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Undermining Independence: The English Political and Cultural Views of America during Haydn's London Sojourns

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In the history of the eighteenth century, the one event that seemed to shape the political landscape towards the last decades was the American War for Independence (also called the American Revolution). The result of a relatively complex political situation in Europe, it had causes and ramifications beyond the imagination of those who conducted it, for it not only marked the ascendancy of the New World as a sovereign power whose influence had to be reckoned with in the scope of European politics and nationalism, it was also an influence on the development of European thought, culture, and economics. No longer a proxy for European conflict, the new United States of America was in the process of becoming a broker for alliances, sociological changes, and nationalist ambitions among two main European powers, France and England. By the time of the first London sojourn of Joseph Haydn in 1791, however, the relationship between the two feuding European powers and this nascent country in North America had gone through several stages, and even though intellectually the concept of democratic suzerainty corresponded well with Enlightenment humanistic thought, and Britain was not without some sympathy for their former colonies' status in the light of events that were ongoing at that time, the political relationships can best be described as fluid.

It is clear that by 1790 a significant sociological change was in the wind throughout Europe, having already been instituted for better or worse in France the previous year with the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 and the establishment of the National Assembly as a parliamentary body a few days prior, thereby effectively eliminating the Ancien Régime that had ruled the country since the Middle Ages. This event had been the direct result of over half a decade of economic difficulties in France, brought about due to the financial constraints of having supported the American Revolution. In England, however, there was also a period of national "Angst", which had forced the new and popular Prime Minister, William Pitt, Jr. and his government to attempt to come to grips with a new political environment, as well as to deal with issues that the entire American war had both created and exacerbated. Given that the American government was also in the throes of consolidating their concept of nationality, no easy

task considering the divisions that were evident in the new congress, the situation had become a complex series of interwoven threads. In a word, Haydn's visit coincided with a time of international and intercontinental political, sociological, and economic flux. How the composer may have been aware of and reacted to such a circumstance, as well as how his music and those of American composers reflected it, is an interesting and equally diverse matter that will be dealt with in due course. Such a period of fluid political turmoil, however, requires a brief historical excursus.

First, the War for Independence 1776–1783 was not purely an American event, but rather it had its roots deeply embedded in European power politics of the time. On 10 February 1763 England and France had signed the first Treaty of Paris that ended the Seven Years War, known in its North American manifestation as the French and Indian War. At this time, England was ascendant, decisively triumphing over its traditional Imperial archrival. It had succeeded in obtaining Canada, much of the West Indies, and half of French Louisiana from the Mississippi River eastwards to the crest of the Appalachian Mountains (not to mention forcing Spain to relinquish Florida), a sizeable amount of territory. Moreover, it had removed the French from India and West Africa, in essence creating a British world colonial power. This in turn had established a ready source of resources that would have an immense economic impact upon the wealth of England. Added to this, the result of the failure of the Jacobite Rebellion after Culloden in 1747 was the beginning of reapportionment of lands in Scotland and Ireland, mainly the granting of estates to British (and loyal Scots) nobility and the removal of indigenous crofters and farmers from their lands, creating a population that was dispersed, first to the coastal towns, and subsequently in a steady stream of immigration, mainly to the North American colonies and England itself¹. By 1770, England was a powerful and seemingly indomitable empire of global extent². It is therefore under-

¹ The first of these evictions, of course, had been promulgated as early as 1617, when the Privy Council had upheld land-owning rights of loyal Scottish clans under James I, resulting in large numbers of Scots and Irish immigrants being among the earliest colonists in North America. It was, however, not until 1747, when George II promoted the rights of the British victors in the wake of Culloden to gain huge tracts of the Scottish Highlands, removing people in order to raise cattle and sheep. These former crofters migrated to the coasts or were drafted into serving in the British military, where they won considerable acclaim for their prowess.

² This fact was part of the coining of the phrase: "The sun never sets upon the British Empire." While one meaning could reflect the immortality of sovereignty that was desired, it really meant that somewhere throughout the empire was daylight. The origins of the phrase can be dated back to Habsburg Emperor Charles V (1500–1558), under

standable that, for example, the rather bombastic and perhaps even arrogant nationalist sentiments contained within Thomas Arne's 1750 opera "Alfred", with its vaudeville finale based upon the royalist military tune "Rule Britannia", had popular appeal as it reflected Britain's new-found power³.

Regardless of the political victory, however, the entire war had left England deeply in debt, and as a consequence not to burden the overtaxed citizenry of the homeland, both the Parliament and King George III decided to exploit the new colonies and territories, which had remained relatively unscathed economically⁴. Parliament levied a number of punishing taxes, resulting in planting the seeds for a revolt, beginning in 1773 with the original Boston Tea Party⁵. In addition, there was a view in England that any internal dissent, whether it be at home or in one of the colonies, should be dealt with in the same suppressive manner as the Jacobite Rebellions, i.e. through excessive force. In 1770 British forces in Boston had opened fire on a crowd, resulting in the murder of unarmed citizens, now known as the Boston Massacre. This act of violence provoked unrest but did not result in outright rebellion⁶. Rather, in 1774 in the aftermath of the tea protests, the Parliament passed the Intolerable Acts that closed off the American ports

whose reign as King of Spain (1516–1556) Spain's overseas empire in the Americas was created and colonized. The global ramifications of the reach of the Holy Roman Empire included Ferdinand Magellan's circumnavigation of the earth in 1521–1522, during which portions of East Asia were claimed for Spain and the Empire.

³ Libretto by David Mallet and James Thomson, not to be confused with the later play with a similar title from 1788 by James Bicknell, which was then revised and translated by John Cowmeadow, to which Haydn wrote his incidental music (Hob.XXX:5).

⁴ British Canada, of course, was the exception, since much of the French and Indian War was fought in the upper reaches of the American colonies or in Québec. Since the population remained French-speaking (as it is today), changes in the political situation did not automatically equate to changes in economic circumstances among the restive and still largely hostile colonists.

⁵ These included the Stamp Act of 1765, the Townsend Acts of 1767, and the Tea Tax of 1773.

⁶ John Dickinson, in his Letters of a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies, Philadelphia 1768, for example, notes two years earlier that the protests that led to the massacre reflected views of the colonialists as being oppressed without opportunity to obtain their rights under English law, as well as those of the governors and military that the inhabitants were not intelligent enough to warrant exercising them. Specifically, he notes in Letter IX: "Why should all the inhabitants of these colonies be, with the utmost indignity, treated as a herd of despicable stupid wretches, so utterly devoid of common sense that they will not even make 'adequate provision' for the 'administration of justice and the support of civil government' among them."

through which commerce passed and yet did not either lower or repeal the taxes or allow for the expression of dissent. This colonialist attitude was promoted by the English Prime Minister, Lord Frederick North, supported by a highly militarist faction in Parliament, who believed that Imperial might would triumph. The result of this politically arrogant attitude was the unheard of step of a colony declaring their intent to secede from England and a protracted war that once again involved France, this time as an initially reluctant ally of the new secessionists. At the end, their intervention was crucial to the defeat of General Charles Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781. Of course, as this war was in progress, other European powers (Holland and Spain) saw a chance to even the score for the Seven Years War and without endangering Europe. At first covert and then finally overt action helped the colonists win a decisive victory, and on 3 May 1783 the second Treaty of Paris was signed. England won few concessions, indeed so few that the chief negotiator, David Hartley, refused to sit for the final portrait of the negotiators (Figure 1)⁷.

The British government was, as one might expect, stunned at their failure to retain their main American colonies by force, and moreover the entire war had considerable economic consequences, for it created a debt of, as Haydn himself put it in 1790, about £ 200 million, which had to be paid off⁸. Reactions were variable and considerable across the political and economic spectrum. General feeling was, however, that the defeat of the army as well as the impotence of the much-vaunted British navy left the Empire as little more than a truncated power, a view that popped up in various satirical portrayals, such as an anonymous etching from 1779 entitled “Who’s in Fault?” (Figure 2). It also had ramifications for the political power struc-

⁷ There were, in reality, four separate Treaties of Paris of 1783, for the American alliance forced Britain to sign individual treaties with Holland, Spain, and France, in addition to the new United States. In these, Britain returned Florida to Spain, and France reacquired West Africa, former islands in the West Indies (Guadalupe and Martinique), as well as Tobago. Of the ten articles of the American treaty, the most significant were (apart from British recognition of American independence) the establishment of boundaries, the access to the Mississippi River for future colonization, and debt repayment to creditors. England received the return of land of British loyalists confiscated during the war (who then became American citizens) and the return of “captured” territory to England, which included only small portions of British Canada and the Bahamas. The American negotiators were John Adams, John Jay, and Benjamin Franklin, all signers of the Declaration of Independence.

⁸ CCLN, p. 257. Haydn, of course, may have exaggerated the sum, but in today’s currency, this amount could be close to 3 trillion dollars. Although exact equivalents to modern exchange are difficult to determine, there are several on line conversion algorithms, such as using the Real Price Index available on Measuring Worth website.

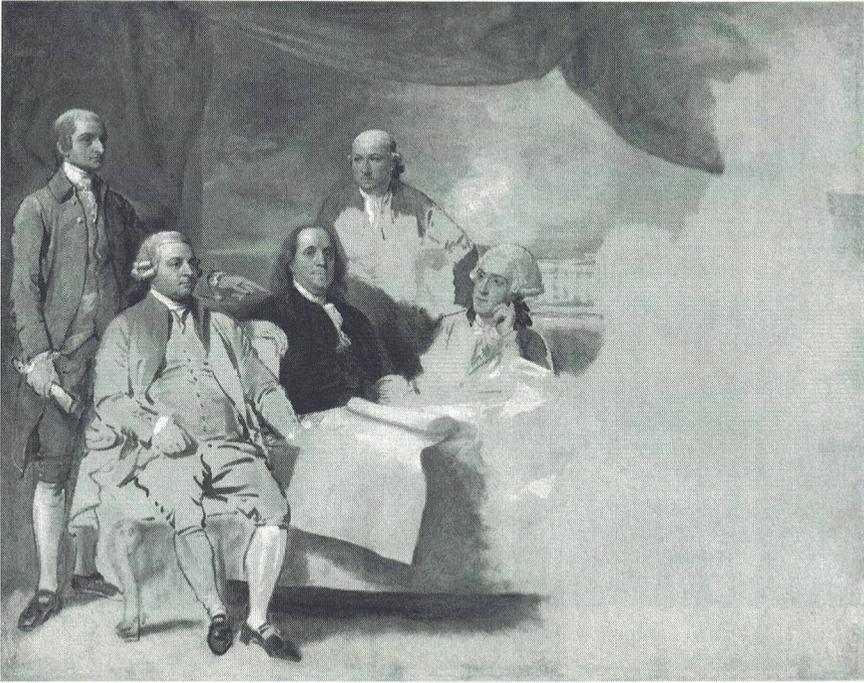


Figure 1: Benjamin West, Unfinished portrait of the signers of the Treaty of Paris 1783.

ture, with blame placed upon those who had advocated for the war through their bellicose actions. As early as 1782, Lord North was replaced as Prime Minister by two interim leaders, the Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Shelbourne⁹. The latter, a friend of Benjamin Franklin, was in sympathy with the former colonists and remained in office just prior to the signing of the treaty, after which he died prematurely. He in turn was replaced by the Duke of Portland¹⁰, one of the old Lord North coalition, but his own attempt to refocus attention on the former colonies as well as India, where things were progressing towards another American-style debacle, forced his resignation in December of 1783. He was in turn replaced by William

⁹ Charles Watson-Wentworth, the Second Marquis of Rockingham (1730–1782) was appointed in March of 1782 but died only 14 weeks later. His sudden death forced George III to appoint William Petty, Second Earl of Shelbourne (1737–1805).

¹⁰ William Cavendish-Bentinck, Third Duke of Portland (1738–1809) had been Lord Chamberlain but resigned at the death of Rockingham. His appointment was largely seen as a surrogate for both Charles Fox and Lord North, who openly reiterated their policies that had led to the American Revolution in the first place. Needless to say, his short tenure was not popular with British parliamentarians.



Figure 2: Who's in Fault? (No Body). Anonymous etching, 1779.

Pitt, Jr., a popular citizen leader, whose job it became to rejuvenate the British political scene. Pitt made it his priority to reform the government as well as rehabilitate the now-faded popularity of King George III. The King, who had in 1775 authorized the use of troops against his own subjects in order to repress the rebellion, found the loss of America difficult to comprehend, but his trust in Pitt was no doubt the reason for his eventual desultory acceptance of American independence as a *fait accompli*. He expressed this shortly after the Treaty of Paris in a letter to his subjects¹¹:

America is lost! Must we fall beneath the blow? Or have we resources that may repair the mischief? What are those resources? Should they be sought in distant Regions held by precarious Tenure, or shall we seek them at home in the exertions of a new policy?

The situation of the Kingdom is novel, the policy that is to govern it must be novel likewise, or neither adapted to the real evils of the present moment, or the dreaded ones of the future.

For a Century past the Colonial Scheme has been the system that has guided the Administration of the British Government. It was thoroughly

¹¹ Quote taken from John Bullion, "George III on Empire", in: *The William and Mary Quarterly* 51 (1994), pp. 306f.

known that from every Country there always exists an active emigration of unsettled, discontented, or unfortunate People, who failing in their endeavours to live at home, hope to succeed better where there is more employment suitable to their poverty [...] A people spread over an immense tract of fertile land, industrious because free, and rich because industrious, presently became a market for the Manufactures and Commerce of the Mother Country. An importance was soon generated, which from its origin to the late conflict was mischievous to Britain, because it created an expense of blood and treasure worth more at this instant, if it could be at our command, than all we ever received from America¹².

This reflects the view that George III became disillusioned at the state of Britain during the American crisis, but once independence had been attained, he seems to have realized that it held considerable advantages for the Empire¹³, as he told John Adams when the latter was appointed ambassador to the Court of St. James in 1785¹⁴:

I was the last to consent to the separation; but the separation having been made and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power.

The British government was no less aware that a new relationship had to be forged, both geo-politically, in order to prevent a similar “disaster” from occurring with the many other colonies being settled, and economically, for the new country was still a vital source of trade and commerce as a partner. Moreover, as George III noted, the new country offered opportunities for new immigrants who could be persuaded to retain some of their old world loyalties while being able to improve their lives in such a free environment. For the populations impoverished by the clearances, for example, the offer of a new life not only relieved Britain of needing to find ways to support them and redirect their resentment at how they (or

¹²The letter itself is undated but stands in sharp contrast to the belligerent speech before Parliament of 27 October 1775 in which he stated that he would suppress the rebellion with the most “decisive exertions”. See Note 10 and Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, “If others will not be active, I must drive”: George III and the American Revolution, in: *Early American Studies* 2 (2004), p. 16.

¹³He is quoted as saying: “I can never suppose this country so far lost to all ideas of self-importance as to be willing to grant America independence; if that could ever be adopted I shall despair of this country being ever preserved from a state of inferiority and consequently falling into a very low class among the European States.” See O’Shaughnessy, “If others will not be active, I must drive”, p. 2.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 46.

their immediate families) were handled, it also made possible an outlet so that those political and economic policies could continue, as they did up through the middle of the nineteenth century¹⁵.

The very fact that the British government did not formally acknowledge the policies that could have caused a similar movement in the periphery of the British Isles meant that Pitt's notion of reconciliation was not entirely universally accepted among Parliament. Indeed, he himself was not above parceling out the blame for the loss of America entirely onto the previous regime in what has become known as the Great Denial. Politically, however, it meant consciously ignoring or undermining the political situation as it presented itself in 1784. First, Pitt's own rise to power in the midst of one of the most vitriolic parliamentary elections in that year was the result of a vicious constitutional crisis, made all the worse by a badly-run war in India brought on by the East India Company and yet another incipient rebellion in Ireland. Second, Pitt decided that, in a gesture to the defeated Fox-North coalition, to continue a process of ignoring the articles of the Treaty of Paris. The British army was strengthened in the Caribbean and in Canada, occupying and establishing a number of forts in territory supposedly ceded to the new country, including Detroit and several in the Ohio River valley. In these territories, displaced native populations were encouraged to become restive and attacks on the Western frontiers of the United States were a constant source of nuisance. The Royal Navy continued to harass American merchantmen, thus stagnating trade even as the British government officially encouraged new economic ties. Indeed, impressments of sailors from captured American ships continued in direct violation of the treaty¹⁶. Third, both displaced people and ordinary British citizens were now officially encouraged to seek their fortune in America, with the not-so-subtle subtext that if enough arrived in the new country with their loyalties intact, then perhaps a second revolution reversing independence could be called for, providing a pretext for British intervention. Finally, Pitt was persuaded that what today would be called branding

¹⁵ See, for example, John Prebble, *The Highland Clearances*, London 1990; and Eric Richards, Patrick Sellar and the *Highland Clearances*, Edinburgh 1999. Patrick Sellar, though he lived in the early Nineteenth Century, nonetheless epitomizes the philosophy behind the Clearances that had occurred half a century earlier.

¹⁶ This is, of course, not to say that the new country did not retaliate in other respects. One of the articles of the Treaty was that loyalist properties were to be returned to their owners, a provision that was tacitly ignored or revoked through the process of eminent domain, whenever they refused to sign an oath of allegiance to the new country. Compensation, also stipulated in the treaty, was offered in American currency, which was, of course, worthless outside of the new country.

was in order. Daniel O'Quinn has noted that during the winter of 1784 all attention was turned towards a great cultural celebration, in this case the Handel Commemoration performed over five days¹⁷. William Weber notes: "The Commemoration put in ritual form the culmination of the country's political development over the previous decades"¹⁸. Allegorically, one of the concerts featured fragments of works cobbled together in what the "London Magazine" called rather oddly a "sacred concert"¹⁹. This included royalist anthems (such as "Zadok the Priest"), a celebratory work of a military victory ("Dettingen Te Deum", with its bellicose kettledrum and cavalry trumpet signals), music from "Saul", a portion of the Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline, and the finale of the Utrecht "Jubilate". The political message, Saul mourning the fallen at the battle of Mt. Gilboa, was a metaphor for George III and the loss of America, and the chorus "How are the mighty fall'n" with its text taken from the Lamentations of Jeremiah was perhaps pointedly symbolic of the new state of affairs, but the conclusion with the "Gloria patri" from the brilliant "Jubilate" lent a touch of optimism to this awareness of the possible future political state of the British Empire²⁰. This not only insured that this celebration would continue another year or so as a festival, it also raised the morale of Britain as well as the popularity of her King. For Pitt, it was a political triumph²¹.

¹⁷ See Daniel O'Quinn, *Entertaining Crisis in the Atlantic Imperium*, Baltimore, 2011. O'Quinn calls the chapter on this singular event, "one of the three or four most significant performance events of the eighteenth century" (p. 302), "Days and Nights of the Living Dead: 'Handelmania'" (*ibid.*). This author may have had in mind one of the signal works of the celebration, the performance of the "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day", in which the text of the last chorus runs (in part): "The dead shall live, the living die." For a contemporaneous description of this event, see Charles Burney, *An Account of the Musical Performances in Westminster Abbey and the Pantheon*, in: *Commemoration of Handel*, London 1785.

¹⁸ William Weber, *The 1784 Handel Commemoration as Political Ritual*, in: *Journal of British Studies* 28 (1989), pp. 43–69; here pp. 43f. Weber also notes that this was intended as an event to unite the political factions, the Tories and the Whigs, into a cohesive community, with a "new harmony seen in the grand event" (pp. 43f). As O'Quinn notes, however, articles on the event pay more attention to the political wrangling over seating arrangements (and their symbolic value) than the cultural significance itself. See O'Quinn, *Entertaining Crisis*, pp. 306f.

¹⁹ *London Magazine*, 26 May 1784, p. 421.

²⁰ See O'Quinn, *Entertaining Crisis*, pp. 319f. The Lamentations text following the title line of the chorus reads: "She that was great among the nations, and princess of the provinces. How are the mighty fall'n." The allusions are obvious today as they would have been in 1784.

²¹ The following year, Swedish Kapellmeister Joseph Martin Kraus visited London, where he reported on a nearly identical program on 11 June 1785, consisting of the

Oddly enough, and perhaps due to the association of Handel, considered England's late greatest composer, with Haydn, now the greatest living European composer, Cramer's "Magazin der Musik" reported a decision to create a Haydn monument in June 1784 in Westminster Abbey, for which Haydn was to travel to London²². Haydn was of course quite popular at the various public concerts, but over the course of the next year the various English papers noted witheringly that this entire visit may have been no more than speculative, or at least never proceeded beyond the initial discussion stages. Nonetheless, over the next two years, articles in the "Morning Post" were rife with anticipation of some sort of visit, perhaps for the Hanover Square concerts. Indeed, by 1788 "The World" seemed to think that he would visit shortly²³:

London will be the scene of direful action! Hospitals are preparing for the wounded, young Surgeons are gaping for dislocations, fractures, fiddle stick wounds, and operations; new recruits are enlisting to gain immortal honour by discordant deeds. Heaven send, that during the bloody Musical Conflict, the French, or Spanish may not invade our British territories, and annihilate English Liberty!

A more apt metaphor for the American conflict, replacing Haydn with the colonials, and the political mood surrounding it cannot be imagined. Britain was a truncated power, its core reduced to nothing in the eyes of the public, and though this gaiety disguised this feeling, caricature certainly depicted the shortened reach of the British armed might.

But what of the Americans during this time? The British government was well-aware that the new country was hardly the model of stability, for the power was vested in a parliamentary body, the Continental Congress, whose membership consisted of representatives of former colonies, now termed "states", each with their own separate agenda. The immediate result was an inherent split in philosophy between those who thought uni-

Te Deum, the celebration scene from "Judas Maccabaeus", a chorus from "Saul", "Samson", "Joshua", and the famed "Hallelujah" chorus from "Messiah". See Friedrich Noack, *Eine Briefsammlung aus der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 10 (1953), pp. 323–337, here p. 324.

²²The brief notice in the "Magazin der Musik" for 1784 (p. 194) was followed by a brief article in the "European Magazine and London Review" for the month of October 1784, p. 257, which noted: "The universality of Haydn's genius cannot be more strongly proved than by the vast demand for his works all over Europe." It also commented that the amount of music was prodigious, appearing "in quantity to exceed what any other person has composed, Handel only excepted" (*Ibid.*). See Landon II, pp. 595–601.

²³Issue of 15 April 1788, quoted in extenso in Landon II, p. 602.

ty came through centralization of government, the Federalists, and those who favored the individual rights of more local governance, the Democratic-Republicans. The former were led by John Adams, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton, while the latter were supported by James Madison and Thomas Jefferson. Not surprisingly, the Federalists based their system on British parliamentary rule and were thus seen as natural allies of their former overlords, while after the French Revolution of 1789 the latter were deeply vested in the concept of popular rule without strong central leadership, and thus pro-French. This in turn led to what one might consider contradictory efforts.

The new country had been administered under the Articles of Confederation of 1778, which was initially an attempt to formulate a method of cooperation between the 13 original colonies. It was not meant as a means of national government, nor was it intended to be permanent. By 1787, enough turmoil had been generated by each state acting on its own that efforts were made to create national unity through a Constitutional convention. This assigned a division of powers, created an overarching government under which the entire new country would operate, and established procedures for election, appointment, and delegation of power; it is today the world's oldest national constitution still in effect. The ratification was hotly debated by Noah Webster, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Joseph Story, and others in a series of printed arguments, but in the end its ratification in 1787, further strengthened by a series of ten amendments two years later as the Bill of Rights, established the government of the new country, although it did not end the political divisions²⁴. It would, however, have important cultural ramifications, for example, in the state of Pennsylvania, where in 1774 all public theatrical and musical performances had been banned as inappropriate²⁵. While these had continued surreptitiously as "lectures", the enactment of the freedoms of the constitution allowed for state restrictions to be overturned in favor of "individual" rights, and immediately public concerts, theatrical companies, and musical-mercantile efforts emerged. This in turn

²⁴ Samples of the debate can be found in Bruce Frohnen (ed.), *The American Republic. Primary Sources*, Indianapolis 2002. Of particular note is Noah Webster's 1787 article "An Examination of the Leading Principles of the Federal Constitution" (*ibid.*, pp. 483–507), the various Federalist Papers arguing the validity of the Constitution by Alexander Hamilton (No. 1, pp. 409–412, and No. 9, pp. 413–417), James Madison (No. 10, pp. 417–424, and No. 39, pp. 424–429), and John Jay (pp. 509–522). Anti-Federalist views were espoused by Samuel Bryan ("Centinel", pp. 523–531) and Melancthon Smith ("The Federal Farmer", pp. 543–555).

²⁵ See Nicolas E. Tawa, *Philadelphia. A City in the New World*, in: *The Classical Era*, ed. Neal Zaslaw, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1989, pp. 368–82, here p. 377.

led to a large-scale immigration, particularly of artists and performers, who were hoping to parlay their talents into success. As early as 1787, Scotsman Alexander Reinagle arrived in Philadelphia, where he immediately became a pivotal member of the new artistic scene. Though his music from this period emphasizes Scots and Irish tunes, usually in medley form, his own ballad operas had a distinct flavor of nostalgia, catering to the new immigrants. Like Haydn, whose music he introduced occasionally into the public concerts in Philadelphia²⁶, Reinagle was adept at harmonizing modal folk tunes, resulting in some Haydnesque moments²⁷.

Approaching Haydn's arrival in London, one more British political concern needs to be mentioned, the Eden Treaty of 1786 between France and Britain. Although this did not have to do with the United States "per se", it was a means of capitalizing on the dire financial straits that France found itself in by helping with American independence. William Eden, First Baron of Auckland (1744–1814) had offered to help pay French debts by mortgaging certain influential commodities, such as textiles and paper, noting that the theory behind the ability of the country to discharge indebtedness through resource growth had been expounded in "The Wealth of Nations", a treatise from 1776 written by Scotsman Adam Smith²⁸. The argument that free trade would cause productivity (and hence economic growth) to rise seemed a way out of the difficulties. For France, however, there was no infrastructure in place to safeguard either development or production of goods and services, and soon English interests were depriving the two leading industries of that country of capital growth, resulting in further impoverishment. In England, the lower classes were also asked to contribute more ostensibly to alleviate the British debt, much of which was rumored to go directly into the pockets of the nobility, but since George III was riding a wave of popularity as a constitutional monarch, this was never truly investigated beyond the usual caricature or innuendo. Indeed, the House of Lords was depicted as vicious curs competing to devour whatever wealth could be obtained from France by the treaty, ignoring their equal victimization of the British populace at home. The result in France at least was the 1789 Revolution, when the disconnect between the French

²⁶ Ernst Krohn, Alexander Reinagle as Sonatist, in: *Musical Quarterly* 18 (1932), pp. 140–49, here p. 144.

²⁷ See the present author's article *Federalists, Immigrants, and Wild Irish Savages: The Development and Influence on National Identity of the Eighteenth-Century American Symphony*, in: *Haydn and His Contemporaries*, ed. Stirling Murray, Ann Arbor, 2011, pp. 179–201, here pp. 190f.

²⁸ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, London 1776.

people burdened with repayment and a failing economy and a nobility that was morally and economically bankrupt became irrevocable. Initially, this regime change offered no problems for foreigners, being mainly a domestic French event. During Haydn's first visit to London, for instance, he was able to travel via French territories mainly on English conveyances without problem due to the guarantees found in the Eden Treaty. During his visit, however, things turned politically for the worse, and during the War of the First Coalition in April of 1792, he may have been forced to travel back to Austria by a more northerly route via the Netherlands, possibly to avoid conflict²⁹. It was during this visit that Haydn finally became a part of the Great Denial, at least in the cultural Handelian Commemoration sense, visiting Charles Burney and accepting both a doctorate at Oxford, as well as perhaps being inspired in May 1791 at a Westminster Abbey performance of a Handel oratorio to attempt something both British and Handelian on his own, according to Landon³⁰. At this time, views on America were beginning to shift as the French Revolution began to increase in violence and chaos. William Blake (1757–1827) published a poem that reflected public sentiment. He saw the French Revolution with all its horror as the result of the failure of England to suppress the American Revolution, and his “prophecy” was that this chaos and incivility would soon engulf the entire world³¹:

He plagues creep on the burning winds driven by flames of Orc,
 And by the fierce Americans rushing together in the night
 Driven o'er the Guardians of Ireland and Scotland and Wales
 They spotted with plagues forsook the frontiers & their banners sear'd
 With fires of hell, deform their ancient heavens with shame & woe.
 Hid in his caves the Bard of Albion felt the enormous plagues.
 And a cowl of flesh grew o'er his head & scales on his back & ribs;

²⁹ This may have been the reason he wrote to Marianne von Genzinger on April 24, 1792 of his plan to travel “über Holland nach Berlin zum König v[on] Preussen, von da nach Leipzig, Dresden, Prag, und endlich nach wienn [via Holland to Berlin to the King of Prussia, and from there to Leipzig, Dresden, Prague, and – at last! – to Vienna]”. See Bartha, p. 285, and Landon III, p. 158. Although this route was not taken, due to Prince Esterházy diverting him to the Imperial coronation ceremonies in Frankfurt, it is not clear that this was his original plan or whether he developed it to avoid the hostilities. In any case, if he had followed it, he would have avoided them altogether. See Pohl III, p. 60.

³⁰ Initially this was to be an English political masque entitled “Alfred the Great”, but it also may have been the first intimation of what eventually became “Die Schöpfung”, originally “The Creation”. See Landon III, pp. 354f. Haydn was the most impressed by Handel’s “Israel in Egypt” and the various excerpts that accompanied the performance.

³¹ William Blake, *America. A Prophecy*, Lambeth 1793.

And rough with black scales all his Angels fright their ancient heavens
 Over the hills, the vales, the cities, rage the red flames fierce;
 The Heavens melted from north to south; and Urizen who sat
 Above all heavens in thunders wrap'd, emerg'd his leprous head
 From out his holy shrine, his tears in deluge piteous
 Falling into the deep sublime! Flag'd with grey-brow'd snows
 And thunderous visages, his jealous wings wav'd over the deep;
 Weeping in dismal howling woe he dark descended howling
 Around the smitten bands, clothed in tears & trembling shudd'ring cold.
 His stored snows he poured forth, and his icy magazines
 He open'd on the deep, and on the Atlantic sea white shiv'ring.
 Leprous his limbs, all over white, and hoary was his visage.
 Weeping in dismal howlings before the stern Americans
 Hiding the Demon red with clouds & cold mists from the earth;
 Till Angels & weak men twelve years should govern o'er the strong:
 And then their end should come, when France receiv'd the Demons light.

For Blake, only a revived and heavily (and righteously) armed England (in the guise of Albion, Paradise of the West) could rise to resist the onslaught. Not all thought negatively of this, however. In 1792 just after Haydn left London, Thomas Paine published his "Common Sense", a treatise on the rights of man that had originally been written in 1776 and contained a description of the rights inherent in the British constitution whose violations were the root causes of the American Revolution³². Coming on the heels of Olaudah Equiano's autobiography of 1789³³ that questioned the humanity of the slave trade, pro-American articles began appearing in the London papers, touting it as a place where, in theory at least, equality promised by English liberty was already extant.

By 1793, however, Britain was once more at war with France, this time over another political move called the Aliens Act, which required all foreigners to register and revoked the right of "habeas corpus". As Haydn contemplated his return to London, American leaders, namely the Federalists who had triumphed in the constitutional debates over the Democratic Republicans in 1789, regarded as vital a renegotiation of terms of the Treaty of Paris in order to forestall a second revolution in the vein of Republican France. These leaders, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, and John Adams, believed

³² The pamphlet has often been reprinted; here in Frohnen, *The American Republic*, pp. 179–188.

³³ *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African*, Norwich 1789. The work was reprinted frequently thereafter, most recently in annotated facsimile ed. by Robert Allison, New York 2007.

strongly that a sound nationalist government depended upon neutrality in the new war that threatened once more to spread by proxy over the Atlantic. In opposition, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison were still leery of any alliance with England, suspicious of any attempt at reconciliation, and were in favor of a diffuse government where states would be in charge of all but the simplest governmental offices. They favored France, even if they were not entirely in sympathy with the actual social disintegration of the French Revolution. Britain had an intrinsic interest in improving a very rocky relationship with the United States. As Bradford Perkins notes, Governor Morris, the British negotiator, was “well-disposed to America”, noting “they have made their arrangements upon a plan that comprehends the neutrality of the United States, and we are anxious that it be preserved”³⁴. This was a means of removing American impediments to the flow of resources from British America (Canada and the Caribbean), and insuring that no Transatlantic front would be opened, particularly with regards to vulnerable colonies such as Canada. Jay was able to get Britain to cease occupying the territory west of the Appalachians, cease impressing sailors to serve in the British navy, cease predatory attacks on American merchants (as long as they were not carrying arms to France) and provide compensation to those whose ships were seized, open the West Indies to trade, create a permanent Canadian boundary, and cease inciting Native Americans to harass settlers. In the midst of all this, Jay arrived in London to negotiate what was to become the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, signed on 19 November 1794 as Haydn had begun the Opera Concerts at the new King’s Theatre. Jay was heavily criticized for negotiating, sometimes unsuccessfully (as in the case of impressments), things that should have been adhered to in the original Treaty of Paris, and the fight over this in the United States, followed closely by the London papers, was long and bitter. Historians have debated equally as vociferously over whether Jay repeated the egregious errors of the Eden Treaty with France or shrewdly allowed England to focus on the war with France without having to choose sides and thus risk damage if their side lost. Although it did not solve many of the issues, there seems to be agreement that, whatever its merits, it kept America relatively calm at a time when it was incapable either of fighting another war or repelling a deliberate attempt at reuniting England with its recalcitrant former colony (an attempt that spawned the War of 1812).

This political situation was certainly not unknown to Haydn, for he was certainly not one to be monomaniacal when it came to international politics and events. His letters, mainly concerned with issues regarding his

³⁴ Bradford Perkins, *The First Rapprochement. England and the United States, 1795–1805*, New York 1955, p. 54.

music and its distribution, bear no indications of any views on the geopolitical situation before, during, or after his London sojourns, however³⁵. Nor, might it be added, are there many indications within that eclectic collection of bits and pieces now known as the London Notebooks. We do know that he met Francisco de Miranda at Eszterház in October of 1785. Miranda, a close personal friend of both George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, was warmly received by Haydn, to whom he gave letters³⁶. It would be speculation to suggest that these unknown “letters” could have been from an American figure, though any such notion would first have to document why anyone on that side of the Atlantic would have written Haydn at all. The only connection at all with America is a brief note from his first notebook dated 31 December 1791 where he simply lists “Mr. Antis, Bishop and a minor composer”³⁷. The reference almost certainly is to John Antes (1740–1811), a Moravian minister (not bishop) who had returned from missionary work in Egypt in 1782 and, after several years in Germany, began work as a merchant and businessman in Fulneck, England about 1785³⁸. Although Antes was certainly one of the many musical disciples of Haydn, as evidenced in his surviving op. 3 trios for two violins and bass, his compositions had been limited in quantity and scope, which in turn substantiates Haydn’s designation of him as a “minor composer”³⁹. Moreover,

³⁵ H.C. Robbins Landon notes even that Haydn had no reaction to the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789, seeing some significance in the fact that the same day the score and parts for “Le nozze di Figaro” by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart arrived in Eisenstadt for a production by Haydn’s ensemble intended for Eszterház. Calling it a “quirk of fate”, Landon states: “Haydn was not for the Revolution, and if he had an opinion, it was probably that of the famous ‘graffito’ which we recently saw in the old Fort Charlotte above Nassau: ‘Only Evil lies under 1789’” (Landon II, p. 725). This, of course, is purely speculative, both on Haydn’s true reaction and opinion. Indeed, on August 28, 1789, a bit over a month after the event, Haydn expressed to the publisher Sieber in Paris that he wished to title one symphony “National,” though here too one may wonder whether this was a political opinion or merely taking advantage of an opportunity to follow what seemed to be a popular movement. See Bartha, p. 212; CCLN, p. 88.

³⁶ See Landon II, p. 673.

³⁷ CCLN, p. 266. Landon (*ibid.*, p. 401) also notes that Haydn may have been aware of Moravian interest in his music as early as 1784, when Hans Adolph Friedrich von Eschstruth published a report in the “Musikalische Bibliothek” (I. Stück, p. 114) in Marburg about performances in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Charleston, South Carolina. There is, however, no proof that Haydn actually read or knew of this report.

³⁸ See also the contribution by Kathleen Lamkin in the present volume.

³⁹ See Irving Lowens, *Haydn in America*, Detroit 1979, p. 17. Lowens comments on a “persistent story” of a meeting between the two earlier, as expressed by Rufus Grider: “in Vienna, Antes made the acquaintance of Haydn, who, together with other musicians, performed his compositions”; Rufus Grider, *Historical Notes on Music in Bethlehem*,

even though Antes was also an acquaintance of Benjamin Franklin, one can probably assume that he and Haydn had little or no special interest in discussing the American political situation beyond perhaps a cursory mention. Antes, after all, had not been a resident of the United States for well over a decade at that point, and though he certainly maintained his ties with Moravian communities and musical colleagues there, their interests were rather more apolitical, as in all probability were his.

It was rather the brewing conflict with Republican France that drew Haydn's interest during his English sojourns. As noted earlier, this too had its New World associations, and Haydn was certainly aware from the English papers of the various political circumstances, as he most certainly was of the other implications. This was manifested in terms of his political alignments in England with the enlightened ruling class. His sympathies are demonstrated by his friendship with the Prince of Wales (despite the well-known "contretemps" of Haydn submitting a bill to Parliament for services rendered when the former's debts were absolved), the Duke of York, and others who were crucial to the success of the Jay Treaty. To be sure, he was a celebrated figure whose arrival could be seen as a feather in the English artistic cap, but his interactions with these leading figures certainly went beyond the simple confines of music. For instance, Haydn was keenly interested in the capture of French ships by the British, to the point of journeying to Portsmouth to visit the Royal Navy and commenting upon their weaponry (see Figure 3)⁴⁰. It is clear that he maintained a strong pro-English political stance, and while he was not anti-French, his sympathies were most in accord with his host country, though not without some misogynist views on the social order⁴¹.

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 1873, p. 5. This has been refuted by Donald McCorkle, who states that there is no such evidence either of Antes actually travelling to Vienna or of a meeting with Haydn. Substituting London for Vienna, however, makes some sense in the light of the entry in Haydn's own notebook, although Grider's citation is rather vague on just whose compositions (if any) these putative musicians performed. Antes was, however, well-acquainted with Benjamin Franklin, to whom he sent a set of string quartets from Egypt as part of his intercession on behalf of the Moravians for their hardships during the American Revolution. See Nola Knouse, *The Music of the Moravian Church in America*, Rochester, NY 2008, p. 267.

⁴⁰ See CCLN, p. 289. His descriptions from 1794 include frigates, brigs, cutters, and a particularly detailed description of the fire ship.

⁴¹ For example, Haydn comments in his Notebooks (Bartha, p. 484): "in Franckreich [sind sie] als Mädchen tugendhaft, Hure als Weib, in Holland Hure als Mädchen, tugendhaft als Weib, in England bleiben sie alezeit Huren [In France, as girls [they] are virtuous, [but] whores as wives; in Holland the girls are whores [but] virtuous as wives; in England they stay whores all their lives]." Landon (CCLN, p. 253) mistranslates this to express the

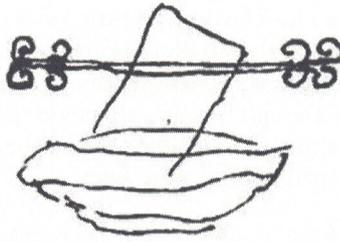


Figure 3: Haydn's sketch from the Notebooks of an English fireship.

There is also evidence of this from a musical standpoint, for during his visits he wrote several pointedly British royalist pieces. These include a series of three marches for Harmoniemusik, two entitled “Derbyshire Marches” (Hob.VIII:1, 2) and the well-known “March for the Prince of Wales” (Hob.VIII:3), a paean to the British Navy (“Thy great endeavours to increase the marine power” Hob.XXIVa:9)⁴². Upon returning home to Vienna, he also composed incidental music for John William Cowmeadow’s play-cum-political oratorio “Alfred, oder der patriotische König” (Hob.XXX:5)⁴³. Among only three numbers of this work to have survived, the opening chorus (Hob.XXX:5a) is a “Siegesruf” in a highly martial style replete with Haydn’s signature C-alto horns⁴⁴. Unfortunately, the bulk of this composition is missing, which is a pity since there are a number of marches (including a final “Kriegersmarsch” [sic]) that undoubtedly would have contained political musical implications and possi-

opposite meaning, clearly undermining Haydn’s own humorous quip as an underlying evaluation of the social mores of each country.

⁴²Hob. vol. II, pp. 196f. The work was written as an aria with chorus, in which Neptune’s comments invokes his permission for the British to rule the seas at his command (“Nor can I think my suit is in vain”), followed by the chorus. It was written to a text from “Mare Clausum” of 1635 by Marchmont Nedham and John Selden, and Friedrich Pohl noted that a comment on the original manuscript (British Library, Add. 9284) stated that it was intended as part of an oratorio to be composed at the request of Lord Abington (Pohl III, p. 339, quoted in Landon III, p. 271, see CCLN, p. 271 and 299). Given its anomalous state, and three other pieces by Ignaz Pleyel, this now seems unlikely; rather, it would serve better (along with these other movements) as insertion pieces into the regular concerts.

⁴³ See Landon IV, pp. 107f. Cowmeadow’s German play was originally produced by Emanuel Schickaneder’s theatre troupe, and it was subsequently produced at Eszterház.

⁴⁴The others are the aria of the Schützgeist “Abgesandt vom Strahlenthron” (Hob. XXX:5b) and the duet “Der Morgen graut” (Hob.XXX:5c). The opening chorus represents the Danes celebrating their victory over the Anglo-Saxon English.

bly excerpts of royalist tunes, as well. Finally, in his own list of works composed in London Haydn notes a rendition of “God save the King”, a work that seems to have impressed him enough to inspire his own nationalist hymn “Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser”, or at least that is the verdict of Charles Burney, who wrote on 19 August 1799 about the “Divine Hymn, written for your imperial master, in imitation of our loyal song, ‘God save great George our King’”⁴⁵.

These works, as well as the setting of Ellis Cornelia Knight’s poem “The Battle of the Nile” (Hob.XXVIb:4) celebrating Lord Horatio Nelson’s victory over the French at Abukir in 1798, are clear indications of Haydn’s pro-British sentiments, something that was of significant importance in resurrecting national pride in the composer’s visits by his hosts. It does not, however, have much to do specifically with the New World itself. For that, one needs to look a bit deeper into the popular song literature written for the stage and salon. Haydn, of course, had an excellent friendship with both William Shield and Samuel Arnold, whose music he found interesting. Given that Arnold was one of the main figures in the development of the medley overture, consisting of a series of popular tunes, mainly from his own works, that were strung together, it is likely that Haydn too was familiar with this sort of work, even though he himself probably did not find it practical. Moreover, he was also acquainted with the music of Stephen Storace, whose operas were performed both in Britain and in the United States, along with Samuel Arnold’s “The Mountaineers”⁴⁶ and William Shield’s “The Woodman”⁴⁷, also favorites in theatres of Philadelphia and New York⁴⁸.

The real connection, however, came with his presumed acquaintance with Benjamin Carr and James Hewitt, both of whom claimed to have participated in Haydn’s London concerts during his first visit and who immigrated to the United States about 1793⁴⁹. Indeed, the former published a number of forte-piano pieces and songs in Philadelphia and New York as early as 1794, and Karl Geiringer has stated that “there is a direct line from Haydn to such

⁴⁵ See Hob. vol. II, p. 279 and references therein.

⁴⁶ See CCLN, p. 295.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 273f.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Richard Crawford, *America’s Musical Life*, New York 2001, pp. 99–101. The operas produced there are listed alphabetically in Oscar Sonneck and William Upton, *A Bibliography of Early American Secular Music*, Washington, DC 1945.

⁴⁹ See Karl Geiringer, *Haydn. A Creative Life in Music*, Berkeley 1982, p. 110. Geiringer states specifically: “Musicians who had the privilege of playing under him or, at least, of becoming acquainted with the master’s interpretation of his own works, traveled from London to the New World, taking with them an insight into how Haydn’s works should be performed.”

pioneers of American musical life as Graupner, Menel, Hewitt, and Bergmann”⁵⁰. In 1792 five composers (Hewitt, Bergman, Jean Gehot, William Young, and a cellist named Phillips) arrived in New York, where they proclaimed themselves “professors of music from the Opera House, Hanover Square, and professional concerts under the direction of Haydn, Pleyel, etc., London”⁵¹. There is, however, no real documentation that any of these five, or Benjamin Carr for that matter, made the acquaintance of Haydn prior to their emigration; Haydn’s own list of members of the orchestra under Salomon does not mention them, and if they performed at the rival series with Ignaz Pleyel, then it could have been at most a single concert prior to their leaving for the United States. Therefore, any real connection must be considered as momentary if it occurred at all, and thus the claim can be seen as a mere advertising tool. That both Hewitt and Carr were acquainted with Haydn’s music, however, is indicated by the number of the great composer’s works: songs (such as the “Mermaid Song”), sonatas, and symphonies that appeared with considerable regularity on American subscription concerts, both in New York and Philadelphia (although Alexander Reinagle had already begun the trend)⁵². Carr and Hewitt were, however, immediately caught up in the American political turmoil that threatened the new country in 1794–1795 as a result of the aforementioned treaty negotiations.

In 1793 the political situation in the main American cities had sharply divided those who favored the French and those Federalists who sought neutrality with an eye towards a British alliance. In 1793 a performance of Arthur Murphy’s potboiler “The Grecian Daughter”, in which an innocent girl strikes her father’s oppressor to obtain his freedom, took place in honor of a visit by French naval officers. Among the chaotic pre-concert hullabaloo was a call for the popular song, “Ça ira” followed by “La Marseillaise”, which concluded with shouts of “Vivent les François, vivent les Americains” before the play could begin⁵³. Another incident involving Hewitt’s opera “Tammany” ended with the composer being assaulted and forced to alter his score on the spot to place more politically appropriate

⁵⁰ Ibid. The references are to Gottlieb Graupner (1767–1836), who apparently only arrived in Charleston, South Carolina in 1795 by way of Canada, Menel (first name unknown), who styled himself as Johann Peter Salomon’s principal cellist, and Bernhard Bergman (active ca. 1792–1800), who Geiringer confuses with 19th century conductor Carl Bergmann (1821–1876). About Hewitt, vide infra.

⁵¹ See Sonneck and Upton, p. 499, and passim under the entries for each of the other composers.

⁵² These are listed alphabetically in Sonneck and Upton.

⁵³ Irving Lowens, Preface to Benjamin Carr’s Federal Overture, Philadelphia 1957, p. 8. The entire event was described in the New York Evening Register for 23 November 1793.

tunes into it. Indeed, so uncouth were the audiences that Médéric Moreau de St. Méry noted in 1793⁵⁴:

The performance is boisterous, and the interludes are even indecent. It is not unusual to hear such words as Goddamn, Bastard, Rascal, Son of a Bitch. Women turn their backs to the performance during the interludes. The actors are well enough dressed: the style of the plays, which are English and in the English taste, is extremely coarse and full of pleasantries highly repugnant to the French taste.

Clearly, some sort of reconciliation had to occur to defuse the situation, and Carr wrote his medley “Federal Overture” in 1794 in order to accomplish this. The succession of tunes, scored for a large orchestra no doubt modeled upon that found in the Salomon Concerts, began with the “La Marseillaise”, followed by “Ça ira”, and then “Oh dear, what can the matter be?” with other English tunes drawn from immigrant folk music (“Irish Washerwoman”) a British ballad opera (“The Poor Soldier” by William Shield). The overarching melody, however, was “Yankee Doodle”, considered at the time to have been the quintessential American Revolutionary hymn. When performed in New York, this musical-political compromise was reviewed as a marvel⁵⁵:

The orchestra was a pleasing spectacle; but when the band struck up, it excited in us as delightful sensations as ever we remember to have experienced on a similar occasion. Let us here pay a due tribute to Mr. Carr’s overture, which, besides his intrinsic merit, has the advantage of being eminently calculated to attract an universal admiration.

Although not entirely original in musical content, it united the various factions at a time when Haydn himself may have learned in London of the successful negotiations of the Jay Treaty, indicating that, at least in English eyes, the neutrality of the American state allowed focus to be drawn back to Europe, with the New World no longer a place of proxy war, devastating economic and political Imperial consequences, or potential social turmoil. For a time, it was as Thomas Paine put it in his “Common Sense”: “We have it in our power to begin the world over again”⁵⁶. As Haydn’s own career began a new phase with his visits to London, this paean of the American Revolution was no doubt an appropriate metaphor.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Lowens, p. 11.

⁵⁵ The New York Magazine, Theatrical Register, 16 December 1794.

⁵⁶ Paine, Appendix to Common Sense, in: The Writings of Thomas Paine, New York 1894, p. 120.

