown had gone too far because still “Among the few nations, which have preserved their liberty, Britain shines foremost in riches and fame”.⁹⁷⁹ Wallace believed that Brown saw the 1688 Revolution as the reason for the corruption in the nation’s character. Since the British people had gained liberty by the Revolution, this liberty and security in the *Estimate* seemed to direct the nation towards an exorbitant trade and wealth that would finally lead to corruption.⁹⁸⁰

Furthermore, the spirit of humanity that was altered in the second volume had been opposed by the critics. Brown claimed that liberty was natural to the British, but in the latter volume he changed his mind.⁹⁸¹ He established a link between humanity and effeminacy and asserted that even effeminacy could produce humanity.⁹⁸² But, for Brown, this kind of humanity could only be “partial, rational and confined”.⁹⁸³ St. C. L. attacked Brown and stated that he was wrong in attributing effeminacy to humanity because this arrived at the conclusion that the most effeminate and the most humane were the same.⁹⁸⁴ While Brown gave details in his account on the spirit of humanity of the second volume, for Jenyns, there were still contradictions. In the second volume, Brown repeated that he did “endeavour to understand his Subject before he talks upon it”.⁹⁸⁵ But Jenyns sarcastically stated that he would understand the ideas of Brown later, when “Possibly the third Volume may clear up many things, which are left in the Second, seemingly inexplicable and inconsistent”.⁹⁸⁶

Over the spirit of public love he was attacked again because Brown insisted that public love was replaced by selfish interests. The critic asked Brown:

⁹⁷⁸ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 373.

⁹⁷⁹ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 202, n.

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁹⁸¹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 41.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

⁹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁹⁸⁴ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 25.

⁹⁸⁵ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 125.

⁹⁸⁶ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 27.

Look around you, examine your own Heart, your Patron's, and your Friends; is it extinct in you? Does Warburton disclaim, has Allen felt it? Come, you will own at least three Men possess it: and how can you be certain there is not a fourth?⁹⁸⁷

According to St. C. L., Brown was inconsistent. He stated that, "they [people] are ignorant and abandoned, Persons destitute of Religion, Honour, Public Spirit, and every manly Virtue. This is the Character you give them; and is it by this they are so highly qualified?"⁹⁸⁸ Despite all these criticisms, one point of view asserted that Brown's criticisms of liberty, humanity and civil administration of justice were beneficial as they attracted the attention of the nation and led Britain to "baffle the whole power of France".⁹⁸⁹ In short, Brown had helped Britain to victory in the Seven Years' War.

IV. Criticisms of the *Estimate*'s views of the principles underlying the manners of the nation

Among the principles of religion, honour and public spirit, that of honour (which was corrupted by the excessive wealth) was the most debated point after the publication of the first volume. Since the weakening of the spirit of honour harmed the national capacity, it underscored the significance of the French threat. Brown's account of honour was opposed by many commentators with vitriol. For Brown, "honour was perverted into effeminate vanity by the spirit of commerce".⁹⁹⁰ The vast wealth turned money into the engine of the war and thus military honour was suffocated by selfish interests. The hardy and courageous soldier was replaced by cowardly, self-oriented and fashion-seeking troops, and commerce in Brown's *Estimate* made people unable to fight.

According to Temple, this was "ridiculous"⁹⁹¹ because "British valour never appeared with more *éclat*, than in our last wars".⁹⁹² He gave the example of the Romans to prove

⁹⁸⁷ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 25.

⁹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁹⁸⁹ John Gordon, *A new estimate of manners and principles* (Cambridge, 1760), p. x.

⁹⁹⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 61-62.

⁹⁹¹ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 136.

⁹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

that it was possible for a nation to be avaricious, warlike and covetous at the same time. For him, valour, trade and avarice could exist at the same time without destroying martial abilities “but rather invigorated their desires of war”.⁹⁹³ Temple stated that Brown had not investigated the history in detail because for him, “Whoever closely examines history will clearly perceive, that valour is not compatible with avarice and trade; but on the contrary, that it is their natural issue”.⁹⁹⁴ Apart from Temple, another critic of Brown who was a supporter of effeminacy, St. C. L., argued that effeminacy would not detract from martial honour among the British. Effeminacy and love of luxury could make soldiers dress better, although this would not make them unable to fight.⁹⁹⁵ A good soldier could love luxury and “the prettiest Gentlemen of the Age commands a Ship of War”.⁹⁹⁶ Against Brown, “There is nothing inconsistent in Valour, and a clean Shirt”.⁹⁹⁷ Furthermore, the author of *The Prosperity of Britain* criticised Brown’s insistence on preserving the martial honour, and it was possible that English people could have lost their abilities to fight. Nevertheless, their other talents and developments in the nation would compensate for this loss in the military arena. For him:

While we have been improving the sciences, we have lost territories: it will appear from this, that we are better philosophers than soldiers; but is there a man so distracted as to understand this as a reproach.⁹⁹⁸

He humiliated Brown by showing that military success was more significant than obtaining knowledge in arts and sciences. In fact, Brown never made such a comparison. For the author, people gave up being a part of the army or navy when “they attend to the nobler lessons of erudition”.⁹⁹⁹ In this sense the loss of Minorca could not be regarded as a significant defeat as long as Britain achieved success in more praiseworthy areas like the sciences.¹⁰⁰⁰ The gain or loss of lands had consumed their supremacy in the body politic because, as the author stated “these possessions are transitory: the advances in knowledge are universal and eternal”.¹⁰⁰¹

⁹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁵ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 2.

⁹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹⁹⁸ Anonymous, *The Prosperity*, p. 15.

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁰⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Besides the superiority of arts and sciences to military, the author had praised effeminacy for the improvements of the former. For him, “to effeminacy we owe these discoveries and those everlasting honours that will accompany them”.¹⁰⁰² According to Brown, only truth and virtue would provide British prosperity. The critic claimed that Brown had ignored the utility of effeminacy, as virtue alone could not ensure the survival of states. In the examples of Sparta, Athens and Rome, their distinction was due to their virtuous structures. Since all had declined, the critic came to the conclusion that Britain would be under threat as well.¹⁰⁰³ He believed that Britain was more prosperous than ever,¹⁰⁰⁴ and this advantageous position was owed to effeminacy. In the critic’s opinion, Britain should trust effeminacy in order to return “by art, all we have lost by arms”.¹⁰⁰⁵ Even France owed its power to effeminacy as “its power, its territory, and the respect of nations increased” after France had embraced effeminacy.¹⁰⁰⁶

Brown may have argued that effeminacy was the sole source of decay, but he added that the effeminate character of the French did not damage its martial honour due to the strength of its principles. He therefore preferred the military honour of France to Britain. In reply, Temple stated that the French honour that Brown mentioned actually did not refer to true honour, as “a Frenchman shall cheat or rob you, in a breath meet, and eat, and spend it as merrily with you, as you could have done yourself. This is the French honour our author is fond of”.¹⁰⁰⁷ Honour in France appeared to be related to profit.¹⁰⁰⁸ Moreover Brown’s account of the principle of religion was criticised. Brown represented the clergy as vain and effeminate, whose younger elements were given up to pleasure, and older to gain.¹⁰⁰⁹ St. C. L. asserted that if Brown’s melancholic picture of clergy was correct, then “it is the Professors, not the Profession, who are fallen into Contempt”.¹⁰¹⁰ He asked “are Warburton and you effeminate?”¹⁰¹¹ In the second volume, Brown clarified his ideas and confirmed that he did not argue that all clergy

¹⁰⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 107.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 119.

¹⁰¹⁰ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 28.

¹⁰¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

were malicious. The issue was not the virtuous clergy rather the venal clergy, who were appointed to higher positions affirming that they were the clergymen in question.¹⁰¹²

According to Wallace, there were only a few clergy possessing the character Brown had described, and “the generality of the clergy both are, and deserve to be, honoured and respected”.¹⁰¹³ To him, Brown could not condemn the profession of clergy by observing a few bad examples and he could not say that religion had lost its influence.¹⁰¹⁴ Echoing him, Jenyns stated that such a charge against the clergy was only “generally, not universally, true”.¹⁰¹⁵ He opposed the impartiality of Brown on this point, and found it interesting that Brown appreciated great writers and politicians but humiliated clergy. He asked “Whence is it that, in his own profession, not a Character occurred, except this last, worthy of the least notice from his masterly pen?”¹⁰¹⁶ In the same way, Temple replied to Brown and claimed that:

The English clergy are the best preachers, men of the best sense, and the purest morals of any in Europe; and possess the greatest degree of rational esteem among the people of and priesthood in the world.¹⁰¹⁷

The critics did not accordingly adopt the idea of clergy’s role in weakening the national capacity.

In the *Estimate*, the public spirit had also lost its vigour since the principle of religion was weakened and the principle of honour was perverted. To Brown the idea of common good in Britain was replaced by selfish interests through exorbitant trade and wealth,¹⁰¹⁸ while it was preserving its strength in France. At this point, the best response came from Wallace. He stated that human beings:

...have stronger motives to love, support, and fight for his country. The attachments to the family, the person, or the glory of the prince cannot be so powerful under an absolute monarchy, as the amor patriae under a free

¹⁰¹² Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 119.

¹⁰¹³ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 214.

¹⁰¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

¹⁰¹⁵ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 36; Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 189-190.

¹⁰¹⁶ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 38.

¹⁰¹⁷ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 106.

¹⁰¹⁸ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 174.

constitution. Therefore the subjects of a free government (*caeteris paribus*) must be more vigorous and more valiant than those of an absolute prince.¹⁰¹⁹

Against Brown, the critic argued that the liberty gained by the revolutionary settlement did not corrupt the principles of religion, honour and public spirit. It was more reasonable to state that all these principles should exist under a free government rather than under the enslavement of an absolute monarchy. Clearly, Britain had a more suited government than France to preserve these principles in their full vigour, and Brown was severely rebuked for being a supporter of arbitrary power.

V. The Defects of Free Government

In the first volume Brown explained why the spirit of union was naturally weak in Britain.¹⁰²⁰ Afterwards, he complained about the effects of the dominance by selfish interest and pleasure on society, placing an emphasis on the defects of liberty in the British constitution. Following the Revolution, people had gained liberty and Parliament had obtained power. Parliament had become governed by selfish factions and at this point the defects of free government appeared in Britain. For Brown, the practice of making parliaments had emerged in the reign of William III when he “silenced all he could, by Places or Pensions: And hence the Origin of MAKING PARLIAMENTS”.¹⁰²¹ Conversely, Wallace argued against Brown by stating that in the *Estimate*:

The deliverer of Britain from popery and arbitrary power is not celebrated for wisdom in counsel, bravery in war, hatred of tyranny, or love of liberty; but appears in the obscure light of an election-jobber, distributing places and pensions, in order to the making of parliaments.¹⁰²²

In order to reinforce the dominance of selfish interests in Parliament, Brown described a chain of self-interest which “extended from the lowest Cobler in a Borough, to the King’s first Minister”.¹⁰²³ Each part was connected with the other parts to secure their

¹⁰¹⁹ Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 244-245.

¹⁰²⁰ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 103.

¹⁰²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁰²² Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 92.

¹⁰²³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 111.

own selfish ends. This chain (“the rope of sand”) was opposed after the publication of the first volume. The critic stated that Brown’s “Rope of Sand, squeezed together by the imaginary Hand of Self-Interest, is much too weak to strangle British Freedom”.¹⁰²⁴ The same author criticised Brown’s ideas on the sovereign and declared that he was “possessed of every Virtue that can bless a People”.¹⁰²⁵ For Jenyns, Brown’s worries were pointless. He believed that Brown resembled the woman “who sat weeping and alarmed at the foot of a Bridge, because it was possible, that a Grandchild of hers, not then born, might, in passing over that Bridge, fall into the River, and perish”.¹⁰²⁶ To him, Brown had exaggerated these defects and claimed that parliamentary influence was corrupted by the predominant manners and principles. Afterwards, Brown introduced the remedy for this unfavourable situation. For Jenyns this meant that Brown did it on purpose “like a skilful Physician, he first heightens the Disease, in order to magnify the merit of the Cure”.¹⁰²⁷ It was reasonable to make such a comparison between absolute monarchy and free government emphasise the natural advantage of the former in maintaining unity in the political body was seen as pointless and attacked. Moreover, Brown also introduced the other reason that made France more powerful and stable than Britain.

VI. Objections against the superiority of Catholicism

In the *Estimate*, Catholic principles and arbitrary power were introduced as advantages for France. It was anticipated that Brown would be severely castigated for such an argument when France appeared close to victory in the war. Wallace regarded the *Estimate* as pernicious, and wrote the last part of his book entitled *Characteristics of the Present Political State of Great Britain* in order to defend the national genius and capacity of Britain against France. For him, in the *Estimate* had:

...been of late publicly asserted, that our national genius and capacity are almost gone; and that we are grown so feeble both in our counsels, and in

¹⁰²⁴ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 35.

¹⁰²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁰²⁶ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 59.

¹⁰²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

the execution of them, that we run the greatest risk of becoming an easy prey to any bold invader.¹⁰²⁸

The general antagonism towards the *Estimate* could be best seen in *The Monthly Review*:

The Writer has even tortured our virtues into odious shapes, and represented them as dangerous to the public; while he has coloured the failings of the French, and endeavoured to make them appear as national benefits.¹⁰²⁹

The loss of Minorca could have been regarded as a catastrophe especially in the beginning of the war, however, Brown was judged to have exaggerated the significance of the loss, as Wallace asserted:

THE greatest, wisest, most prosperous, virtuous, and magnanimous nations, in times of their greatest prosperity and virtue, have met with greater disappointments and defeats, than the British have met with in the present war.¹⁰³⁰

Brown's view of French superiority in war or peace was mocked, and to Wallace the defeat in Minorca did not mean that Britain was unable to defend itself due to its corrupted manners and principles.¹⁰³¹ He added that British men of fashion could be condemned and their passions for gaming, luxury, their effeminate character, and moral values could be criticised. Yet, this was not sufficient to assert that Britain lacked a national genius or capacity.¹⁰³² While Wallace was aware of the weaknesses and vices of the nation, he accused Brown of exaggerating the misfortunes of the nation.

Another opponent St. C. L., claimed that Brown's argument on the ability of absolute monarchy in preserving the unity of a political state was specious. For him, the *Estimate* was "the first Time Slavery has been supposed to enlarge and ennoble the human Mind".¹⁰³³ Concurrently, Temple argued against Brown and stated that "the union under

¹⁰²⁸ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. iv.

¹⁰²⁹ "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II" in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 373.

¹⁰³⁰ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 199.

¹⁰³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xv-xvi.

¹⁰³² *Ibid.*, p. 196.

¹⁰³³ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 33.

an absolute monarch, is, as Montesquieu observes, only the union of dead men in a grave”.¹⁰³⁴ He described a unity emerging from slavery:

Slavery creates a kind of laziness, and idle despondency, which puts men beyond hopes and fears: it mortifies ambition, emulation, and other troublesome and active qualities, which liberty and freedom beget; and instead of them affords a dull kind of pleasure of being careless and insensible.¹⁰³⁵

It could be argued that every form of government would have both advantages and disadvantages peculiar to itself. But for Wallace, Brown was wrong to attribute the ability of uniting under monarchy because Britain ‘having such a high mixture of freedom, is better fitted than the despotism of France, to preserve us from destruction’.¹⁰³⁶ Under a free government, the preservation of personal liberty and property was more secure and people would have a “greater interest” for their well-being.¹⁰³⁷ Unlike Brown he thought that “it is not Britain, that ought to tremble for fear of France; but France, that ought to dread the bravery and the naval strength of the free Britons, if their just indignation should be roused to strike home and avenge the wrongs of their country”.¹⁰³⁸ The enslavement of France would therefore never be preferable to the liberty of England.

In the first volume Brown made a long analysis of the French’s character by emphasising their ability in seemingly combating contradictions:

They are effeminate yet brave: insincere, yet honourable: hospitable, not benevolent: vain, yet subtle: splendid, not generous: warlike, yet polite: plausible, not virtuous: mercantile, yet not mean. In Trifles serious, gay in Enterprise: Women at the Toilet, Heroes in the Field, profligate in Heart; in Conduct, decent: Divided in Opinion, in Action united; In Manners weak, but strong in Principle: Contemtable in *private* Life; in *public*, *Formidable*.¹⁰³⁹

As a reply to the above statement, St. C. L. emphasised British liberty and stated that:

¹⁰³⁴ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 132.

¹⁰³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

¹⁰³⁶ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 233.

¹⁰³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

¹⁰³⁹ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 141.

Like the French you idolize, we also can reconcile Contradictions: while our Manners are effeminate, our Hearts are firm; while we trifle in frivolous Opinions, we knew the Interests of our Country; and while we quarrel among ourselves, are ready to unite against a common Enemy. This Wrangling is the Voice of Liberty; this Freedom of Abuse you have heard long in the Streets, and you have heard it called the Privilege of British Subjects.¹⁰⁴⁰

According to Brown the nature of Catholicism served to strengthen France against the Protestant principles of Britain. In order to reinforce Brown's idea, Hoadly specified that Catholicism was "taking advantage of our follies and vices, are labouring assiduously to gain over proselytes to their superstitions and idolatries; it is well known that they are too successful, especially among the lower part of our people".¹⁰⁴¹ To Hoadly's mind, it was true that Britain was under direct threat of France and the nation had to be awakened. He highlighted his argument by saying that:

Unless some powerful check is given to the prevailing manners and degenerate principles of the age we live in, BRITAIN, that mighty kingdom, which once gave laws to the main, and long held the balance of power between contending empires, must soon (distressing thought!) become a despicable province to France: and when BRITAIN falls, then falls the temple of religion, then falls the bulwark of the protestant interest: when BRITAIN falls, then liberty expires.¹⁰⁴²

According to Wallace, by contrast, such a comparison between Britain and France was impossible due to the different characters of Catholicism and Protestantism:

[Catholicism] leans so much to superstition and to external ceremony; that of Britain so much to the pure love of God, and to moral virtue: religion is treated so differently by the public in the two nations; the French are so much over-awed by an arbitrary court and a tyrannical clergy; the British, from the mild spirit of their government, and from the happy moderation of their clergy, enjoy so much religious freedom; that, in order to determine the force of their religious principles, it is not safe in this, nor, indeed, in any other case, to trust solely to external appearances of devotion.¹⁰⁴³

Jenyns was another opponent that criticised Brown's comparison of Catholicism and Protestantism, who acquiesced that Brown could discuss the advantages of "Popery" in

¹⁰⁴⁰ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁴¹ Benjamin Hoadly (Britannicus), *Friendly Admonitions to the Inhabitants of Great Britain* (London, 1758), p. 47.

¹⁰⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

¹⁰⁴³ Wallace, *Characteristics*, pp. 207-208.

maintaining the preservation of society. Yet he believed Brown was wrong to favour Catholicism on rational grounds. Jenyns thought that Brown might discuss it “without giving a moral or rational preference to Popery. Accordingly, the religious merits are declared throughout to be on the side of Protestantism and the political merits to be strongly on the other side”.¹⁰⁴⁴ Echoing Wallace who perceived weaknesses in Catholicism that would destroy itself in the long run,¹⁰⁴⁵ Jenyns also stated that the principles of Catholicism could not be more powerful than those of Protestantism.¹⁰⁴⁶ He charged Brown with elucidating the weakness of Protestantism while praising the strong and permanent principles of “popery”, highlighting a contradiction in the *Estimate*. According to Jenyns, if Brown was right and Protestantism was weak, void of zeal and public spirit, this meant that as a Protestant author, Brown was experiencing these defects too.¹⁰⁴⁷

While the French appeared to have the advantage at the beginning of the war, no British man dared to speak out except Brown. This exception of Brown was underlined in an anonymous poem published in *London Chronicle* after Britain became the dominant side in the war. By referring to the volumes of the *Estimate* the author stated that Brown’s vision was altogether fantastical:

Each with a warmth of fancy fraught,
Imagin’d pourtraits draw;
Each paints from speculative thought
A world, that neither saw.¹⁰⁴⁸

VII. Brown’s Remedy

In the first volume, Brown explained the characteristics of a great minister and introduced the necessity for such a person in order to rectify the detrimental situation in Britain. For some critics, Brown’s appeal was not original, and they believed that such a minister could not heal the national malaise. According to St. C. L. although Brown

¹⁰⁴⁴ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 49.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 185.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Jenyns, *Doubts*, p. 51.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Anonymous, “The Estimators Estimated” in *London Chronicle* (May, 1760), p. 450.

claimed there was a remedy, for others a remedy was unknown: “by a niggard Jealousy, and reigned Modesty, you [Brown] lock the inestimable Secret in your Bosom”.¹⁰⁴⁹ He saw the *Estimate* as “pleasing in sound, but thinly mixed Thought”.¹⁰⁵⁰ In order to reinforce his argument, he wrote the beginning of the phrase “Vox & preterea” and left it to Brown to complete.¹⁰⁵¹

To Wallace, Brown’s account of the great minister would not correct the character of the state. He stated that “if Britain is as much sunk in indolence, cowardice, and venality, as this writes apprehends”,¹⁰⁵² ruin was inevitable. While Brown had defended himself by indicating an awareness of the negativity was necessary in order to locate a remedy for Britain,¹⁰⁵³ neither his melancholic representations nor the cure was taken into consideration by Wallace. It was stated in *The Monthly Review* that although the great minister in the *Estimate* “strikes us with an air of novelty”,¹⁰⁵⁴ it was from Brown’s characteristics “from whence he drew the following fine picture”.¹⁰⁵⁵ Brown’s remedy was not accepted, and his *Estimate* was not regarded as a book that promised to be the “rational and lively Hope”¹⁰⁵⁶ as Brown hoped. For him, it became possible to prevent the corruption and rectify the character of the state if, and only if, these defects and weaknesses were unveiled.¹⁰⁵⁷ Despite his struggle, the *Estimate* was seen as dangerous. According to *The Monthly Review*, the aim of Brown was to show a melancholic picture of Great Britain and inspire the enemies to attack it.¹⁰⁵⁸

William Temple saw the *Estimate* as dangerous for the well-being of Britain. The *Estimate* tended “to dispirit our people, discourage our allies, and animate our enemies; who, if they believe this slandered, must consider us as an easy conquest and a rich booty, which they ought to invade and assail”.¹⁰⁵⁹ Similarly, Wallace utilised the same words in his belief that Brown had “aggravate[d] our vices and our weaknesses so much

¹⁰⁴⁹ St. C. L., *The Real Character of the Age*, p. 41.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43. Vox et preterea nihil is a phrase meaning there is voice but there is nothing besides.

¹⁰⁵² Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. 202, n.

¹⁰⁵³ Brown, *Defence*, p. 37.

¹⁰⁵⁴ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), p. 367.

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Brown, *Defence*, p. 55.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 189.

¹⁰⁵⁸ “An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. Vol. II” in *MR* 18 (April 1758), pp. 373-374.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Temple, *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 103.

beyond the truth, as naturally tends to dispirit our countrymen and to raise the spirits of the French".¹⁰⁶⁰ Such a dastardly representation of Britain may have awakened the nation,¹⁰⁶¹ but other arguments by Brown guaranteed the *Estimate* was unusable for such a revival, as Wallace explained:

The views which he [Brown] gives his country-men, of the dangers arising from liberty, and of the advantages of the French despotism, not only tend to excite a distaste of liberty, to reconcile the minds of the people to despotic power, and to beget an admiration of absolute monarchy, but may be expected to have a bad influence, especially if the nation shall suffer any considerable losses in the present war.¹⁰⁶²

Brown clearly praised the French adversary despite its monarchy and Catholicism during the war, but he also criticised its enslavement. His admiration of France with such shortcomings could not be regarded as a power serving the national revival, so for Wallace the *Estimate* was harmful to Britain and would not lead it to achieve victory. Contrary to Wallace's argument, another critic stated that Brown would not affect the destiny of Britain and he was subsequently unable to injure the nation. Brown was the "most ineffectual enemy" of Britain as he could not lead the enemy to see the British as a ruined nation.¹⁰⁶³

Nonetheless, there was also a point of view that regarded the *Estimate* as a motivating force towards the victory against France. According to Voltaire, Brown "roused the sensibility of the English nation".¹⁰⁶⁴ As Brown had criticised the navy, military honour, manners and principles stating explicitly that Britain was close to ruin; for Voltaire this encouraged the British and directed them to win the war, and Voltaire believed that Britain owed its victory to the *Estimate*.¹⁰⁶⁵ In one of Brown's biographies, it was stated that the influence of the *Estimate* was obvious since it roused Britain from lethargy and "they [British] soon display'd their energies in every quarter of the globe".¹⁰⁶⁶ Moreover, another author saw Brown's arguments as contributing to the well-being of

¹⁰⁶⁰ Wallace, *Characteristics*, p. xviii.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

¹⁰⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶³ S. S., *Letters*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁶⁴ François-Marie Arouet, *The Works of M. de Voltaire*, translated by T. Smollett and M. D. T. Franklin and others (London, 1764), p. 183.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁶ Samuel Jackson Pratt, *The Cabinet of Poetry*, six vols, (London, 1808) vol. V, p.333.

the state was John Gordon, a clergyman and an admirer of Brown. According to him, Brown's cure suited the British because Brown was:

Administering the proper remedies under the pleasing vehicle of an Estimate: when instantly, the disorders were removed; the noxious humors passed off; and what is very surprising, we had swallowed our cure, without knowing any thing of the matter.¹⁰⁶⁷

In the first volume, Brown asserted that the alteration of manners and principles was impossible.¹⁰⁶⁸ In the latter volume, he explained that it was more effectual to prevent the nation's path towards ruin rather than change the manners and principles entirely.¹⁰⁶⁹ He therefore never suggested altering these manners and principles completely, but Brown was "the main-spring, which put the whole machine in motion" and his *Estimate* was the cure that healed Britain. Gordon claimed that Brown caused "effectual alteration in the manners of subjects".¹⁰⁷⁰ As Gordon alleged, Brown caused this alteration by:

...diffusing at once such a new and unusual spirit through the camp and the navy, has so amply retrieved the honour of our arms, and raised to so high a pitch the reputation of our country; which, by it's wonderful influence in rousing the indolent, and animating the careless; in giving manliness to the effeminate; public love to the selfish.¹⁰⁷¹

Agreeing with Voltaire, Gordon declared that Brown stimulated the nation rather than depressing it. The *Estimate* had motivated people to replace their selfish interests with common good and the effeminacy with hardiness. In this sense, Brown had led Britain to achieve victory.

Gordon believed that Brown should have written about politics, particularly after Britain came closer to victory by the end of 1759. For Gordon, Brown should have indicated the utility of his work and answered all of his critics:

I have stayed long enough to see, whether you would continue the work, or no. But, though you had now so fair an opportunity, at the end of the

¹⁰⁶⁷ Gordon, *A new estimate of manners and principles* (Cambridge, 1760), p. xii.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 219.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Brown, *Estimate II*, p. 241.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Gordon, *A new estimate*, p. iv.

¹⁰⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

glorious 1759, of telling your countryman better things; and of showing the wonderful and surprising efficacy of your writings; which, in so short a time, have brought about such an effectual alteration in the manners of his Majesty's subjects; yet I perceive, you have let it slip; which inclines me to think, you have intirely given up the business of Estimate-making.¹⁰⁷²

Britain ruined the French trade in the East and West Indies, took all the forts of France in Africa and became the masters of Louisburg and Quebec by 1759. As Voltaire and Gordon stated, the *Estimate* should be regarded as a reason for France's defeat by Britain. The positive effect of the *Estimate* (if it really had one), was only seen after 1759 because the war was not going well for England till that time. It could be stated that the conduct of the war led the *Estimate* to be refuted as being a harmful book which indicated the unfavourable position of the nation. After Britain had gained victory, it could have met with a positive reception and been appreciated as a motivating force. Victory, however, invalidated the arguments of Brown and Britain was seen to be the victor against both France and Brown. Brown thereby became a neglected figure despite the *Estimate*'s popularity, which "was perhaps as extravagantly applauded, and as extravagantly censured, as any book that was ever written".¹⁰⁷³

Conclusion

It was expected that Brown would keep writing on political issues after publishing such a popular book. As one of his supporters claimed, people believed they would receive "greater benefit" from his continued work.¹⁰⁷⁴ That work was clearly 'A Treatise on the Principles of Christian Legislation; or, An Analysis of the various Religions, Manners, and Politics of Mankind in their several Gradations; of the Obstructions thence arising to the Progress and proper Effects of Christianity, and of the most probable Means to remove those Obstructions'. As he stated in the *Defence*, the *Estimate* was an abridged version of this larger work that Brown had researched for many years,¹⁰⁷⁵ but unfortunately it was never published.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.*, p. vi-vii.

¹⁰⁷³ Chalmers, *The General Biographical Dictionary*, p. 98.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Gordon, *A new estimate*, p. xiv.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Brown, *Defence*, pp. 5-6.

In his will, Brown requested that it be published by Rev. Mr. Nathaniel Clayton of St. John's Church, Rev. Mr. Darrel, Percival Clennal and Joseph Airey. Brown wanted them to revise and publish it "as the copy of it was in some places interlined and obscure, he desires that they will make it out, according to the best of their judgement, and the tenor of the argument".¹⁰⁷⁶ While it was listed as a book ready for press in *The Cabinet of Poetry*,¹⁰⁷⁷ it stated in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1791 that it had not completed. In the issue that appeared in September 1791, it was discussed whether the work would be published, and a critic asked "If not, why has so important a bequest been withheld?"¹⁰⁷⁸ In the following edition of the magazine, the critic confirmed that Brown's work was not ready for publication. According to the editor of the *Biographia*, "The work may more properly be said to have been but just begun. The plan, which was immense, could not have taken less than twenty volumes".¹⁰⁷⁹ In the *General Biographical Dictionary* it was claimed that the work would not see the light of day because Brown had left it incomplete.¹⁰⁸⁰ It was implied that Brown did not finish that book because of his lack of knowledge: "he was led to form magnificent plans, the execution of which required a greater depth of erudition than he was possessed of".¹⁰⁸¹

The purpose of Brown in writing this work could be understood from a letter written to his friend. Since he was planning to go to Russia to participate in educational reform there, he wrote that:

This design, if in any degree successful, will realize many things in my principal work, On Christian Legislation; which till now I could only talk of in theory; and will, in this respect, give it a weight which mere speculation can never obtain... I am sometimes fantastic enough to say with Pitt, that as America was conquered in Germany, so Great Britain may be reformed in Russia. However, chimerical this imagination may be, or seems to be, this I am persuaded you will allow, that it is a great and important object which I have now before me. If in any degree I succeed, it will be well. If I fail, or die in the attempt, I only desire some kind of friend to write any apology upon my tombstone, *Magnis tamen excidit ausis*.¹⁰⁸²

¹⁰⁷⁶ Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 662.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Samuel Jackson Pratt, *The Cabinet of Poetry*, six vols, (London, 1808) vol. V, p.333.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Gentleman's Magazine* 61 (September 1791), p. 790.

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Gentleman's Magazine* 61 (November, 1791), p. 995.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Chalmers, *The General Biographical Dictionary*, p. 100.

¹⁰⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁰⁸² Kippis, *Biographia*, p. 667. The saying of Ovid; "Quem si non tenuit magnis tamen excidit ausis" meaning that if he did not succeed, he at least failed in a glorious undertaking.

It would seem that Brown had in fact completed his historical analysis of religion, manners, and principles of political bodies in detail, and could have indicated the reasons for progress and corruption. Brown was presumably going to conclude that educational reform would preserve a state and he would try to prove it through the reforms planned in Russia. Yet he was not able to go to Russia, and his plan remained incomplete. Unfortunately, we will not know what Brown asserted in this book, and the entirety of his vision remains opaque.

Conclusion

Historians and commentators have always considered John Brown to have been a theologian, author and playwright. Brown's politics, when they have studied at all, have largely been classed as cynical and depressive, identifying the ills of the world rather than what might be done to improve it. The central claim of this thesis has been that Brown was much more than a harbinger of national corruption. Rather, he was a hopeful reformer who dedicated himself to rectifying the national character of his state and the mores of the lowly and the great more generally. Focusing on his delineation of English character and its defects led people to overlook his ideas on reform. In order to rectify this mistake I have tried to reconstruct Brown's positive politics. The main argument of the thesis is that it is necessary to understand Brown's politics and philosophy in order to comprehend his ideas and consequently to recognise the *Estimate* as a part of a reform programme. This made Brown's work distinctive, both from supposed fellow cynics such as Rousseau and presumed fellow reformers such as Warburton.

Once the *Estimate* is read closely and in detail it becomes clear that it was intended to be much more than a severe critique of trade and luxury. Indeed, it was the culmination of a series of independently minded work, only some of which was undertaken in the shadow of Warburton, which made Brown into a reformer of a particular kind. From the time of his first sermons, Brown presented virtue as being necessary to achieve truth and then freedom. For all of his life he was convinced that the world had been established to link truth, virtue and freedom together in a mutually sustaining circle of support. In his *Essays on the Characteristics*, Brown introduced another chain to his established link between liberty, truth and virtue; namely utility. He clung to the belief that interest properly understood was the antithesis of passionate libertinism. Accordingly the world had been created so that interest accorded with virtue, once the rational life had been consciously embraced. Whatever maintained society was virtuous and whatever harmed the state was vice. In this light, he considered religion as the most important of all the possible tools to rectify the fallen nature of men and to direct them towards public utility. In the *Estimate*, he indicated the significance of moral integrity in

maintaining the state and the necessity to restore the nation to its first principles: principles that were being damaged by the growth of commercial society.

For too long the main argument of the *Estimate* has been taken to be that exorbitant trade and wealth made the character of the English “vain, selfish and [characterised by] luxurious effeminacy”.¹⁰⁸³ I contend, however, that the primary idea of the book was the necessity of establishing a particular moral character in order to preserving the state. As Brown later put it, in a state it was necessary to put “the Liberty and Happiness of this Kingdom on the solid Basis of Religion and Virtue, and [unite] ALL HONEST MEN in the steady Protection of this great Purpose”. To this end, people should be induced to comprehend that “their first and highest Obligations are to God, their King, and Country”.¹⁰⁸⁴ Brown regarded this moral impulse as the soul of the state and claimed that the strength of Britain depended on upright manners and principles alone. In this regard, Brown introduced the need for moral regeneration and presented a reform programme that emerged from the combination of his political, religious and moral ideas.

The second claim of this thesis is associated with the first. Brown’s reform agenda can only be grasped by studying his relation with William Warburton, because it was through Warburton that Brown tested and formulated his mature reform philosophy. Warburton was the chief spokesman of the established church’s rationalist Whig wing. Brown was for some time a member of the Warburton circle, although they fell out after the publication of the *Estimate*. Their close friendship, which led Brown to eulogise Warburton in the *Estimate*’s first volume, ended up with Brown’s complaints about Warburton’s domineering temper and endeavours to assert his independence. The relation between them has been regarded as one of the most significant quarrels in literary history. Brown was convinced that his *Estimate* refuted Warburton and would convince readers that he had found his own voice.

For Warburton, the security of England depended on the Protestant succession. Atheists, deists, and non-conformists were seen as actual threats to the constitution, since divisions within and beyond the church could lead to chaos in Britain. Therefore, to

¹⁰⁸³ Brown, *Estimate I*, p. 159.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Brown, *Thoughts on Civil Liberty*, pp. 191-192.

Warburton, the unity provided by the Anglican Church alone could preserve public order and social harmony, and thereby the very state itself. For Brown the cause of the forthcoming threat was not religious controversy, but was the different kinds of moral corruption that could be found everywhere. What strengthened the state was not the preservation of the Anglican Church but an envisaged general moral regeneration.

It is evident that Brown, before *Estimate*, tried to establish a link between truth, virtue and freedom. His subject was to show how a virtuous, happy and free establishment could be achieved. In order to indicate it gradually, he defended the superiority of reason to the passions at first. After defending reason's role in directing men toward virtue, he stated that virtue and truth were the same. Since, for Brown, men should achieve virtue to ascend to truth, anything vicious could not be true. In his sermons, he also showed the link between liberty and Protestant principles. This brought Brown to claim that truth and liberty were identical and that the connection between virtue, truth and liberty in his theory provided a well-established moral system founded on Protestant principles, but not necessarily Anglican ones.

For Brown, Britain could be a long-lasting society only by means of this system because "the most effectual Way to render Kingdoms happy, great, and durable, is to make them virtuous, just, and good".¹⁰⁸⁵ The focus upon Anglican institutions alone was too narrow to secure the future of Britain. The Anglican Church was to be supported, but Warburton's emphasis upon unity was not to be followed.

In the *Estimate* Brown was convinced that he had not only discovered means of addressing the national ills plaguing Britain, but had refuted Warburton and the alternative reform strategies of the time. The *Estimate* reveals Brown to be a prudent political reformist who found an answer to the question of how Britain could be a virtuous and free association. Brown considered moral regeneration as the way towards it.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Brown, *Defence*, p. 70.

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