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Loyalist and patriot political discourses in the American Revolutionary War 1773–1783

A comparative discourse analysis of power, representation and justification

Master's Thesis

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## JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Yhdysvallat itsenäistyi vuosina 1775–1783 kädyssä sodassa. Monet aikalaiset käsitteellistivät nämä tapahtumat sisällissodaksi, sillä sodan molemmat osapuolet kuuluivat Britti-imperiumiin, sekä jakovat saman kielellisen, poliittisen ja kulttuurillisen taustan. Tästä johtuen monia samoja poliittisia ja politisoituja käsitteitä jouduttiin uudelleenmäärittämään tehtäessä eroa sodan osapuolten välille.</p> <p>Analysoin pro gradu -työssäni vertailevasti Amerikan vallankumouksen osapuolten, lojalistien ja patrioottien, poliittisia diskursseja. Selvitän työssäni sitä millaisia käsitteitä, termejä, metaforia ja kielikuvia käytettiin käsitteellämään sotaa. Temaattisesti työ on jaettu kahteen osaan. Ensimmäisessä osassa keskitytään siihen, miten sodan osapuolet tulkitsivat valtaan, vapauteen, edustuksellisuuteen, alamaisuuteen, monarkiaan, tasavaltalaisuuteen ja demokratiaan liittyviä käsitteitä. Toisessa osassa puolestaan rakennetaan yleiskuvaa siitä, miten sodan osapuolet käsitteellistivät, rakensivat ja kuvalivat omaa tai vastustajan puolta sodasta, ja millaisia käsitteitä, kielikuvia, vertauksia ja viittauksia tähän käytettiin. Yhteisen anglo-amerikkalaisen taustansa vuoksi sekä lojalistikin että patriootit käyttivät hyvin samankaltaista kuvastoa, viittauksia ja metaforia. Näitä kuitenkin hyödynnettiin eri tavoin ja eri tarkoituksiin. Tämän kielellisen ja käsitteellisen prosessin aikana amerikkalaiset erottivat itsensä ja identiteettinsä brittiläisistä, samoin kuin brittiläisten tuli erottaa itsenäistyvä Amerikka itsestään.</p> <p>Metodologisesti tutkimus yhdistelee käsitehistoriaa, poliittista historiaa ja diskurssianalyysia. Lähdeaineisto sisältää painettua lehdistö- ja pamphlettimateriaalia vuosien 1773–1783 ajalta, ja lähteissä usein esiintyviä teemoja ja käsitteitä analysoidaan ja vertaillaan alkuperäslähteistä nostettujen, kontekstualisoitujen lainausten avulla.</p>	
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## Abstract

The United States of America gained independence in a war between the years 1775–1783. Many contemporaries conceptualized these events as a civil war because not only were both sides constituent parts of the British Empire, but they also shared a common linguistic, political and cultural background. For this reason many of the same political and politicized concepts had to be redefined in differentiating between the two sides of the war and creating two separate identities.

In my Master's thesis I present a comparative analysis of the political discourses on both the loyalist and patriot side in the American Revolutionary War. I seek out, compare and contrast commonly occurring concepts, terms, metaphors and similes used to conceptualize the ongoing war. Thematically this thesis is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on how the two sides of the war interpreted concepts related to power, freedom, liberty, representation, subjection, monarchy, republic and democracy. The second part presents an overview on how the warring parties conceptualized, constructed and described their own and the opposing side, as well as which concepts, metaphors, similes and references were used for this. Because of their common Anglo-American background both the loyalists and the patriots used similar imagery, references and metaphors but for different purposes. During this conceptual process the Americans came to separate themselves and their identities from the British in the same way that the British had to separate the independence-seeking America from herself.

Methodologically this research combines conceptual history, history of ideas and discourse analysis. The source material for this thesis includes printed periodicals and pamphlets from the years 1773–1783. From these sources frequently occurring themes and concepts are analyzed, compared and contrasted through contextualized primary source quotations.

The American Revolution is a popular topic for historical research. However research that compares the loyalists and the patriots or focuses on the linguistic and conceptual scope has been pushed to the sidelines, and a large volume of existing research literature is comprised of narrative or descriptive war histories. Along with a lack of a European conceptual-historical point of view the field lacks research that takes into account the loyalist and British side of the war. A majority of existing research is focused on the United States, the Founding Fathers, a specific state or the genealogy of a specific person. This research aims to fill in some of these existing gaps in the history of the United States.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND FOOTNOTES

For clarity and uniformity in the footnotes all pamphlets and newspapers are cited by their title rather than the author. This is because many of the pamphlets are either pseudonymous or completely anonymous. Pamphlets with a long name have been shortened in the footnotes for clarity, especially if the footnote itself is very long. Full biographical information regarding the pamphlets is found in the primary sources section of this thesis. Publication dates of the periodicals are footnoted in the American format of M/D/Y. The names of the periodicals used for this thesis are abbreviated in the footnotes as follows:

<b>PJaWA</b>	Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser
<b>RNYG</b>	Rivington's New York Gazetteer or The Connecticut New Jersey Hudson's River and Quebec Weekly Advertiser
<b>DPP</b>	Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet or The General Advertiser
<b>SCGaCJ</b>	South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal
<b>TNYGaWM</b>	The New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury
<b>FJotNAI</b>	Freeman's Journal or The North-American Intelligencer

## Contents

1. Introduction, research questions and sources .....	1
1.1 Mapping out the field and methodology .....	4
1.2 Background to the Revolution.....	11
2. Views on power and the people .....	19
2.1 Liberty, Constitution and Representation.....	19
2.2 Republic, Monarchy and Democracy .....	27
2.3 Power, subjection and slavery.....	37
2.4 From true Englishmen to Americans.....	46
2.5 Overview.....	60
3. Justification and describing the other.....	63
3.1 Loyalist or patriot, rebellion or revolution.....	64
3.2 Duty, history and posterity.....	71
3.3 Naturalness, filiality and body politic.....	79
3.4 Religion and justification from God.....	89
3.5 Overview.....	97
4. Timeline of the discursive process .....	100
Sources .....	106
Primary sources.....	106
Biographies.....	118
Research literature.....	118

## 1. Introduction, research questions and sources

*This is now the 28<sup>th</sup> day since the siege of Boston began; and notwithstanding our accumulating differences, the inhabitants continue to exhibit that calm firmness and unanimity, which astonishes our enemies.<sup>1</sup>*

The United States of America gained independence from the British Empire in what many contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic defined as a civil war between two constituent parts of the British Empire.<sup>2</sup> The relationship between Great Britain and her American colonies had been deteriorating since the early 1760s, an armed conflict broke out in April 1775, and independence was declared on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1776. The above quotation from the Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1774 describes the difficulties of the colonists in North America to define, divide and differentiate themselves, and form their political views during the early revolutionary unrest. As the colonists were subjects of the British Empire, and the thirteen colonies themselves vastly different from each other with little contact between them, turning what the author of the above quotation refers to as “accumulating differences” into a unanimous, calm and firm American identity was one of the key challenges for the revolutionary leaders of the war. Both sides also struggled with the definitions of “enemies” in a rapidly changing political situation between neighbors, families and countrymen.

In this thesis I will compare and contrast the discourse, language and concepts of the independence seeking patriots and the British loyalist side in primary sources, applying a European language oriented approach to the analysis of political discourses in a field and topic important to the history of the United States. I aim to seek out and illustrate the discursive process of the years before armed conflict until the end of the war in 1783 by seeking out recurring themes, concepts and metaphors. My main focus is on themes of power and politics, as well as justifications and representations of the self and the other in a transatlantic civil war. Consequently this thesis aims to outline the discursive construction of an American nation including the gradual separation of Americans from the British, and the way similar concepts and arguments were made use of on both sides of the civil war as a result of a common political history, language and culture.

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<sup>1</sup> PJWA 7/27/1774.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *An Enquiry, whether the guilt of the present Civil War in America ought to be imputed to Great Britain or America*. John Roebuck. Dublin 1776; *An Unconnected Whig's Address to the Public; upon the Present Civil War, the state of Public Affairs, and the Real Cause of All The National Calamities*. London 1777; *Letters on the Present Disturbances in Great Britain and her American Provinces*. Allan Ramsay. London 1777; *Crisis issue IV* 11.2.1775.

The pool of primary sources used for this thesis is comprised of periodical essays and pamphlets, including opinion pieces, letters, speeches and political sermons from the years 1773 to 1783. For this thesis I have chosen sources directly related to America or the Revolutionary War, and published mainly in North America or Britain.<sup>3</sup> As the focus of this thesis is on the transatlantic discourses regarding American independence I have left out material of other internal discussions and criticism regarding British domestic policy that only use the American conflict as a superficial argument.

Due to the nature of the discourse a large part of the sources and quotations used come from either the early or the late years of revolutionary unrest. The volume of pamphlets found and used in this thesis is the largest in 1775 and 1776 with 41 pamphlets each year, most likely due to the fact that armed conflict broke out in 1775. Other peaks in the source material fall on the years 1774, 1780 and 1782-1783.<sup>4</sup> The publishing discourse was most active before the war and at its early stages as people started to form their opinions, take sides and campaign against each other, as well as the later years as American independence became clearer and discussions on the terms of peace were active. During the fighting a lot of literary sources are descriptive in nature, and thus include less politicized concepts or emotive language. The Treaty of Paris between America and Britain was signed on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1783.<sup>5</sup> Once the Revolution ended, a new era began and the discourse quickly changed into the newly independent colonists trying to form a functioning government and economy, and Britain accommodating to her reduced Empire. This is why the time frame chosen for this thesis falls on the ten year period between the years 1773 and 1783. Research literature used in this thesis focuses on the process of independence and American political discourse on a larger scale and time frame.

Limitations in the availability of digitized and surviving source material and relevance to the research question mean that material from slaves, Native Americans and other marginalized participants such as the French and the Spanish have been left out of the scope of this research. Due to source availability the writers and creators of the source material used are mainly members of the political elite of bigger cities, such as leaders, soldiers, merchants, politicians and people working in the printing press. The periodical essay sources used for this research paper are found in the 17th-18th

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<sup>3</sup> Some loyalist pamphlets in particular have been published in Canada, Ireland etc. and some have originally been published elsewhere in Europe, e.g. France or Holland before translation and publishing in England or America.

<sup>4</sup> ECCO database advanced search, term ameri\*, all subject areas, English language, published anywhere between the years 1773-1783.

<sup>5</sup> Nester 2011, 91.

Century Burney Collection Newspapers online archive, and the pamphlets from Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) database.

During the 1770s printed material became cheaper, widely available and increasingly important to public discourse. A growing number of local newspapers and periodicals became important for the educated, predominantly male, English protestant population in private homes and public spaces, where they were available for people of other social standings as well.<sup>6</sup> During the American Revolutionary War every possible literary medium was skillfully put to use. This included newspapers, letters, official documents, speeches, commemorative orations of special events, sermons and essays. According to Bernard Bailyn and Jane N. Garrett the revolutionary pamphlets, including single sheet broadsides printed in small type and longer booklets of 5000-25000 words or up to 80 pages, were the most important revolutionary texts. As a continuation to the existing British discourse the pamphlets were often aimed at rapidly shifting targets, events, situations or problems as they were cheap and flexible to manufacture and spread. The pamphlets take advantage of many rhetorical forms such as satire, irony, flat parody, extended allegory and sarcasm as well as different literary styles and expressions of creative effort.<sup>7</sup> Some of the pamphlets are anonymous or pseudonymous, and some have either a clearly stated author, or have later been proven to be the work of a certain person. Another convention of the pseudonymous literary works is, that they are often signed with either classical Latin pseudonyms, names from the ancient world and their mythologies or names from the Old Testament. The political periodical essays used in this thesis are shorter than many of the pamphlets, and thus offer more skillful rhetoric and speech-like emotional and expressive language as they were meant to be read quickly by a large audience of educated elite. Capitalization and cursive are used to bring tones and emphasis into the text, or to make the reader pause at certain points. These essays also contain plenty of reflective metatext to help the reader through several pages of opinionated essays, and to persuade the reader to agree with the writer.

As many of the sources do not have a known author, all the sources are referred to in the footnotes with the name of the newspaper or pamphlet. When the author is known, contextualization is included in the text or footnotes. Some deductions and observations can also be made from the pseudonyms used, and is included in the text or footnotes when applicable.

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<sup>6</sup> Shalev 2009, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 3-6, 9, 19.

This thesis consist of 4 chapters. An introduction to the topic and sources, as well as research questions and methodological background are covered in the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter. The 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter explores political and politicized concepts regarding power and the people. The 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter looks into the metaphors, allegories, parables and figures of speech used in justifying the war, as well as defining and representing the self and the other side. The last chapter provides a concluding overview of the discursive process during the years covered in this paper. Alongside the gradual conceptual separation of the Americans from the British, another important observation is the way political and politicized concepts such as constitution or slavery, and metaphors such as body politic or family relations, are used in different ways by both the loyalists and the patriots. In addition both sides used similar biblical references to justify that God and providence were on their side. In the end the discourses of the American Revolutionary War can be seen to boil down to a juxtaposition between who had the right to hold political power and who did not, who was the tyrant and who the slave and what each side perceived as natural or unnatural. Justification and legitimization for these respective views were sought from similar sources and through similar references, similes and metaphors.

### 1.1 Mapping out the field and methodology

*[I]f our modern patriots were not determined to shut their eyes against the light of common sense, they would see that this was the unavoidable lot of subordination: They would see also, that it was a lot which the first emigrants to America considered as a very happy one.<sup>8</sup>*

As this thesis aims to analyze controversial and debated political concepts of the American revolutionary era, such as the concepts of “modern patriots”, “common sense” or “subordination” mentioned above, it combines methodology from discourse analysis and conceptual history together with analysis of political thought and political history. The research is conducted by reading through digitized primary sources and contextualizing them as far as possible. Contemporary discourse is reconstructed, analyzed, compared and contrasted through frequently occurring key themes, concepts, metaphors and ways of using language. The analysis is done and supported by direct quotations from the primary source materials. Quotations are reproduced as they exist in the sources, and any omissions or additions are marked with square brackets. In the quotations used I

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<sup>8</sup> *The Plain Question upon the Present Dispute with our American Colonies*. London 1776.

have kept the original usage of cursive and capitalization as well as possible misspellings. Abbreviations of the newspapers' names are used in the footnotes as detailed in the beginning of this thesis.<sup>9</sup> In order to simplify the format of the footnoting pamphlets and newspapers are referred to in the footnotes with their name or title rather than their author as not all of them have a clearly stated author.

At no point was the divide between a loyalist and a patriot clear-cut, and many people even on the so called loyalist side were in favor of the American cause for representation and equal rights, even though they favored the continued union of the Empire over American independence. This makes identification of the author's political views and precise contextualization challenging, especially in cases where the authors are anonymous or use a pseudonym. Many loyalists fearful of rebel hostilities stayed silent and tried to remain peacefully in their homes, thus producing less written material of their opinions. As the loyalists were less willing and able to produce printed material in the colonies due to the revolutionary side regulating printing press and punishing for neutral or non-revolutionary views, it is easier to find available digitized source material from the patriot side.<sup>10</sup> In the end many loyalists ended up losing their homes and livelihoods as some 80 000 of them fled into exile or faced persecution.<sup>11</sup> As is customary to a civil war much of the violence happened informally, outside the actual battles and after the war had officially ended. Even though the loyalists were guaranteed legal safety this did not mean they were safe in practice.<sup>12</sup> These are all reasons as to why research into the lives and opinions of loyalists in the colonies is difficult, and why much of the loyalist material used for this thesis comes from overseas.

The terms loyalist and patriot are present in the primary sources themselves. However as analytical terms they present certain problems. Even though a more detailed discussion regarding the conceptual definitions of the terms loyalist and patriot is presented in chapter 3.1., it is important to briefly illustrate the usage of these terms in the methodological discussion. Not only is the identification of a loyalist or a patriot difficult, but both terms themselves are politicized. Especially the term "patriot" is a subject of much contemporary debate regarding defining, rationalizing and

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<sup>9</sup> PJWA – *Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser*, RNYG – *Rivington's New York Gazetteer or The Connecticut New Jersey Hudson's River and Quebec Weekly Advertiser*, DPP – *Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet or The General Advertiser*, SCGaCJ - *South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal*, TNYGaWM - *The New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, FJotNAI - *Freeman's Journal or The North-American Intelligencer*.

<sup>10</sup> Chopra 2011, 3; Grant 1982, 17; Grant & Blakeley 1982, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Ferling 2007, 552; Grant & Blakeley 1982, 11.

<sup>12</sup> Raphael 2001, 4, 175-176.

justifying who is a real patriot and who is not, and towards which country would real patriotic sentiment be expressed. As an example in 1774 a patriot writing under pseudonym C.M.SCAEVOLA<sup>13</sup> writes: “be virtuous! – be determined! – and you will be independent and free!”<sup>14</sup> As a response to C.M.SCAEVOLA’s text presumably a loyalist writing under pseudonym A MODERATE MAN writes:

By a strange corruption of language in these degenerate days, Moderation and Prudence imply the most unspeakable degree of vice [...] and the real Patriot [Loyalist], is treated with contempt [...] Time, no doubt, will discover who are the *real Friends* of America: or whether the measures pursued by the Sons of Violence, or the *Moderate Men*, will tend most to secure our liberties, and establish and happy and lasting reconciliation between the Parent State and her Colonies.<sup>15</sup>

In the quotation above the patriotic organization Sons of Liberty is called Sons of Violence, and pitted against the so called “moderate men”. In addition the author states that the real patriots are those loyal to King George and Britain. Similar views regarding the concept of patriotism are shared by the Loyal associated Refugees in their Declaration of 1779. For them “principles of true patriotism” are “founded on the love of freedom, justice and humanity.”<sup>16</sup> In this manner the so called loyalists – people with patriotic feelings towards the British Empire – argued themselves to be the real patriots. This kind of debate over the so called good and bad patriotism was typical to 18<sup>th</sup> century political debate, and had existed in Britain since the 1730s. The concept of democracy had first emerged in British parliamentary discourses in 1734, when parliamentary opposition supported by Whig Patriots wished for the repeal of the Septennial Act of 1716, which strengthened the Parliament’s political power over the power of the people. According to the opposition this act was infringing on the rights of the people by limiting their rights to choose their representatives. As an initial response to the events in America British political discourse also brought up the case of the Dutch Republic and the progress of the Patriot movement in 1770 to prove that the democracy the Dutch Patriots were after was something to avoid.<sup>17</sup>

As historian Raphael Ray points out, defining the loyalist as a person with a continuing allegiance to the King is simultaneously both too broad and too narrow. The definition includes passive

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<sup>13</sup> The Pseudonym probably refers to Gaius Mucius Scaevola, an Ancient Roman youth famous for his bravery and unrelenting devotion in sacrificing himself to his country after his attempt at assassinating the Etruscan king Porsena failed.

<sup>14</sup> PJAWA 7/20/1774.

<sup>15</sup> PJAWA 8/3/1774.

<sup>16</sup> *Declaration and Address of His Majesty's Loyal associated Refugees, Assembled at Newport, Rhode-Island*. New York 1779.

<sup>17</sup> Ihalainen 2010, 67-68, 305.

acceptance, while excluding those who wished to protect themselves and their livelihoods without any real allegiance to the King.<sup>18</sup> Despite the ambiguity of the terms loyalist and patriot, the use of these terms is an established custom in the field of American history and research of the Revolutionary era, and for this reason these are the terms that I have chosen to use in my research as well. In this research the term “loyalist” is used to indicate those at large who favored the union of the Empire, and “patriot” indicates those who favored American independence. Perhaps these terms have become established for their simplicity and self-explanatory nature as well as their origin in contemporary texts. However it is good to consider their politically saturated nature when conducting research into the topic.

In his research Pasi Ihalainen has utilized a contextualizing and comparative discourse analysis method for historical research, in which he studies the everyday uses of political language through key concepts, different metaphorical expressions and related terminology in contemporary texts. From these texts the new meanings of existing concepts and the way concepts were recycled can be reconstructed and analyzed. Sources are analyzed in their relevant political, spatial and physical contexts and within the context of the speaker’s background, intentions and intended audience. The analysis is conducted without giving an anachronistic or moral evaluation on the character of the source or its creator.<sup>19</sup> This methodology is very similar to the one employed in this thesis, as it focuses on language and context as well as individual words, vocabularies and concepts.

A crucial methodological note for a historian analyzing contemporary sources from hundreds of years in the past is to avoid anachronism, nominalism and teleology through excessive, sloppy or unintentional use of modern analytical terminology and concepts. Instead a historian working on discourse analysis, conceptual history or history of ideas should strive to reconstruct contemporary discourses through the vocabularies in use at the time in question.<sup>20</sup> For this reason I strive to explain concepts such as constitution or democracy the way they were seen in the North American colonies of the late 1700s, rather than as anachronistically explaining them in today’s terms. For historian and political theorist Quentin Skinner the study of contemporary vocabularies allows a historian to understand and gain insight into social perceptions and the moral evaluations given by a society to certain actions over time. As a fundamental problem to understanding old thought it is

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<sup>18</sup> Raphael 2001, 145-146.

<sup>19</sup> Ihalainen 2010, 1-2, 18, 20; Ihalainen 2005, 3, 10.

<sup>20</sup> Ihalainen 2010, 21; Jordheim 2017, 48-49; Steinmetz 2017, 63.

often noticed that contemporary counterparts for many concepts do not exist in the researchers own language.<sup>21</sup> The danger or anachronism exists when historians use the benefit of hindsight in drawing conclusions that the original contemporaries could not have foreseen or predicted. This happens when a writer is falsely discovered to have held a certain view based on similarity of terminology to the one in use today.<sup>22</sup> Even though Skinner's work studies language, concepts and their interpretations throughout history, his research methodology is focused on studying the speech-acts themselves including their rhetoric, performativity, purpose and intentions of the act in its particular context.<sup>23</sup>

For most conceptual historians concepts and the terms used to express them have a history from their birth to their changing meanings and in some cases even disappearance when they are no longer relevant in their changing sociopolitical contexts. For this reason all political concepts can only be understood in their relevant context.<sup>24</sup> This view is especially relevant for the American Revolution as well, since it brought about a profound change in the sociopolitical context of the colonies. This change required extensive reformulations of worldviews through concepts and political discourse. In a historical methodology combining discourse analysis, conceptual history and the history of ideas the most important underlying questions are how concepts have emerged, what meanings have been attributed to them and how these meanings have changed through the timeframe researched in different surviving textual sources. As such the focus itself is on the process of appropriating, redefining and redescribing terminology rather than the terms themselves.<sup>25</sup> In this research I have also drawn attention to the way the Anglo-American concepts, their meanings and recurring themes tie into the bigger picture of Revolutionary discourse. As conceptual change and political change go hand in hand, revolutions and civil wars are sudden and dramatic realizations of this change.<sup>26</sup>

The American Revolution is one of the most researched topics of the eighteenth century. However most previous research tends to be either descriptive war history, local histories, genealogical research or a combination of these. Lately research into women of the Revolution as well as minorities and the slave population have become a trendy research topic. Most research into the

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<sup>21</sup> Skinner 2002, 148-149, 160, 47.

<sup>22</sup> Skinner 2002, 60.

<sup>23</sup> Steinmetz & Freedén 2017, 28-29.

<sup>24</sup> Skinner 2002, 180; Hyrkänen 2002, 37, 112; Koselleck 2002, 5, 20, 24-25.; Ball, T. & Pocock, J.G.A 1988, 1, 8-9.

<sup>25</sup> Steinmetz & Freedén & Fernández 2017, 17; Ihlainen 2010, 23.

<sup>26</sup> Farr 1988, 21.

American Revolution has been conducted by American historians, and for this reason the relationship between Britain and America during the revolutionary unrest has been overlooked.<sup>27</sup> Whereas some conceptual history has been conducted, especially regarding the concepts of freedom and liberty, very little larger scale discourse analysis exists. In addition very few of these combine more than one type of primary source material. In general the English speaking world has produced less semantics oriented and conceptual history than for example German schools of history.<sup>28</sup> Although some research has been conducted on the discourses of the Patriots in forming a republican form of government, these have often focused on specific points of views such as democracy, the aforementioned concepts of freedom and liberty, references to ancient republics, or focused on the latter years of the Revolution and the aftermath of independence rather than the early war years.

According to Tiedemann and Fingerhut, American historical research has not taken loyalism very seriously until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup> An interest in studying the loyalists was sparked in the United States during the bicentennial celebrations of the Revolution, which has led to a more sympathetic view of the loyalists in later research.<sup>30</sup> In what Susan Burgess Shenstone has referred to as the “scholarly border of 1783” anything concerning the loyalists prior to the year 1783 is considered American history and anything after that Canadian history as many loyalists escaped to Canada after the war. Much of the surviving loyalist material is also hidden away in individual little known collections.<sup>31</sup> This could explain why a lot of loyalist research is genealogical in nature. As there is less research on the loyalists themselves or the relations between Britain and America in general, there is also very little comparative research between the rhetoric of the two sides. This research takes into account the loyalist side of the civil war on both sides of the Atlantic as much as the availability of sources makes it possible. Through a comparative discursive analytical approach to a combination of different sources I hope to bring a fresh, critical and updated European approach of the study of political languages to a familiar topic with lots of existing literature in the historiography of the United States.

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<sup>27</sup> Dickinson 1998, 1-2.

<sup>28</sup> Ihalaisten 1999, 37-38.

<sup>29</sup> Tiedemann & Fingerhut 2009 (1), 19.

<sup>30</sup> Grant 1982, 19.

<sup>31</sup> Shenstone 2000, Introduction.

According to British historical sociologist and a specialist in nationalism and ethnicity Anthony D. Smith, the birth of nationalism as an ideology and movement is often dated to the last quarter of the eighteenth century. A national identity itself is comprised of a sense of political community, common institutions, a code of rights and duties as well as a defined territory. Ethnic communities are formed into nations either through state-sponsored or popular mobilization.<sup>32</sup> This formation of a nation through popular mobilization can be seen particularly well in the case of New England. Through transatlantic problems arising from legislative rights and duties, and the lack of a shared territory with the mainland, the American Revolution eventually culminated into the creation of a new nation called the United States of America and its eventual national identity. Thus Smith's research into the origins of nationhood and national identities has been important in understanding much of the reasoning behind Revolutionary rhetoric regarding the building blocks of a national identity as well as the justifications and descriptions of the Patriots in chapter 3. However according to historian John M. Murrin the American Revolution did not culminate in a direct national identity, but rather left America divided and separated.<sup>33</sup> Regarding the formation of an American identity Richard Beeman's book *Our Lives, Our Fortunes & Our Sacred Honor* (2013) gives valuable insights into the evolution of an American identity, and provides biographical information on those crucial in forming it.

American historian Bernard Bailyn's works regarding colonial and Revolutionary-era America have been important for this research. One of the most important works for this thesis has been Bailyn, B. (1992). *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, where the ideology and rhetoric of the revolution are researched through pamphlets as a primary source. Terrence Ball and J.G.A. Pocock's book *Conceptual change and the Constitution* has been important to this thesis as it explores similar concepts and the same phenomenon of political (re)conceptualization in the formation of the United States of America through similar methods. Ball and Pocock mention concepts of liberty, virtue, republic, democracy, constitution and representation as examples of significant concepts debated and reformulated since the Revolutionary years in constituting and justifying American political life.<sup>34</sup> These are some of the same concepts that this thesis explores, although the focus of this thesis is on the Revolutionary years themselves.

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<sup>32</sup> Smith 1999, 31; Smith 1991, 9, 44, 68-69.

<sup>33</sup> Murrin 1987, 334.

<sup>34</sup> Ball, T. & Pocock, J.G.A 1988, 1, 3-4.

Raphael Ray's book *A People's History of the American Revolution* (2001) provides accounts of those who have otherwise been marginalized in the research of the American Revolution, such as women, Native Americans and slaves. Through contextualized quotes from primary sources of these ordinary people the book provides a realistic view of the revolution, rather than the glorified view presented in popular history, which is often colored with American national feeling. Chopra, R. (2011) *Unnatural Rebellion : Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution*, as well as Pearson, M. (1972) *Those Damned Rebels: The American Revolution Through British Eyes* have been useful for the insight they provide into the less researched loyalist and British point of view of the war through contemporary loyalist correspondence, and away from patriot propaganda.

For Quentin Skinner the value of reconstructing past discourses lies in the possibility to understand and situate ourselves in the shoes of past peoples, and to gain objectivity, perspective and understanding instead of fostering prejudice.<sup>35</sup> This is my aim as well: to gain a critical analytical perspective and a thorough understanding of the way the events of the Revolution were perceived and given meaning to, through a partially transatlantic comparative combination of discourse analysis and conceptual history. In the next chapter I will provide an overview of the context to the events of the American Revolution.

## 1.2 Background to the Revolution

*When a certain great king whose initial is G,  
Shall force stamps upon paper, and folks to drink tea:  
When these folks burn his tea, and stamp papers, like  
stubble,  
You may guess that this king is then coming to trouble.*  
– extract from choice words, or prophetical hints of an illiterate fisherman, discovered on a paper by mere accident<sup>36</sup>

The American colonies' criticism turned against the British Empire surprisingly quickly. In 1763 the colonies were celebrating the victory of the Seven Years' War, and felt closer to Britain than to each other. Only some ten years later the colonies started to revolt, which eventually led to a civil war.<sup>37</sup> In order to understand the emergence of discourses that contributed to a civil war it is necessary to understand some of the basic background and context for the events that led to the colonies gaining

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<sup>35</sup> Skinner 2002, 125.

<sup>36</sup> FJoTNAI 3/27/1782.

<sup>37</sup> Colbourn 1988, 3.

independence. In this chapter I will present a shortened version of the events leading up to the outbreak of the war in 1775 and declaration of independence in 1776, as well as to the discourse regarding that process. Additionally I will be introducing who the loyalists and patriots were, and what separated them from each other.

Since 1745 British imports had trebled, foreign trade was on the rise and industrial production climbed partially due to the growth of the American markets. Simultaneously population was growing, which led to poverty and emigrations everywhere in the empire. Public institutions in London were poorly managed and inadequate to respond to the challenges of large population movement and resettlement, and because of this the political system had come under attack from ideological and extremist perspectives for years. As there was no constitutional theory on the dependencies and relations between colonies and mainland, or how to exercise the rights of Englishmen outside the mainland, the entire Empire was proving to be increasingly inefficient in accommodating the growing new world. The growth of population brought prosperity, power and independency to the colonies, and an increase in British-American trade coupled with decreased British-European trade made America more important to Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Thus America was growing more independent while Britain's dependence on her colonies was increasing.<sup>38</sup> However it is important to keep in mind that the concept of America itself was merely geographical until the 1770s, after which it became politicized due to the somewhat systematic attempts by the patriots to create common myths, stories and symbols to unite the fragmented and vastly differing colonies under one flag.<sup>39</sup>

A catalyst to the Revolutionary War was the worsened economic state of the British Empire. During the Seven Years' War between the years 1754–1763 the Empire's debts soared from £73 million to £146 million.<sup>40</sup> The British Parliament reasoned that as the American colonies had benefitted from the victory of the war, they should make a contribution by paying some of the expenses.<sup>41</sup> As a result the British government attempted to balance the budget and pay off war debts by taxing the North American colonies and tightening trade laws. Eventually some colonists came to believe that George III was engaged in a conspiracy against American liberty and economic well-being.<sup>42</sup> The colonists

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<sup>38</sup> Bailyn 1990, 163-168, 172, 179, 181-182.; Draper 1996, 110, 119, 127; Katz 1987, 26.

<sup>39</sup> Liuska 2005, 74.

<sup>40</sup> Chopra 2011, 19.

<sup>41</sup> Shenstone 2000, 15.

<sup>42</sup> Tiedemann & Fingerhut 2009 (1), 1, 4.

demanded representation in the British government as well as the right to use their own tax money for the development of the colonies. As the colonists had not elected the Parliament and were thus not enjoying the fundamental rights of English common law, the Parliament had no right to tax them.<sup>43</sup> Conspiracy theories were not uncommon in England either, as it was believed by some, that conspirators were seeking to overthrow the English government by pitting England against America.<sup>44</sup>

The British Parliament began exerting control over the colonies and balancing her financial state through the Sugar Act of April 1764, which cut the tax on imported molasses. Through the Currency Act of 1764 the Parliament also forbade the colonies from coining or printing money in order to standardize the currency. In reality this led to a decrease in trade as money was taken out of circulation. In addition Britain enacted taxes to be paid only in gold and silver, which further decreased the amount of money in circulation.<sup>45</sup> The Stamp Act of March 1765 tightened taxation on all printed goods such as newspapers, diplomas, marriage licenses, legal documents, playing cards and dice in the North American colonies. In response a group of organized opposition to the Stamp Act called the Sons of Liberty was formed by newspaper printers. Eventually Parliament rescinded the Stamp Act, however Britain continued to justify her control over the colonies in all cases through the Declaratory Act, which asserted the Parliament's authority over the colonies.<sup>46</sup> For many of the colonists the Stamp Act had come to represent something larger and more threatening than a tax. As historian Theodore Draper has said, it embodied the struggle between power that the British wished to exercise over America, and America wished to exercise over herself.<sup>47</sup>

Due to the colonial tradition of communal law enforcement the colonies had no official civil police force, and demonstrations were common. Thus it was natural for the rebels to take to the streets and demonstrate against British taxation.<sup>48</sup> Both George III and Secretary of State for America George Germain agreed that the government should take a firm stance against these American protests.<sup>49</sup> In 1767 a new series of taxes for luxury items such as lead, glass, paint and tea were

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<sup>43</sup> Chopra 2011, 19, 21-22; Allison 2011, 6; Colbourn 1988, 66.

<sup>44</sup> *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*. By John Wesley. London(?) 1775.

<sup>45</sup> Allison 2011, 5-6; Bouton 2007, 18, 20.

<sup>46</sup> Allison 2011, 7, 10; Bouton 2007, 20.

<sup>47</sup> Draper 1996, 507, 511.

<sup>48</sup> Raphael 2001, 12.

<sup>49</sup> Piecuch 2008, 37.

proposed by Chancellor Charles Townshend. The Townshend Acts renewed political and social agitation and the situation in Boston escalated as tax collectors were sent to America to make sure all taxes were paid. Britain sent two regiments to Boston in October 1768 and Parliament repealed most of the Townshend acts, which calmed the situation. Even though the taxes were small, each tax depleted the supply of gold and silver in circulation. Despite the struggles and differences between the colonial governments they all agreed that the Parliament could not tax them.<sup>50</sup>

Despite the repeal of most of the Townshend Acts and the appeasing of some colonists, the tax on tea remained. The Tea Act of 1773 gave preferable trading position to tea from the British East India Company, and as a result some colonists started attacking tax collectors and merchants, and taunting British soldiers. Britain responded by repressing free speech and the right of assembly, and sending in more troops.<sup>51</sup> During the events of what later became to be known as the Boston Tea Party, on the night of December 16<sup>th</sup> 1773 the Sons of Liberty sent guards to make sure a British merchant ship could not unload its tea. After unloading all cargo was taxed, which is why the tea could not be allowed into the harbor. At night Bostonians disguised as Native Americans boarded three merchant ships and dumped 92,586 pounds of tea, worth £9,659 (about \$1.7 million today) into the water.<sup>52</sup>

As taxation without representation was only a concern to those rich enough to vote and pay taxes, for many of the poorer colonists tea became a concrete symbol for the arrogance of the Parliament, the decadent habits of the rich and a crumbling social hierarchy in the British Empire. Thus the British and their loyalist allies represented a decadent European culture, and tea was an easy target.<sup>53</sup> Americans in all colonies had united against the Parliament and the East India tea, and as a response the British parliament closed up Boston harbor until the destroyed tea would be paid for. In addition the Parliament banned town meetings and prevented any British officials from being prosecuted at courts in Massachusetts, replaced local elected officials with royally appointed ones and sent more troops giving British officers the right to confiscate uninhabited houses and other buildings with compensation to the owner.<sup>54</sup> These regulations came to be known as the Coercive Acts of March 1774, and they ended up unifying the colonies like nothing before.<sup>55</sup> The Rivington's

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<sup>50</sup> Allison 2011, 11, 13; Bouton 2007, 20, 28.

<sup>51</sup> Bouton 2007, 20, 28; Chopra 2011, 25; Allison 2011, 17.

<sup>52</sup> Allison 2011, 17; Beeman 2013, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Raphael 2001, 16-17.

<sup>54</sup> Allison 2011, 17; Bouton 2007, 46.

<sup>55</sup> Bouton 2007, 46, Ferling 2007, 26; Chopra 2011, 32.

New York Gazetteer of May 12<sup>th</sup> 1774 reflects this by encouraging the colonists to take the escalating situation seriously, and even mentions upcoming bomb vessels.<sup>56</sup>

The colonists and colonial officials had differing views on how to react to the radicalizing events. The Whigs objected only to the Parliamentary abuse of power and taxation without representation. Their opponents, the Tories, pushed for stern measures in the colonies and a suppression of the riots.<sup>57</sup> Both the Whigs and Tories got their names from the terminology of the British political arena, where they had been in active use since the Glorious Revolution of 1688. In Britain the Whigs wished to restrict monarchical power, opposed Catholicism and to an extent even upheld and justified alternative republican theories, popular sovereignty and contractual government. The Tories in turn supported the established political order, traditionalist political theories of the Anglican Church, monarchy and passive obedience.<sup>58</sup> Generally the traditionalist and wealthy Anglican Tories in America supported the colonial government and lived very British lifestyles, whereas the Presbyterian and less wealthy Whigs were more likely to benefit from change.<sup>59</sup> However in reality much of the intellectual argument of the revolution took place between Whigs of different Whiggish doctrines debating between consent and sovereignty.<sup>60</sup> Prior to the Declaration of Independence the distinction between a Whig and a Tory was vague, and even George Washington was originally an Anglican traditionalist fearful of the chaos of mob rule. As his mother was a loyalist the British thought that Washington could be reasoned with and bought with a title and a position. More often than not declaring ones side happened accidentally through a public remark or an act of defiance against local injustice.<sup>61</sup>

The first Continental Congress of representatives from twelve of the thirteen colonies met in Philadelphia in the autumn of 1774 as a response to the Coercive Acts. Some delegates wished for a peaceful solution and a compromise, whereas others wanted to enact a national boycott against Britain. Many wished for London to back down, whereas others saw the war as inevitable. The Continental Congress agreed to a boycott of British imports from Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies, urged the colonies to prepare their armed forces and if needed to bar exports to Britain.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> RNYG 5/12/1774.

<sup>57</sup> Raphael 2001, 14.

<sup>58</sup> Ihalaisten 1999, 230, 233, 237.

<sup>59</sup> Pearson 1972, 34; Shenstone 2000, 24-25.

<sup>60</sup> Draper 1996, 217.

<sup>61</sup> Shenstone 2000, 25; Wilson 2001, 157.

<sup>62</sup> Ferling 2007, 26; Chopra 2011, 32.

Originally the Continental Congress reiterated their loyalty to the King while insisting on the right of Americans to govern themselves. Britain on the other hand aimed at restoring colonial loyalty, but without a clear plan on how to achieve this.<sup>63</sup>

The aim of a majority in Congress was a reconciliation with the British Parliament on American terms. Diplomacy to that end included petitions and essays promptly rejected by George III, who proclaimed that the Americans were in a rebellion.<sup>64</sup> Individual colonists were now faced with difficult decisions on whether to oppose the King and Parliament with the Continental Congress, or declare themselves for the King to seek shelter with the British army and re-establishment of King George's authority.<sup>65</sup> Many people who had originally campaigned against the economic restrictions were now more afraid of the outbreak of war rather than increased taxation.<sup>66</sup> Because of all the disagreements and differing opinions it took 22 months of congress from September 1774 to July 1776 to settle on independence.<sup>67</sup> Independence was declared in Pennsylvania by the Second Continental Congress on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1776, forming a new nation of thirteen sovereign states. By the winter of 1776-1777 the loyalist side and Britain realized that the war against this self-proclaimed United States of America would not be won quickly or easily.<sup>68</sup>

During the first battle of the civil war in Lexington on April 19<sup>th</sup> 1775, much to the surprise of the American soldiers the British started a retreat toward Concord. Americans fired at the British throughout their retreat, and this first strategic victory gave the Continental Congress the confidence to establish the Continental Army with George Washington in the lead. In London the news of the defeats of Lexington and Concord were at first rejected as an American fabrication. Due to the British constantly downplaying the strength of the Continental Army Britain paid a big price during these first battles of the civil war.<sup>69</sup> As America had no trained army it was assumed that there would be no difficulty of suppressing the rebellion.<sup>70</sup> However, as English physician with multiple connections to North America John Fothergill wrote in 1780: "How often have we been

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<sup>63</sup> Allison 2011, 20-22.

<sup>64</sup> Nester 2011, 19.

<sup>65</sup> Grant & Blakeley 1982, 11.

<sup>66</sup> Chopra 2011, 29-30, 33.

<sup>67</sup> Beeman 2013, 2.

<sup>68</sup> Chopra 2011, 79; Ferling 2007, 62.

<sup>69</sup> Ferling 2007, 61; e.g. *A Letter to the English Nation, on the Present War with America; With A Review of our Military Operations in that Country; and a Series of Facts never before published*. By an Officer returned from that Service. London 1777.

<sup>70</sup> Ferling 2007, 25; Chopra 2011, 52. E.g. *The strictures on the friendly address examined and a refutation of its principles attempted. Addressed to the People of America*. Boston 1775.

assured, that Washington's troops were unclothed, unarmed, undisciplined, and starving? Yet, has he not baffled a succession of the ablest officers, and the best troops this country had to send?"<sup>71</sup> As a physician and a naturalist Fothergill was an avid helper of the poor who wished to repeal the Stamp Act, avoid war and to abolish slavery.<sup>72</sup> As the war went on, the British realized that the Americans together with the French and the Spanish were starting to form a united, experienced and strong front. The prolonged war was also making Britain look unfavorable in Europe not only in the eyes of her traditional enemies. As Britain could not defeat America back when her army didn't have training or resources, it would be impossible now that she was strong and had strong allies.<sup>73</sup>

All thirteen colonies differed greatly in population and socioeconomic structures. They were also geographically isolated from each other and most transit was by water.<sup>74</sup> Even though the two sides of the civil war could not be categorized easily based on their background or economic status some generalizations are made to distinguish the origins of their differing views. The loyalists are often described as the older, protestant and educated elite with better jobs and experience traveling the world. The revolutionaries in turn are described as the younger rebellious dissenters.<sup>75</sup> However a majority of the loyalists were in fact relatively poor rural landowners. Many were also in commerce or in charge of an official position in the coastal towns. Minorities such as different religious groups, native people and slaves were also represented in the loyalist ranks.<sup>76</sup> This could be because they either had no choice but to fight with their masters, needed to prove their loyalty to the crown or felt that they had more to gain by joining Britain than the poorer colonies prone to losing the war. Raphael Ray points out that the patriotic Sons of Liberty were at least as wealthy as the loyalists in Boston, and even though the classic image of a loyalist is a one of a wealthy traditionalist threatened by republican theory and power in the hands of the common people, in reality the loyalist ranks comprised of people with a multitude of different ethnic, religious, economic and immigrant backgrounds.<sup>77</sup> Commonly loyalists sided with Britain to protect their lives and livelihoods, and gain protection or benefits in the form of land grants, repayments of debt or simply protection against

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<sup>71</sup> *An English Freeholder's Address, to his Countrymen.* John Fothergill. London 1780.

<sup>72</sup> Fothergill, John in Oxford dictionary of national biography vol 20; Fothergill, John in Dictionary of national biography vol 20.

<sup>73</sup> *Free Thoughts on the Continuance of the American War, and the Necessity of its Termination. Addressed to the inhabitants of Great Britain.* By a Gentleman of Lincoln's Inn. London 1781.

<sup>74</sup> Allison 2011, 3.

<sup>75</sup> Hull & Hoffer & Allen 1978, 344-345, 348.

<sup>76</sup> Grant 1982, 13; Tiedemann & Fingerhut (2), 196.

<sup>77</sup> Raphael 2001, 14, 146, 149-151.

the rebels. Some aristocratic loyalists showed themselves as loyal to the British political, social and economic institutions, however the majority of loyalists had no firsthand experience with Britain.<sup>78</sup> Many people also did not know how to classify themselves, or faced a decision between joining the Revolution or suffering the consequences of jail, banishment or even the gallows, which makes identifying peoples' true allegiances difficult.<sup>79</sup>

Both the loyalists and the patriots lacked internal unity. This made it difficult to unite behind a single thought. At large the loyalists in America advocated liberty and the rights of Englishmen as much as the patriot side, however at the same time they feared social change and an increase in the power of the people. For many loyalists violent revolution and independence would ruin the future of America, as well as the future of Britain in general.<sup>80</sup> The patriots in turn wished to stop Britain's meddling in the trade and finances of the colonies, and wanted to bring about a system of legislation and government that would be based on republican virtues and active civic participation.

What was originally a disagreement over taxation was quickly and skillfully turned into a universal battle between liberty and tyranny, where the patriots built a new definition to the people and redefined representation.<sup>81</sup> A severing of legal and political links with Britain and the formulation of a new independent identity led to an exploration of new philosophies and ideologies by preserving, claiming and negotiating the underlying English culture, and incorporating a shared heritage.<sup>82</sup> As the war had started because of the Parliament exceeded its powers, the leaders of this rebellion had to justify their own needs of taxation and demands of military service. This required strong and seductive political language, as well as adaptation of English Whig tradition to suit colonial circumstances.<sup>83</sup> In the following chapters I will look at the way the patriots and loyalists saw and described themselves and their ideologies with regards to their views on power and the people.

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<sup>78</sup> Tiedemann & Fingerhut (2), 196.

<sup>79</sup> Raphael 2001, 145, 169.

<sup>80</sup> Grant 1982, 12.

<sup>81</sup> Rozbicki 2011, 80.

<sup>82</sup> Clark 2013, chapters 6 and conclusion.

<sup>83</sup> Rozbicki 2011, 81; Colbourne 1988, 231; Allison 2011, 30.

## 2. Views on power and the people

*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.<sup>84</sup>*

The constitution of the United States, written in September 1787, is a culmination of the patriots' work at establishing a coherent line of political views, and provides a good overview on what an independent republic would represent as a union of justice, tranquility, defense, welfare and liberty for the Americans and their posterity. Much of the same political vocabulary was also employed by the loyalist side, although from different perspectives. In this chapter I will examine the views the two contestants held on political power and political systems through a few of the most important key concepts, how these views developed and how they were presented during the Revolutionary era. In the first two subchapters I will examine political concepts such as liberty, representation, constitution, republic, monarchy and democracy as well as views attributed to them. Chapter 2.2 looks at political slavery, and the way it was used as a metaphor of power and subjection, and skillfully made to fit both the patriot and the loyalist rhetoric. In chapter 2.3 I will examine the development of the colonists from true Englishmen and British subjects to independent Americans, as well as the building of an American constitution and a consequent political identity throughout the war years. Lastly an overview is presented to combine the ideas discussed in this chapter.

### 2.1 Liberty, Constitution and Representation

*Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his Life; for the very LIFE of LIFE is LIBERTY.<sup>85</sup>*

As has been previously discussed, a shared political tradition and vocabulary led to the need to redefine and recycle many familiar political concepts. One of these concepts and ideologies supplied by British history was liberty, and it's invoking of a trial by jury, representation and a government by consent.<sup>86</sup> As a core belief people voluntarily surrender their natural liberty only if their security and independence can be guaranteed, and thus political power has to be justified by each

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<sup>84</sup> The constitution of the United States of America. 1787.

<sup>85</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>86</sup> Rozbicki 2011, p. 85, 234

individual.<sup>87</sup> According to political scientist and historian James Farr the Revolutionary generation condemned British rule as tyrannical in order to command action against it. Thus they were able to protect this precious liberty through constant commendation and vigilance. In other words the use of concepts such as tyranny and liberty helped justify the beliefs of the political actors of the Revolution.<sup>88</sup> The revolution also heightened awareness surrounding the differences between laws and the underlying constitution, as different laws and regulations were seen and represented in public discourses as “unconstitutional” and the constitution became a paramount law.<sup>89</sup>

For the patriots any oppressive regimes such as tyranny, oligarchy and mob rule were pitted against liberty and happiness.<sup>90</sup> In 1775 pseudonym Author of Regulus writes how “tyranny” deprives people of “life, liberty and property”, and how the colonies struggle with “despotic power under a popular government; a government where it is as lawful and as safe for the people to rebel, as for the legislature to play the tyrant; and indeed one is the natural and just consequence of the other.”<sup>91</sup> These ideas correspond to John Locke's Second Treatise on Civil Government published in 1689, although the author doesn't quote Locke directly. Loyalists in turn promoted the lawful, natural and constitutional liberty of the British constitution as the culmination of all political wisdom. Thus it was believed that American liberty was dependent on the superior government combining the British Crown with the balance of aristocracy and democracy.<sup>92</sup> In 1776 Pseudonym A Country Curate summarizes the view of many loyalists by stating that “[a] genuine Love of Liberty will as certainly engage us to reverence and support Authority, as to withstand Tyranny; since the one is as necessary to the very Being of Liberty, as the other is destructive of it.” In this way the loyalists believed that true liberty required subjection to authority, and to a Country Curate the American false “Spirit of Liberty” was in fact “the Spirit of Licentiousness” or “Excess of Liberty” destroying “all civil Security and constitutional Freedom” and overthrowing “many free Governments, and particularly our own.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Sinopoli 1992, 22.

<sup>88</sup> Farr 1988, 17.

<sup>89</sup> Strourzh 1988, 45-47.

<sup>90</sup> Bailyn 1992, 70.

<sup>91</sup> *A Defence of the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, in reply to Taxation no Tyranny*. The Author of Regulus. London 1775.

<sup>92</sup> Chopra 2011, 10; e.g. *An Address to the People on the Subject of the Contest Between Great-Britain and America*. By \*\*\*\*\*. London 1776.

<sup>93</sup> *American Resistance Indefensible. A Sermon, Preached on Friday, December 13, 1776, Being the Day appointed for A General Fast*. A Country Curate. London 1776.

Britain had a tradition of promoting political freedom through its governmental system.<sup>94</sup> In the early 1760s most colonists identified themselves as English, and shared this English view of government kept in check by the three branches representing different segments of society. England had combined sovereign authority with a parliament, and power was shared by the Crown, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. To most contemporary British subjects this form of government effectively protected the interests of all groups through the unity and vigor of a monarch, wisdom of the well-born and the representation of the common good by the ordinary people.<sup>95</sup> In 1775 an anonymous loyal colonist writes about the deluded “rebels” as the “Enemies to British and constitutional Liberty”.

British Freedom then is a Freedom of Law, a constitutional Freedom, a Freedom of acting and speaking what is right, a Freedom founded in Reason, Happiness, and Security. All licentious Freedom, called by whatever specious Name, is a savage Principle of speaking and doing what a depraved Individual thinks fit, without Regard to the Convenience of others, or the Welfare of the World. The former is undeniably a substantial Good: The latter is indisputably the greatest Curse, that could be established for Mankind.<sup>96</sup>

Similarly in his sermon Alexander Gerard, a Scottish minister and an academic who questioned the legitimacy of the American actions<sup>97</sup>, states that “[l]iberty cannot exist in any society without restraints”, and that laws were required to regulate what is right and forbid what is wrong in order to give security to liberty.<sup>98</sup>

The British constitution is a partially unwritten amalgam of parliamentary acts, court judgments, conventions and laws. The earliest document of the constitution is the Magna Carta from the year 1215, which establishes that the king is subject to the laws as agreed by the barons they govern, and forms the basis for other constitutional documents in Britain.<sup>99</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the only practical British constitution was the Instrument of Government from the year 1653, and the period from the Stamp Act to the formation of the United States was a period of constitutional reflection in Britain.<sup>100</sup> The relations between England and America were largely based on this vague concept of constitution, and the relationship between the constitution and the charters. While British

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<sup>94</sup> Liuska 2005, 32-33.

<sup>95</sup> Banning & Estes 2014, p. 15

<sup>96</sup> *Americans against Liberty: or an essay on the nature and principles of True Freedom, shewing that the designs and conduct of the Americans tend only to Tyranny and Slavery.* London 1775.

<sup>97</sup> Gerard, Alexander in Oxford dictionary of national biography vol 21.

<sup>98</sup> *Liberty the cloke of Maliciousness.* Alexander Gerard, D.D. Aberdeen 1778.

<sup>99</sup> Blackburn 2015.

<sup>100</sup> Strourzh 1988, 36-38; Gravil 2015, 33.

colonial policy required self-sufficiency, it simultaneously weakened the colonies' dependence on Britain.<sup>101</sup> The American colonies faced a constitutional dilemma of being ruled by the British sovereign, while simultaneously enjoying privileges from the charters that worked outside general British legislature, such as avoiding import taxes.<sup>102</sup> For the loyalists constitution provided a framework for the existing form of government, whereas for the Patriots the constitution became a limit to the creation of American politics. This opposition to the British constitution and the way it was operated gave rise to the concept of independence.<sup>103</sup>

For the loyalist side America was constitutionally a part of Great Britain. To Pseudonym a Back Settler “[t]he Sovereignty of a British Parliament over all the Dominions belonging to Great Britain is so essential a Part of the Constitution, that the Right cannot be renounced without a Confusion of Ideas, or a treasonable Surrender.” The author also points out that since the beginning of societies a supreme power had been necessary to regulate the good of the whole, and that as the colonial charters were a part of British legislation, taxing the colonies accordingly was constitutional.<sup>104</sup> For Thomas Bradbury Chandler, an Anglican parson and a loyalist<sup>105</sup>, America had thus far prospered under British rule, and should therefore be expected to take part in the costs through taxation. For him “[T]he bands of society would be dissolved, the harmony of the world confounded, and the order of nature subverted, if reverence, respect, and obedience, might be reduced to those whom the constitution has vested with the highest authority.” Again, as the charters bound the colonies to the laws of Great Britain, and the charter of Pennsylvania explicitly stated that taxes could be laid upon the inhabitants by act of Parliament, the Americans had no constitutional grounds for rebelling under the British “equitable and free constitution”, and “protection and patronage of the greatest maritime power in the world.”<sup>106</sup> This constitutional dependence and duty to contribute to the British crown was a common argument used against the rebelling colonists.<sup>107</sup> For this reason many loyalists saw the American demands for representation and constitutional rights as unjust and

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<sup>101</sup> Draper 1996, 89.

<sup>102</sup> Draper 1996, 55.

<sup>103</sup> Bailyn 1992, 67, 175-176; Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 45, 47.

<sup>104</sup> E.g. *Some fugitive thoughts on a letter signed freeman*. A Back Settler. Keowee 1774.

<sup>105</sup> Chandler, Thomas Bradbury in Concise Dictionary of American biography.

<sup>106</sup> *A friendly address to all reasonable Americans, On the subject of our political confusions*. Thomas Bradbury Chandler. London 1774.

<sup>107</sup> E.g. *Great Britain's right to tax her colonies. Placed in the clearest Light*, by a Swiss. John Joachim Zubly. London 1774; *A Calm Address to Americanus*, by A Native of America. London 1775; *The Present Crisis, with respect to America, Considered*. London 1775.

uncalled for. In 1774 British economist John Gray<sup>108</sup> pointed out that millions of other British subjects were not directly represented in the parliament, and therefore the Americans should not demand to be a special case. To him a superintending power had a right to demand supplies from the citizens when needed.<sup>109</sup> Similarly Methodist vicar John Fletcher, born in Switzerland and an officer in the Portuguese army before immigrating to England<sup>110</sup>, points out in his pamphlet that all women are indirectly represented by men regardless of their rank or property, and that voters represent those who do not or cannot attend elections. Therefore the Americans should be content with a similar indirect representation as British subjects.<sup>111</sup> Methodist preacher John Wesley adds to this list by pointing out that the slaves are not represented by anyone, and asks whether other non-represented people in England should be considered slaves as well.<sup>112</sup> Wesley entered American politics through his pamphlet titled *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies* in 1775, where he sided with the British ministry opposing the rebellion.<sup>113</sup>

As a big part of the argument leading to the American Revolution arose from problems of representation, the concept of representation itself was understandably a subject of much debate. If the colonists had to give consent to parliamentary taxation, the parliament was not sovereign. However if the parliament was sovereign, the colonists would not have to consent to their decisions. Whereas British people were represented in the Parliament through virtual representation, the Americans had their own assemblies regarding their own colonial affairs.<sup>114</sup> For patriots such as Benjamin Franklin, who was originally a colonial agent to Parliament for the colonies of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, a delegate of Pennsylvania in the Second Continental Congress in 1775, the most famous American in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and one of the foremost Founding Fathers<sup>115</sup>, those in public service should “have some regard to prevailing and established opinions among the people to be governed”.<sup>116</sup> Before the American Revolutionary War Franklin had attempted to balance the

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<sup>108</sup> Gray, John 1724-1811, Online Computer Library Center OCLC WorldCat network of library content and services 2017.

<sup>109</sup> *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated; and the Means of Asserting that Right proposed.* John Gray. London 1774.

<sup>110</sup> Sandoz 1998, 560; Fletcher, John William in Oxford dictionary of national biography vol 20.

<sup>111</sup> *American Patriotism Farther confronted with Reason, Scripture, and the Constitution.* John Fletcher. Shrewsbury 1776.

<sup>112</sup> *A Calm Address to our American Colonies.* By John Wesley. Bristol 1775.

<sup>113</sup> Sandoz 1998, 410; John Wesley in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>114</sup> Draper 1996, 216-217.

<sup>115</sup> Beeman 2013, xiii, 25; Benjamin Franklin in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>116</sup> *The Cause of the present distractions in America explained: in two letters to a merchant in London.* Benjamin Franklin. New York 1774.

relations between Britain and the colonies before sailing to America in March 1775. He represented the United States in France during the events of the Revolution, and public service was the cornerstone of his politics.<sup>117</sup> On the opposing side it was argued that as British subjects were all the same and equal, the House of Commons was an equal representation of the population despite geographical disparity.<sup>118</sup> However in general the understanding that a representative was needed in order to be taxed was shared by many patriots and loyalists equally.<sup>119</sup> More on the forms of representation and good governance is discussed in chapter 2.2.

Patriots saw the British constitution and its clause of representation differently. In November 1774 Pseudonym A Carolinian wrote, that Americans were entitled to “all the privileges and immunities which the *common law of England* and *Magna Charta* confer, as fully as their local circumstances admit of”, and that taxation and representation are “constitutionally inseparable”. As the Americans were the descendants of Englishmen rather than a conquered people, they should be under the same legislation as other Britons.<sup>120</sup> In his oration on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1773 Dr. Benjamin Church criticized the monarchy by stating that “[i]t would shock humanity, should I attempt to describe those barbarous and tragic scenes, which crimson the historic page of this wretched and detestable constitution, where absolute dominion is lodged in one person: Where one makes the whole, and the whole is nothing.”<sup>121</sup> In 1777 the Earl of Abingdon Bertie Willoughby, a frequent speaker in the House of Lords and an opponent of British policy that lead to war with America,<sup>122</sup> expressed that the power of the people should always come before the power of the constitution and legislation.<sup>123</sup>

In his famous pamphlet titled *Common Sense* Thomas Paine states that tyranny of the British government is inherent in its branches, where “[t]he remains of Monarchical tyranny” are present “in the person of the King”, and “[t]he remains of Aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the Peers”. However for Paine the House of Commons had potential as “[t]he new republican materials in the persons of the Commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.” As the positions of the King and the House of Lords were hereditary, “in a constitutional sense they contribute nothing

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<sup>117</sup> Benjamin Franklin in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>118</sup> E.g. *A Letter to the People of Great-Britain, in Answer to that published by the American Congress*. London 1775.

<sup>119</sup> E.g. *A Plain state of the Argument between Great-Britain and Her Colonies*. London 1775.

<sup>120</sup> *A very short and candid appeal to free born Britons by an American*. A Carolinian. London 1774.

<sup>121</sup> *An Oration, delivered March 5th 1773 at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770*. Dr. Benjamin Church. Boston 1773.

<sup>122</sup> Bertie, Willoughby. Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, vol 4.

<sup>123</sup> *Thoughts on the Letter of Edmund Burke, Esq. to the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the Affairs of America*. By the Earl of Abingdon. Dublin 1777.

towards the freedom of the State.”<sup>124</sup> Thomas Paine arrived to America in November 1774 after the death of his first wife, a second failed marriage and a failed career as an excise tax officer, to escape the threat of imprisonment from his employers. He was a talented debater and for a short while he worked as an essayist for the *Pennsylvania Magazine, or American Monthly Museum* in 1775 before starting his work on *Common Sense*.<sup>125</sup> *Common Sense* became known as the most famous instance of violent insult against the institution of hereditary kingship, and a direct attack on the English Constitution.<sup>126</sup> In his emotional rather than intellectual arguments he captured the feelings those who agreed with were unwilling or unable to articulate, helping his readers sever their affection and fear for the monarchy as a whole.<sup>127</sup>

The vague concepts of constitution and constitutionalism are often used by the Revolutionary generation with no context or definition. Vague references to “fundamental principles of constitution”<sup>128</sup>, “happy constitution” to which British subjects should cheerfully submit to,<sup>129</sup> and “restoring the Constitution to its original purity” by removing the oppression and giving equal representation<sup>130</sup> proved the ambiguity of the terminology, which is also affected by the nature of the British constitution as an amalgam of documents, statutes, common law, customs and state institutions rather than an actual written constitution.<sup>131</sup> Frustration over the debate regarding the constitution was felt by contemporaries as well. In 1774 pseudonym a Friend to Both Countries states that “[t]he question should be, not what the constitution was, or is, but what present circumstances considered, it ought to be.”<sup>132</sup>

According to historian John E. Ferling, a minority in the Continental Congress favored independence from the start. However in order to keep the moderates in the Patriot ranks they had to make slow progress. For this reason the Continental Congress sought a reconciliatory war on its own terms. During the first year or so America fought to re-establish the British Empire as a confederation of

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<sup>124</sup> *Common Sense: Addressed to the Inhabitants of America, On the following interesting Subjects. Written by an Englishman.* Thomas Paine. Philadelphia 1776.

<sup>125</sup> Beeman 2013, 306-312.; Bailyn 1990 67.

<sup>126</sup> Pocock 1988, 61; Hanson 1988, 170; Beeman 2013, 118.

<sup>127</sup> Nester 2011, 24.

<sup>128</sup> *A letter from a Virginian to the Members of the Congress to be held at Philadelphia, on the First of September 1774.* Jonathan Boucher. Boston 1774.

<sup>129</sup> E.g. *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress.* John Lind. Dublin 1777.

<sup>130</sup> *Two Speeches of Thomas Day, Esq. At the General Meetings of the Counties of Cambridge and Essex, Held March 25, and April 25, 1780.* Thomas Day. London 1780.

<sup>131</sup> Beeman 2013, 117.

<sup>132</sup> *America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion.* A Friend to Both Countries. Devizes London 1774.

sovereign states under a king. Parliament was to be removed or at least its power was to be severely limited.<sup>133</sup> Some Patriots defined themselves as constitutional Whigs in order to combine the idea of preserving the British constitution together with Whiggish republicanism. For these people the constitution offered a form of “constitutional liberty”<sup>134</sup>, “constitutional consent”<sup>135</sup> and a return to “lost rights and privileges”.<sup>136</sup> In 1774 Samuel Tucker, who later became a member of the Continental Navy writes:

[I]t is the indispensable duty of his Colony, under the enjoyment of our constitutional privileges and immunities, as being a part of his Majesty's dominions, always to bear faithful and true allegiance to his Majesty, and him defend, to the utmost of our power, against all attempts upon his person, crown and dignity<sup>137</sup>

Aside from enjoying the privileges and immunities offered by being a dominion to the King, the British constitution was referred to by the loyalists as “the free and happy constitution of Britain”<sup>138</sup> or “this free and glorious constitution”<sup>139</sup>, and the uprisings of the colonies seen as attempts “to subvert our glorious constitution”<sup>140</sup>.

For some the constitution admired and respected by the Americans no longer existed in Britain as a result of the unjust means of taxing and limiting the colonies. The English “natural rights” of representation were long gone and had to be restored.<sup>141</sup> Corruption was spreading in Europe and Britain too had lost its traditional freedom. This task of defending and fighting for true freedom originating from God and nature now fell on the Americans as God's chosen people.<sup>142</sup> Originally the goal of the colonists was not a revolution, rather than the restoration of the constitution and the prevention of corruption to uphold political liberties. With these goals the early texts were systematic and explanatory rather than emotional.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Ferling 2007, 71.

<sup>134</sup> E.g. PJAWA 6/29/1774; *An Answer to a late pamphlet, entitled Taxation no tyranny 1775; A Second Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the People 1775; The Plain Question upon the Present Dispute with our American Colonies. 1776; Taxation, Tyranny. Addressed to Samuel Johnson, L.L.D. 1775.*

<sup>135</sup> *Taxation, Tyranny. Addressed to Samuel Johnson, L.L.D. London 1775*

<sup>136</sup> PJAWA 6/29/1774.

<sup>137</sup> PJAWA 7/13/1774.

<sup>138</sup> RNYG 11/9/1775.

<sup>139</sup> *A View of the Several Schemes with respect to America; and Their Comparative Merit in Promoting the Dignity and Interest of Great Britain.* Capel Lofft. London 1776.

<sup>140</sup> TNYGaWM 11/13/1775.

<sup>141</sup> Colbourn 1988 p. 231, 232

<sup>142</sup> Liuska 2005, 85-88, 95, 97-99, 102-103, 105, 108.

<sup>143</sup> Bailyn 1992, p. 19

## 2.2 Republic, Monarchy and Democracy

*What simpletons, said I, are mankind to surrender so many of their just, necessary, and natural rights, forever, into the hands of one or more men, which, unless they all prove just, wise, patriotic and benevolent (a miracle not to be expected) commonly renders the people the miserable slaves of ambition, avarice and oppression.*<sup>144</sup>

For the Revolutionary colonists the problems of liberty and representation sprung from the British monarchy, and the rule of the unrepresentative houses. In this chapter I will look more closely into the ways the patriots defined concepts such as republic, democracy and monarchy, and how a republican form of government became to be seen as the better option for governance. Loyalist views are added in to illustrate how these discourses were opposed. It is useful to keep in mind that until 1776 most Americans denied republicanism and supported the British model of limited monarchy as well as unprecedented freedoms to owning land and starting businesses or having a voice in public matters.<sup>145</sup>

According to modern republican theory in a republican government power has to remain in the hands of the people, political equality is reached, wealth is equalized to promote the good of the community, and the governing bodies are subject to and servants to the people chosen through public deliberation. During early 1781 all 13 colonies ratified the Articles of Confederation, the first constitution of the United States of America drafted by the Second Continental Congress, which established the first official American government. These documents created a union between the colonies under the name of The United States of America, and established a common representative congress for all of the states.<sup>146</sup> Values such as power in the hands of the people, political equality to an extent and the virtues of governmental agents were all important to the Americans of the 18<sup>th</sup> century drafting the foundations of a new republican nation. As discussed in the previous chapter the loyalists saw British monarchy together with the power of the Houses of Lords and Commons as the culmination of political liberty, and expressed their criticism towards a new and independent American government by trying to warn the colonists of the dangers of independence and republicanism. The internal division of the colonies<sup>147</sup> would make forming a new government hard,

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<sup>144</sup> FJoTNAI 11/21/1781, PILGRIM.

<sup>145</sup> Hanson 1988, 167-168.; Nester 2011, 135-136.

<sup>146</sup> Bailyn 1992, 56; Nester 2011, 78-80; Sinnopoli 1992, 25.

<sup>147</sup> *The Sentiments of a Foreigner On the Disputes of Great-Britain with America. Translated from the French.* Abbe Guillaume Thomas Francois Raynal. Belfast 1775.

and letting go of Britain's envied liberty<sup>148</sup> as well as political and trade connections<sup>149</sup> would lead to difficulties for the new republic. In an anonymous answer to Paine's *Common Sense* the author points out that a civil war would likely break out in independent America, or another foreign power would wish to take over. The republican congress is described as a despotic tyranny to replace the "private happiness and prosperity under British laws."<sup>150</sup>

For Thomas Paine republics were inherently peaceful, and monarchies in turn, with their "pride and insolence", sought to cause "rupture with foreign powers in instances, where a republican government by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake." The hatred for monarchy as a form of government manifests in the rhetoric of many other patriots as well. In a continuing series of political essays pseudonym The PILGRIM writes how "All wars are, in a great measure produced by regal pride, generated by regal power; monarchs are the children of discord[...]."<sup>151</sup> The author says to have an "innate love for *republics*, and could never be long at ease in the vicinity of kings, emperors, kingdoms or aristocracies", which are described as "but different words for tyrants and tyranny". Once again the republican Americans are seen as virtuous, and power in the hands of representatives chosen by the people is seen as a natural form of government. According to The PILGRIM, monarchical governments are, by definition unjust and unnatural slavers, as well as through negation the opposite of wise, patriotic and benevolent.<sup>152</sup>

For the patriots and their Revolutionary leaders democracy meant an eradication of hereditary privilege in favor of a meritocracy based on talent, public service and an active participation. For them a legitimate authority could only rise from popular election, where governments could genuinely respond to the people.<sup>153</sup> This was heavily influenced by radical British Whig tradition of objecting to the growing power of Parliament and its control by the English landowning elite.<sup>154</sup> For the contemporaries the concepts of democracy and republicanism became synonymous, and were hard to distinguish from each other.<sup>155</sup> In May 1781 pseudonym IMPARTIAL referred to the loyalist

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<sup>148</sup> *Thoughts on the Present state of affairs with America, and the means of conciliation*. William Pulteney. London 1778.

<sup>149</sup> *Plain Truth: Addressed to the Inhabitants of America. Containing Remarks on a late Pamphlet, intitled Common Sense*. CANDIDUS. James Chalmers. Dublin 1776.

<sup>150</sup> *Reason. In Answer to a Pamphlet entituled Common Sense*. Dublin 1776.

<sup>151</sup> FJoTNAI 6/19/1782; FJoTNAI 11/21/1781.

<sup>152</sup> FJoTNAI 11/21/1781.

<sup>153</sup> Banning & Estes 2014, 15, 21.

<sup>154</sup> Wilson 2001, 29.

<sup>155</sup> Hansen 1988, 171-172.

side as trying “to overturn the *democracy* of our constitution”.<sup>156</sup> According to Bailyn and Garrett although republic and democracy were often used synonymously, democracy itself meant the lowest order of society where the commons ruled.<sup>157</sup> To many of the Revolutionaries the new government should be what historian Eran Shalev refers to as an organic hierarchy led by patricians or aristocrats embodying classical republican virtues. Thus a Roman style republican government led by this so called “natural aristocracy” was ideal, whereas an Athenian-style democracy was frowned upon as a chaotic rule of the mob.<sup>158</sup> According to European political theorists democracy in its pure form was a historical, impractical and irrelevant form of government, and a true rule of the people would not work in practice. Thus the democracy of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was merely an element within the political system rather than a single system of government.<sup>159</sup>

In the Freeman’s Journal and Weekly Advertiser on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1781 pseudonym SINE QUIBUS NON<sup>160</sup> writes: “O ye sages, who direct our SUPREME council, never forget that every FINAL POWER must remain inviolate in the hands of the people – in those hands which lifted you up to your present high stations.” Thus only by retaining power in the hands of the voting population, would the United States be free, independent and secure against external threats. For the writer the ability to choose who rules is referred as “the essential right of man; but no where else, he is blessed with it.” They also state that “This singular blessing [power in the hands of the people], which naturally derives from the social state of man, is the envy and terror of Britain, and indeed of every other nation, which, *in the dark*, ever groped for liberty.”<sup>161</sup> Throughout the war years the patriots developed a myth describing themselves as beacons of light and a citadel of opportunity showing the way for other less privileged nations to rid themselves of oppressive regimes. In the previous quote this manifests quite literally, as other nations grope in the dark for liberty. Professor of Government and Politics William Nester has argued that this idea of liberal culture with exceptional and universal values could be at the core of American culture at large.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> FJoTNAI 5/30/1781.

<sup>157</sup> Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 169, 176.

<sup>158</sup> Shalev 2009, 5, 14; Ihlainen 2010, 65.

<sup>159</sup> Ihlainen 2010, 59, 62-64.

<sup>160</sup> *Sine quibus non* translates to indispensable or essential actions or conditions. In the singular form *sine qua non* was originally a Latin legal term for an essential condition without which it could not be”, or “without which [there is] nothing”. To the author the essential condition for independent, secure and free America is power in the hands of the voters.

<sup>161</sup> FJoTNAI 7/11/1781.

<sup>162</sup> Nester 2011, 136.

For the patriots forming a good and exemplary government without the vices of the British Houses of Parliament was an important part of the ongoing discourse. In his oration on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1774 John Hancock states his love of righteous governments in favor of the tyrannical treatment of the colonies by Britain:

Some boast of being *friends to government*; I am a friend to *righteous* government, to a government founded upon the principles of reason and justice; but I glory in publicly avowing my eternal enmity to tyranny. Is the present system which the British administration have adopted for the government of the colonies, a righteous government? Or is it tyranny? [...] What regard, respect or consideration has *Great-Britain* shewn in their late transactions for the security of the persons or properties of the inhabitants of the colonies? or rather, What have they omitted doing to destroy that security?<sup>163</sup>

John Hancock was the flamboyant proprietor of a large trading firm, the president of the first and second provincial congresses, and one of the leaders of Massachusetts Patriots.<sup>164</sup>

Discussions over what kind of government America should form were popular both early on as well as later on when American independence became clearer. One of the most important factors for good governance for the patriots and in the republican discourse was virtue.<sup>165</sup> Classical republicanism sprung from virtue, which originated from classical antiquity. This attitude was based on public civic virtue, a love of liberty and a hatred of tyranny.<sup>166</sup> The new government had to represent the virtues of both social groups: the majority of people and the minority who were better off in birth and possessions.<sup>167</sup> The basic function of a republic was to prevent corruption as an antithesis of virtue, and being republican meant aligning oneself with civic virtue.<sup>168</sup> According to pseudonym SINE QUIBUS NON “Republican ministers acting as such, are, and must be *constitutionally* virtuous.”<sup>169</sup> This is an interesting way of combining the political concept of constitution especially sought after by the loyalist side, with republican virtue<sup>170</sup> often attributed to the discourse of the new form of government.

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<sup>163</sup> *An Oration; delivered March 5, 1774, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston: to commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the fifth of March 1770.* John Hancock. Boston 1774.

<sup>164</sup> Beeman 2013, 210-219; John Hancock in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>165</sup> Ball, T. & Pocock, J.G.A. 1988, 7.

<sup>166</sup> Shalev 2009, p. 5, 15.

<sup>167</sup> Banning & Estes 2014, p. 15

<sup>168</sup> Pocock, J.G.A. 1988, 64-65.

<sup>169</sup> FJoTNAI 7/11/1781.

<sup>170</sup> E.g. FJoTNAI 12/28/1781, where nickname WHIG sees virtue as the base principle of a republican government.

Virtue as a concept was associated with virility and vigilance, all opposed and challenged by softness, effeminacy and slumber that inevitably followed a life of luxury. Virtuous republican citizens selfishly defended their own liberties and interests, were constantly vigilant in public life and consciously submitted themselves to the will of the community.<sup>171</sup> While people were entitled to their own ideal rights of life, liberty and property, the constitution was allowed to state which parts of liberty were to be sacrificed for the common good. An individual's desires had to give way to the demands of the community, and an individual had to be willing to sacrifice his property or even life if needed.<sup>172</sup> To pseudonym QUIRNUS<sup>173</sup> a "love for our country" is seen as the highest virtue, without which republics can't work and monarchies work poorly. This love is deemed essential in the "wisdom and justice of government"<sup>174</sup> According to a Citizen of Philadelphia the ministers of a good republican government need integrity, a good reputation, piety, religion, wisdom, abilities, a decisive nature, close attention, perseverance, steady attendance and the ability to command their passions.<sup>175</sup> These essential virtues combine both private and public virtues, and emphasize the duty of a minister to the people. Another concept and virtue often attributed to building an independent republic, and the struggle against the British monarchy is common sense, that the loyalists and British seem to be lacking.<sup>176</sup> A loyalist under the pseudonym BRITANNICUS takes part in the discussion of public virtue by claiming that the patriots have sacrificed their moral and religious reputation to seduction, and are "determined under the mask of public virtue to introduce public ruin! Villains, echoing the most sacred names of Heaven, Liberty, Magna Charta, and British Laws, to accomplish private schemes of self-interest by the subversion of the state."<sup>177</sup>

The philosophical origins of classical republicanism stem from Greek and Roman thinkers, and the knowledge of classical antiquity was important to any learned person of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The antiquity of Parliament and Whiggish political ambitions had their basis in ancient customs, and idealized versions of Anglo-Saxon, Roman, Greek and even Spartan democracies were presented. References to and quotations from heroic stories were often used, albeit superficially, to support arguments, and analogies were established from antiquity to the modern day.<sup>178</sup> The virtues of

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<sup>171</sup> Banning & Estes 2014, p. 84, 86, 88; Banning 1988, 197, 199-200, 203.

<sup>172</sup> Bailyn 1992, p. 183, 188; Banning & Estes 2014, p. 87.

<sup>173</sup> Quirinus was a god in Roman mythology often associated to Romulus, the mythical founder of Rome.

<sup>174</sup> FJoTNAI 8/21/1782.

<sup>175</sup> FJoTNAI 10/3/1781.

<sup>176</sup> E.g. FJoTNAI 5/1/1782.

<sup>177</sup> *The Political Mirror. By A Student of the Inner Temple.* BRITANNICUS. London 1776.

<sup>178</sup> Banning & Estes 2014, p. 15; Colbourn 1988, p. 7; Bailyn 1992, pp. 23-24, 26; Shalev 2009, p. 11, 13.

ancient Greece, Rome and Israel were seen as a way to defend against the threat of corruption spreading from Europe.<sup>179</sup> In this public rhetoric many Americans tended to think of the history of antiquity as one historical unit, where references were used anachronistically and histories of Roman and Hellenistic worlds were mixed up ignoring divisions of space and time.<sup>180</sup>

Shalev draws attention to the ambivalence of Americans in a modern revolution fashioning themselves as ancient republicans. Interpreting history and linking it to present was done by appealing to classical antiquity for a historical meaning as well as constitutional reasoning, instructive models and argumentation to political endeavors. According to Shalev the historical contextualization of the Americans also made use of history for propagandistic ends as history was seen as a cyclical process of reoccurring events.<sup>181</sup> With this interpretation of reoccurrence and repetitive nature of history came concerns of the failures of the glorified past republics. The patriots had to attribute these past failures to other causes, and make sure these causes wouldn't affect America in the late 1700s. For Joseph Galloway – a colonial statesman, a loyalist merchant, an adamant opposer of American independence and a strong believer of and spokesperson for the American loyalist potential<sup>182</sup> – Rome's mistake had been arrogance in power, which led to the downfall of the republic.<sup>183</sup> The new independent American republic would not degenerate into anarchy followed by tyranny, but rather become a protector and propagator of liberty everywhere in the world.<sup>184</sup>

Whereas the British Empire was originally seen as a new Rome in her military achievements and territorial expansion, the events of 1763–1765 led the colonists to reformulate their view of Britain as the corrupt Roman Empire close to collapse. Contemporary patriot historians of the 1700s also attributed the past failures of republics to the tyranny of feudalism.<sup>185</sup> During the 1770s and 1780s Britain was often seen and described as the wicked, malicious tyrannical and mad Roman Empire of the corrupt Caesars, whereas revolutionary America was seen as the virtuous and republican Rome in its early stages. In this way America was separated both politically and psychologically from the British Empire. Britain had reflected her extensive empire and its historical significance with regard

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<sup>179</sup> Liuska 2005, 110.

<sup>180</sup> Shalev 2009, 13-14.

<sup>181</sup> Shalev 2009, 2, 6, 9, 21, 38.

<sup>182</sup> Beeman 2013, xiv; Galloway, Joseph in Concise Dictionary of American biography.

<sup>183</sup> *Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion*. Joseph Galloway. London 1780.

<sup>184</sup> Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 85.

<sup>185</sup> Colbourn 1988, 7.

to the Roman Empire, whereas the Americans came to a conclusion that Roman virtue had sunk in Britain when she became rich, luxurious and thus corrupt.<sup>186</sup>

According to a quoted essay from pseudonym VOX POPULI. W.<sup>187</sup> from Rivington's Royal Gazette November 10<sup>th</sup> 1781 despite the failings of the ancient Spartan and Roman democracies time was now ripe, and the American people better prepared for its introduction. The writer suggests that "possibly America has produced a race of men more simple, virtuous, and patriotic, than any part of the world has hitherto been blessed with", again lifting America above other nations as an example. Building a republic with democratic elements would nevertheless bring its challenges:

Absolute democracy and absolute monarchy are nearly connected with each other: and even wise and tried patriots have in all ages submitted to the latter, to escape from the distractions of the former: perhaps the situation of our country, upon every account, is such that it will not bear a strict comparison with any other.<sup>188</sup>

As was pointed out the discussion over the relative merits and demerits of democracy as well as the extent to which it should be applied was typical to 18<sup>th</sup> century British and European political discourses.<sup>189</sup> Even though America was seen as better prepared and sufficiently sophisticated for the introduction of democracy, the Patriots should be wary of repeating past mistakes and submitting either to the rule of one in a monarchy or the rule of the people in a true democracy. A Citizen of Rhode Island writes that monarchy has flourished because people themselves have given in to, accepted and even demanded it in the past. Interesting to note here is the reference to monarchy as a form of arbitrary and tyrannical rule imposed upon once free states.

Whoever reads the history of past ages [Roman republic] with suitable attention, will find, that the seeds of tyranny have been sown, and the foundation of arbitrary rule, in all states once free, has been said during such administrations of government, as, in other respects, have been most acceptable to the people.<sup>190</sup>

The patriots attempted to attribute the failures of the past republics and democracies to several factors including religion and feudalism. According to a text translated from an unknown French author in 1776 the Roman and Greek republics failed because of "new mistakes and blunders", one of which was the Roman Catholic religion. In the text religion is seen as a necessity of regal governments, and so deeply interwoven to the lives of European people, that they have lifted priests

<sup>186</sup> Shalev 2009, 6, 41, 44; Colbourn 1988, 30.

<sup>187</sup> Vox populi is Latin and translates to "a voice of the people".

<sup>188</sup> FJOTNAI 11/28/1781.

<sup>189</sup> Ihlainen 2010, 59, 62-64, 67.

<sup>190</sup> FJOTNAI 11/6/1782.

in the positions of kings in name to establish theocracies. Additionally the people of these ancient republics have imagined that all members of a republican government were equal, which in turn led to everyone being seen as “kings and legislators”. According to the essay “Man showed himself to be nothing more than man, because he was designed by omnipotence to be nothing else”. The rulers of the republics could not answer to the otherworldly demands of virtue:

[H]ow greatly the superstition or rather vanity of the Christian world deceives itself, when it stiles the heroic virtues of the ancients *false virtues* and *human virtues* [...] the greater part of the virtues and morality that Christianity preaches up, is of this miraculous and supernatural kind.<sup>191</sup>

Whether this unknown French author actually existed or not this translated text was taken up as a part of the patriots’ discourse since it opposed Roman Catholicism and saw the American people as virtuous and prepared for the coming of the republican form of government.

During the final years of the war it became clear to the patriots that establishing a new and unified virtuous republican government was not going to be easy. Research points out that as heirs to English political tradition the Revolution produced a general government with more reach and control over America than the British had as the rebellion started. In truth the new republican state narrowed the possibilities of manifesting republican virtue,<sup>192</sup> and the elite responsible for postwar policies was nearly identical to the British during the 1760s and 1770s, which had been deemed tyrannical.<sup>193</sup> This roused obvious discontent and criticism back and forth, where others saw the new government as an extension of the British one, and others defended it. For pseudonym CENSOR in 1781 “[t]he same men who have been disappointed in the wish of subjecting their country to a foreign yoke, are now laboring to forge chain for us at home.”<sup>194</sup> In 1782 pseudonym LAOCOON<sup>195</sup> criticizes the decision to restore trade with Britain by stating that “The tories, once the objects of horror and detestation, seem of late to direct our politics, and many who were once sturdy whigs, now bend the knee and fawn and cringe to the new idols”<sup>196</sup> In the same year pseudonym

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<sup>191</sup> FJoTNAI 3/12/1783; FJoTNAI 3/26/1783.

<sup>192</sup> Shalev 2009, 191; Banning & Estes, 13.

<sup>193</sup> Bouton 2007, p. 5

<sup>194</sup> FJoTNAI 12/26/1781.

<sup>195</sup> Laocoön was a Trojan priest from the Greek and Roman mythology, who advised the Trojans to refuse entry and set fire to the wooden horse that the Greek soldiers used to infiltrate the city. Laocoön and his two sons were punished by Athena, and eventually killed in an attack by giant serpents. By using this pseudonym the author implies that their advice should be heeded lest the British invade and infiltrate America again through trade agreements and politics.

<sup>196</sup> FJoTNAI 6/19/1782.

DEMOCRITUS<sup>197</sup> voices discontent in the new government suggested by Britain as identical to the British one: “an American parliament – American peers – a house of lords – a lord lieutenant appointed by the king [...]”<sup>198</sup> Pseudonym A Whig from the Beginning shares this view. “We did not repel the force of Britain to be the slaves of the most wretched scoundrels among ourselves, that ever debased humanity.”<sup>199</sup> As opposed to this in 1782 Pseudonym POMPHILIUS<sup>200</sup> answers to the criticism of a new government by defending them:

Why is our government less to be respected than the British government used to be? Why are our officers to be insulted for doing their duty more than theirs were? – Why shall the same man hold the same office under their government for many years without complaint, and now be treated as an infidel and traitor for holding that office under the revolution? We certainly are beginning to forget that we are an independent people. We must crush disaffection among ourselves or we are ruined.<sup>201</sup>

Some people supported neither independence nor complete British control over the colonies, but brought forward a variety of different ideas on how to organize the relations between the two. In a Letter to Doctor Tucker an anonymous author brings forth an interesting conceptual observation by proposing that the colonies would be referred to as “constituent parts of the British empire” as it does not imply subjection and subservience to the same degree as the term “colony” does. In addition to the change of name, the colonies should also be able to regulate their own internal taxes and have provincial legislation.<sup>202</sup> This idea of provincial legislation was brought forward by many others as well.<sup>203</sup> In 1776 Allan Ramsay, a Scottish-born painter and the appointed painter to George III who devoted his life to political pamphleteering and classical studies after becoming disabled in 1773<sup>204</sup>, stated how laws and taxation should apply equally to both England and colonies, and therefore taxing the colonies alone is unjust.<sup>205</sup> Under the pseudonym COSMOPOLITE, Scottish Whig

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<sup>197</sup> Democritus was an Ancient Greek philosopher from the pre-Socratic era and often considered the father of modern science.

<sup>198</sup> FJoTNAI 6/26/1782.

<sup>199</sup> FJoTNAI 7/24/1782.

<sup>200</sup> Numa Pompilius was the legendary second king of Rome who founded many of Rome’s most important religious and political institutions.

<sup>201</sup> FJoTNAI 10/2/1782.

<sup>202</sup> *A Letter to Doctor Tucker on his Proposal of a Separation between Great Britain and her American Colonies*. London 1774.

<sup>203</sup> E.g. *An Answer to a Pamphlet, entitled Taxation no Tyranny. Addressed to the Author, and to persons in power*. London 1775; *The Sentiments of a Foreigner On the Disputes of Great-Britain with America. Translated from the French*. Abbe Guilliaume Thomas Francois Raynal. Belfast 1775.

<sup>204</sup> Allan Ramsay in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>205</sup> *A Plan of Reconciliation between Great Britain and her Colonies*. Allan Ramsay. London 1776.

Joseph Cawthorne<sup>206</sup> suggests preserving the dependency of America by granting the colonies manufacturers and foreign trade of their own on British vessels, and giving them rights to representation and their own taxation.<sup>207</sup> One plan of reconciliation suggests a Supreme Council of Colonies and Commerce with deputations from Peers and Commons, and representation of the provinces. In addition representatives of the colonists should be added to the House of Commons and taxes should be equal everywhere.<sup>208</sup> In 1780 an anonymous author suggests local legislative governments with the British constitution as a basis to be established in Canada, New England, Virginia and Florida.<sup>209</sup>

Recurring themes in the Patriot rhetoric regarding monarchy, democracy and republic were constitution, republican virtue and what a good republic should be like, as well as references to past historical republics of Rome, Greece and Sparta. Towards the end of the war the Patriots had to build a new form of republican government and answer to the expectations of the people roused by the references to liberty, virtues and natural rights in the new political system. However this proved to be challenging as no coherent line of opinion existed, and the dependence on a common political history and tradition was strong. A quotation from pseudonym VIRGINIUS in 1782 describes the new republic in the making as “crowned with independence and the inestimable blessings of liberty.”<sup>210</sup> This is an interesting way of using the monarchical imagery of a crowning to describe the transfer of power, and a telling example of how a shared political tradition and cultural vocabulary related to the different ways of organizing governments and governmental power. Thus old imagery was used to give rise to new meanings and ways of legitimizing current events. Through discussing the relative problems and merits of republics, monarchies and democracies the American patriots moved public opinion from supporting British limited monarchy to acknowledging that Britain was corrupt, ruined and lacked virtue. American political power should be in the hands of those people who choose their own virtuous and merited representatives, and do their civic duties by participating actively on the political arena. However the dangers of pure democracy and anarchy resulting from giving power to the people were acknowledged, and this was to be avoided just as

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<sup>206</sup> Gould 2000, 204.

<sup>207</sup> *A plan to reconcile Great Britain & her Colonies, and preserve the dependency of America*. COSMOPOLITE. Joseph Cawthorne. London 1774.

<sup>208</sup> *A Plan for conciliating the jarring political interests of Great Britain and her North American Colonies, and For promoting a general Re-union throughout the Whole of the British Empire*. London 1775.

<sup>209</sup> *An Essay on the Interests of Britain, in regard to America: Or, an Outline of the Terms on which Peace may be restored to the Two Countries*. 1780.

<sup>210</sup> FJoTNAI 8/7/1782.

much as submitting to the rule of a despotic monarch. To the patriots America was now ripe and could avoid the mistakes of past republics. Nevertheless there were several problems and disagreements over the practicalities of republicanism.

In the next section I will look at the related themes of power, subjection and slavery as common arguments used when discussing politics and political systems on both sides of the war.

### 2.3 Power, subjection and slavery

*I therefore propose to come under your wing.  
A foe to REBELLION --- a slave to the KING.”<sup>211</sup>*

By the 1760s debate on the abolishing of slavery in Britain started heating up as slavery and the treatment of slaves as property became regarded as morally wrong.<sup>212</sup> This was partially sped up by the growing possibility of American independence, and the increase of enlightenment-sponsored debate about the social and political rights of all people including slaves. Additionally British anti-Catholic public debate had gained momentum during the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. This idea of anti-Catholicism and anti-popery opposed the arbitrary power of absolute monarchy, Continental tyranny, slavery, oppression and political abuse. In the end the British, who had originally perfected the Atlantic slave trade, became pioneers in the abolition campaigns across the world. Slavery in Britain was partially abolished in 1834, and abolished completely in 1838.<sup>213</sup>

As slavery was a popular subject in 18<sup>th</sup> century British public discourses the concept itself was also a part of the Revolutionary discourse. Instead of talking about actual slaves, both sides referred to a metaphorical slavery as a separate concept through imagery of oppression and tyranny when discussing the relations between the colonies and the British Empire.<sup>214</sup> This form of political slavery was seen as the ultimate evil threatening both Britain and America. Even though Britain's acts in subjecting her colonies were seen as unjust, and the Revolution eventually weakened slavery in the Upper South and Northern states due to both humanitarian concerns and slave uprisings or escapes, the Revolutionary rhetoric remained silent on the actual issue of slavery. This made the development of the independence movement possible in the slave reliant Southern parts of the colonies where nine out of ten people were slaves and the amount of slaves continued to increase

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<sup>211</sup> FJoTNAI 2/12/1783, *A poem titled Hugh Gaine’s life*.

<sup>212</sup> Walvin 1996, chapter 9; Piecuch 2008, 40.

<sup>213</sup> Walvin 1996, chapter 9; Ihlainen 2005, 305-308, 311, 314, 317, 321-323

<sup>214</sup> Bouton 2007, 13.

throughout the war.<sup>215</sup> As the white patriots complained about their metaphorical slavery, actual black slaves were not granted their wish of one day a week to work for themselves. Alongside slaves many patriot women wished for equality and representation to be extended to them, but did not receive what they wanted.<sup>216</sup>

The discourses of political slavery were often accompanied with concepts of power, control and subjection, and a profound distrust of power and its corrupting nature were an essential part of the Revolutionary discourse.<sup>217</sup> On the patriot side these discussions were attributed to aggression, and the need for power to spread beyond its borders through metaphors and analogies.<sup>218</sup> According to Bailyn and Garrett power was often represented in the revolutionary texts as aggressive and trespassing in its efforts to expand beyond legitimate boundaries, and only rightful when voluntarily accepted by all for the good of all. Common metaphors and analogues for power used were a grasping hand, an uncontained ocean or a disease or desire that humans are too weak to resist, attacking liberty.<sup>219</sup> In 1774 pseudonym A Carolinian appeals to the Britons by describing tyrannical power extended over the colonies “with an out-stretched arm”,<sup>220</sup> and in 1782 Thomas Paine refers to a “bloody hand of vengeance”<sup>221</sup>. The pamphlets in particular include allusions to an iron grasp of tyranny against personifications of liberty<sup>222</sup> and justice<sup>223</sup>, and imagery of breaking free from the slavery of power and tyranny. Some went as far as to state that the Stamp Act was a deliberately crafted conspiracy against liberty, rather than a misguided and mistaken or evil policy violating freedom.<sup>224</sup> In January 1782 The PILGRIM contrasts “chains of slavery, despotism and tyranny” against the “beautiful structure of liberty and virtue, raised with immense toil and cemented with the blood of heroes”<sup>225</sup> This near personification of liberty and virtue is a powerful metaphor. John Martin, The Governor of Georgia, uses similar imagery of war heroes rising against unjust slavers in

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<sup>215</sup> Bradley 1999, 154-155; Groth 2009, 82; Raphael 2001, 295-296.

<sup>216</sup> Raphael 2001, 1, 115.

<sup>217</sup> Bailyn 1990, 220.

<sup>218</sup> Bailyn 1992, 55-56.

<sup>219</sup> Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 38-41.

<sup>220</sup> *A very short and candid appeal to free born Britons by an American*. A Carolinian. London 1774.

<sup>221</sup> *Letter addressed to the Abbe Raynal on the Affairs of North-America. In which The Mistakes in the Abbe's Account of the Revolution of America are corrected and cleared up*. Thomas Paine, M.A. Boston 1782.

<sup>222</sup> E.g. *An Oration delivered March 5th 1781 at the request of the inhabitants of the Town of Boston, to Commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770*. By Thomas Dawes, Jun. Boston 1781. In the text liberty is seen as a woman who has “suffered from corruption and despotic force” and should be made to feel welcome in America.

<sup>223</sup> E.g. *An Oration; delivered March 5, 1774, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston: to commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the fifth of March 1770*. John Hancock. Boston 1774. “[D]rowsy justice intoxicated by the poisonous draught prepared for her cup”.

<sup>224</sup> Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 60.

<sup>225</sup> FJoTNAI 1/23/1782.

stating that “No, we would not be their slaves: we had the spirit of men and warriors. We fought them and beat them.”<sup>226</sup> The patriots are seen as heroes, men and defenders of justice and liberty against the slavers of Britain.

In a patriarchal society the patriots often personified liberty as a passive and delicate woman in need of the protection of valiant men.<sup>227</sup> As the American patriots saw themselves as the preservers of English virtue, they saw and contrasted the virtue of the body politic to the virginity of a maiden.<sup>228</sup> Pseudonym Z. refers to the patriarchal view of men as protectors of the innocent women and children from the horrors of British soldiers:

See yon helpless female, delicate by nature, and educated in all the elegance of southern taste! what misery is painted in her countenance! Her house is no longer permitted to afford her shelter, and she is forced to seek it in the lonely woods: - Her weary limbs must rest upon the clay-cold ground for the British ravager has seized her downy bed: - Her table no longer groans under a profusion of delicious food; but she feels most sensibly the keen distress of hunger: - Paleness covers her once blooming cheeks, and her little strength is gone: - She faints – she falls – she dies: - No friend attends to close her languid eyes: - No funeral rites conclude the solemn scene: - a grave denied, she falls a prey to beasts. [...] - See hoary age and helpless infancy become at once a prey to *British* fury! Hear the piercing shrieks of the insulted virgin, and the heart-rending groans of dying matrons! [...] - See beauteous towns reduced to heaps of rubbish, and e'en our sacred temples wrapt up in flames! – Then say, ye votaries of Britain, say, can ye find charms in these? If so, go, sordid fouls, and enjoy, without a rival, the horrors which enchant you! – go, and experience the mercy of Great Britain!<sup>229</sup>

In the above quotation pseudonym Z. invokes sympathy by drawing from strong imagery of a weak woman dying alone and being denied a funeral, her corpse ending up as food for wild animals all because of the British invaders. Even the “sacred temples” are ransacked and burnt by this so called “mercy of Great Britain”. Similarly in 1781 pseudonym C. states that the British bring “dishonor to your wives and daughters, and ravage your property”<sup>230</sup> in order to implore the colonists to take arms against the invader. In 1782 pseudonym CARACTACUS<sup>231</sup> puts forth a provocative claim stating that “[f]or my own part, I would choose subjection to the Indians rather than be connected with the barbarous, savage, treacherous, beggarly, and insatiable kingdom of England.”<sup>232</sup> Whereas the

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<sup>226</sup> FJoTNAI 5/15/1782.

<sup>227</sup> Bailyn 1992, 56-58; in the sources e.g. PJaWA 12/15/1773.

<sup>228</sup> Colbourn 1988, 229.

<sup>229</sup> FJoTNAI 7/11/1781.

<sup>230</sup> FJoTNAI 10/24/1781.

<sup>231</sup> Caractacus was a first-century British chieftain who expanded his tribe's territory and led British resistance against Roman conquest for nearly a decade before his imprisonment.

<sup>232</sup> FJoTNAI 6/19/1782.

Native Americans were generally considered barbarous and savage, CARACTACUS makes them seem a better option than England. The wars and conflicts with Native Americans had started in 1607<sup>233</sup>, and continued up until as late as 1924. The colonists were therefore simultaneously fighting the British as well as the Natives making these references and parallels topical. The native peoples were recruited by both the British loyalist and the American patriotic armies as both saw their potential as allies, and threat as enemies.<sup>234</sup>

Regarding slavery and subjection references to the British yoke<sup>235</sup> that the Americans were groaning under, as well as other relevant everyday uses of agricultural imagery were popular and relatable metaphors to the agrarian and often slave owning colonists. Pseudonym C.M. SCAEVOLA refers to the colonists as horses or bulls ploughing the fields: “[I]f you permit the bridle to be put into your mouths, - the yoke is easily put on you, - and you cannot shake it off [...]”<sup>236</sup> Similarly America had her “neck at the British yoke”, and was breaking free through her “glorious struggles for liberty”.<sup>237</sup> In a text translated from an unknown French author despotism is seen as the yoke, from which the chains of slavery must be broken to restore “human nature the liberty which had been torn from it” by establishing a republican government like those of ancient Greece and Rome.<sup>238</sup> In his political sermon on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1775 Henry Cumings, a pastor in Massachusetts and a zealous patriot who believed God and his providence favored the patriots<sup>239</sup>, refers to “the yoke of bondage” and the “iron rod of tyranny and oppression” chastising and enslaving the American colonists for “being a free people, and being resolved to continue so”. He sees slavery as “the bane of all social virtues” such as arts, sciences and religion, and an infernal monster crossing the Atlantic to “erect his throne on these western shores”.<sup>240</sup> This seems like an application of traditional English Protestant anti-Catholic rhetoric, where the threats of bondage and oppression that Cumings alludes to had traditionally been Catholic monarchies.<sup>241</sup> As an abolitionist Cumings could have referred to both real and political slavery in his sermon.

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<sup>233</sup> Piecuch 2008, 332.

<sup>234</sup> Morgan 2007, 225.

<sup>235</sup> E.g. *Remarks on A Late Pamphlet Entitled Plain Truth*. By Rusticus. Philadelphia 1776; *The Pamphlet, Entitled, "Taxation no Tyranny," Candidly considered*. London 1775.

<sup>236</sup> PJWA 7/20/1774.

<sup>237</sup> FJoTNAI 7/3/1782.

<sup>238</sup> FJoTNAI 3/12/1783.

<sup>239</sup> Sandoz 1998, 658.

<sup>240</sup> *A Sermon, Preached in Billerica, On the 23d of November, 1775. Henry Cumings, A.M. Massachusetts 1776.*

<sup>241</sup> Ihalainen 2005, 307.

Even though the oppressors are different, the loyalist rhetoric also includes mentions of a “hand of tyranny and oppression”.<sup>242</sup> Whereas the patriots saw British subjection as slavery, for the loyalists the true slavers were the rebellious colonists.<sup>243</sup> Since true liberty required subordination America had given up her freedom by starting a war against Britain.<sup>244</sup> In 1774 William Allen, the wealthiest and most powerful loyalist in Pennsylvania who sided with the colonists in their grievances but opposed the Declaration of Independence<sup>245</sup> demands the establishment of “a proper Subordination in his [King George III] Colonies, which from the Laws of God and the Practice and Right of Nations, is due to” rather than the alternative of independence, which would “forge the Chains of Slavery, and erect a Throne of Despotism” in the colonies. For him independence is seen as the new yoke.<sup>246</sup> As a rich and powerful loyalist Allen was understandably threatened by the demands of the patriots.

In 1776 vicar John Fletcher compares “loyal subjection” to “abject slavery”, and states that what the patriots call “American *liberty*” is in fact “American *tyranny*”. According to the principle of loyal subjection he writes: “I will be the *servant*, the *subject*, and if you please, Sir, the *SLAVE* of GOOD government. I am determined to glory in the *subjection*, of which you seem to be so afraid and ashamed.”<sup>247</sup> A similar view of voluntary or loyal subjection is shared by British physician, chemist and inventor John Roebuck<sup>248</sup>, who states that “every man is a slave to the laws; and must either submit to such slavery, or forfeit the benefits of public order.” Additionally colonies are by definition subservient to the mother country: “Every colony is subject to the authority or will of the original state; which subjection or slavery, if it must be so called, is inseparably attached to the condition of a colony.”<sup>249</sup> Many loyalists believed that independence would lead to a new tyrant or despot ruling America with a heavier hand than Britain had thus far. For Samuel Seabury, a priest and a loyalist

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<sup>242</sup> *Declaration and Address of His Majesty's Loyal associated Refugees, Assembled at Newport, Rhode-Island*. New York 1779.

<sup>243</sup> E.g. *Letters on the American Troubles; Translated from the French of M. De Pinto*. Isaac dePinto. London 1776; *A Second Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the People, on the measures respecting America. By the Author of the First*. Arthur Lee. London 1775; *Political Lamentations Written in the Years 1775 and 1776*. John Darwall. Walsall 1777.

<sup>244</sup> E.g. *Letters on the American Troubles; Translated from the French of M. De Pinto*. Isaac dePinto. London 1776.

<sup>245</sup> William Allen (1704-1780). Penn Biographies, University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center.

<sup>246</sup> *The American crisis: A letter addressed by permission to the Earl Gower, Lord President of the Council &c. &c. &c.* William Allen. London 1774.

<sup>247</sup> *American Patriotism Farther confronted with Reason, Scripture, and the Constitution*. John Fletcher. Shrewsbury 1776.

<sup>248</sup> John Roebuck in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017; Roebuck, John (1718-1794). Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, vol 49.

<sup>249</sup> *An Enquiry, whether the guilt of the present Civil War in America ought to be imputed to Great Britain or America*. John Roebuck. Dublin 1776.

pamphleteer who urged the Americans not to seek independence<sup>250</sup> abandoning Britain in a civil war would result in tyranny and slavery, since either a foreign tyrant or an American despot would inevitably rise as the new ruler.<sup>251</sup> Similarly for loyalist James Chalmers, who later became the lieutenant colonel of the First Battalion of Maryland Loyalists, “independence and slavery are synonymous terms.”<sup>252</sup> In 1774 Thomas Bradbury Chandler criticizes the actions of the Sons of Liberty in rousing the colonists by asking whether they “have ever *willingly* allowed to others the liberty of thinking and acting for themselves; and whether any other liberty than that of doing as *they shall direct*, is to be expected during their administration?”<sup>253</sup> In 1779 an association of American loyalists addressed the King with a letter describing the “*ruinous designs of subverting the constitution, and enslaving America.*” and the “bloody scenes of American tyranny and despotism”.<sup>254</sup>

As early as December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1773 vaguely radical expressions such as “emancipation from the tyranny of Britain”<sup>255</sup> were occasionally put forth on the patriot side. However this emancipation was in no way necessarily analogous to independence. A more typical view of the situation is presented by pseudonym EUGENIO in 1773, where he considers the colonists a part of the empire, and refers to Britain as the “Mother Country”.

It is an inconceivable misfortune to the people of the colonies, that the principles on which they emigrated from England, to occupy an immense country in America, and their subordination to the Mother Country, were never equitably and constitutionally settled.[...] while some seem exempted [...] from all dependence, and others subjected by them to a state of absolute dependence [...]”<sup>256</sup>

In his text EUGENIO questions whether the colonists truly are free Englishmen, or mere servants of England in the interests of the crown. In his essay he shows that the colonists deserve to be considered equal, and not just stripped off their money and resources. However there is no talk of actual independence. In an essay pseudonym Z. refers to the disappointment that the economic regulations to the colonies caused: “See prison ships, full freighted with unhappy citizens, whom

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<sup>250</sup> Samuel Seabury in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>251</sup> *A view of the controversy between Great-Britain and her Colonies.* A. W. Farmer. Samuel Seabury. London 1774.

<sup>252</sup> *Containing Remarks on a late Pamphlet, intitled Common Sense.* James Chalmers. Dublin 1776. CANDIDUS.

<sup>253</sup> *American Querist: or, some questions proposed relative to the present disputes between Great Britain, and her American colonies. By a North-American.* Thomas Bradbury Chandler. 1774.

<sup>254</sup> *Declaration and Address of His Majesty's Loyal associated Refugees, Assembled at Newport, Rhode-Island.* New York 1779.

<sup>255</sup> PJaWA 12/22/1773.

<sup>256</sup> PJaWA 12/15/1773.

confidence in British faith hath bound in chains!”<sup>257</sup> The implications are, that the loyalty and confidence of the colonists in the British rule eventually led them into being betrayed, and their people loaded into prison ships. During the war over 10,000 American sailors died by neglect on British prison ships such as the *HMS Jersey*, where victims were in the thousands.<sup>258</sup> However the patriot side was by no means innocent, especially in their treatment of the loyal colonists. According to historian Michal Rozbicki the patriots’ rhetoric of equal rights was used to justify mistreatment in the form of lynching, jailing, fining and other attacks on loyalists and others who did not advocate the patriots’ cause.<sup>259</sup>

In his oration commemorating the Boston Massacre Benjamin Church, the first physician on the scene of the Massacre, talks about the role of a King as a servant of the state rather than a tyrant by stating that “the crimes acted by a King against the people, are the highest treason *against the highest law among men*. [...] When rulers become tyrants, they cease to be Kings; they can no longer be respected as God’s *vicegerents*, who violate the laws they were sworn to protect.” For this reason “human nature and self preservation will eternally arm the brave and vigilant, against slavery and oppression.”<sup>260</sup> In the Boston Massacre of the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1770 British soldiers shot a mob of colonists. For many patriots the event became a reason to stand and fight,<sup>261</sup> and it was annually commemorated in speeches and orations across the colonies between the years 1771-1783, after which it was replaced by the celebrations of 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Many of these Boston Massacre orations were printed and circulated far beyond local audiences.<sup>262</sup> Benjamin Church acted as the first Surgeon General in the Continental Army while working as a paid informant to British authorities in Boston, thus playing both parts in the Revolution.<sup>263</sup> Like Church, other patriot and loyalist authors took part in criticizing the King’s right to rule for his degeneration into tyranny by attempting to enslave the colonies.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> FJoTNAI 7/11/1781.

<sup>258</sup> Dull 2010, 85-86; Raphael 2001, 104-105.

<sup>259</sup> Rozbicki 2011, 82.

<sup>260</sup> *An Oration, delivered March 5th 1773 at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770*. Dr. Benjamin Church. Boston 1773.

<sup>261</sup> E.g. *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN*. John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>262</sup> Draper 1996, 412.

<sup>263</sup> Church, Benjamin in Concise Dictionary of American biography.

<sup>264</sup> E.g. *A letter from a Virginian to the Members of the Congress to be held at Philadelphia, on the First of September 1774*. Jonathan Boucher. Boston 1774; *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN*. John Allen. Boston 1773.

Whereas the patriots were clear in calling the loyalists and the king tyrants<sup>265</sup>, the loyalists in turn saw the patriots, and especially the revolutionary leaders, as the real tyrants and slavers. In an address to King George His Majesty's Loyal associated Refugees describe the “tyranny and persecution of the Continental Congress” in driving “his Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects” from their possessions and close relations to even to captivity or death. These loyalists describe “detesting rebellion, and preferring death to a life of slavery and subjection under the tyranny and usurpation of the Congress”, and hoping for a return “back to that constitutional ground of peace and safety, from which they [patriotic colonists] have been seduced by the Congress.”<sup>266</sup> Consequently the loyalist side made great efforts in illustrating how taxation was not tyranny or slavery. However the line between a subject and a slave was sometimes hard to define. In 1774 Arthur Lee, a diplomat seeking aid and recognition to the American Revolution in Europe together with Silas Deane and Benjamin Franklin,<sup>267</sup> questions the actions of Britain in taxing the colonies by illustrating the difference between the terms subject or subordination and slavery. According to him “[t]he Americans are subordinate, when we control them, for our own advantages, in the means of acquiring property; when we add to that the practice of taking the property so acquired at our pleasure, they are slaves. What right have we, or can we have, to make them slaves?”<sup>268</sup>

In 1781 pseudonym SINE QUIBUS NON writes about the Britons as the natural enemies of Americans. Normally these natural “enemies of our religion, liberty, and laws” for British subjects had been the Catholic French as a “false and dangerous a people”.<sup>269</sup> However as the colonists had been receiving aid from the French, and allied formally in 1778 these natural enemies were now the British as the unrelenting foes of the Patriots, who cunningly and treacherously subjugated their people and abolished independence:

Usurpations every where proclaim him [a subject] a slave. You have no greater personal consequence than the proud and wretched Britons, who pretend that they are envied by all nations, [...] THEY are slaves; but WE are and will prove ourselves MEN.[...] our *natural* enemies have long since renounced their once favourite project of “unconditionally subjugating” us by

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<sup>265</sup> E.g. *The Pamphlet, Entitled, “Taxation no Tyranny,” Candidly considered.* London 1775.

<sup>266</sup> *Declaration and Address of His Majesty’s Loyal associated Refugees, Assembled at Newport, Rhode-Island.* New York 1779; *The Declaration and Address of His Majesty’s Suffering Loyalists, to the People of America. Associated Loyalists, in America, January 8, 1782.* London 1782.

<sup>267</sup> Arthur Lee in *Encyclopædia Britannica* 2017.

<sup>268</sup> *An Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the people of Great Britain, in the present disputes with America. By an old member of parliament.* Arthur Lee. London 1774.

<sup>269</sup> Liuska 2005, 6. *Proposal for Peace Between Great Britain and North-America.* D.M. Knight. Birmingham 1779.

the superiority of arms. Perfidiousness and conspiracies are the weapons, with the assistance of which those preserving and unrelenting foes mean to abolish our independence.<sup>270</sup>

It is interesting to note how SINE QUIBUS NON turns the rhetoric of the colonists as slaves of Britain around by referring to the Britons as slaves for remaining under the power of a King, and the Americans as men now that they have freed themselves. Reinhart Koselleck refers to this way of assigning opposing concepts to distinguish self from the other as the use of counter concepts, where self is defined by the other in showing what “they” are and “we” are not.<sup>271</sup> Using concepts regarding power, subjection and slavery it was debated whether the real misuses of power occurred on the patriot or the loyalist side, and which side were the true slavers subjecting others under their will.

Even though the colonists were originally in favor of a reunion on equal terms, the makings of a distinction between America and Britain was underway early on. Letter IV to the inhabitants of the British Colonies in America in June 1774 states, that “Liberty is essential to the happiness of a society, and therefore is our right. The father of mercies never intended men to hold UNLIMITED authority over men. [...] The father of mercies never intended for *us* for the slaves of *Britons*”.<sup>272</sup> It is interesting to note how the distinction between “us” and the Britons is made already in 1774, and how God takes the side of the colonists in their demands for freedom from the British slavers. In July 1774 the escalating political situation is referred to as “the common cause of America”.<sup>273</sup> The most fervent Patriots started to gradually turn against the King early on, and make a clear distinction between themselves and the British subjects. The British and loyalist side began to separate the Americans as a different people as well, even though through different means and later on in the war. The shift on the patriot side from loyal and abused victims to heroic defenders of liberty, as well as the gradual turning against the King and the way all Britons are seen as the King’s slaves is discussed further in the next chapter.

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<sup>270</sup> FJoTNAI 7/11/1781.

<sup>271</sup> Koselleck 2004, 156.

<sup>272</sup> DPP 6/20/1774.

<sup>273</sup> PJaWA 7/20/1774.

## 2.4 From true Englishmen to Americans

*[I]t is time to prove the virtue, and rouse the spirit of the people of England [...] Let them heartily join the Americans, and see whether tyranny and lawless power; or reason, justice, heaven, truth, and liberty will prevail.<sup>274</sup>*

Even though talk of the colonies weaning themselves from Britain had existed in and outside the British Empire since the early 1770s,<sup>275</sup> the shift from loyal subjects of the British crown to independent Americans happened gradually over the war years. Between the start of the war in 1775 until early 1780s a separation of American identity from the British tradition took place not only on the patriot side,<sup>276</sup> but on the loyalist side as well. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the British had separated Americans as an ill-mannered, vain and shallow breed completely different from the British.<sup>277</sup> As early as 1773 the colonists separated Americans as a different nationality from the British, and starting in 1774 the word American was already in use as a political concept.<sup>278</sup> This can clearly be seen in the above quotation by Thomas Paine from the year 1775. According to A.D. Smith's theory the roots of early nations and nationalism lie in kinship, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic factors. The importance of shared memories to collective cultural identities and a common history is integral to the survival of said collective identity.<sup>279</sup> Within the British Empire the American colonists were a part of this shared cultural, historical and ethnic identity. However the colonies' geographical position far away from the mainland, and the heterogeneity of American population created cracks in this uniform British identity. Nevertheless the shedding of a British identity was not an easy process.

Due to the geographic and economic disparities between the colonies the Americans had diverse interpretations about what it meant to be American. These interpretations relied heavily on the support of Britain and a belief in the morality of English character.<sup>280</sup> American historian and biographer Richard Beeman has argued that the colonists' identity as British subjects and their loyalty to King George were perhaps the only binding thing for the diverse colonists, and thus the

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<sup>274</sup> Crisis issue IV 2/11/1775.

<sup>275</sup> Draper 1996, 72-74, 76.

<sup>276</sup> E.g. FJoTNAI 2/5/1783.

<sup>277</sup> Flynn 2008, 3.

<sup>278</sup> Liuska 2005, 76-77.

<sup>279</sup> Smith 1999, 3-5, 10.

<sup>280</sup> Clark 2013, chapter 2.

American political leaders had to work hard in shedding these provincial and imperial British identities towards the American cause.<sup>281</sup> As the political loyalties to an entity called America barely existed and the colonists were loyal to their own state first and America second, a new government would not survive unless this order was reversed.<sup>282</sup> In this chapter I will look at the way the patriots shifted their rhetoric from using their British origins as justification for equal treatment and proclaiming their loyalty to the righteous king, to direct attacks against the King and the Americans as the true preservers of British liberty, and finally America as a separate nationality and an example or asylum to the rest of the world. I will also discuss the way the patriots separated themselves from both the British overseas, and the loyalists at home. At the same time the loyalists' opinion on the patriotic colonists changed from fellow Englishmen and deluded victims of the Congress to a separate people. According to historian Jennifer Clark the recognition of an Anglo-American heritage could not satisfy a need of building a separate identity or stop the Revolution from happening as Britain was defined as the enemy.<sup>283</sup> Thus the revolutionaries had to formulate the idea of an American people, and sell it to the colonists in order to make the revolution a reality.

Early on the colonists used their origins as British by birth as an argument for justifying their demands for equal treatment. As the constitution of the British Empire was supposed to guarantee the natural, inherent and inalienable rights of the English people to personal security, liberty and private property,<sup>284</sup> the original question of whether the Americans were British or not was raised. For many people the colonists as British subjects should have been represented in decisions regarding them, and if they were not granted representation they, by extension, were no longer British. To John Allen writing under the pseudonym British Bostonian “[T]he happiness of life, especially to men free born, consisteth in the full enjoyment of their *natural*, civil and religious RIGHTS. These are the nerves of health, the bulwarks of strength, and pillars of peace: Upon this foundation ALONE, the happiness and prosperity of the people stands.”<sup>285</sup> For Benjamin Church the liberty of the people is proportional to their share in legislature, and “[t]hat state only is free, where the people are governed by laws which they have a share in making: and that country is totally enslaved, where one single law can be made or repealed, without the interposition or consent of

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<sup>281</sup> Beeman 2013, 3, 5.

<sup>282</sup> Nester 2011, 136; Murrin 1987, 339.

<sup>283</sup> Clark 2013, chapter 2.

<sup>284</sup> Bailyn & Garrett 1965, 50-51.; e.g. *The Pamphlet, Entitled, “Taxation no Tyranny,” Candidly considered*. London 1775; *An Oration on the Beauties of LIBERTY*. John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>285</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN*. John Allen. Boston 1773.

the people.”<sup>286</sup> As the Magna Charta states that possessions cannot be taken away without consent, and John Locke’s notable ideas included the rights of life, liberty and property were an important part of the enlightenment era discourses these arguments were used against British taxation on both patriot and sympathetic loyalist side.<sup>287</sup> In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the topic of the British Parliament’s legitimacy as a representation of the population at large was returning to public debate. This questioning of the Parliament’s authority was in turn argued against with the concept of virtual representation through communities and groups with common interests. However the American crisis highlighted the problems of virtual representation, which eventually led to demands for parliamentary reform in Britain as well.<sup>288</sup>

In 1774 loyalist Thomas Bradbury Chandler under the pseudonym *a North-American* questions the position of the Americans as British subjects by stating that if they wish to choose which laws to obey they are no longer British subjects but “aliens and foreigners”. As a part of the British Empire America should be legislated by Britain, who had conquered and settled the colonies. To him the taxed items were “hurtful luxuries” rather than daily necessities, and staying under British rule would be safer for the colonies.<sup>289</sup> For him the tax on tea is “the weight of an atom on the shoulders of a giant” since nobody is forcing the colonies to buy tea.<sup>290</sup> Similarly for other loyalists the Americans were British by origin, and thus a part of the constitution and legislation of Britain. Many loyalists argued that no tax is ever universally accepted regardless of the representatives.<sup>291</sup> For Charles Lee however taxes were still taxes, no matter the taxed product was a luxury item or not.<sup>292</sup> As an officer in the British military Charles Lee opposed King George’s tyranny and the ruling government. He left England for New York in the summer of 1773, and due to his military experience

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<sup>286</sup> *An Oration, delivered March 5th 1773 at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770.* Dr. Benjamin Church. Boston 1773.

<sup>287</sup> E.g. *An Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the people of Great Britain, in the present disputes with America. By an old member of parliament.* Arthur Lee. London 1774; *The Reply of a gentleman in a Select Society, upon the important contest between Great Britain and America.* London 1775.

<sup>288</sup> Seaward & Ihlainen 2015, 57-58.

<sup>289</sup> *American Querist: or, some questions proposed relative to the present disputes between Great Britain, and her American colonies.* By a North-American. Thomas Bradbury Chandler. 1774.

<sup>290</sup> *A friendly address to all reasonable Americans, On the subject of our political confusions.* Thomas Bradbury Chandler. London 1774.

<sup>291</sup> E.g. *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated; and the Means of Asserting that Right proposed.* John Gray. London 1774; *A friendly address to all reasonable Americans, On the subject of our political confusions.* Thomas Bradbury Chandler. London 1774.

<sup>292</sup> *Strictures on a pamphlet entitled “A Friendly Address to all reasonable Americans on the subject of our Political Confusions.”* Charles Lee. Boston 1775.

and prestige in Europe he became a major general for the Continental Army in 1775 risking his life and fortune as a British general in a fight against his king, country and colleagues.<sup>293</sup>

The common history of the British Empire and the struggles of the original British settlers, as well as the fact that the Americans received their lands from Great Britain and should by extension contribute with taxes to its security, were common arguments on the loyalist side standing up for the unity of the empire.<sup>294</sup> For John Gray the idea of defending their liberties to the death is “a noble resolution, worthy of Britons, and the descendants of Britons.” However he fails to see how the liberties of the colonists are being invaded by demanding obedience to laws and constitution.<sup>295</sup> For the patriots this origin story was much different. For pseudonym a Friend to Both Countries rather than the British it was the Americans specifically, who fled Europe to exercise civil and religious liberties in the colonies. Using gendered language these people “unsubdued by effeminate unmanning pleasures” and determined to “maintain those just rights, privileges and immunities, for which their forefathers so often struggled in Parliament and fought in the field, at the price of their blood” were now the so called rebellious Americans.<sup>296</sup> According to this anachronistic view the Americans had somehow existed as a people even before settling in America. The use of references to these British and American forefathers is discussed further in chapter 3.2.

Even as late as in 1778 pseudonym a Gentleman, For many Years a Resident in America wrote that “the Americans” despite their attempts to “dissolve every connection with this country [...] are still called our *brethren, friends, and countrymen*.” For the author the Americans would have been happy “had they known their own good, and enjoyed in peace, those blessings which heaven had bestowed on them.”<sup>297</sup> Throughout the war many loyalists shared the idea of Americans giving up the same liberties they used to share with the Britons by submitting to a republican congress.<sup>298</sup> However British naval officer Major John Cartwright, a political reformer and pro-American radical

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<sup>293</sup> Mazzagetti 2013, 38-40, 62, 68, 79-80.

<sup>294</sup> E.g. *The Right of the British Legislature to tax the colonies considered, in a Letter to the Right Honourable Frederick Lord North*. London 1774; *Some fugitive thoughts on a letter signed freeman*. A Back Settler. Keowee 1774; *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated; and the Means of Asserting that Right proposed*. John Gray. London 1774.

<sup>295</sup> *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated; and the Means of Asserting that Right proposed*. John Gray. London 1774.

<sup>296</sup> *America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion*. A Friend to Both Countries. Devizes London 1774.

<sup>297</sup> *A Letter to Lord George Germaine, Giving an Account of the Origin of the Dispute Between Great Britain and the Colonies. By a Gentleman, For many Years a Resident in America*. London 1778.

<sup>298</sup> E.g. *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*. John Wesley. London? 1775?

sympathetic to the cause of the patriots,<sup>299</sup> considered the colonists as American subjects rather than British. “*Descent, relationship, and amity*, seem to me to be quite distinct things from *sovereignty and subjection; confidence, partiality, and acquiescence*, from *duty and obedience*.” For him the Americans were “only the subjects of the *king*, not of the British *parliament*; for they had legislatures of their own”, and thus the British parliament had no right to legislate trade in America.<sup>300</sup>

Some loyalists supported America, but wished for a connection between the two. In 1777 A neutral party calling themselves An Unconnected Whig complains about the fact that America could not be defended without declaring oneself an enemy of Britain. For the author Britain should have directed the Americans into a different direction and “given that spirit, which we are now attempting to break, its proper direction, and opened up to it a different scene of action, what would their noble courage and enterprising genius have earned us!” Thus Britain is to blame for driving America into a rebellion and breaking the bonds between brethren.

If the project of imposing a trifling tax upon America had not taken possession of the obstinate mind of this weak man [Mr. Greenville], we had still called America our own. [...] Recollect that they are bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh, and so jealous loving of their liberty, that they will not suffer the smallest infringement upon it; that if they are not soldiers, you are teaching them fast to be so; and that the dearer they purchase their experience, the greater fruits of it they will hereafter exact from your troops.<sup>301</sup>

However not all loyalists believed in the arguments of brotherhood or similar origins. In 1777 Allan Ramsay argues that Americans and British being both considered Englishmen or brethren “is altogether a fallacy.” For him the “[s]imilarity of language or descent do not confer upon a man the Rights of any community; nor does the want of them prelude him from those rights, if he happens to be furnished with the more essential requisites.” Interestingly Ramsay draws attention to the ambiguity of terminology used to describe the colonists by stating that the Americans have deceived the British with terms such as “fellow subject” or “mother country”. For him the Americans can never be represented in Britain as they are so different from the British and have differing interests.

To hinder us from perceiving that they are not Englishmen or our Fellow Citizens, the Americans have availed themselves of every ambiguity in our language. They have called,

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<sup>299</sup> Bailyn 1990, 156; Cartwright, John in Oxford dictionary of national biography vol 10.

<sup>300</sup> *A Letter to the Earl of Abingdon*. John Cartwright. London 1778.

<sup>301</sup> *An Unconnected Whig's Address to the Public; upon the Present Civil War, the state of Public Affairs, and the Real Cause of All The National Calamities*. London 1777.

themselves our *Fellow Subjects*, knowing, all the while, that they acknowledge themselves to be such, only from a circumstance which belongs to them in common with the people of Hanover. They have talked constantly of their *Mother Country*, and have founded their absurd pretensions on their British descent [...] and they have lately talked to us, in the tragic strain, about the horrors of a *civil war*, when they know, that, let the war in America be ever so horrible, there will no true Englishman fall in it, except he from amongst those brave men who have lately sailed from England with red coats upon their backs, to vindicate the important rights of their countrymen.<sup>302</sup>

A similar view of the Americans is shared by Scottish philanthropist John Knox.<sup>303</sup> For him the Americans claimed to be British as long as it benefitted them.

They claimed their descent from Britain, they gloried in the name of Englishmen, they flourished under the influences of her equitable laws, and the protection of her victorious arms: But when indispensable necessity urged the propriety of reimbursement, however trifling when compared to the burthens of the mother country, our brethren seemed thunderstruck. They imagined, or seemed to imagine, that American Englishmen had an exclusive privilege of exemption; - that to contribute towards the general exigencies of state was slavery, and that all Englishmen were slaves.<sup>304</sup>

However Knox still wishes for the Americans to stay as a part of the British people by hoping that “[m]ay the only distinctions amongst the various inhabitants of this empire be purely commercial, arising from local situation, from climate, soil, productions, and other accidental causes – every American to be a Briton, and every Briton to be an American.”<sup>305</sup> In a political sermon in 1776 pseudonym a Country Curate points out that the Americans only recognize their “Bonds of Union and Affection”, the protection offered by the mother country and their heritage as Englishmen when promoting and securing their own interests: “[W]henever Danger threatened, they were our Bone and our Flesh; but as soon as we called upon them for a Testimony of Affection in their Turn, they were no longer our younger Brethren, but derived their Origin from all the States of *Europe*.<sup>306</sup>

Originally colonial virtue was a mirror for the mother country, and during the early years many attributed the moral and economic decline of England to political corruption, venality and a betrayal

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<sup>302</sup> *Letters on the Present Disturbances in Great Britain and her American Provinces*. Allan Ramsay. London 1777.

<sup>303</sup> Knox, John (1720-1790). Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, vol. 31.

<sup>304</sup> *The American Crisis, by a Citizen of the World; inscribed to those members of the Community, Vulgarly named Patriots*. John Knox. London 1777.

<sup>305</sup> *The American Crisis, by a Citizen of the World; inscribed to those members of the Community, Vulgarly named Patriots*. John Knox. London 1777.

<sup>306</sup> *American Resistance Indefensible. A Sermon, Preached on Friday, December 13, 1776, Being the Day appointed for A General Fast*. A Country Curate. London 1776.

of the constitution by ignoring the rights of the people. It was not until later on that the actions of the King and Parliament were seen as “an unholy conspiracy against the ancient English constitution.”<sup>307</sup> At the start of the unrest many colonists turned against the treacherous and corrupt representatives of the houses of Lords and Commons as traitors to the ultimately good and virtuous King. The houses were seen as what the contemporaries defined as undemocratic, and they were described as deceiving the good and just monarch. In the Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet or The General Advertiser on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1774 a Citizen of Philadelphia writes:

George the Third. – A Prince, whose goodness of soul and unsuspecting heart, unfortunately for his people, have unwarily betrayed him into the ensnaring measures of designing men; men whose lust for power and rapacious pursuit after riches, would tempt them to swallow up both King and kingdom[...]<sup>308</sup>

The King is described as an unsuspecting victim betrayed by power hungry decision makers. This could be a socially acceptable form of addressing the king in an attempt to grab attention and plead for help, or the author could genuinely believe in the goodness of the king. As the author is not known it is difficult to contextualize the text. In his oration in 1774 John Hancock puts forth a similar idea by wishing that the King as a father would defend the rights and liberties of his “most loyal subjects in America”. He wishes that history would not remember George as the one to “conquer and enslave his subjects in America.”<sup>309</sup> Benjamin Church implores the wisdom, justice and piety of “his most sacred Majesty” wishing he would be hailed with “effusions of genuine joy, and dutious veneration, which the proudest DESPOT will vainly look for, from forced respect or ceremonial homage”.<sup>310</sup> In a speech at a general meeting at Lewes Town on Delaware on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1774 the speaker refers to the King’s humanity in easing the situation of the colonists.

[S]ure his *human heart* would bleed for the distresses of his reign, and he would vow redress to his loving and oppressed subjects.- Any one of these *twenty-seven grievous impositions*, would have driven a people of less *loyalty, patience, prudence and fortitude*, into actual rebellion, to take arms in defence of such invaluable privileges [...] though we *love Liberty, we love Britain too*, and earnestly desire to continue the most inviolable union, connexion and harmony with the land of our fathers.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Colbourn 1988, 62, 230.

<sup>308</sup> DPP 7/4/1774.

<sup>309</sup> *An Oration; delivered March 5, 1774, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston: to commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the fifth of March 1770.* John Hancock.

<sup>310</sup> *An Oration, delivered March 5th 1773 at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770.* Dr. Benjamin Church. Boston 1773.

<sup>311</sup> PJaWA 6/3/1774.

The speaker states that the colonists are willing to reconcile the union and harmony between the North American colonies and the British Empire, if their grievances are answered. The colonists are described as loyal, patient and prudent in enduring the unjust measures taken by Britain. Were they less so, the colonists could have already broken into a full rebellion and taken up arms against the empire, but as they still value the union they have not done so. However early on some Americans, such as Adam Smith and John Cartwright argued, that an independence and voluntary relations between two free equals would be more profitable for both parties.<sup>312</sup>

Some writings went further in their blame of the Parliament. In the 4<sup>th</sup> pamphlet of the famous series titled *The CRISIS*, Thomas Paine refers to the parliament as a satanical opposer of the humane and gentle sovereign:

Ye Conspirators against the Liberties of Mankind, at St. James's in St. Stephen's Chapel, the House of Lords, or amongst the Bench of Satanical Bishops, you must surely think there is no God to Judge, nor Hell to receive you, or you could never be so far abandoned as to stain your Hands, and consent to dye the Plains of America with the innocent Blood of her inhabitants. [...] The bloody resolution has passed the House of Commons and the House of Lords to address our present humane, gentle sovereign, to give directions for enforcing the cruel and unjust edicts of the last Parliament against the *Americans* [...] carrying effectually into execution the massacre in *America*; especially as he is to be supported in polluting the earth with blood, with the lives and fortunes of his *faithful* butchers, the Lords and Commons [...]<sup>313</sup>

This manner of referring to the Lords and Commons as satanical butchers obviously roused and angered the loyalists and many others in America. In the Rivington's New York Gazetteer of April 27<sup>th</sup> 1775 the pamphlet was referred to as "a well written, artful, but severe libel against the constitution", whose writer should be punished and all copies burnt.<sup>314</sup> In the pamphlet Thomas Paine refers to the current political situation in London as follows:

[T]he present King, supported by an abandoned ministry, and a venal set of prostituted Lords and Commons is now pursuing to overturn the sacred constitution of the British empire, which he had sworn to preserve[...]<sup>315</sup>

At this point the British constitution is still seen as something sacred and worth preserving for the colonists. The Americans are the true defenders of this constitution against the King and other rulers

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<sup>312</sup> Gravil 2015, 45.

<sup>313</sup> *Crisis issue IV* 2/11/1775.

<sup>314</sup> RNYG 4/27/1775.

<sup>315</sup> *Crisis issue IV* 2/11/1775.

attempting to overthrow the constitution. Thus the American colonists were not rebels or revolutionaries.

As early as in 1773 the King came under direct criticism from some of the most radical patriots such as John Allen, who criticizes the King by stating that he should not allow for violations of his subjects.

It is said the name of the King is *sacred*: I hope it is meant a *political* sacredness, not a *divine*; if so, who made his name sacred? Why the people, in investing him with a trust of power, above another man, to preserve their laws, and rights inviolable: Therefore all sacredness of the King ceases, together with obedience, and allegiance, when the trust, which the people reposed in him, is violated.<sup>316</sup>

The distinction between political and divine sacredness in the above quotation reflects the ongoing change in the relationship between politics and religion that had begun in England during the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. This gradual secularization of politics has been attributed to social and economic changes, and an acceptance of religious liberty amongst other reasons.<sup>317</sup> In the above quotation Allen does not wish to alienate the Americans from obedience, love or reverence to the King, rather than show "how the dignity of the King, the security of his Crown, the sacredness of his Person, the authority of your laws, RIGHTS and LIBERTIES are all essentially from the power of the people", and that the Americans have been misrepresented as rebellious even though they are "loyal, loving and affectionate to the King."<sup>318</sup> However by the 1780s the King came under direct attacks from the colonists. A poem on the surrender of one of the leading British generals, British Army officer and colonial administrator Charles Cornwallis on 19th of October 1781 suggests an overthrow of the King as well as slavery, exile and even executions of his offspring:

As Samuel hew'd the tyrant Agag down,  
So hew the wearer of the British crown;  
Unpitying, next his hated offspring slay,  
Or into foreign lands the fiends convey:  
Give them their turn to pine and die in chains,  
'Till not one monster of the race remains.<sup>319</sup>

A big part of the patriots' separation of America from Britain and Europe was the idea of Americans as an example to other nations, and the true carrier of freedom and liberty. The idea of a unique

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<sup>316</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>317</sup> Ihälainen 1999, 29-31.

<sup>318</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>319</sup> FJoTNAI 11/7/1781.

mission in history had been present in Britain since the birth of the English national identity even before the reformation. This common national identity and special relationship between God and the nation was copied and made to fit revolutionary America in the form of a divine mission and responsibility to the rest of the world.<sup>320</sup> In the spread of this enlightening mission the metaphor of a guiding light is used by many, including John Allen according to whom America would help spread liberty “like the *light of the morning.*”<sup>321</sup> The idea of Americans as beacons of divine guidance for the rest of the world is also expressed by pseudonym LUCULLUS,<sup>322</sup> who writes that “all nations resort to the harbours of independent America, bringing gold, frankincense, and myrrh, that they will also hanker after these good things, and will [...] make themselves free”.<sup>323</sup> LUCULLUS draws from familiar biblical imagery of the three wise men making their way to America, who plays the role of a newborn savior, and to whom other nations look to for guidance and deliverance from oppressive regimes. In the analogy America is not directly presented as Jesus Christ, but carries a similar role in guiding the peoples of other nations through God’s divine mandate. A Committee of the Continental Congress refers to their task as making America a temple raised to freedom and ready to open up as “an asylum to mankind” who shall “receive to her bosom and comfort and cheer the oppressed, the miserable and the poor of every nation and of every clime”.<sup>324</sup> Similarly in his oration in Boston 1780 Mr. Jonathan Mason states that America has become “the land of liberty” and “an asylum for the oppressed.”<sup>325</sup>

Not only did the patriots see themselves as an example to the rest of the world, but they also created a myth of a new, pure, healthy and free version of Britain.<sup>326</sup> The colonists carried the task of “preservation of British Liberty, in its genuine and primitive purity, throughout all these extensive and (till very lately) happy dominions in America”.<sup>327</sup> This view of the genuine and pure British Liberty and an unspoiled version of the British Empire being preserved in the colonies gradually changed into a view of a corrupt Britain beyond rescue, and America having nothing to do with her.

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<sup>320</sup> Ihälainen 2002, 73-74.

<sup>321</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>322</sup> Lucius Licinius Lucullus was an extraordinary military general, a politician and a patron of arts and sciences in the late Roman Republic 118 – 57 BC. This could be the origin of the author’s nickname.

<sup>323</sup> FJoTNAI 3/5.3.1783.

<sup>324</sup> *Observations on the American Revolution. Published according to a Resolution of Congress, by their Committee.* Continental Congress. Philadelphia 1779.

<sup>325</sup> *An Oration, delivered March 6, 1780. At the Request of the Inhabitants of the Town of Boston; To Commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770.* Mr. Jonathan Mason, Jun. Boston 1780.

<sup>326</sup> Bailyn 1992, 83.

<sup>327</sup> PJaWA 7/20/1774.

A quote from Thomas Paine's CRISIS issue IV from 1775 illustrates the view of the Americans as true Englishmen of family, fortune and honest principles.

I entertain too good an opinion of you to believe there is ONE TRUE ENGLISHMAN, who will undertake the BLOODY work [...] men of family and fortune, of honest principles [...] could never be prevailed upon to sheath their swords in the bowels of their countrymen. [...] if they are valiant, courageous, magnanimous and free [...] true to their King and their country; if they value their religion, laws, lives, liberties, families and posterity, no consideration can prevail with them to engage against the Americans in an inhuman, bloody civil war.<sup>328</sup>

Once again in describing through counter concepts what “true Englishmen” represent, the pamphlet shows how far Britain has strayed from this, and how the American colonists still represent this England as heroes in defending and keeping up liberty, morality and freedom everywhere.<sup>329</sup> A circular letter to the committees on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1775 states that the Americans are an example that even the English look to in preserving liberty: “In short the whole people of England are alarmed at such a measure, and look to the virtue of the Americans, to preserve even the Liberties of England herself, now almost annihilated by corruption.”<sup>330</sup> Not only did America represent an example to the rest of the world, but also carried the true legacy of the British Empire acting as an example even to Britain herself. In 1773 pseudonym EUGENIO refers to Britain as “her horrid empire [...] chiefly upheld by selfishness, cowardice and treachery”, and the colonists as the “true and genuine worshippers” of liberty.<sup>331</sup>

Towards the end of the war the loyalist side no longer saw the Americans as natural British subjects, but rather saw that they did not deserve to be Englishmen at all. In 1777 pseudonym a real Friend to Legal Liberty and the Constitution writes about the patriots’ “inveterate hatred to our constitution both in church and state”, and the ease with which they throw off “all legal restraints, and by what artifices they are seduced to commit the most enormous excesses, under the specious pretence of Liberty.” As such the “rebellion” and “open war against the Parent State, are sufficient proofs how little they deserve the name of fellow-subjects of countrymen.” Additionally as the American populace comprised of many Europeans of different origins, they were never truly British.<sup>332</sup> This is a complete reversal of the earlier loyalist rhetoric of the origin of Americans as

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<sup>328</sup> Crisis issue IV 2/11/1775.

<sup>329</sup> Bailyn 1992, 160.

<sup>330</sup> RNYG 4/27/1775.

<sup>331</sup> PJWA 12/15/1773.

<sup>332</sup> *Reflections on the Present combination of the American Colonies against the Supreme Authority of the British Legislature, and their Claim to Independency. By a real Friend to Legal Liberty and the Constitution.* London 1777.

British colonists of the same flesh and blood, and united with the same language, customs and constitution. Some more moderate writers such as John Hampson took a calmer approach, and stated that the Americans were no longer British, even though they originally were so.<sup>333</sup>

A similar development took place on the patriot side as well. In December 1781 the printer of the Freeman's Journal or The North-American Intelligencer Francis Bailey writes, in a reply to a loyalist text in the Rivington's Royal Gazette November 21<sup>st</sup>, that the American colonists are no longer a part of the British in any way:

The free Americans of the United States utterly deny themselves to be Englishmen in any respect [...] we should reckon if the greatest disgrace to be thought to be any way related to that wretched, bloodthirsty, and detestable people.[...] These Englishmen may be aptly compared to a madman confined in an iron cage: He menaces death and destruction to those without, and endeavours to terrify by his ravings, when at the same time it is evident that he cannot stir an inch beyond the bars of his inclosure.<sup>334</sup>

After the separation between the British and the Americans was established, the British were seen as the worst and most inhumane criminals or madmen. The patriots' own loyalist neighbors in America however were a lot harder to blame. To avoid this the American loyalists were sometimes described by the patriots as having been caught in the middle. "British oppression and delusion had turned the American loyalists into mere machines of labour and beasts of burden." They were thus absolved of the blame by having been manipulated into following the King, and mistreated in their efforts to follow orders.<sup>335</sup> Pseudonym J.R. writes that the British army fled from battle because they were scared, and thus the loyalists should not be punished for being cowards.

[...] the tories in general would do any thing sooner than fight. Many of them became tories for no other reason than that they might avoid fighting. The poor chicken hearted creatures cryed out to the potent king of England, to take them under his wings for protection; which he endeavoured to do, but they were too short to cover them.<sup>336</sup>

Not all patriots were this forgiving. In the Freeman's Journal or The North-American Intelligencer on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1782 Pseudonym HAWSER TRUNNION wishes to "export the scum" from America altogether to rid her of a pest:

The purpose of nature will thereby be answered, namely that the whole earth should be peopled: and we shall rid ourselves at the same time of a swarm of insects, winged and fiery

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<sup>333</sup> *Reflections on the Present State of the American War*. John Hampson. London 1776.

<sup>334</sup> FJoTNAI 12/12/1781.

<sup>335</sup> FJoTNAI 8/14/1782.

<sup>336</sup> FJoTNAI 8/21/1782.

sepents, who if suffered to remain will soon gnaw through our vitals, and feast, even to fullness, upon the mangled carcase of departed liberty.<sup>337</sup>

Commodore Hawser Trunnion is an eccentric character in Tobias Smollett's satirical adventure novel *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* first published in 1751. Thus it is possible that the above quotation is written as an in character parody and not entirely seriously. However pseudonym A REFUGEE complains about the way the people who have turned to the loyalist side are referred to as refugees. For the author calling "[t]he dastardly Americans, who have gone over to the enemy, through fear, or for filthy lucre" refugees is wrong. These people should be called deserters rather than refugees, since refugees are the ones who had to run away from being overpowered, not those who voluntarily switched sides.<sup>338</sup> Thus real hatred towards the loyalists existed and thrived long after the war had ended.

Many patriots as well as loyalists wished for a continuation in the relations between the two countries. As late as 1783 Captain McNeil wished for a union of sorts between the two, while still recognizing that America and Britain were now two separate countries. To him constitutional liberty required monarchy. He hopes that "[r]eligion, language, interests, affections may, and I hope will, yet prove a bond of permanent union between the two countries."<sup>339</sup> His text does not make explicit mentions of what this union might be, however religion and language are mentioned as the most important unifying factors between the countries. It is also interesting to note how he uses the concept of constitutional liberty as something requiring a monarch, even though what the patriots wanted to achieve was a form of republican liberty. A common language, descent, affinity, laws, affections, interests and the same sovereign are also brought forward throughout the war by many others either as arguments for a reunion or reasons as to why the separation would be difficult.<sup>340</sup> In August of 1782 pseudonym PROBUS doubts the new Americans, perhaps in a form of jeremiad self-lamentation by asking: "Are we really that virtuous people we pretend to be? Genuine sons of

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<sup>337</sup> FJoTNAI 8/28/1782.

<sup>338</sup> FJoTNAI 5/16/1781.

<sup>339</sup> FJoTNAI 2/19/1783.

<sup>340</sup> E.g. *The thoughts of a traveler upon our American disputes*. VIATOR. William Draper. London 1774; *A proposition for the present peace and future government of the British colonies in North America*. London 1775; *A Free and Calm Consideration of the Unhappy Misunderstandings and Debates, which have of late years arisen, and yet subsist, between the Parliament of Great-Britain, and these American colonies*. Benjamin Prescott. Massachusetts 1774; *The Sentiments of a Foreigner On the Disputes of Great-Britain with America. Translated from the French*. Abbe Guillaume Thomas Francois Raynal. Belfast 1775.

the Britons, have we not inherited their vices?"<sup>341</sup> In doing so he points out that, in the end the Revolution was a civil war between neighbors, trading partners, friends and family members.

Towards the year 1783 political discourse becomes filled with discussions on how to organize the new government. Terms such as loyalist or tory are rarely mentioned, and most of the discourse switches to indirect references to any generic enemies.<sup>342</sup> Who these enemies are is not always clear. The language used when describing the enemies also changes to passive form. An example of this is stating that "liberty has been suppressed"<sup>343</sup> rather than actively naming who the oppressor is.

In hindsight it was easy to say that the Americans were a separate people from the start. Looking back on the events of war in 1783 Thomas Day, an adamant supporter of the revolution and a denouncer of slavery<sup>344</sup> writes:

[T]he American Congress made a bold appeal to the first principles of human society, declared themselves independent of a country which had destined them to slavery and destruction, and invited the rest of Europe to their alliance and assistance. It is evident, that from this moment the original grounds of the quarrel were changed, and the Americans no longer fought to resist, as subjects, the claim of taxation in the British Parliament, but to defend themselves, as independent nations, from the attacks of an hostile people, that exerted all its force to reduce them to unconditional servitude.<sup>345</sup>

This quotation provides a good summary of the rhetoric that changed the colonists from British subjects to the true carriers of original British liberty and virtue, and finally to independent Americans. The declaration of independence can, as Thomas Day states, be seen as a tipping point between resistance and revolution. After the Declaration of Independence the loyalists were no longer merely disagreeing with the patriots, but proclaimed traitors who were arrested, pillaged and many lost their lives over this disagreement.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> FJoTNAI 8/7/1782; Liuska 2005, 100-101.

<sup>342</sup> E.g. FJoTNAI 1/22/1783; FJoTNAI 2/5/1783; FJoTNAI 2/19/1783.

<sup>343</sup> FJoTNAI 2/12/1782.

<sup>344</sup> Day, Thomas in Oxford dictionary of national biography vol 15.

<sup>345</sup> *Reflections upon the present state of England, and the Independence of America. By Thomas Day, Esq. The Fourth Edition: With Additions.* Thomas Day. London 1783.

<sup>346</sup> Pearson 1972, 156-157.

## 2.5 Overview

*Who then are the real enemies of America, if not they who have perverted the virtuous aims of the main body of the people for the defence of their rights and privileges, into a war for dominion? And seduced some, terrified many, and driven more to assist in this extravagant enterprize – who, under the disguise of patriot zeal, did, unauthorized, dispatch an emissary in the winter 1776, to draw the ancient enmity of France into a contention purely domestick; [...] are feeding and thriving upon the miseries of their countrymen, and by force and fraud preventing their return to the blessings of peace, liberty and safety, under a most generous plan tendered by Great-Britain [...].<sup>347</sup>*

The above quotation from William Smith, an Anglican emigrant from Scotland to New York who was eventually driven out of Pennsylvania in 1779 due to his opposition to the cause of independence<sup>348</sup> combines many of the key points discussed in chapter two. Questions of who the real enemies of America were took place on both of the sides that naturally saw each other as enemies. Additionally for many loyalists the “main body” of the colonists were “seduced” or “terrified” into the designs of the Sons of Liberty or the Congress as a conspiracy against Britain, the King and the constitution. For both sides the civil war was “a war for dominion”, and both struggled to defend their rights and privileges. For the loyalists people were first and foremost subjects of the monarch with duties to the crown and the constitution. Thus their rights and privileges were granted by the King and constitution or as a result of constitutional liberty. For the patriots their rights and privileges were the right to own property and be represented in government when decisions regarding said property were taking place. The loyalist side felt patriotic towards Britain, and the patriot side towards America.

The underlying rhetoric of the patriots’ political struggle can be boiled down to a juxtaposition of tyranny and liberty. For the patriots monarchy was seen as tyrannical, and what the loyalist and British side referred to as constitutional liberties, were referred to on the patriot side as despotism or tyranny. The confusing concept of constitution was used by many authors in various ways. This vagueness of conceptual definitions was also noted by the contemporaries. For example in 1775 an

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<sup>347</sup> *The Candid Retrospect: or, The American War examined, by Whig principles.* William Smith. Charlestown 1780.

<sup>348</sup> Sandoz 1998, 816.

anonymous author observes that the definitions of familiar political concepts such as “colony” and “constitution” were the root of the problem as they had no clear definitions or legislation.<sup>349</sup>

Patriots saw people as self-governing and naturally independent. To them power should be in the hands of the people, which at the time meant the white male population. Interestingly the British Parliament was seen as corrupt and even satanical, and thus not a real representative of the people questioning its legitimacy. To justify a republican form of government the patriots used imagery of ancient republican virtues, and ancient republics of Greece, Rome and Sparta familiar to the enlightenment era readership. How to organize a virtuous republican government and what it meant in practice however, would prove to be more difficult than imagined. In the end the Revolution led to a government very similar and even more restrictive than the British had been, and slavery continued strong in the southern colonies for years. According to Banning and Estes the Revolutionary process forced old customs and ideas into new shapes. Yet in the end no drastic change took place, and old structures of ideas did not abruptly crumble, and Americans continued to fear the possibility of the abuse of power despite the new consensus regarding its character and limits.<sup>350</sup> This consensus, which was gradually broken, can largely be attributed to the similarity of political vocabularies, concepts and rhetoric.

The concept of (political) slavery was often used on both sides of the civil war. For the loyalists voluntarily subjecting oneself to rule and order was an important duty, and independence would bring anarchy and tyranny. The patriots in turn were being forcefully subjected to the rule of an unrepresentative government and a monarch, and had to gain liberty through independence. In their rhetoric the American patriots moved from oppressed and ill-treated loyal subjects to an example of true British Liberty even to Britain herself, and finally to independent Americans who acted as an example to the rest of the world struggling to break free of oppressive regimes. Thus the revolutionary generation of Americans learned to hold themselves in a special position in history as the fulfillers of the meaning of mankind in a continuation of their English identity.<sup>351</sup> Originally most colonists wanted to believe in the goodness of King George, and initially blamed the Parliament

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<sup>349</sup> *A Defence of the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, in reply to Taxation no Tyranny*. The Author of Regulus. London 1775.

<sup>350</sup> Banning & Estes 2014, 16.

<sup>351</sup> Bailyn 1992, 20.

for the decisions to tax and control the colonies, which had led to inflation and other problems. The discourse eventually changed to oppose the King directly as an easy target for mockery.

In a civil war a shared language, culture and political vocabulary made it inevitable to redefine many concepts. In addition as both the loyalist and the patriot side comprised of many people from vastly different fields of life using generic expressions and vague or ambiguous concepts such as “the cause of America”, “sacred constitution” or “natural rights” made political language more relatable to a large number of people. Rozbicki calls this newly formed political language a “hybrid blending of the fictional and the real”.<sup>352</sup> Developing the ideology of the Revolution took time as the original objections were directed towards taxation and the Parliament rather than the king. Before 1776 the end result was not meant to bring a republic, democracy or egalitarianism.<sup>353</sup> Eventually the Americans came to separate themselves from the British through defining themselves as true Englishmen, and the British as corrupt and unjust perversions of this original purity. The colonists could thus justify their shared heritage by claiming to protect it as an example to the rest of the world.

The two sides of the American Revolution separated each other and justified their own struggle through a variety of concepts, counter concepts and metaphors. In chapter 3 I will illustrate some of the most common ways the two contesting sides of the Revolution justified their own struggle, and how they defined, described and represented the other.

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<sup>352</sup> Rozbicki 2011, 81.

<sup>353</sup> Draper 1996, 507-508.

### 3. Justification and describing the other

*Criterions by which we may distinguish friends from enemies, I admit in my essay, would be fine things.<sup>354</sup>*

According to A.D. Smith, Western civic nations are predominantly built upon a spatial and historic community on a self-sufficient homeland. The national identity of the people in this spatial and historic community legitimates legal rights and duties, which in turn define the nation and reflect its customs and morals. This shared national identity also lets individuals distinguish themselves from the other and define the self.<sup>355</sup> Additionally religion can function as an ally or even a symbiotic partner to nationalism or national identity via providing a unified system of beliefs and practices and a special status as the chosen people, which had historically been the case in Protestant Britain.<sup>356</sup> Even though Britain and her North American colonies shared a historic community and the Protestant religion, their common identity came apart on the spatial and legislative fields. As America was becoming self-sufficient and aware of both geographical distance and legislative differences between the two, the foundations of a separate national identity were created.

The above quotation from pseudonym a Citizen of Philadelphia in October 1781 illustrates the difficulties that the Revolutionary generation faced when drawing a line between family members, friends, neighbors or trading partners in a civil war. Not only did the two contesting sides struggle to establish a coherent line of political opinions within themselves as discussed in the previous chapters, but they also had to separate themselves from the other side of the war. During the American Revolution the liberty commonly associated with Britain and being British had to be defended in a civil war against Britain, and an American nation had to be both defined and justified.<sup>357</sup> In this chapter I will examine the ways in which the two sides pitted themselves against the other, and what kinds of vocabulary, references and metaphors were employed for this purpose. The first and underlying question related to the differences between a loyalist and a patriot is discussed in chapter 3.1. In both creating an American national identity as well as defending a common British one references to themes such as duties, common history, posterity, naturalness, filiality and family relations were commonly used in association with each other. These themes are

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<sup>354</sup> FJoTNAI 10/3/1781.

<sup>355</sup> Smith 1991, 9-10, 16-17.

<sup>356</sup> Smith 2003, 16, 26, 46-49.

<sup>357</sup> Liuska 2005, 25.

discussed in chapters 3.2 and 3.3. Chapter 3.4 explores themes of religion, justification from God and the way biblical stories were referenced and used as an important means of discourse.

### 3.1 Loyalist or patriot, rebellion or revolution

*When first proud Britain rais'd her heavy hand  
With claims unjust to bind your native land,  
Transported armies, and her millions spent  
To enforce the mandates that a tyrant sent;  
"Resist! Resist!" was heard through every state,  
You heard the call and mourn'd your country's state;  
Then rising fierce her sons in arms array'd,  
And taught to vanquish those who dar'd invade.<sup>358</sup>*

As has been previously discussed, the fundamental conceptual debate of the American Revolutionary War boils down to the way the two sides of the civil war defined themselves and the other through main concepts such as loyalist, Tory, patriot, Whig, rebellion and revolution. The contemporary definitions to these central concepts, as well as the descriptive adjectives linked to them, are thus an interesting and important point when trying to understand the Revolutionary War on the terms of the historical actors themselves. In this chapter I will look at the ways this loyalist-patriot divide was conceptualized by the contemporaries of the war.

As was discussed in the introduction of this thesis the terms loyalist and patriot themselves were a central part of defining the conflict. As central concepts they were also debated and problematized. As both sides saw themselves as patriotic the loyalists did not wish to refer to their opponents as patriots due to the positive connotations of the word. Instead they opted for variations of the term rebel. Similarly the patriots did not wish to refer to their opponents as loyalists since the term indicates loyalty as a positive attribute. Thus the patriots often referred to the loyalists either as Tories or simply as British.<sup>359</sup> The names of Whig and Tory in British political language had derogatory origins as nicknames from past religious confrontations in Scotland and Ireland. During the eighteenth century the imagery of the rival party was exaggerated, members caricatured and stereotypes strengthened.<sup>360</sup> Similarly in exaggerated American patriot propaganda the name "Tory" came to suggest loyalty to the Crown at the cost of one's own rights, and even supporting the King's

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<sup>358</sup> FJoTNAI 9/5/1781, extract from a poem titled *To his Excellency GENERAL WASHINGTON*.

<sup>359</sup> E.g. Raphael 2001, 146.

<sup>360</sup> Ihalainen 1999, 229-231.

arbitrary rule. In reality this description did not fit most loyalists, who did object to British colonial policy and the members of the British government while supporting the institutions themselves.<sup>361</sup>

In the early 1770s Samuel Johnson, a leading English literary figure and a formidable 18<sup>th</sup> century conversationalist, wrote a series of political pamphlets including *The Patriot*, which was designed to influence an upcoming election and remove so called false patriots from power by using the American rebellion as an example.<sup>362</sup> In *The Patriot* Johnson defines the term “patriot” as someone who does not rebel over lawful authority:

*A Patriot is he whose public conduct is regulated by one single motive, the love of his country; who, as an agent in parliament, has for himself neither hope nor fear, neither kindness nor resentment, but refers every thing to the common interest. [...] He that wishes to see his country robbed of its rights, cannot be a Patriot. That man therefore is no Patriot, who justifies the ridiculous claims of American usurpation; who endeavours to deprive the nation of its natural and lawful authority over its own colonies: those colonies, which were settled under English protection; were constituted by an English charter; and have been defended by English arms.”*<sup>363</sup>

Throughout the war Samuel Johnson opposed the American Continental Congress and argued that the colonists had voluntarily left England where they had votes, and that America had to contribute to the monetary support of the Empire. In the colonies he was caricatured as the arch-Tory for his views and opinions.<sup>364</sup> Similar ideas to those presented in Johnson’s *The Patriot* were presented by many others as well. In 1776 pseudonym An Englishman writes about the American so-called “Glorious Patriots” in comparison to “true Patriotism” as a love for the unity of the British Empire.<sup>365</sup> For many loyalist authors “true patriotism” was not the American kind,<sup>366</sup> and the term “patriotism” was “tortured and misapplied”<sup>367</sup> or “corrupted”<sup>368</sup> by the “men who call themselves patriots”<sup>369</sup>. In 1777 Pseudonym a real Friend to Legal Liberty and the Constitution writes that “any man who

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<sup>361</sup> Shenstone 2000, 24.

<sup>362</sup> Samuel Johnson in Encyclopædia Britannica.

<sup>363</sup> *The Patriot. Addressed to the Electors of Great Britain*. Samuel Johnson. London 1774.

<sup>364</sup> Samuel Johnson in Encyclopædia Britannica.

<sup>365</sup> *An address to the People of Great-Britain in general, the Members of Parliament, and the Leading Gentlemen of Opposition in particular, on the Present Crisis of American Politics*. An Englishman. Bristol 1776.

<sup>366</sup> *An Appeal to the Unprejudiced; or, a Vindication of the Measures of Government, with respect to America*. Oxford 1776.

<sup>367</sup> *Some Candid Suggestions towards Accommodation of Differences with America. Offered to Consideration of the Public*. 1775.

<sup>368</sup> *The Patriotic Mirror, or the Salvation of Great Britain in embryo*. Cincinnatus. London 1781. Quintius Cincinnatus or Lucius Quincitius was a Roman statesman and a military leader who came to represent the virtues of the early Roman Republic.

<sup>369</sup> *The Plain Question upon the Present Dispute with our American Colonies*. London 1776.

has one spark of real patriotism still glowing in his breast" would understand that independency would lead to the entire kingdom losing its independence. In addition the deluded colonists were seen as "blindly submitting to their pretended patriots and champions".<sup>370</sup> The idea of the innocent colonists being manipulated by these pretended patriots is present in a number of other texts as well.<sup>371</sup>

In hindsight it was easy to claim that the division between the two opposing sides was formed immediately. In 1780 loyalist defender Joseph Galloway simplifies and summarizes the formation of the two opposing sides in his reflections on the American Rebellion:

[T]wo parties were immediately formed, with different views, and determined to act upon different principles. One intended candidly and clearly to define American rights, and explicitly and dutifully to petition for the remedy which would redress the grievances justly complained of – to form a more solid and constitutional union between the two countries, and to avoid every measure which tended to sedition, or acts of violent opposition. The other consisted of persons, whose design, from the beginning of their opposition to the Stamp Act, was to throw off all subordination and connexion with Great-Britain; who meant by every fiction, falsehood and fraud, to throw the subsisting Governments into anarchy, to incite the ignorant and vulgar to arms, and with those arms to establish American Independence. The one were men of loyal principles, and possessed the greatest fortunes in America; the other were congregational and Presbyterian republicans, or men of bankrupt fortunes, overwhelmed in debt to the British merchants.<sup>372</sup>

Even though the text is heavily biased in its representations of the patriots as bankrupt and indebted anarchical war-mongers, and the loyalists by contrast as rich, dutiful, constitutional and non-violent, this simplified view of the patriots as the young and poor rebels and loyalists as landowning elite has stayed strong. For the victorious Whigs the stereotype of a greedy and vicious loyalist provided the ideal villain in the heroic narrative of the Revolution, and it justified the treatment of the loyalists after the war.<sup>373</sup> As has been stated before this was not the case, and the two groups were internally very diverse. Especially at the start of the war, and even throughout, there were those who did not wish to take sides. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1774 pseudonym a Citizen of Philadelphia writes:

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<sup>370</sup> *Reflections on the Present combination of the American Colonies against the Supreme Authority of the British Legislature, and their Claim to Independency. By a real Friend to Legal Liberty and the Constitution.* London 1777.

<sup>371</sup> E.g. *A Few Remarks upon some of the Votes and Resolutions of the Continental Congress, Held at Philadelphia in September, and the Provincial Congress, Held at Cambridge in November 1774. By a Friend to Peace and good Order.* Harrison Gray. Boston? 1775.

<sup>372</sup> *Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion.* Joseph Galloway. London 1780.

<sup>373</sup> Piecuch 2008, 331.

[W]ith whom should we engage: - our friends – our countrymen – our kindred – No! let not the base profligacy of a Ministry, abandoned to every principle of virtue, and raging for despotism, tempt such near and dear connexions, to sheath the sword in each others bowels. – There are surer, safer means to end the controversy. [...] Has she [Britain] trained up her children like calves in the stall, to fall bloody victims by her own unnatural cruel hands? Patriot or undecided, but against the war and bloodshed.<sup>374</sup>

Originally the Sons of Liberty, a group of organized opposition to the Stamp Act of March 1765, vowed “to use all lawful endeavours in our power” to “transmit to our posterity, those blessings of freedom, which our ancestors have handed down to us; and to contribute to the support of the common liberties of America, which are in danger of being subverted.”<sup>375</sup> The emphasis on lawful means shows that in 1773 independence or rebellion were far from the minds of organized opposition to Britain’s attempts at increased taxation. Another example of this attitude is a quote from Benjamin Franklin in 1774, where he describes the loyalty of the colonists. According to Franklin the colonists respected and loved Britain, but would not be loyal to the point of surrendering their possessions to an unrepresentative Parliament. Later on Franklin became a known leader of the Revolution and a proponent of independence.

[W]e have been reviled in their Senate as rebels and traitors, we are truly a loyal people. [...] But a new kind of loyalty seems to be required of us, a loyalty to Parliament; a loyalty that is to extend, it seems, to a surrender of all our properties, whenever a House of Commons, in which there is not a single member of our choosing, shall think fit to grant them away without our consent, and to a patient suffering the loss of our privileges as Englishmen, if we cannot submit to make such surrender. We were separated too far from Britain by the ocean, but we were united strongly to it by respect and love, so that we could at any time freely have spent our lives and little fortunes in its cause.<sup>376</sup>

According to Richard Gravil, a researcher in Anglo-American literary relations, even in 1775 when the hostilities started the debate in the colonies was between those who saw the Revolution as a restoration of the rights of Englishmen and those who wanted independence.<sup>377</sup> Most to-be loyalists and many Britons also agreed with the cause of the colonists, and sympathized with the “unnatural, unconstitutional and unjust grievances which they groan under.”<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> DPP 6/20/1774.

<sup>375</sup> PJaWA 12/22/1773.

<sup>376</sup> *The Cause of the present distractions in America explained: in two letters to a merchant in London*. Benjamin Franklin. New York 1774.

<sup>377</sup> Gravil 2015, 47.

<sup>378</sup> PJaWA 7/20/1774.

Perhaps the most fundamental conceptual difference of the Revolutionary war was the way the loyalist and patriot side defined and conceptualized the war itself. To the British and loyalist side the war was seen as a family quarrel and an unnatural rebellion.<sup>379</sup> Words *rebellion* and *rebel* were used to emphasize the unlawful, sudden and wicked nature of the uprisings and betrayals.<sup>380</sup> In The New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1775 Captain general and commander in chief of Massachusetts-Bay Thomas Gage writes that “an unnatural and unprovoked rebellion has been wantonly raised” by the “lawless hands of rebels”. In the same paper William Howe, the major general and commander in chief of the Atlantic side of the colonies drafts “loyal citizens” by writing that “his Majesty’s deluded subjects in America are in open rebellion”.<sup>381</sup> In 1776 pseudonym An Englishman writes: “what strikes *them* in a patriotic Light, as ‘A Glorious Struggle for Freedom,’ should strike us in a Constitutional one, as a Rebellious Opposition to Legal Establishments.”<sup>382</sup>

For the Patriots the events of the war were conceptualized as a revolution<sup>383</sup> rather than rebellion, and lawful resistance to usurpation and violations on the rights of people should not be called rebellion,<sup>384</sup> “but a just, virtuous and honorable self-defense, as well as a patriotic defense of the public.”<sup>385</sup> A poem titled *To his Excellency GENERAL WASHINGTON* from the year 1781 includes the following couplet: “The barbarous Briton hails thee to his shores/And calls him *Rebel* – whom his heart adores!”<sup>386</sup> Similarly in a sermon in Massachusetts on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 1775 William Stearns describes the “plundering expedition” of the British troops, and the way “our innocent countrymen”

<sup>379</sup> Chopra 2011, 3.

<sup>380</sup> Shenstone 2000, 24; e.g. *Reflections on the Present combination of the American Colonies against the Supreme Authority of the British Legislature, and their Claim to Independency. By a real Friend to Legal Liberty and the Constitution*. London 1777; *The Advantageous Situation of Great Britain on the Reduction of America*. London 1777; *An address to the People of Great-Britain in general, the Members of Parliament, and the Leading Gentlemen of Opposition in particular, on the Present Crisis of American Politics*. An Englishman. Bristol 1776.

<sup>381</sup> TNYGaWM 13.11.1775.

<sup>382</sup> *An address to the People of Great-Britain in general, the Members of Parliament, and the Leading Gentlemen of Opposition in particular, on the Present Crisis of American Politics*. An Englishman. Bristol 1776.

<sup>383</sup> E.g. FJoTNAI 9/26/1781; FJoTNAI 5/30/1781; *Letter addressed to the Abbe Raynal on the Affairs of North-America. In which The Mistakes in the Abbe’s Account of the Revolution of America are corrected and cleared up*. Thomas Paine, M.A. Boston 1782; *A Circular Letter from the Congress of the United States of America to their Constituents*. John Jay. Philadelphia 1779.

<sup>384</sup> E.g. *A Defence of the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, in reply to Taxation no Tyranny*. The Author of Regulus. London 1775; *Resistance no Rebellion*. London 1775; *Taxation, Tyranny. Addressed to Samuel Johnson, L.L.D.* London 1775; *America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion*. A Friend to Both Countries. Devizes London 1774.

<sup>385</sup> *A Defence of the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, in reply to Taxation no Tyranny*. The Author of Regulus. London 1775.

<sup>386</sup> FJoTNAI 9/5/1781.

were accosted “with the infernal, shocking name, *damn'd rebels.*”<sup>387</sup> In December 1772 John Allen asks: “What is *rebellion*, my Lord? If I understand it right, Rebels are persons rising up, with an assumed authority and power to act, dictate, and rule, in direct violation to the laws of the land.” By consequence “[t]he King, Ministry, and Parliament are *Rebels* to GOD and mankind, in attempting to overthrow, by guns, by swords, and by the power of war the laws and government of *Rhode-Island.*”<sup>388</sup> For Allen the ones using rebellious and unlawful means were the British, and the colonists merely defended themselves against this. Attention to the nature of the revolution as a dignified, patriotic and just act is drawn to in a postscript to the Freeman's Journal on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1781 written by A Citizen of Philadelphia, where the author expresses his discontent to this conceptualization by a loyalist:

I am confirm'd in my suspicion by observing, sir, that you repeatedly affect to call our revolution by the name of revolt, which is an epithet of low diminutive import often used in a bad sense, and which the dignity of our revolution does not deserve[...]<sup>389</sup>

The definitions of other key concepts such as colony or law in the ongoing conflict were important to the contemporaries. In the Freeman's Journal or The North-American Intelligencer on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 1781 pseudonym A DICTIONARIAN takes the position of a Tory and gives ironical, exaggerated and amusing definitions to common concepts regarding the ongoing political situation. *Absolute Monarchy* is defined as “The only perfect form of government ever yet introduced – For if the ruling powers are controuled by laws, customs, or any such nonsense, can they be said to rule? The absurdity is palpable.” Here the unlimited power of the monarch is sarcastically made to look like an absurd, unjust and old-fashioned custom. *Colonies* in turn are seen as foreign settlements that must be suppressed by force “as soon as they arrive to such as state of prosperity as to be able to be useful to the mother country and themselves”. *Dependence* is defined as “The proper state of all those not born to crowns”, and those who live further off from the monarch are supposed to be kept proportionately more dependent. The British form of governing her colonies presents itself as grossly unjust, which is further emphasized by defining *enemies* as “those who will not submit peaceably to our taking [money] from them”. *Honor* and *honesty* are said to have nothing to do in politics, and *independence* “ought to be extirpated root and branch”. *The best laws* are “those,

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<sup>387</sup> *A View of the Controversy subsisting between Great-Britain and the American Colonies.* William Stearns. Watertown Massachusetts 1775.

<sup>388</sup> *An Oration on the Beauties of LIBERTY.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>389</sup> FJoTNAI 10/3/1781.

which like a piece of whalebone can be bent any way without breaking” and *modesty* is “A weed which must be carefully rooted out of the political garden; as it has scarce ever been known to thrive there, and is often the means of preventing useful plants from doing so.” *Yankies* are defined from the assumed British point of view as “A kind of Yahoos who have the unparalleled effrontery to put themselves upon a footing with rational beings, and to talk of rights, liberties &c. as confidently as the citizens of London or freeholders of Middlesex.”<sup>390</sup> According to this satire only the well-off subjects in the British Isles can be called rational, and talk of rights and liberties, unlike the poor colonists anywhere else in the Empire.

The events in America led to demands from the British opposition for increased representation, shortened parliamentary terms and an extended suffrage among others. By the 1780s these reform debates surrounding the good and bad sides of democracy and popular governments had reached the Parliament, and democracy became a possible future addition to the mixed government. For many British Whigs in the opposition the defeat in the American war was taken as proof that the monarchy was to blame, and that the British monarchy was becoming a tyranny. Additionally the existence of a democratic element in the constitution was recognized even by those who did not wish to increase democracy in Britain.<sup>391</sup> This trend is shown in another example of contemporary definitions to current political concepts comes from January 1782, where the PILGRIM analyses the words *Whig* and *Tory* based on their soundings to describe and give valued judgement of the political ideas these words represent. As progressive Whiggism was gaining a stronger foothold in Britain as well, the author values Whiggism as the smart and simple political view, and Toryism as unstable, insecure and hesitant.

[T]here is not a letter alike: if the one is a monosyllable the other is a disyllable; and the sounds of the words when spoken are as different as can be well conceived: one is short and smart, the other long and tremulous.<sup>392</sup>

In a later essay pseudonym Anti-Tory suggests the removal of the letters T, O, R and Y, as well as the plural letters i, e and s from the alphabet altogether. Thus the author wants to remove any words, such as history, inventory and territory from use, since they all end with –tory. To this The PILGRIM replies, that it would be unwise, since they would have to remove names such as *Troy* referring to

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<sup>390</sup> FJoTNAI 12/19/1781.

<sup>391</sup> Ihälainen 2010, 252-253, 255, 264, 267, 269-270, 272, 285, 287.

<sup>392</sup> FJoTNAI 1/23/1782.

the ancient city, words like *try* and utterances such as *o yes*.<sup>393</sup> In another sarcastic dictionary text an unknown author sees both Whigs and Tories in a negative light. Whig is defined as “Formerly an honorable distinction supposed to imply some portion of virtue and merit, but justly fallen into decline and bidding fair to be soon obsolete.” Conversely a Tory is “an amiable harmless thing, which hurts nobody when it has no power to do it – changes its colour like the Cameleon, lives upon hopes, and yields only to the conviction of captured armies; but always calls itself a friend to the country.”<sup>394</sup> Even though the writer seems to be a Whig they are not happy with the current views of the Whiggish patriots.

Even though attempts at distinctions, definitions and justifications were actively presented during the conflict – especially on the patriot side who had to justify an entirely new national identity and an uprising against the status quo – the arguments for and against were often remarkably similar. In the following chapter I will look at the way duties, historical events and the future were often brought together and used in accordance with each other to argue why either a revolution or a reunion should take place.

### 3.2 Duty, history and posterity

*Look back to your ancestors, look forward to your posterity; and if these will not rouse, you deserve not to be free.*<sup>395</sup>

A. D. Smith’s definition of an *ethnie* as a human population highlights myths of common ancestry and shared historical memories as two important attributes.<sup>396</sup> As a part of the British Empire the American patriots had to justify their struggle of breaking free from this shared past, whereas the loyalists appealed to it in trying to mend the relations between Britain and North America. References to common history and ancestry as well as the future of the British Empire were thus important topics for both loyalists and patriots. The above quotation from pseudonym A *REVOLUTIONIST* represents a very common way of appealing to a duty to ancestry, posterity and freedom on the patriot side. For the loyalists references to Great Britain’s historical position as a mighty empire and naval power as well as the fact that the colonies were founded by English people

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<sup>393</sup> FJoTNAI 5/29/1782.

<sup>394</sup> FJoTNAI 3/20/1782.

<sup>395</sup> FJoTNAI 5/2/1781.

<sup>396</sup> Smith 1999, 13; Smith 1991, 16.

under English law were commonly used arguments. References to these founder colonists and their struggles, freedoms or rights were used on both sides of the argument, either to prove that the Americans were a separate people who deserved to be free and independent, or to implore that the original colonists were Englishmen and the Americans should remain that way. Ancient republics and references to past historical events were also used on both sides either to prove that America could gain independence, or to prove that republics in the past had failed.

For many patriots including John Allen, the American colonists were fighting for the “rights their fore-fathers lived and died, fought and bled, to obtain for them”, and to carry these rights on to their “children or children children [...] of ages yet unborn.”<sup>397</sup> To Allen liberty was the “native right of the Americans”, and the “blood-bought treasure of their Forefathers” to which they are entitled to as much as “to the air they breath in, or to the light of the morning when the sun rises”.<sup>398</sup> As the Americans had to create a common history separate from the British these forefathers were used to create an image of a common past and shared traditional values to justify their struggle.<sup>399</sup> According to Allen the colonists’ forefathers had fled “English tyranny” and met struggles and hardships in establishing themselves and leaving behind an inheritance for their children without aid from the King of England. Thus they should not be called rebels for defending this liberty purchased by their ancestors at a great expense.<sup>400</sup> The story of the first settlers who had left the luxury and abundance of Europe and settled in the harsh wilderness all for liberty was even contrasted with the Israelites’ escape from the slavery of the Egyptians guided by God through the Red Sea to a promised land.<sup>401</sup> For the patriots this liberty that their forefathers had sought by settling in America was worth preserving at any cost: “We have suffered every thing in the cause of freedom --- for this we have fought --- for this we have bled.”<sup>402</sup>

According to A.D. Smith a genealogical ancestry can be derived either from biological or cultural-ideological myths of spiritual and heroic kinship of the past.<sup>403</sup> Early on before Americans had their own separate identity the common British ancestry was used as an argument to appeal to the rulers

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<sup>397</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>398</sup> *A Sermon, Preached in Billerica, On the 23d of November, 1775.* Henry Cumings, A.M. Massachusetts 1776.

<sup>399</sup> Liuska 2005, 31, 101.

<sup>400</sup> *An Oration on the Beauties of LIBERTY.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>401</sup> Liuska 2005, 100, 102-103; Smith 2003, 138.

<sup>402</sup> *A Sermon, Preached in Billerica, On the 23d of November, 1775.* Henry Cumings, A.M. Massachusetts 1776.

<sup>403</sup> Smith 1999, 47, 57-58.

in London. In 1775 Edmund Burke, an Irish politician, philosopher and a member in the Parliament<sup>404</sup> wished to appeal to the British in his speech in favor of the Americans by referencing the British origins of the colonial ancestors: “To prove that the Americans ought not to be free, we are obliged to depreciate the value of Freedom itself; and we never seem to gain a paltry advantage over them in debate, without attacking some of those principles, or deriding some of those feelings, for which our ancestors have shed their blood.”<sup>405</sup> In order for the British to respect their ancestors they should acknowledge the wish for the colonists to be free of arbitrary control from the mother country. For Burke a popular uprising signified serious misgovernment rather than criminal action on the part of the governed, and authority towards the colonies should be exercised with respect for the wishes of the governed rather than through coercion and repression.<sup>406</sup>

For John Hancock the American Revolution would eventually become a story told from parents to children as an event “on history without a parallel”, and the anniversary of the Revolution would be celebrated and posterity would be taught to “guard against such evils for the future.”<sup>407</sup> The virtuous and free present day colonists would struggle to preserve this “enjoyment of entire freedom” for their fellow subjects.<sup>408</sup> As discussed in chapter 2.4 the patriots came to see America as a special nation with a task of spreading freedom, and an “asylum from slavery and oppression” with “fundamental rights of human nature” guaranteed in “the happy seat of peace, liberty, learning, arts, virtue and religion”. The “noble patriots and sons of freedom” now defending America “at the risk of their lives and estates” would in turn become respected by “unborn millions” who would “rise up and call them blessed”, and their memories would become “dear to all posterity” as gilded and near mythical heroes of the American founding era.<sup>409</sup> For John Hancock the names of the people suffering for “a publick cause” would “grace the annals of America” and become examples of divine enthusiasm of diffusing happiness and delivering the oppressed “from the iron grasp of tyranny”. Although John Hancock himself owned several slaves, he speaks “of changing the hoarse complaints and bitter moans of wretched slaves, into those cheerful songs, which freedom and

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<sup>404</sup> Beeman 2013, 25-26; Edmund Burke in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>405</sup> *Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq. on moving his resolutions for conciliation with the colonies, March 22, 1775. The Third Edition.* Edmund Burke. London 1775.

<sup>406</sup> Edmund Burke in Encyclopædia Britannica 2017.

<sup>407</sup> *An Oration; delivered March 5, 1774, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston: to commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the fifth of March 1770.* John Hancock.

<sup>408</sup> *An Answer to a late pamphlet, entitled Taxation no tyranny.* London 1775.

<sup>409</sup> *A Sermon, Preached in Billerica, On the 23d of November, 1775.* Henry Cumings, A.M. Massachusetts 1776.

contentment must inspire.”<sup>410</sup> This is another example of the separation between political and actual slavery in the patriot rhetoric.

For the loyalists the struggles of the first settlers and the value of the American trade were historically important to the unity of the Empire,<sup>411</sup> and the unlawful tyranny of the violent and rebellious colonists was seen as an attack on this historical, cultural and linguistic unity.<sup>412</sup> In 1774 William Allen expressed his distress towards the uprisings in the colonies by criticizing the actions of the colonists in their protests, and demanding a swift removal of the rebellious elements.

[A] Committee is formed, who over-awe the Magistrate – intimidate the Peaceable – settle Matters of Government illegally – throw Ship-loads of Tea into the Ocean, though private Property – Tar and Feather any Object of their Dislike untried – and roar Defiance against supreme Authority. This is *New- England* Liberty – Heavens save *Old England* from such Freedom! [...] For if the Ax is not laid to the Root of Faction, and only some of its Branches are lopt off, Rebellion will sprout out with accelerated Vigour; perhaps too powerful for the Arm of Resistance.<sup>413</sup>

For Allen the actions of the rebels are represented as “New-England Liberty” that should be chopped off at the root and some infected branches in order to protect Britain from its corrupting influence.

Another common occurrence in the discourses of the Revolution are references to duties on both sides of the war. For the patriots these duties were often related to liberty, such as a duty to “preserve liberties” against the “cruel and oppressive invasions of the natural rights of the people”, and “suffering in the common cause of America”.<sup>414</sup> On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1774 a Citizen of Philadelphia writes: “So loud and important is the present cry for liberty, that it cannot but rouse every man who has the welfare of his country at heart; and it becomes every man’s duty to exert himself on the occasion.”<sup>415</sup> Not only do the colonists have a duty to preserve and protect liberty, but also a duty to their country and its welfare. At a public meeting in 1774 it was resolved that “a virtuous and steady opposition” is necessary to “preserve even the shadow of liberty, and is a duty

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<sup>410</sup> *An Oration; delivered March 5, 1774, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston: to commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the fifth of March 1770.* John Hancock.

<sup>411</sup> E.g. *The Right of the British Legislature to tax the colonies considered, in a Letter to the Right Honourable Frederick Lord North.* London 1774; *The thoughts of a traveler upon our American disputes.* VIATOR. William Draper. London 1774.

<sup>412</sup> E.g. *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated; and the Means of Asserting that Right proposed.* John Gray. London 1774; *A Second Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the People, on the measures respecting America. By the Author of the First.* Arthur Lee. London 1775.

<sup>413</sup> *The American crisis: A letter addressed by permission to the Earl Gower, Lord President of the Council &c. &c. &c.* William Allen. London 1774.

<sup>414</sup> DPP 7/4/1774.

<sup>415</sup> DPP 6/20/1774; duty to the country is also mentioned in e.g. DPP 7/4/1774.

which every freeman in America owes to his country, to himself and to his posterity.” This was a duty to defend against the “violent attack upon the liberties of America.”<sup>416</sup>

Referring to duties to liberty or country as a means of justification, as well as the preserving of liberties for the posterity were not uncommon in the loyalist rhetoric either. For them these duties were duties and loyalties to the King, who in turn provided liberties and security to the future generations of colonists: “[...] a duty which we owe to our King, our country, ourselves and our posterity [...] to maintain, defend and preserve our loyalty, rights and liberties.”<sup>417</sup> For the loyal associated Refugees these duties were conceptualized as the “great duties which we owe to society, to our Sovereign, and to the constitution” or duties “to our King and Country, - to ourselves and posterity.” These colonial loyalists did not wish to take up arms against their countrymen or “natural connections, - and the ties of consanguinity.”<sup>418</sup> Duties to the mother country and posterity are mentioned in many other texts as well.<sup>419</sup>

During the Enlightenment studying and referencing history was both prestigious and practical, as well as a requirement for any politician or statesman. It was argued that universal laws of history existed and history repeated itself. Thus with careful study errors of the past could be learned from and avoided in the future.<sup>420</sup> In 1782 pseudonym *VOX POPULI.W.* compares Britain’s attack on America to the stabbing of Julius Caesar: “We [Americans] experience the feelings of Caesar, when his friend Brutus presented an uplifted dagger at his breast.”<sup>421</sup> Here Britain is represented as the trusted friend who suddenly turned against America. According to historian Trevor Colbourn Whig historians typically singled Julius Caesar out as a tyrannical military despot, and Cato and Brutus as heroes of freedom and patriotism. Murdering his friend and thus committing a personal sacrifice Brutus rendered a great service by destroying a tyrant and providing justification for tyrannicide.<sup>422</sup> Based on this argument the quotation from *VOX POPULI.W.* is an uncommon reference to Cesar’s murder.

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<sup>416</sup> PJWA 12/24/1773.

<sup>417</sup> PJWA 7/13/1774.

<sup>418</sup> *Declaration and Address of His Majesty’s Loyal associated Refugees, Assembled at Newport, Rhode-Island.* New York 1779.

<sup>419</sup> *E.g. America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion.* A Friend to Both Countries. Devizes London 1774.

<sup>420</sup> Colbourn 1988, 5-6; FJoTNAI 3/5/1783.

<sup>421</sup> FJoTNAI 7/24/1782.

<sup>422</sup> Colbourn 1988, pp. 28-29

In 1775 Charles Lee compares America to the past republics of Greece, Thebes, Sparta, Athens and Syracuse. These were all freed from the rule of tyrants and recovered their liberties by demolishing “slavery, citadels, strong holds, and military tenements.”<sup>423</sup> In 1782 pseudonym *Censor* draws a concrete parallel between battles of the ancient world and the current war between Britain and America: “her gallant struggles in the cause of freedom: the action of Lexington, and the bloody carnage of Bunker’s hill (the Marathon and Thermopylae of the new world).”<sup>424</sup> In the battle of Marathon 490 BC the Greeks managed to drive away the invading Persians, like the Americans had driven away the British away at Lexington. In the Battle of Thermopylae the Persians defeated the vastly outnumbered Greeks, providing a tactical victory for the conqueror much like in the battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. The heroic defense against an undefeatable enemy displayed during the battle of Thermopylae was seen as a source of inspiration for the Americans, and in Mr. Quesnay’s poem to Washington from 1782 America is described as a “new Athens rising in the west”.<sup>425</sup>

As stated before the Patriots worked hard to prove why America was better than the failed republics of the past. An essay titled “To THE PEOPLE” by pseudonym *JUNIUS*<sup>426</sup>, from the Public Ledger of February 9<sup>th</sup> 1775 states:

[T]he tale of the event of your present transactions, must stand a solecism in the language of history. [...] America, with a dignity for which Greece or Rome in the ages of freedom would have revered her, yet extends the hand of amity. [...] Ensue the worst that can ensue; let them be vanquished in the field; let their cities be bombarded and consumed, they have in the boundless continent a secure asylum; they have impenetrable forests to retire to in the centre whereof they will erect a Temple to

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<sup>423</sup> *Strictures on a pamphlet entitled “A Friendly Address to all reasonable Americans on the subject of our Political Confusions.”* Charles Lee. Boston 1775.

<sup>424</sup> FJoTNAI 1/23/1782.

<sup>425</sup> FJoTNAI 1/9/1782.

<sup>426</sup> The pseudonym of the author probably comes from the founder of the Roman Republic Lucius Junius Brutus in 509 BC. Gens Junia was a prominent family in Roman history. The nickname can also refer to Julius Caesar’s assassins Decimus Junius Brutus or Marcus Junius Brutus from 44 BC. However the founder of the Roman Republic seems more likely in context of the quote, even though the year 1775 seems a bit early for ideas of the founding of an American Republic. JUNIUS was also a pseudonym used in Britain by a writer contributing a series of political letters to London newspapers such as the Public Advertiser and the London Evening Post between January 1769 and January 1772. These essays informed the British public of their historical and constitutional rights and liberties, and expressed criticism towards King George III and his government infringing upon these rights. The name might originate from Lucius Junius Brutus, a Roman patriot who led the overthrow of the Roman monarchy, or the Roman poet Juvenal. There are more than forty persons who had been supposed to be Junius. Today Sir Philip Francis, an Irish-born British politician and pamphleteer, is generally but not universally believed to have been JUNIUS. Even though the JUNIUS quoted here seems to be a different author it is likely that the author is familiar with the work of the original JUNIUS. More information about the identity of the original JUNIUS can be found in Frearson, Alan (1984). "The Identity of Junius". Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies. Volume 7, Issue 2: September 1984, pages 211–227.

Liberty, which in defiance of the utmost efforts of European tyranny will stand forever inviolate”<sup>427</sup>

The mention of a temple to Liberty that the Americans can erect into their boundless forests can be seen as an allusion to the temples of the ancient world. By calling Britain’s actions a solecism in the language of history JUNIUS states that Britain is on the wrong side of history in attempting to subdue the revolting colonists. America is willing to make amendments and as the most dignified people world history has yet witnessed they are not willing to go to a bloody war. America’s special position in the history of nations was recognized by Thomas Paine as well. In 1783 he writes:

It is not every country (perhaps there is not another in the world) that can boast so fair an origin. Even the first settlement of America corresponds with the character of the Revolution. Rome, once the proud mistress of the universe, was originally a band of ruffians. Plunder and rapine made her rich, and her oppression of millions made her great. But America needs never be ashamed to tell her birth, nor relate the stages by which she rose to empire.

Paine suggests that America originates in pure principles and has not risen to success based on “plunder and rapine” or “oppression of millions”, unlike many, if not every other country in the world.

As inspiration for a new republic was sought from the republics of old, so were references to historical events and the historical position of Great Britain used to deter the British from oppressing the colonists. In 1774 *A Citizen of Philadelphia* appeals to the British parliament in compelling them to consider their own history and the progress they have made: “Let not a British Parliament rave with indignation [...] and rush impetuous into vindictive resentment: [...] Let them look back into their own *history*, and mark the progress of the State.”<sup>428</sup> In 1781 pseudonym *AN AMERICAN* writes that “[t]he history of the world cannot produce an instance of a more absurd, or wicked demand by one people over another”.<sup>429</sup> On the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 1774 in the British House of Commons an unknown speaker refers to Britain’s historical position as an Empire: “No less than the FATE OF A GREAT EMPIRE, trembles on the decision”, as they call to put aside the differences of Britain and America “for the general good”.<sup>430</sup> Other more superficial and symbolic references to history were used as well. In 1778 in the fifth part to his series of pamphlets titled “The American Crisis” Thomas

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<sup>427</sup> SCGaCJ 5/9/1775.

<sup>428</sup> DPP 7/4/1774.

<sup>429</sup> FJoTNAI 9/5/1781.

<sup>430</sup> RNYG 5/12/1774.

Paine attacks Sir William Howe, a commander in chief of the British army in North America,<sup>431</sup> by sarcastically comparing the tarring and feathering of the colonial rioters to the funeral customs and rites of ancient Egypt: "In a balmage, Sir, of humble tar, you will be as secure as Pharoah, and in a hieroglyphic of feathers rival in finery all the mummies of Egypt."<sup>432</sup> For the loyalist side it was obvious that references to the fall of ancient Rome and the necessity of the unity of the Empire were brought up as an answer to the patriots' arguments.<sup>433</sup>

Eventually as the patriots realized that Britain would not grant America the demands for representation they wished for, Britain's image as a great global empire was destroyed. An address of the Congress in 1778 describes this fatalism well.

In vain did we implore his [King George] protection: In vain appeal to the justice, the generosity, of Englishmen – of men, who had been the guardians, the affectors and vindicators of liberty, thro' a succession of ages: Men, who, with their swords, had established the firm barrier of freedom, and cemented it with the blood of heroes.<sup>434</sup>

The British had been just and generous guardians of liberty, but this was no longer the case and the Americans were now the true carriers of freedom and liberty of their ancestors to their posterity and the rest of the world.

For the patriots the main goals regarding their common history and ancestry with the British were finding means of breaking free from this shared past and creating a separate identity. For the loyalists references to common origins, nationality, history, ancestry and lineage were made in an attempt to mend the relationship between Britain and her colonies, and compel the colonists to return to their rightful duties. Both sides promised to guarantee safe and profitable lives for their posterity, either as the historically mighty and united British Empire or the new and glorious American republic. The patriots felt it their duty to fight for the rights established by their forefathers, and make sure these rights were preserved for future generations as well as spread abroad as a part of America's divine mission to liberate other nations from slavery and oppression. For the loyalists the common British origins inevitably meant that the colonists had duties to the British law, constitution and the King as their protector. Thus both sides used references to the past

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<sup>431</sup> William Howe. (2017). In Encyclopædia Britannica.

<sup>432</sup> *The American Crisis. Number V. Addressed to General Sir William Howe By the Author of Common Sense.* Thomas Paine. Lancaster 1778.

<sup>433</sup> E.g. *The Rights of the English Colonies established in America stated and defended.* William Bollan. London 17774.

<sup>434</sup> *An Address of the Congress to the Inhabitants of the United States of America 9.5.1778.*

in order to draw attention to traditional values, compel people into action in defending these values and ensuring their transfer to future generations.<sup>435</sup>

Similar to the way that references to duties, history and posterity often occurred together, so did references to naturalness, filiality or consanguinity and body politic, which are discussed in the following chapter.

### 3.3 Naturalness, filiality and body politic

*[T]here were on board 27 chests of that pernicious, destructive, troublesome commodity, called TEA, which for a long time has, and still keeps the whole continent in a ferment [...] it will require the most cooling medicines, and the best skill of the ablest political Physicians, to prevent the body politic from great convulsions-*<sup>436</sup>

In the above quotation from the Pennsylvania Journal and the Weekly Advertiser on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 1774, the author describes tea as a destructive and poisonous commodity to the body politic of the American colonies. In order to cure the effects of this poison the aid of political physicians is needed. Even though conceptualizing the status quo as something natural, familiar and reliant upon traditional values was understandably common for the loyalists and the British who favored the return to the unified state of the Empire, similar discourses were a surprisingly common occurrence on the patriot side as well. Naturalness, filiality and body politic were often combined as an organic set of metaphors, and many texts that mention one of them include mentions of or allusions to the others as well.

According to A.D. Smith, much like natural organisms nations are subject to laws of nature.<sup>437</sup> Throughout the eighteenth century different bodily and mechanical metaphors were used in political texts in reference to political systems and their parts.<sup>438</sup> Thus body politic – the transfer of governmental or political bodies to physical bodies – was also one of the most important and most common political metaphors of the American Revolution.<sup>439</sup> The situation of the colonies and the different ideologies of the Revolution were analogous to various ailments of the physical body

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<sup>435</sup> Liuska 2005, 31.

<sup>436</sup> PJWA 7/13/1774.

<sup>437</sup> Smith 1999, 3-4.

<sup>438</sup> Ihlainen 2009, 1.

<sup>439</sup> Shelley 2009, 92; Flynn 2008, 11; Shalev 2009, 52; Strourzh 1988, 38.

leading to disease, amputation or even death.<sup>440</sup> The patriots had differing opinions regarding the central pillar of the body politic. For pseudonym *THEOPHILUS PHILADELPHUS*<sup>441</sup> freedom of the press was the heart of the body politic “through which constitutional Life circulates freely and vigorously”. When this circulation is obstructed or destroyed, “disease, or death inevitable, ensues.”<sup>442</sup> For John Allen the full enjoyment of natural, civil and religious rights is described as “the nerves of health, the bulwarks of strength, and pillars of peace” upon which the happiness and prosperity of the people stands.<sup>443</sup>

During the eighteenth century medical metaphors of the body politic including the spread of political or religious diseases remained an important part of the Anglo-American Protestant language.<sup>444</sup> For the loyalists of the American Revolution the rebellion was seen as a disease demanding the attention of an able state physician to stop its spread.<sup>445</sup> For the patriots however, this disease of the body politic came from the head of state being sick, rather than the actions of the colonists causing the sickness.<sup>446</sup> These differences also lead to different views on how to treat the body politic. For some loyalists an amputation would be the best option. One of such loyalists was Methodist writer John Hampson, who in 1776 argued that a community spreading inflammation and gangrene to the rest of a nation should be amputated.

[A]s we have recourse to the cautery or the knife, when any part of the human body is so affected as to become hurtful to the rest; so in communities likewise, the inflamed and gangrenous members must be taken away, if their destruction be necessary to the health and safety of the whole political body.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> E.g. PJaWA 7/13/1774; DPP 7/4/1774; *The American Alarm*. 1773; *An Oration on the Beauties of LIBERTY*. 1773; *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated*. 1774; *The Sentiments of a Foreigner On the Disputes of Great-Britain with America*. 1775; *The Pamphlet, Entitled, "Taxation no Tyranny," Candidly considered*. 1775.

<sup>441</sup> Theophilus = friend of God.

<sup>442</sup> A *Sequel to Common Sense: or, the American Controversy considered in Two Points of View Hitherto Unnoticed*. THEOPHILUS PHILADELPHUS. Dublin 1777.

<sup>443</sup> *The American Alarm, or the Bostonian plea, For the RIGHTS, and LIBERTIES, of the PEOPLE. By the BRITISH BOSTONIAN*. John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>444</sup> Ihlainen 2005, 560.

<sup>445</sup> E.g. *America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion. A Friend to Both Countries*. Devizes London 1774; *Thoughts on the Letter of Edmund Burke, Esq. to the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the Affairs of America. By the Earl of Abingdon*. Dublin 1777; *Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion*. Joseph Galloway. London 1780; *A Letter to a Noble Lord, Concerning the British Navy, &c. in our present Critical Situation*. A.B. London 1776.

<sup>446</sup> E.g. *A Sermon Preached at Lexington, On the 19th of April, 1781*. Henry Cummings, A.M. Boston 1781.

<sup>447</sup> *Reflections on the Present State of the American War*. John Hampson. London 1776.

Similarly in 1779 Thomas Tod argues that an amputation would be better than endangering the whole body.<sup>448</sup> In 1776 an anonymous author states, that “it is often requisite to lose some blood, to save the patient from absolute ruin”<sup>449</sup> making amputation or bloodshed in war an unfortunate reality. However not all shared this view. In December 1774 Samuel Seabury, under the pen name A.W. Farmer, writes that a colony cannot be independent: “To talk of a colony independent of the mother-country, is no better sense than to talk of a limb independent of the body to which it belongs.”<sup>450</sup> As the concept of a colony by definition implies dependency, it would be conceptually impossible for a colony to become independent. According to Pasi Ihalainen bodily analogies were mostly favored by defenders of the established order, and questioned by those in favor of adding elements of popular sovereignty.<sup>451</sup>

In the civil war discourses America and England often took on the roles of feuding family members. During the war the patriots turned from a filial relationship with the parent country to seeing Britain as a tyrant treating his children as slaves. For the Patriots referring to the war as a war within a family emphasized how far the loyalists and the British had strayed, and how unnaturally cruel and twisted Britain’s treatment of the colonies was.<sup>452</sup> The loyalists in turn sought to emphasize the kinship between the colonies and Britain in order to preserve the relationship between the two.<sup>453</sup> Initially the British did not wish to see the colonists as real enemies like the French or the Spanish, but rather as strayed brothers who could be brought back into their senses.<sup>454</sup> For the loyalists it was also natural to adopt the role of an insulted parent, who raised their child with love and care, and was betrayed by the demands and actions of the colonists, who “like unnatural children would destroy their ever-indulgent parent.”<sup>455</sup> These “refractory Offspring”<sup>456</sup> or “refractory children”<sup>457</sup> should be brought back to their duties using any means necessary. In 1778 pseudonym *a Gentleman, For many Years a Resident in America* wished for the rebellion to be crushed: “Let it never be said in the annals of this Kingdom, that a time has existed when this great empire could not correct the

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<sup>448</sup> *Observations on American Independency*. Thomas Tod. Edinburgh 1779.

<sup>449</sup> *Remarks on the different opinions relative to the American Colonies. The second edition*. London 1776.

<sup>450</sup> *A view of the controversy between Great-Britain and her Colonies*. A. W. Farmer. Samuel Seabury. London 1774.

<sup>451</sup> Ihalainen 2009, 2.

<sup>452</sup> Liuska 2005, 110.

<sup>453</sup> Chopra 2011, 1, 90.

<sup>454</sup> Liuska 2005, 71-72.

<sup>455</sup> TNYGaWM 11/13/1775.

<sup>456</sup> *The American crisis: A letter addressed by permission to the Earl Gower, Lord President of the Council &c. &c. &c.* William Allen. London 1774.

<sup>457</sup> PJaWA 5/4/1774.

insolence of her sons, however firm they might have been in their disobedience, or powerfully supported by foreign assistance.”<sup>458</sup>

Not only was England seen as a mother country<sup>459</sup> or parent country<sup>460</sup> to the colonies, but also a literal mother<sup>461</sup> taking care of her child, and despite her efforts to protect and provide, being attacked<sup>462</sup> in an “unnatural contest with her own children”.<sup>463</sup> For English clergyman John Darwall the royal patrimony meant that the King was the father of the nation, and England as a country the mother raising America. Thus the Americans were seen as traitors maligning the King with the name of tyrant, and stabbing the mother in the heart with a dagger.<sup>464</sup> On the other side the patriots saw England as a tyrannical parent<sup>465</sup> or an “unnatural mother” sheathing a sword in the bowels of her child.<sup>466</sup>

In 1776 Scottish poet James Macpherson<sup>467</sup> writes, that the cruelties of the Americans are a parricide forced by the so called patriots, who proudly degrade Great Britain and “bind the hands

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<sup>458</sup> *A Letter to Lord George Germaine, Giving an Account of the Origin of the Dispute Between Great Britain and the Colonies. By a Gentleman, For many Years a Resident in America.* London 1778.

<sup>459</sup> E.g. *Some fugitive thoughts on a letter signed freeman.* 1774; *America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion.* 1774; *A very short and candid appeal to free born Britons by an American.* 1774; *The Right of the British Legislature to tax the colonies considered.* 1774; *The Sentiments of a Foreigner On the Disputes of Great-Britain with America.* 1775; *A Calm Address to our American Colonies.* 1775?; *The Pamphlet, Entitled, “Taxation no Tyranny,” Candidly considered.* 1775; *Taxation no Tyranny; An Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress.* 1775; *What think ye of the Congress Now?* 1775; *An address to the People of Great-Britain in general, the Members of Parliament, and the Leading Gentlemen of Opposition in particular, on the Present Crisis of American Politics.* 1776; *Letters on the American Troubles; Translated from the French of M. De Pinto.* 1776; *Thoughts on the Letter of Edmund Burke, Esq. to the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the Affairs of America.* 1777; *Proposal for Peace Between Great Britain and North-America. Upon a New Plan. In a Letter to Lord North.* 1779; *A Candid Examination of the Mutual Claims of Great-Britain, and the Colonies.* 1780.

<sup>460</sup> E.g. *A letter from a Virginian to the Members of the Congress to be held at Philadelphia, on the First of September 1774.* Jonathan Boucher. Boston 1774; *An Address to the People on the Subject of the Contest Between Great-Britain and America. By \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*.* London 1776; *Remarks on the different opinions relative to the American Colonies. The second edition.* London 1776; *Liberty the cloke of Maliciousness.* Alexander Gerard, D.D. Aberdeen 1778; *Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion.* Joseph Galloway. London 1780.

<sup>461</sup> E.g. PJaWA 8/3/1774; *An Oration on the Beauties of Liberty.* John Allen. Boston 1773.

<sup>462</sup> E.g. *Taxation, Tyranny. Addressed to Samuel Johnson, L.L.D.* London 1775; *The Patriotic Mirror, or the Salvation of Great Britain in embryo.* Cincinnatus. London 1781; *An Address to the People on the Subject of the Contest Between Great-Britain and America. By \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*.* London 1776.

<sup>463</sup> E.g. *America Vindicated from the high charge of Ingratitude and Rebellion. A Friend to Both Countries.* Devizes London 1774; *Liberty the cloke of Maliciousness.* Alexander Gerard, D.D. Aberdeen 1778.

<sup>464</sup> *Political Lamentations Written in the Years 1775 and 1776.* John Darwall. Walsall 1777.

<sup>465</sup> E.g. *Remarks on American Affairs.* John Day. London 1774.

<sup>466</sup> *A View of the Controversy subsisting between Great-Britain and the American Colonies.* William Stearns. Watertown Massachusetts 1775.

<sup>467</sup> James Macpherson in *Encyclopædia Britannica* 1017.

of the MOTHER, while they plant a dagger in those of the DAUGHTER, to stab her to the heart.”<sup>468</sup> Similar rhetoric of a parricide can be found on the patriot side as well. In a letter by an anonymous author from 1776 the “liberties of the colonies must perish by the parricidal hand of Britain.”<sup>469</sup> America is also seen as “an injured and oppressed sister”<sup>470</sup>, and the brotherly affection<sup>471</sup> or filial reverence<sup>472</sup> that existed between the colonists and British prior to the rebellion is referenced by many authors on both sides. This relationship is “now exposed to unexpected and unnatural scenes of distress” with a nation “in whose parental guidance” the colonies have trusted.<sup>473</sup>

Throughout the war the British stubbornly downplayed the rebellion as a family quarrel resolved through teaching the rebels a military lesson.<sup>474</sup> An example of this is Scottish Minister Alexander Carlyle’s sermon from 1777, where he preached that all nations must pray to God and fill the duties of religion if they wish for success in war. The “degenerate and rebellious colonists” had been led by ambition to an “unjust and unprovoked rebellion against the parent-state”. However the child should be chastised rather than slaughtered for disobedience: “let us not entirely extinguish our affections to the child, because he is for the present forward and disobedient. Let us bend his will, but not subdue his spirit. Let us chastise him in kindness, *not slay him in anger.*”<sup>475</sup> Carlyle was friends with thinkers such as David Hume, Adam Smith and other Scottish literary celebrities of the time, which influenced his thinking.<sup>476</sup>

Towards the end of the war family rhetoric turned from describing the relationship between a dependent child and their parent towards that of feuding but equal brothers, or a child who had come of age and become independent. According to Richard Gravil the British parent-child analogy naturally led to the colonial children either being coerced into submission and obedience, or

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<sup>468</sup> *The Rights of Great Britain Asserted against the Claims of America: Being an Answer to the Declaration of the General Congress. The Sixth Edition to which is now added, a Refutation of Dr. Price's State of the National Debt.* James Macpherson. London 1776

<sup>469</sup> *A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Price. By the Author of The Defence of the American Congress, in reply to Taxation no Tyranny.* London 1776.

<sup>470</sup> DPP 7/4/1774.

<sup>471</sup> *The Right of the British legislature to Tax the American Colonies vindicated; and the Means of Asserting that Right proposed.* John Gray. London 1774.

<sup>472</sup> *Observations on the American Revolution. Published according to a Resolution of Congress, by their Committee.* Continental Congress. Philadelphia 1779.

<sup>473</sup> *Observations on the American Revolution. Published according to a Resolution of Congress, by their Committee.* Continental Congress. Philadelphia 1779.

<sup>474</sup> Chopra 2011, 224; Ferling 2007, 565.

<sup>475</sup> *The Justice and Necessity of the War with our American Colonies Examined. A Sermon, Preached at Inveresk, December 12. 1776, being The Fast-Day appointed by the King, on account of The American Rebellion.* By Alexander Carlyle, D.D. Minister of Inveresk, and Almoner to his Majesty. Edinburgh 1777.

<sup>476</sup> Carlyle, Alexander, D.D. in Dictionary of national biography vol 9.

alternatively given their independence for having come of age.<sup>477</sup> However whether the loyalists should let the child become of age or not was a matter of debate. In 1776 loyalist bishop Charles Inglis, who was an adamant defender of the English crown and whose property was thus confiscated in 1779<sup>478</sup> wrote, that the relationship between a parent and a child does not break when the child comes of age, and thus a reconciliation would be a natural continuation for the relationship between the two.<sup>479</sup> As opposed to this view pseudonym *BRITANNICUS* writes, that as Britain had saved the infant America and brought her up to a “flourishing and happy nation”, America should be subject to Britain as the natural mother country.<sup>480</sup> In 1778 pseudonym *Friend to Great Britain* writes that since the Americans would never lose sight of the pursuit of independence “though they were reduced to the last extremity” the unnatural and hopeless war should be ended and Englishmen should hasten towards their “brethren with open arms” rather than force them to alter their plan.<sup>481</sup> Similarly for an anonymous English author in 1780 the American colonists should be considered “not as children, whom we may caress or chastise at pleasure, but as friends, as equals, and as brethren.”<sup>482</sup> For many merchants an open and independent American market would be more beneficial than subjection or an unproductive war.<sup>483</sup> However authors such as Joseph Galloway, Arthur Lee and Thomas Day also pointed out the monetary and military losses Britain would suffer by letting America become independent, and that there would be no guarantee for Britain to gain a preferential trading position in America.<sup>484</sup> It is also pointed out by some, that the loss of America would diminish Britain’s role in European politics<sup>485</sup>, but on the other hand continuing the war and insisting to own America would make Britain the enemy of Europe.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>477</sup> Gravil 2015, 44.

<sup>478</sup> Inglis, Charles (1734-1816) in Dictionary of national biography vol 29

<sup>479</sup> *The True Interest of America Impartially Stated, in certain Stictures On a Pamphlet Intitled Common Sense. By An American.* Charles Inglis. Philadelphia 1776.

<sup>480</sup> *The Political Mirror. By A Student of the Inner Temple.* BRITANNICUS. London 1776.

<sup>481</sup> *Address to the Rulers of the State.* Friend to Great Britain. London 1778.

<sup>482</sup> *A Plan, or Articles of Perpetual Union, Commerce, and Friendship, Between Great Britain and her American Colonies.* London 1780.

<sup>483</sup> E.g. *Consolatory thoughts on American Independence.* A Merchant. Edinburgh 1782; *An Enquiry, whether the Absolute Independence of America is not to be preferr'd to her Partial Dependence, as most agreeable to the real interests of Great Britain. Addressed to the People of Great Britain, by one of themselves.* London 1782.

<sup>484</sup> *Cool thoughts on the Consequences of American Independence, &c.* Joseph Galloway. London 1780; *Reflections upon the present state of England, and the Independence of America. By Thomas Day, Esq. The Fourth Edition: With Additions.* London 1783; *An Appeal to the Justice and Interests of the people of Great Britain, in the present disputes with America. By an old member of parliament.* Arthur Lee. London 1774.

<sup>485</sup> *Considerations on the American War, Under the following HEADS. American Independency. Pursuit of the War. War of Posts. Plan of Operation. French Policy.* By Joseph Williams, Esq. London 1782.

<sup>486</sup> *Consolatory thoughts on American Independence.* A Merchant. Edinburgh 1782.

America's coming of age was used as an argument by the patriots as well. In 1782 pseudonym QUIRINUS wrote that because America is "a youth arrived to age" the Americans had "become our own guardians".<sup>487</sup> Major John Cartwright, a pro-American radical with a career in political reforming,<sup>488</sup> used this argument as early as 1774. In his speech delivered in the House of Commons in April 1774 he stated that "America may now be considered, as an industrious and intelligent youth just arriving at man's estate; who, having chearfully served a long *apprenticeship* under us, must now, *if not admitted into partnership*, become our *rival* in trade."<sup>489</sup> In 1776 John Cartwright writes, that parents cannot be unjust tyrants and rule over a child after they have come of age as the child is no longer the property of the parent. Instead "brotherly affection" and "a manly and independent friendship" will naturally take place between a child and a truly loving parent who has raised the child justly, leading into a "lasting union [...] between the separate branches of one great family."<sup>490</sup> In Thomas Paine's additions to *Common Sense* he argues that the interest of America would be to be separated from Britain, and to raise her own family.<sup>491</sup> In 1775 an anonymous author compares the "natural connexion" between a parent and a child that cannot be broken, to the "artificial connexion" between Britain and America which "may be broken upon any just occasion" as America was established by settlers and a variety of emigrants with different nationalities. Thus Britain is an "unnatural parent" to the colonies.<sup>492</sup>

References to filial relationships were not only used to express outrage and rouse people to action on both sides, but also to try to subdue the horrid civil war by pleading or appealing to the filial love and affection between the two sides. For example a letter from London on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1774 states that "both sides, like a divided family, will at once feel the effects as being equally injured by triumph or subjection."<sup>493</sup> Thus no matter who wins, the war will lead to a national loss. In 1775 Connecticut clergyman Moses Mather, a Congregationalist who was imprisoned several times for his patriotism<sup>494</sup>, writes that the colonists were "called upon to surrender our liberties, our religion, and country; or defend them at the point of the sword, against those, that were our friends, our

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<sup>487</sup> FJoTNAI 8/21/1782.

<sup>488</sup> Bailyn 1990, 156.

<sup>489</sup> *A Letter to Edmund Burke, Esq.* John Cartwright. London 1775.

<sup>490</sup> *American Independence, the Interest and Glory of Great Britain; In a Series of Letters to the Legislature.* John Cartwright. Philadelphia 1776.

<sup>491</sup> *Large Additions to Common Sense; Addressed to the Inhabitants of America.* Thomas Paine. Philadelphia 1776.

<sup>492</sup> *The Reply of a gentleman in a Select Society, upon the important contest between Great Britain and America.* London 1775.

<sup>493</sup> RNYG 5/12/1774.

<sup>494</sup> Mather, Moses in Edited Appletons Encyclopedia.

brethren, and allies.”<sup>495</sup> Similarly in 1776 John Wesley describes the conflict by stating that “children of the same parents, are to murder each other with all possible haste, to prove who is in the right”, and thus a brother is pitted against brother.<sup>496</sup> Wesley was an evangelist, a missionary and a leader of Methodism who opposed the American rebellion. He was also the earliest religious leader to have joined opposition to slavery and advocate tolerance of Roman Catholicism.<sup>497</sup>

During the eighteenth century terminology regarding nature and naturalness became fashionable, and natural philosophy became a part of public discourse as secular political questions were discussed within academic political theory. Different concepts of nature were thus used in political discourses to strengthen arguments, defend traditional ideals, discuss the idea of nation and define what was natural as opposed to artificial.<sup>498</sup> Much like the phrasing “unnatural parent”, rhetoric of naturalness during the American Revolutionary War often appears alongside discourses of family relations or other organic metaphors. Following John Locke’s thinking the patriots saw that the colonies had a natural right to resist corruption and a government full of vice.<sup>499</sup> The underlying view of the loyalist side was that the events of the Revolution were an unnatural rebellion as a collective denunciation to the actions of the rebelling colonists, and that the natural and unified state of the British Empire should be preserved.<sup>500</sup> The rebellion was seen as a violation against the “good and wholesome laws” as well as the constitution,<sup>501</sup> a “groundless, vexatious and scandalous attack on the honour and integrity of the British”, and an attempt “to destroy that harmony and good-will between Great Britain and thy Colony, which every honest subject should strive to establish”<sup>502</sup> In 1776 Joseph Cawthorne states, that a reconciliation between the two should take place “to restore things to their NATURAL channel, and thereby preserve the DIGNITY of the Mother Country, and the DEPENDENCY of her Colonies.” The colonies would “mistake their interest and their permanent happiness, if they continue their delusive pursuit after absolute liberty and boundless freedom, instead of that usual, natural, and necessary dependence on Great Britain.” The

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<sup>495</sup> *America's appeal to The Impartial World.* Moses Mather. Hartford 1775.

<sup>496</sup> *A Seasonable Address to the More Serious Part of the Inhabitants of Great Britain, respecting the unhappy Contest between us and our American Brethren.* John Wesley. Bristol 1776.

<sup>497</sup> Wesley, John (1703-1791) in Dictionary of national biography vol 60.

<sup>498</sup> Ihalainen 2005, 558-559.

<sup>499</sup> Liuska 2005, 96.

<sup>500</sup> Chopra 2011, 3; e.g. *A plan to reconcile Great Britain & her Colonies, and preserve the dependency of America. COSMOPOLITE.* Joseph Cawthorne. London 1774.

<sup>501</sup> PJaWA 12/9/1773. A letter of a governor read at Boston.

<sup>502</sup> PJaWA 5/4/1774. A report from the Right Hon. the Lords of the committee of Council for Plantation Affairs, 29th of January 1774 against Thomas Hutchinson, Governor, and Andrew Oliver, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Massachusetts -Bay, to remove the two from government.

liberty the patriots are seeking after would thus bring ruin to the colonies, whereas a natural and necessary dependence on the mother country would save them. However Cawthorne does not judge the colonists for their rebellion. To him there is “nothing *unnatural* or unreasonable in the struggle of the American colonies” and the differences between the two are seen as natural and inevitable in the name of self-preservation as the “first law of nature.”<sup>503</sup> Whereas the loyalists saw unity of the British Empire as the natural status quo to be preserved, for the patriots independence was seen as a natural progression. Similar to Cawthorne’s view, in *The American Crisis issue IV* Thomas Paine refers to self-preservation as “the first and fundamental law of nature,”<sup>504</sup> and in issue II independence is seen as “*America’s natural Right and Interest.*”<sup>505</sup>

For some patriots the geographical distance between England and America, America’s rates of population growth as well as output in agriculture and manufacture provided natural proof of their purposed independence and separation from each other.<sup>506</sup> In an essay titled *To THE PUBLIC Number IV*, pseudonym *A.N.P. of S.J.A & N.I* uses nature and geography to justify the fact that America and Europe should be connected in trade only:

The God of nature, by interposing the vast Atlantic between Europe and America, seems evidently to have pointed out the true natural connection of the one with the other, to be by trade and commerce: and to have forbidden both to exercise rule or authority, except on their own side of the ocean.[...] [rebellion after a state of enslavement] is a principle in nature; and to expect the reverse is equally absurd as to expect rivers to turn backward, or the ebbing and flowing of the sea to cease.<sup>507</sup>

As early as in 1774 pseudonym *a Citizen of Philadelphia* uses geography to prove that America can be independent by illustrating numbers of population growth and calculations of possible agricultural output. According to the author “the great volume of nature, will find sufficient scope for the exercise of foresight, and reasonable conjectures.”<sup>508</sup> For the loyalist Joseph Cawthorne the distance between America and Britain would not be a problem, and despite it the Americans were

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<sup>503</sup> *Thoughts on America: Together with An Idea of Conciliation, Adapted to The Natural and Legislative Rights of the Colonies, And to The Supremacy of Great-Britain.* Joseph Cawthorne. London 1776.

<sup>504</sup> *Crisis issue IV* 2/11/1775.

<sup>505</sup> *The American Crisis, Number I., II, III By the Author of Common Sense.* Thomas Paine. Philadelphia 1777.

<sup>506</sup> E.g. FJoTNAI 1/9/1782; *Common Sense: Addressed to the Inhabitants of America, On the following interesting Subjects. Written by an Englishman.* Thomas Paine. Philadelphia 1776.

<sup>507</sup> FJoTNAI 5/23/1781.

<sup>508</sup> DPP 7/4/1774.

entitled to all the “natural and constitutional rights of a free people”, as “natural subjects who plan colonies” rather than people “subdued and obliged to submit to the will of the conqueror.”<sup>509</sup>

Due to the variety of the contexts that the concepts of nature or naturalness were used as a typical convention of the time they were not easy for the contemporaries to define. In 1775 an anonymous author writes about the ambiguity of the term “Natural Liberty” by stating that it is “so vague a Term, that it is used to imply, sometimes unlimited Measures of Freedom, and sometimes none at all. The Difficulty rests upon the Word *Nature*.” As the liberty to act according to nature includes both good and evil depending on the nature of the person, giving up “a Part of his natural Liberty to the Dominion of another Part, which imposes that Rule of Restraint” is in a loyalist view “better than a wild discursive Freedom” where people are free to do as they please and their natural “*unruly Inclinations*” are not bound by subjection and servitude to government.<sup>510</sup>

For the loyalists naturalness meant the family of the British Empire reunited. For the patriots however, nature intended Britain and America to be separate, and it was natural for children to come of age and be separated from their parents. Different physical illnesses and ailments were used to describe the unrest and suggest measures to fix and cure these political diseases. As subjects of the British monarchy with a common history, culture and traditions, both sides used filial relations in their discourse to show the cruelty and horror of a civil war of either feuding siblings, a parent attacking a child or vice versa. Throughout the war the Americans grew from oppressed children to young independent adults or equal brothers of the British. Another important part of discourse and rhetoric that is often found in relation to naturalness or the patriarchal structure is religion, which is discussed in the following chapter.

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<sup>509</sup> *Thoughts on America: Together with An Idea of Conciliation, Adapted to The Natural and Legislative Rights of the Colonies, And to The Supremacy of Great-Britain*. Joseph Cawthorne. London 1776.

<sup>510</sup> *Americans against Liberty: or an essay on the nature and principles of True Freedom, shewing that the designs and conduct of the Americans tend only to Tyranny and Slavery*. London 1775.

### 3.4 Religion and justification from God

*[T]hat dismal night, [...] when Heaven in anger, for a dreadful moment, suffer'd Hell to take the reins; when Satan with his chosen band open'd the sluices of New-England's blood, and sacrilegiously polluted our land with the dead bodies of her guiltless sons.*<sup>511</sup>

Despite the rapid ongoing secularization of political discourses of the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries Protestantism and Puritanism were very important for the Revolutionary generation, and to many of the colonists God had a hand in shaping American independence through divine providence to his chosen people.<sup>512</sup> According to A. D. Smith's theory of a nation's divine covenant a nation is chosen by God, who makes a promise of future prosperity to this chosen people and reveals his plan through signs and miracles. As the community follows God's commandments and laws it acts as the carrier of true faith in bringing about global salvation, and enjoys God's privileges by being set apart from all others. If the community fails to do so it is faced with God's punishment and a withdrawal of favor. This divine mission was abundantly clear in the American context where America had become a promised land for the Puritan settlers after their exodus across the Atlantic Ocean into an "American Israel".<sup>513</sup> According to Bailyn the natural and just freedom of the American patriots came from God, and was then formed into political freedom or liberty by setting it in the frames of equal use of power and representation.<sup>514</sup>

In 18<sup>th</sup> Century society religion simultaneously played the role of common practice, public moral and a political symbol as well as held journalistic and educational responsibilities.<sup>515</sup> Thus despite secular invoking of the laws of nature or common sense a big part of the discourses and juxtaposition of natural or unnatural rose from Christianity as God was the setter of the laws of nature.<sup>516</sup> As the Revolutionary generation put such a strong emphasis on the historical and Puritan origins of the Revolution, the importance of political sermons to the spread of ideas was great. Despite the decline in the influence of the clergy by the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the clergy worked together with political figures and played a key role as philosophers of the American founding and in the

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<sup>511</sup> An Oration; delivered March 5, 1774, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston: to commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the fifth of March 1770. John Hancock.

<sup>512</sup> Bailyn 1992, 32; Bailyn 1990, 104; McKenna 2007, 46; Beeman 2013, 2; Wilson 2001, 26-27; Ihalaisten 2005, 3.

<sup>513</sup> Smith 2003, 50-51, 95, 138.

<sup>514</sup> Bailyn 1992, 77-78.

<sup>515</sup> Liuska 2005, 9, 12.

<sup>516</sup> Liuska 2005, 96.

formulation of political opinion. The clergy also influenced concepts of national and political identity as well as actively contributed to the redefining of political concepts in Protestant nations during the Enlightenment.<sup>517</sup> This was done through political sermons preached at important political events as well as election sermons preached annually to the governor and legislature after being elected to their offices. As the election sermons were published and distributed to each official and to a few of the ministers of the district, they were the most esteemed vehicle for political theology in Revolutionary America.<sup>518</sup>

Political sermons related current politics and constitutional issues to convictions about eternal verities, and included interpretations of pragmatic events in terms of political theology and philosophical or revelatory learning through Western spiritual and philosophical traditions. These state sermons had political origins and functions, were performed in the presence of political elites at important events as a central part of the ceremony following strict established conventions. If the listeners wished to, the sermons were printed to be available to a wider audience. In the political sermons of the American founding the concepts of political liberty and religious truth were intertwined, and the responsibility of man to live morally and in accordance with God's commandments granted true liberty. A threat to this true liberty was the oppression of men spreading falsehoods in service to evil. On the loyalist side the possibility of Rebellion led to the necessity of governmental organizations to promote the right and just living through political sermons.<sup>519</sup> According to Anglican tradition patriotism and Protestantism were closely linked and the love for one's country was simultaneously the duty of a Christian. In Britain disobedience to authorities was also traditionally seen as disobedience towards God, which in turn justified the war against the rebelling colonists.<sup>520</sup>

As the quotation regarding the events of the Boston Massacre at the start of this chapter shows, religion and biblical stories were often used as examples to either justify or condemn the war, and sometimes literally demonize the other side.<sup>521</sup> The patriot side also referred to and demonized corrupt British Protestantism in the form of the Church of England, as well as papal monarchy that

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<sup>517</sup> Colbourn 1988, 71; Sandoz 1998, Foreword XII; Ihlainen 2005, 16; Liuska 2005, 23.

<sup>518</sup> Sandoz 1998, Foreword XX.

<sup>519</sup> Sandoz 1998, Foreword XI-XII, XVII-XVIII; Ihlainen 2005, 25-26; e.g. *A Sermon, Preached in Billerica, On the 23d of November, 1775. Being the Day appointed by Civil Authority, for a Public Thanksgiving Throughout the Province of Massachusetts-Bay.* By Henry Cumings, A.M. Worcester Massachusetts 1776; *God arising and pleading his people's cause.* Abraham Keteltas, A.M. Newbury-Port 1777.

<sup>520</sup> Liuska 2005, 66-67.

<sup>521</sup> Liuska 2005, 60.

had brought down the early Roman republic. After the 1778 treaty of alliance between America and France the loyalists understandably turned their hate once again towards French Catholicism, and contrasted examples of Catholic tyranny from the past with the benefits of belonging to the British Empire.<sup>522</sup> As part of the building of a national community in Britain the church had long maintained that it was the representative of true religion whereas their neighboring countries were not, thus providing a distinction between themselves and those they should oppose. Anti-Catholicism and anti-popery had traditionally been a factor of strengthening the feeling of British national uniqueness.<sup>523</sup> Representing Britain as a free protestant nation and France as a catholic tyranny helped create a common British identity as in Britain the church was exceptionally close to the nation.<sup>524</sup>

In his book *The Puritan Origins of American Patriotism* political scientist George McKenna summarizes the key elements of Revolutionary Puritanism in two points. According to the first one America was seen as ancient Israel reborn, and the Americans were God's chosen people setting an example for the rest of the world. According to the second point the Americans carried out God's will on Earth through activist Christianity.<sup>525</sup> The use of the concept of a reborn Israel can be seen as a direct continuation of the English traditional construction of a national community from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. As ancient Israel was a distinguished country favored over other nations, comparisons and analogues to it provided proof of a special British national community and a political identity to other Protestant nations as well.<sup>526</sup> In political discourses Britain had traditionally been represented as a nation chosen and blessed by God. This Puritan tradition carried over to New England and the other colonies even as the rhetoric of a chosen nation had started to lose its popularity and politics started to become secularized in England.<sup>527</sup>

McKenna's activist Christianity and America's divine mission were kept in mind by the Patriots throughout the war and long after it. In his election sermon Ezra Stiles, president of Yale University and a Congregationalist minister<sup>528</sup> predicts, that after becoming prosperous through trading partnerships and alliances America would spread God's providence across the globe.<sup>529</sup> The

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<sup>522</sup> Chopra 2011, 93.

<sup>523</sup> Ihalainen 2005, 299-300.

<sup>524</sup> Liuska 2005, 23, 25.

<sup>525</sup> McKenna 2007, 49.

<sup>526</sup> Ihalainen 2005, 86-91.

<sup>527</sup> Liuska 2005, 26, 60, 78.

<sup>528</sup> Sandoz 1998, 910.

<sup>529</sup> President Stiles's Election Sermon. Ezra Stiles. New Haven 1783.

development of commerce and economic competition in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was also reflected in the new political vocabulary used to redefine national communities.<sup>530</sup> References to America's rising power in agriculture, trade and industry as well as her upcoming contributions to science, liberty and peace were often present in defining, legitimizing and justifying an American national identity.<sup>531</sup> According to Stiles revolutions would occur elsewhere in the world with the model of government copied from America, and the American flag would be carried across the globe. Religious liberty would prevail in the world, much like in America where all Christian religious sects were welcomed.<sup>532</sup> For John Jay, a wealthy and socially prominent leader in New York's legal and social scene and a participant in both the First and Second Continental Congress,<sup>533</sup> "the Divine Disposer of human events" has led the Americans safely "from the house of bondage", "through a sea of blood, towards the land of liberty and promise."<sup>534</sup> As a colonial merchant Jay opposed independence for fear of upheaval and democracy, and attempted to persuade political leaders against it. However ultimately he came to support independence and helped ratify it once the Congress had made its decision.<sup>535</sup>

As discussed in chapter 3.2 in patriot stories the Protestant American settlers had heroically sought a place of refuge and the right to exercise Protestantism by crossing the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>536</sup> In his sermon from the year 1775 William Stearns states that the land of the colonists was "God's possession, which He has given us to inherit" and that "no man, or body of men, have a right to this possession, or any part of it" unless it would be given away.<sup>537</sup> This idea of a land of God filled with God's chosen people was present in many of the Revolutionary writings, and many similar stories from the Bible were used to justify this idea. One of these biblical stories used to reflect the patriots' struggle was the Old Testament's story of Nehemiah, who upon finding out that the walls and gates of Jerusalem were broken down and the Jews in danger got permission from the king of Persia to rebuild the walls. Thus Nehemiah acted out God's will by leading the Jews to rebuild the walls and protect their city. In the same way as Nehemiah the patriots should fight righteously "by mourning,

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<sup>530</sup> Ihlainen 2005, 535-537.

<sup>531</sup> Liuska 2005, 80.

<sup>532</sup> President Stiles's Election Sermon. Ezra Stiles. New Haven 1783.

<sup>533</sup> Beeman 2013, XV.

<sup>534</sup> A Circular Letter from the Congress of the United States of America to their Constituents. John Jay. Philadelphia 1779.

<sup>535</sup> Beeman 2013, XV; Jay, John in Concise Dictionary of American biography.

<sup>536</sup> McKenna 2007, 49-50.

<sup>537</sup> A View of the Controversy subsisting between Great-Britain and the American Colonies. William Stearns. Watertown Massachusetts 1775.

fasting, praying and using direction from God to procure relief and prosperity" and be rewarded by God.<sup>538</sup> Other examples of similar biblical stories were the story of the Amalekites invading and burning the cities of Negev and Ziklag and David fighting them to lead back the hostages, livestock and other plunder they had taken,<sup>539</sup> as well as the story of how the Israelites led by Joseph were delivered from slavery in Egypt.<sup>540</sup> Additionally stories such as God taking the side of Abel instead of the murderous Cain, speaking for Israel by the mouth of Moses, saving Noah and his family from the flood, preserving the righteous from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, protecting pious David from the murderously envious king Saul and rescuing Daniel from a lions' den were an inspiration to the patriots.<sup>541</sup> According to Protestant tradition in all these stories God acts on the side of the oppressed, provides assistance or guidance to those who trust in him, and delivers those who act piously. Thus these stories provided both inspiration and justification for the patriots in breaking free from oppression. One of the most common biblical stories referenced in the patriots' political sermons is the story of the vain and foolish King Rehoboam, whose taxation and yoke of oppression the people of southern Israel rebelled against.<sup>542</sup> In this story God pleaded the cause of liberty when delivering the people from Rehoboam's rule, and it has obvious similarities to the struggles of the patriots against taxation and oppression.

For the patriotic political sermons as well as Protestant sermons in general it was important to prove that humble and repentant people would gain God's favor.<sup>543</sup> In July 1774 Samuel Webster preached that tyranny and oppression of the British are God's punishment to an ungrateful people: "[L]et us now seriously consider, that it is for *our sins* that God suffers all these evils to come upon us: He would never have thus *forsaken* us, if we had not *forsaken* him first."<sup>544</sup> Similarly in 1781 Pastor Henry Cummings preached, that God decides events in favor of the just rather than evil sinners. Such was the case for Pharaoh who was destroyed for abusing the Israelites, Haman who plotted to kill all Jews in ancient Persia but was hung from the gallows, and Absalom who rebelled against his father and was killed in a battle. The "arbitrary and despotic schemes" of Britain were

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<sup>538</sup> *The Misery and Duty of an oppress'd and enslav'd People*. Samuel Webster. Boston 1774.

<sup>539</sup> *God arising and pleading his people's cause*. Abraham Keteltas, A.M. Newbury-Port 1777.

<sup>540</sup> *American Liberty Asserted: or British Tyranny Reprobated*. Fitzhugh Mackay. Lancaster 1778.

<sup>541</sup> *God arising and pleading his people's cause*. Abraham Keteltas, A.M. Newbury-Port 1777.

<sup>542</sup> E.g. *God arising and pleading his people's cause*. Abraham Keteltas, A.M. Newbury-Port 1777; *American Independence Vindicated*. Peter Whitney, A.M. Boston 1777; *A Sermon Preached at Lexington, On the 19th of April, 1781*. Henry Cummings, A.M. Boston 1781.

<sup>543</sup> E.g. Ihalainen 2005.

<sup>544</sup> *The Misery and Duty of an oppress'd and enslav'd People*. Samuel Webster. Boston 1774.

allowed by God to punish Americans for their sins and “in order to teach us righteousness, and make us pious and virtuous.”<sup>545</sup> In his sermon from 1775 Congregationalist pastor Phillips Payson proves that God’s providence has brought the Americans to where they are right now, and filled the colonists with a spirit of liberty to rise against Britain.

The finger of God has indeed been so conspicuous in every stage of our glorious struggle, that it seems as if the wonders and miracles performed for Israel of old, were repeated over anew for the American Israel, in our day. [...] The whole of our arduous struggle is indeed but a scene of wonder and amazement; exhibiting the most striking marks of the interposition and agency of God.<sup>546</sup>

Whereas the patriots wished to gain independence and liberty through leading pious lives, to the loyalists this would bring America back to Britain and reunite two. As independence was the road to destruction, the Americans should repent to be spared from becoming independent and being reduced to slavery. Instead they would be restored to the freedom and blessings of British government and constitution as God’s rightful cause.<sup>547</sup> In a fast-sermon from 1779 the loyalists’ actions in going to war are defended by blaming America as a corrupt and sinful nation spreading “the Flame of Rebellion” throughout the “distracted Colonies with so much ruinous Rapidity.” The unnamed preacher states that the British did not start the war, and therefore should not be held responsible: “But it should be remembered, - That they did not rebel, because we burnt their Cities and their goodly Castles; but we burnt their Cities and their goodly Castles, - because they rebelled.”<sup>548</sup> In 1778 Alexander Gerard draws attention to 1 Peter 2:16, which asks people to live as God’s slaves, who do not use their freedom for doing evil.<sup>549</sup> In his writings from 1775-1777 John Darwall, an English clergyman and hymnodist, condemns the Americans as having a “universal aversion to God and his Church” and a general neglect of religious practices.<sup>550</sup> A quoted essay from the Royal Gazette in January 1782 states that as the cause of the loyalists and the British is just, the rebel factions should repent:

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<sup>545</sup> *A Sermon Preached at Lexington, On the 19th of April, 1781.* Henry Cummings, A.M. Boston 1781.

<sup>546</sup> *A Sermon Preached at Lexington, On the Nineteenth of April, 1782.* Phillips Payson, A.M. Boston 1782.

<sup>547</sup> *Liberty the cloke of Maliciousness.* Alexander Gerard, D.D. Aberdeen 1778.

<sup>548</sup> *Fast-Sermon Preached at Feb. The 10th 1779 By the Reverend - - shewing the Tyranny and Oppression of the British King and Parliament Respecting the American Colonies. Inscribed to The Congress.* London? 1779.

<sup>549</sup> *Liberty the cloke of Maliciousness.* Alexander Gerard, D.D. Aberdeen 1778.

<sup>550</sup> *Political Lamentations Written in the Years 1775 and 1776.* John Darwall. Walsall 1777.

The door of repentance, from the great lenity of government, they know to be always open to *repenting* sinners, and happy would it be for them, could they put away false pride and obstinacy, and obtain leave to enter it.<sup>551</sup>

The view of the Americans as the evil wrongdoers was not shared by all British preachers, and as early as 1776 some condemned the harsh measures taken against America. Vicar John Fletcher argues that defeating the rebellion would not help convince the colonists of the good intentions of Britain, rather than lead to the need to use force to keep the rebellion subdued, which would be miserable for both sides. For him “[b]easts and savages can be conquered by fire and sword; but it is the glory of men and Christians to be subdued by argument and scripture.”<sup>552</sup> Similarly Joshua Toulmin, a theologian and a minister outside the Anglican Church whose sympathetic views of the American Revolution were frowned upon<sup>553</sup>, asks for compassion from the mother country to spare their fellow countrymen and subjects, who have thus far provided “the riches of commerce” and “the blessings of harvest.” He also asks if England truly is the innocent party: “Can we, in the face of Heaven, declare we are not the first aggressors?”<sup>554</sup>

Historian Raphael Ray has pointed out that even before the blood of the revolution had cooled, the surviving patriots had created a heroic and whitewashed mythology of the founding fathers.<sup>555</sup> This can clearly be seen in patriotic poetry, where religious metaphors and biblical imagery are often used and attributed to the divine war heroes of the patriots, as well as the diabolical British King and parliament. According to historian John Ferling George Washington was carefully crafted by both the Congress and Washington himself to become a symbol of virtue and courage holding together the army and the nation.<sup>556</sup> A poem titled *To His Excellency GENERAL WASHINGTON* from the year 1781 refers to Washington as a prophet guiding the Patriots to a promised land and posthumously commemorated as divine:

Late from the world in quiet may'st thou rise  
And mourn'd by millions, reach thy native skies-

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<sup>551</sup> FJoTNAI 1/23/1782.

<sup>552</sup> *American Patriotism Farther confronted with Reason, Scripture, and the Constitution.* John Fletcher. Shrewsbury 1776.

<sup>553</sup> Toulmin, Joshua in Dictionary of national biography vol. 57.

<sup>554</sup> *The American War lamented. A Sermon preached at Taunton, February the 18th and 25th, 1776.* A.M. Joshua Toulmin. London 1776.

<sup>555</sup> Raphael 2001, 5.

<sup>556</sup> Ferling 2007, 574.

With patriot kings and generous chiefs to shine,  
Whose virtues rais'd them to be deem'd divine<sup>557</sup>

Washington is interestingly described as one of the patriot “kings”, a monarch. In his election sermon of 1783 Ezra Stiles praises Washington as a heroic and gilded symbol for posterity and the rest of the world:

O WASHINGTON! how do I love thy name! how have I often adored and blessed thy God, for creating and forming the great ornament of human kind! upheld and protected by the Omnipotent, by the Lord of Hosts, thou hast been sustained and carried through one of the most arduous and most important wars in all history. The world and posterity will, with admiration, contemplate thy deliberate, cool, and stable judgment, thy virtues, thy valour and heroic achievements, as far surpassing those of a Cyrus, whom the world loved and adored.<sup>558</sup>

In a quoted essay from the Maryland Gazette pseudonym AN AMERICAN refers to Britain’s “impious lust of power” and “claim of omnipotence” as “blasphemy against our great Creator, who alone, from his unerring wisdom and justice, can have a right of exercising an absolute authority over any part of the human race.”<sup>559</sup> In a poem regarding General Charles Cornwallis’ surrender in 1781 the ambition of kings is seen as an insult to this divine power: “When sacrificing at ambition’s shrine,/Kings slight the mandates of the power divine./ And devastation spread on every side,/ To gratify their malice of their pride.” In the poem Cornwallis is also referred to as Satan’s firstborn son, and Britain as a dragon’s den sending out monsters:

Is he [Cornwallis] a hero? – Read, and you will find/ Heroes are beings of a different kind: -/  
Compassion to the worst of men is due,/ And mercy heaven’s first attribute, ‘tis true:/ Yet  
most presume it was *too nobly* done/ To grant mild terms to *Satan’s firstborn son.*/  
Convinc’d we are, no foreign spot of earth/ But Britain only, gave this reptile birth./ That  
white-cliff’d isle, the vengeful dragon’s den,/ Has sent us monsters where we look’d for  
men.<sup>560</sup>

According to the poem mercy as a religious virtue could be overlooked in the case of the Britons who did not deserve to receive mercy from the patriots. Once again there are no mentions of American loyalists, and the monsters are those who were sent from the British Isles.

British Protestant tradition played an important role in American revolutionary discourses. Thus political sermons actively contributed to the building of a national identity and redefining of many political concepts. Biblical stories of liberation from tyranny, as well as God favoring the righteous

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<sup>557</sup> FJoTNAI 9/5/1781.

<sup>558</sup> *President Stiles’s Election Sermon*. Ezra Stiles. New Haven 1783.

<sup>559</sup> FJoTNAI 9/5/1781.

<sup>560</sup> FJoTNAI 11/7/1781.

underdog, speaking through the mouths of the oppressed or providing guidance to his humble and repentant servants were used to rouse the revolutionaries, support their cause and help them in their divine mission of spreading revolutions and liberty to the world. Like many of the European Protestant nations the revolutionaries saw America as a chosen nation akin to ancient Israel with a divine mission and providence on their side. This is especially visible in patriotic poetry where biblical imagery and divine status were linked with the war heroes of the revolution, whereas the British side was sometimes literally demonized. As the loyalists condemned the revolution as an unlawful rebellion it was natural that God's rightful cause was seen as the cause of the British and the loyalists. The Americans had strayed from the word of God and should be brought back and made to repent. However not all condoned the use of violence in doing so.

### 3.5 Overview

*On one side, we behold fraud and violence labouring in the service of despotism; on the other, virtue and fortitude supporting and establishing the rights of human nature.<sup>561</sup>*

The above quotation comes from an address by the Congress to the people of the newly formed United States of America. However without knowing its origin it would be difficult to tell whether the quotation came from the patriot or the loyalist side as both sides saw the other as fraudulent, deluded, violent and despotic, while describing themselves as patriotic, virtuous and rightful. Both sides used remarkably similar descriptive adjectives, metaphors and similes differently to suit their unique circumstances. It is also clear to see that the discourse of the two sides regarding representations of the self and the other were not only typical to war discourses in general, but also typical of civil wars. The patriots directed their hate towards Britain overseas rather than their loyalist friends and neighbors, and the difference between the two sides was mainly made by strengthening the arguments of their own side rather than demonizing the friend, the neighbor or the family member. However not all attitudes towards the other side were accepting or neutral, and especially in the use of religious imagery the accusations thrown across could sometimes be very strong.

The fundamental conceptual difference between the two sides came from the conceptualization of the events themselves. According to historian Jennifer Clark the imagery of the Revolution as a

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<sup>561</sup> An Address of the Congress to the Inhabitants of the United States of America 9.5.1778.

subject of new histories and basis for political developments turned out to be more powerful than the side advocating for consanguinity and the unity of the British Empire,<sup>562</sup> and thus the victory of the patriots can at least partially be attributed to their conceptualization of the Revolution. Even though this process had started since the early 1760s it was intensified during the start of armed hostilities in 1775 and culminated in the era surrounding the Declaration of Independence in 1776. For the patriots the uprising came to represent a revolution, whereas the loyalists stubbornly downplayed it as a disorganized rebellion until it was too late to take the rebels seriously.

Although separating the loyalist from the patriot was difficult, and especially so in the colonies, some forms of distinctions were made. The patriot side used descriptive adjectives such as honor, virtue, courage and rightfulness when describing themselves. The loyalists in turn described themselves with adjectives such as loyalty, faithfulness, heroism, innocence and gratefulness, and to a lesser extent honor. For the patriots the loyalists were seen as tyrannical, corrupt, diabolical, venal, full of vices, vain, and the enemies or even butchers of liberty and such like ideals. The British were “old, corrupted and tyrannical masters”<sup>563</sup> and through America’s divine mission her virtue had exceeded European vice.<sup>564</sup> The loyalists in turn saw themselves as the innocent side under attack of an unhappy, unnatural, unprovoked and deluded rebellion. The loyalists referred to the patriots as rebels rather than patriots to avoid positive allusions to the patriots’ struggles, and dismissing the rebellion by refusing to take it seriously. As the Americans had started the war, the patriots had to be crushed and the country delivered “from lawless power and wide spreading anarchy” to restore and preserve the “free and happy constitution of Britain.”<sup>565</sup> Otherwise America would fall into the anarchy and chaos of independence, which would ultimately lead to subjection by a new tyrant.

Both sides of the war saw themselves bound to duties towards their ancestors and posterity. For the loyalists the ancestors were British, whereas for the patriots they were oppressed people from all over Europe who sought liberty and freedom in colonial life through struggles and hardships in a promised land. The loyalists had to fulfill their duties to the King and constitution of Britain, whereas the patriots’ duties were in the promotion of a republican form government and religious freedom

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<sup>562</sup> Clark 2013, chapter 2.

<sup>563</sup> FJoTNAI 5/1/1782.

<sup>564</sup> SCGaCJ 5/9/1775.

<sup>565</sup> RNYG 11/9/1775, written by Josiah Martin, his Majesty’s Captain General Governor and Commander in Chief of North Carolina.

across the world, as well as making America an asylum for the oppressed. As another continuation of British Protestant discourse many patriots saw America carrying out God's will, and proof of this was sought from various biblical stories of the weak and oppressed rising against their oppressors through the power of prayer and piety. The loyalists and British in turn saw the rebellious colonists as ungodly and impure souls that had to be brought back to obedience through repentance. References to the British Empire's history were used by both sides to either advocate unity or find reasons from the past as to why the Empire should fall. The loyalists had "strayed from the high road of honour, justice and humanity"<sup>566</sup> to "British cruelty" and "bloody orders",<sup>567</sup> and emotional language was used to describe the "tyranny of Britain", "spirit of heroism" and the ongoing "glorious conflict".<sup>568</sup> Heroic stories were borrowed from Western classical literature, and personalities such as George Washington, Charles Cornwallis and King George were frequent targets of praise and satire.

Concepts of nature and naturalness were brought up in much of the discourse regarding duties, family relations and organic metaphors such as the body politic. Nature was used both in its literal sense as well as in a subjective view of what was natural and what was not to each side. For the British and loyalists it was natural for the empire to be united, and all people governed, restricted and protected by law and order. The patriots on the other hand used different kinds of comparisons, similes and allusions ranging from geography to the laws of nature to show how the natural state of mankind was to be free and self-governing rather than ruled by a tyrannical monarch.

Family rhetoric and references to filial and consanguine relations were used simultaneously to both rouse pity and compel for war. At the beginning of the hostilities both sides represented each other as an unnaturally murderous and cruel family member. Eventually it was argued by the patriots that a house divided could not stand.<sup>569</sup> For many loyalists even if America was to gain independence the relationship between the two should naturally stay warm and filial, as the natural state of families is to be united even after the children have come of age.

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<sup>566</sup> FJoTNAI 6/12/1782.

<sup>567</sup> A Sermon Preached at Lexington, On the Nineteenth of April, 1782. Phillips Payson, A.M. Boston 1782.

<sup>568</sup> FJoTNAI 10/24/1781

<sup>569</sup> The Gospel of Mark 3:25: "If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand." This passage was occasionally quoted by the patriots, for example in *Observations on the Reconciliation of Great-Britain and the Colonies. By a Friend of American Liberty. Jacob Green. New York 1776; Proposal for Peace Between Great Britain and North-America. D.M. Knight. Birmingham 1779.*

In his considerations of the treaties with America, France and Spain from the year 1783 pastor Andrew Kippis, a Presbyterian minister and biographer widely known in London's intellectual circles<sup>570</sup> summarizes the feelings of both sides of the revolution at the end of the war:

Who could have imagined, when the Colonies, on the fourth of July, 1776, declared themselves to be Independent States, that in less than seven years their claim should be acceded to, and ratified by Britain herself? It is a revolution which it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to parallel in the annals of mankind; and the effects of it will extend to both hemispheres.<sup>571</sup>

How did the process of the Revolution and its ideals take the colonists from Englishmen of a common history and ancestry, and subjects of a monarchy to independent republican Americans separate from Great Britain? In the final chapter of this thesis I will tie together the evidence presented to form a larger picture of the narrative and discursive process that took place during the revolutionary years 1773-1883, and summarize the main results of this thesis.

#### 4. Timeline of the discursive process

*When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.[...] But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. [...] And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm*

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<sup>570</sup> Kippis, Andrew in Oxford dictionary of national biography vol 31.

<sup>571</sup> *Consideration on the Provisional Treaty with America, and the Preliminary Articles of Peace with France and Spain. The Second Edition Corrected.* Andrew Kippis. London 1783.

*reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.*<sup>572</sup>

The Declaration of Independence given in Congress on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1776 represents the ideology and the thought process of the patriots behind changing a rebellion into a revolution. At the same time it summarizes many of the key elements of political discourses of the Revolutionary era discussed in this thesis. The Declaration of Independence mentions "Laws of Nature", "divine Providence" and rights to "Life, Liberty and Happiness" in opposition to "abuses and usurpations" and "absolute Despotism". Historian Barry Wilson has somewhat anachronistically pointed out the controversies in the intellectual birth of the American Revolution as a declaration of rights by slave owners, a call for equality by those willing to extend equality only to white male land owning elite, and a declaration of freedom of expression from Protestant zealots hostile to outside ideals promoting Roman Catholicism or anything French.<sup>573</sup> The building of a republican United States of America began with difficulties, differences of opinion and internal division within the Continental Congress. As political scientist Russell L. Hanson has pointed out, revolutionary movements momentarily unite diverse peoples against the status quo, but their differences resurface during interpretation and implementation of revolutionary ideals.<sup>574</sup>

The aim of this thesis has been to provide a new and updated point of view to one of the most researched topics of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, by combining methods from conceptual history, discourse analysis and history of ideas. In this thesis I have illustrated how the loyalists and patriots of the American Revolution described, defined and conceptualized their own ideologies, and how they represented the self and the other in a civil war. In this concluding chapter I will outline the general trends of public discourses found on the source material used for this thesis, as well as summarize the findings and results of this thesis in terms of the most common themes and concepts of the discourses. Acclaimed American historian Bernard Bailyn has divided the ideological history of the American Revolution into three phases: The struggle of justifying resistance to constituted authority before 1776, the second phase of constructing governments and rethinking fundamental beliefs to establish a political system expressing these principles from 1776 until the 1780s, and lastly a phase

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<sup>572</sup> The Declaration of Independence, In Congress, July 4, 1776.

<sup>573</sup> Wilson 2001, 26.

<sup>574</sup> Hanson 1988, 165.

of writing, debating, ratifying and amending the constitution.<sup>575</sup> In this thesis I have focused on the first two phases.

During the early years of 1773 and 1774 discourses on both sides focused largely on concepts of representation, rights, constitution, freedoms and liberties. This type of rhetoric is the one popular history seems to uphold as the typical and most iconic rhetoric of the American Revolutionary War. The rhetoric is emotive, and there is much debate on the relative pros and cons of different forms of government. Britain and the Colonies are still represented as one people, even though the colonists' rights as natural Englishmen are being infringed on by the demands of the Parliament. As the war breaks out in 1775, the discourse changes to a more rational direction. American historian Theodore Draper has argued that the intellectual coming of age of the American Revolution took place between the years 1774-1775.<sup>576</sup> Defense speeches as well as suggestions on how to resolve the situation are presented on both sides, and the usage of metaphorical language is sparse. As talks about American independence start to pick up speed in 1776, the calm discussions on the details of taxation make way for emotional descriptions of the horrors of (civil)wars, and debate over the generic concepts of liberty, rebellion and revolution.

Around the year 1777 much of the discourse focuses on technicalities of warfare and news from the fronts. Simultaneously the use of emotive family rhetoric lessens as independence has been declared and the goal of the patriots is clearer. Debates on whether the Americans and British are fellow-subjects, countrymen or separate people are brought forward, and by the year 1778 talks of whether America should be given independence or not are commonplace in Britain as well. In addition the motivations of the French and the alliance between France and America dominate the discourses of the British pamphlets. This debate continues on to the year 1779, where it becomes increasingly clear that Britain should withdraw as victory at a reasonable cost seems to slip further and further away. Considerations of the treatment and fates of the American loyalists start to take place in the sources during the year 1779 as well.

At the end of the war between the years 1780 and 1783 the bad situation of the British army is a commonly discussed topic of the pamphlet material. The terms of a peace or alliance, suggestions on whether to give independence or not, and discussions of whether independence should be partial or whole are commonplace. Concerns over American loyalists continue in Britain, and in 1783

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<sup>575</sup> Bailyn 1990, 228.

<sup>576</sup> Draper 1996, 458.

the rhetoric changes towards the benefit of hindsight. Problems and challenges for the future are discussed both in the independent United States of America as well as in Britain who had lost her colonies, and with them a source of income and manufacturing.

At no point was it clear that the continental army would win, or that America would become independent. Thus it was natural that the British and loyalist side continued to hold on to their ideas of what a natural status quo was, whereas the patriot side used much more persuasive and powerful imagery in their language. As victory and independence came to many as a surprise, the struggles of unity and a coherent political line made things complicated for the Americans during the early years of the republic. Even though some patriotic thinkers in America valued independence and strove for it from the start of the hostilities, in the more general public discourse the shift from vague expressions of emancipation to literal independence took place gradually from the year 1773 to the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and even long after that.

As the dispute over increased taxation and representation in the British parliament gradually shifted towards the unavoidable war and eventually independence, simultaneously the identities of the American colonies shifted from insulted British subjects to a separate independent people. In the beginning of the dispute the ministers and members of the parliament in charge of taxation were blamed, and talk of olive branches, insulted family members and equal rights to representation within the Empire dominated public debate. In the beginning the American patriots used their status as equal British subjects as a means to appeal to London to grant them the rights they wanted. As these rights were not given, and control over the colonies was increased, the discourse changes to explore the possibility of the Americans as an independent and separate people. Gradually the common discourse also changed to oppose the King and monarchy directly, rather than the corrupt, venal or diabolical ministers plotting the destruction of the colonies. As the situation in the colonies escalated towards a war, the loyalist and British side came to separate the Americans as a strayed, deluded and disrespectful people with ill manners and no respect toward the mother country that provided and protected the colonies from foreign invasions. Naturally not everyone subscribed to this separation, and even after independence became clear different filial, cultural, linguistic or historical reasons were used to justify that the British and the Americans were of the same family, and that their relationship should remain close and loving.

The separation into patriots and loyalists or Americans and British was not clear cut, and as is natural for a civil war these distinctions were often painful. When the patriots talked about the loyalist side

they were usually referred to as British or Tories rather than loyalists. Similarly for the loyalists the patriots were referred to as rebels. Thus the terms loyalist and patriot were used as definitions of the self rather than descriptions of the other due to their positive connotations. Towards the end of the war this divided discourse changed to face different problems, challenges and enemies of the future. For the patriots and Americans these were the problems of starting a new republic, and for the loyalists and British how to gather their bearings in a changed world and recover their losses. At this point allusions to other, more generic “enemies” of the republic show up in patriot rhetoric, but these enemies are very rarely – if ever – defined or given details to.

The political legitimization of a new republic, as well as reasons to oppose this were found from imagery and literature familiar to the contemporaries. Metaphors of the human body and family are used on both sides, as well as references to myths, history, biblical stories and political thinkers. Both sides had duties to fulfill, both wanted to leave a better world for their posterity and both wished to respect their ancestors, whether they were the British settlers of the loyalist side, or the Europeans escaping tyranny and oppression in their countries on the patriot side. Political slavery is also used as an argument by both sides, only the roles of the slave and the slave driver or tyrant change. Even though political slavery was seen as the worst possible thing to submit to, slavery as an institution continued to thrive in the colonies throughout the war, and the “we the people” of the constitution was not applied to the slaves.

The main conclusion of this thesis is how remarkably similar the discourses of both sides of the American Revolutionary War were. A common history, common political culture and common language meant that the same vaguely defined concepts such as constitution or representation had to be used and redefined by both sides, and similar morals and values were appealed to between people with similar educational backgrounds through familiar stories and imagery. The Christian religion and its morals as well the ideas of enlightenment era thinkers such as John Locke or Adam Smith were interpreted and used to suit the ongoing political conflict and the views of the person interpreting them. This thesis has provided an impartial but critical analysis of some of the most common occurrences of political concepts and discourses from a large volume of primary sources. A lot has been covered, but in the process the research has given grounds for many more interesting questions from a number of topics. Going into further detail about any of the concepts or metaphors presented in this thesis, further researching the building of an American identity, or conducting similar research on sources of marginalized groups would all be interesting topics for future research.

It would also be interesting to continue researching how the concepts of power, people or representation were truly applied during the formation of the United States of America in the 1780s, and how they have changed over time. Even though the American Revolutionary War as a topic is widely researched, there is still much more to understand about the way the Revolutionary generation thought, represented and conceptualized their reality and everyday lives.

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