Conclusion

By the Restoration the habit of bracketing inward religious sense and feeling with its potentially destructive outward forms of expressions was a permanent feature of England's political language. It did not mark the point at which it was originally formulated as a problem. It was present at the birth of the Reformation itself, in Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms, the earthly and the heavenly, where separate orders prevailed.[1] In his parable of the tribute money, recorded in the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, Christ himself provided a version of the dual obligations at the centre of Christianity: 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's'. In England the idea that religious sensibilities were not politically innocent, whether deeply felt and sincere or superficial and cynical, was decisively forced on the country by the civil wars and instability that characterized the middle of the seventeenth century. Attempts to address the matter, of which Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* and John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* are now the most well known, were exacting in defining legitimate forms of piety and distinguishing them from their enthusiastic aberrations. Anglican, nonconformist, and Catholic contemporaries were watchful of those who would re-introduce the latter into the country's political life, and all of them, from their respective points of view, arrayed their own means of exposing its contours.

As Restoration historians of anti-popery have made clear enough, however, this increased awareness was not, on its own, the remedy that brought the end of religious conflict in England.[2] But it was a decisive development in demarcating a realm of the holy spirit, the will of God, and the heavenly city, on the one hand, and a realm of duty, political authority, and the earthly city on the other. Divine law, writes Offspring Blackall, commanded only the 'truest and Heartiest Love both to God and Men'. Human law, in contrast, was cumulative, mutable, imperfect, and amendable. It was specific to the traditions, needs, and follies of those who

---

[1]   Dominique Colas, *Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories*, tr., Amy Jacobs (Stanford, 1997), pp. 122-30.

[2]   A noted above, recent literature on Restoration political history has emphasized enduring and deepening crises of the 1670s and 1680s especially. See, for example, Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms* (London, 2005); Tim Harris, *The Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarcy, 1685-1700* (London, 2006); Steven C.A. Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, 2009).

were, at that moment, subject to its authority. The one governed 'the Heart' and 'the whole inner Man'. The other was 'an external Obedience', for the preservation of 'Justice and Peace among Men'.[3] It was, in short, a separate order of compromise, negotiation, and agreement. To observers of a similar mind, the enthusiasts, armed with divine certainty, introduced a muddle by conflating, and finally corrupting, both orders. In this period following, in John Morrill's words, 'the last of the Wars of Religion', the separation and clarification of these two orders must have seemed like a modest, precarious achievement.[4]

The long-term process this suggests is not the radical Enlightenment described by Jonathan Israel, but the conservative or clerical Enlightenment described by Hugh Trevor-Roper, J. G. A. Pocock, and B. W. Young. Pocock and Young identified a variety of enlightened churchmanship, partly within the Anglican fold, characterized by a tendency for fractious but fruitful intellectual debate.[5] Trevor-Roper concluded that the origins of the Enlightenment were Erasmian and Socinian, or at least Arminian. This adaptable philosophy was defined above all by a commitment to free-will, reason, humanism, and tolerance. It too, after 1660, found its place in the wide intellectual circles of the Anglican Church, among even clerics who took part in engineering a persecuting society.[6] This disjuncture should serve to remind historians that, for many in the 1660s, religious pluralism was not necessarily or even widely associated with the freedom of an unimpeachable conscience, as it is in the modern mind, but as a problem associated with extremists known to use violence to achieve the ends that conscience required of them.[7] It also points to understanding religion as a

---

[3] Offspring Blackall, *The Sufficiency of Standing Revelation* (London, 1700), pp. 8-9.
[4] John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (London, 1994), p. 68.
[5] B. W. Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England: Theological Debate From Locke to Burke* (Oxford, 1998), p. 3; J. G. A. Pocock, 'Post-Puritan England and the Problem of the Enlightenment', in Perez Zagorin (ed.), *Culture and Politics From Puritanism to the Enlightenment* (Berkeley, 1980), 91-113.
[6] Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment', in *Religion, the Reformation, and Social Change* (London, 1967), 193-237; Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Great Tew Circle', in *Catholics, Anglicans, and Puritans: Seventeenth Century Essays* (Chicago, 1987), 166-231. See also John Robertson, 'Hugh Trevor-Roper, Intellectual History, and "The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment"', *English Historical Review*, 124 (2009), 1389-1421.
[7] Mark Goldie, 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance', in Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke (eds.), *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 357-58; J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology, and Politics During the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 59.

cause of, or at least something, in a limited sense, interlaced and concomitant with, the Enlightenment, rather than something simply thrown off by it. The clearing away of space for human authority, certainly, cannot be understood without taking seriously the religious beliefs of those who had their part in accomplishing it.

Of equal importance to this study are the meanings that were attached to the holy spirit, and it has been conceptualized as an elementary part of an inner spiritual dynamic. It shaped not only private piety but also in certain conditions and for certain individuals exerted an influence on the will as well as suggested the action and the object required for satisfying it. G. W. F. Hegel's reflection on the 1793 Terror in France is an apposite, if anachronistic, resource for framing this subject matter.[8] Hegel understood the will as consisting of two moments. The first, indeterminacy, was pure self-reflection, undivided and undisturbed by any given object, purpose, or desire. This was the 'absolute freedom of the void'. But because the self cannot remain in this state indefinitely, it passed on to one of three forms of determinacy. All three possibilities consisted in the will's discovery or positing of objects, whether in nature or in the mind.[9] One possibility was the transition from the abstract indeterminacy of the void to concrete determination, embodied in objects, and the determinacy, defectiveness, and finitude of reality.[10] Thus 'all existence and validity of the specific members of the organization of the actual world and the world of faith have, in general, returned to this simple determination as into their ground and spiritual principle'.[11] This principle constituted part of Hegel's notion of 'objective spirit', or ethical life.[12]

The other two possibilities were defined by Hegel as forms of fanaticism. Both forms were marked by an inability or refusal of the self to accept the particularized, the limited, the precise, the finite, and the given. The self remained in this state of infinitude and indetermination, the void,

---

[8]   For this discussion much is owed to the analyses of Hegel's political philosophy found in Colas, *Civil Society*, pp. 263-88; J. F. Suter, 'Burke, Hegel, and the French Revolution', in Z. A. Pelczynski (ed.), *Hegel's Political Philosophy: Problems and Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1971), 52-72; Robert Wokler, 'Contextualizing Hegel's Phenomenology of the French Revolution and the Terror', *Political Theory*, 26 (1998), 33-55.

[9]   G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood and H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 35-38.

[10]   Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 40.

[11]   G. W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. A.V. Miller (Oxford, 1977), p. 356.

[12]   Suter, 'Burke, Hegel, and the French Revolution', p. 67.

but requiring determinacy of some sort, its resolution consisted in positing and elevating the void 'to the status of actual shape and passion'.[13] One of the two forms of fanaticism, religious contemplation, was in itself harmless and it aimed to achieve 'knowledge of one's simple identity with oneself, on remaining within this empty space of one's inwardness' and on 'renouncing every activity of life, every end, and every representation'.[14]

The second of the two kinds of fanaticism, and of more interest to Hegel, was the 'active fanaticism of both political and religious life'. What he had in mind here was the Reign of Terror that followed the French Revolution 'during which all differences of talents and authority were supposed to be cancelled out'. This was, furthermore, 'a time of trembling and quaking and of intolerance towards everything particular'.[15] In the language of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* it was absolute, abstract, universal freedom. It was the will absent of any content and any object except itself and the void of negation that constituted it. Consequently it 'cannot achieve anything positive, either universal works of language or of reality, either of laws and general institutions of *conscious* freedom, or of deeds and works of a freedom that *wills* them'.[16] In less oblique language:

> [I]t repudiates all political institutions and legal order as restrictive limitations on the inner emotions and as incommensurate with the infinity of these, and hence also rejects private property, marriage, the relationships and tasks of civil society, etc. as unworthy of love and the freedom of feeling.[17]

This kind of active fanaticism, in the end, accomplished nothing but death: '[A] death too which has no inner significance or filling, for what is negated is the empty point of the absolutely free self. It is thus the coldest and meanest of all deaths, with no more significance than cutting off a head of cabbage or swallowing a mouthful of water'.[18]

During this period the inner spiritual dynamic was compounded by new significations and it assumed a new intensity. The multitude of terms signifying the holy spirit and the methods of discovering and engaging it

---

[13]   Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 38.
[14]   Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 39.
[15]   Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 39.
[16]   Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 358.
[17]   Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 293.
[18]   Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 360.

point to a pervasiveness that suggests its centrality in not only ideas associated with political matters, but also its fundamental importance for the early modern self. The mind and the heart, both metaphors that operated in conjunction with the self and the holy spirit, were supplied with grace, virtue, discipline, and joy, and these might also be revoked by the holy spirit on terms widely negotiated and debated. The importance, ubiquity, and novelty of these ideas and debates underline the place of the holy spirit in the history of the mind. This history, put schematically, begins with ancient Greek thought, is transformed by the inner life of Renaissance and Augustinian Christianity, and by the eighteenth century must accord to role to the holy spirit and its functions in ordering the minds and hearts of those who felt its presence.

The 'dictatorship of the universal void', to use a phrase turned by Dominique Colas,[19] was not installed in England between 1660 and 1714. But an image of the Hegelian enthusiast, or a version of it, appeared in the worried mind of every astute observer of religion and politics during this period. It animated the individual who, again in Hegelian parlance, found the institutions of society and the state as unworthy of the absolute truth that is the will of God, and because compelled by this higher purpose would replace them with something more spiritually pure or theologically correct. The matter was urgent, certainly, because the enthusiast's advent in religion and politics was so recent in time. But also, and perhaps more importantly, it was urgent because the elements that comprised it - the mind, imagination, and feeling, all organs of the holy spirit - were also, by the seventeenth century, irreducible features of the Western tradition.

---

[19] Colas, *Civil Society*, p. 280.