Abstract

The system of propaganda employed by the competing political groups in early eighteenth century England embraced the popular literary circles in order to gain their support, a process which was reflected in the prolific and politically inclined literary output of the period. One of the lesser known members of these circles was the writer and physician Joseph Browne. Little information concerning Browne is available, something which perhaps can be attributed to the relatively scant attention paid to his person. One critic, Howard Weinbrot, in his study on Samuel Johnson, acknowledged Browne as the author of the poem “The Gothick Hero” (so far only accredited to Browne) and associated his political views with support for the Hanoverian dynasty that ascended the British throne in 1714. However, the works Browne actually authored, as well as those attributed to him, contradict such a statement. In fact, his literary output, journalism, literary and political circles as well as his posthumous opinion reflected in nineteenth century works and comments on his literary activity prove Browne’s anti-Harleyite, anti-Whig and therefore anti-Hanoverian views. This article attempts to draw a sketch of Joseph Browne, confirming the constancy of his political views, and contributes to the discussion on the authorship of a number of key texts hitherto only attributed to him.

Keywords: Joseph Browne, eighteenth century, English poetry, propaganda, Tory, Whig

The political situation in early eighteenth century England was largely defined by the conflict between the two most politically influential factions, the Whigs and the Tories. Moreover, the events of the Glorious Revolution framed the formation of the Jacobites with their plans to restore the Roman-Catholic members of the exiled Stuart dynasty. The system of propaganda employed by all these political groupings embraced the popular literary circles and gained their support, a process which was strongly reflected in the prolific and politically inclined literary output of the period. The first decades of the eighteenth century witnessed a fierce war of words that dominated a large chunk of pamphleteering and journalistic activity. Literary figures such as Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, Daniel Defoe, Joseph
Addison and Richard Steele (along with a number of lesser known names) emerged, keen to back one or other side of the political scene. One such figure was Joseph Browne, an early eighteenth century physician and writer.

Studies in early eighteenth century English history and literature provide no systematic treatment concerning Browne’s life and activity; and perhaps the scarcity of information justifies the relatively scant attention paid to his person. Only a few references to Browne can be found in discussions on topics connected with the particulars of his medical, literary or journalistic activity. As such the information on him appears in works which are largely concerned with the history of medicine or early eighteenth century propaganda. Robert J. Allen in his biographical sketch of William Oldisworth referred to Browne as the continuator of the Tory periodical *The Examiner* (1715–1716) and initiated a debate on the authorship of certain literary pieces previously only ascribed to him (161–162). His engagement in editing *The Examiner* particularly focused the attention of scholars researching the history of the early eighteenth century English press. Alan J. Downie, for example, explored Browne’s contribution to the political propaganda in early eighteenth-century England (1979) while Ruth Herman (2003) concentrated on his connections with *The Examiner*. Perhaps the most analytical study on Browne’s supposed authorship of the works usually only attributed to him, was presented by Downie in an article questioning Manley’s established opinion as the author of the pamphlet *The Secret History of Queen Zarah and the Zarazians* (1705). In fact, Downie argues in favour of Browne as the work’s actual creator (2004). However, the study was inconclusive and the debate continued with divided opinions on the issue (Conway 2010; Carnell 2016; Carnell 2017). The historically evidenced conflict and political differences between Joseph Browne and Daniel Defoe comprise one more fascinating context where the person of Browne is discussed (Downie 1978; Shaw 1988; Novak 2003). However, a revision of the available literature reveals the lack of a concise biographical study on Joseph Browne, though a number of facts concerning his life and literary activity are scattered amongst a variety of texts. What is more, attempts at proving Browne’s authorship of at least some works published in *State Tracts Containing Many Necessary Observations and Reflections on the State of our Affairs at Home and Abroad; with some Secret memoirs. Vol. I. and State and Miscellany Poems; Compos’d Occasionally According to the Circumstances of the Author, and the Difficulty of the Times. Consisting of Fables, Satyrs, Panegyricks, &c. Vol. II.* a publication by the Author of *The Examiner* (the issues will be discussed more thoroughly in a later part of this article), reached striking conclusions. Howard Weinbrot, for example, in his study on Samuel Johnson (2005) ascribed the anonymous poem “The Gothick Hero” to Browne. He also argues that the poem complimenting the Swedish monarch Charles XII should not be excluded as Browne’s, even though its apparent praise for the new Hanoverian dynasty seems to conflict with other compositions by the author.
This article attempts to draw a biographical sketch of Joseph Browne with the purpose of demonstrating the consistency of his political views in order to contribute to the debate outlined above concerning his actual authorship of specific works otherwise only attributed to him. In the various published studies analysing his contribution to the partisanship writing in early eighteenth century England so far, neither the fact of ascribing to Browne some contradictory works nor the analysis of his posthumous opinion have been taken into account. The realisation of the pursued objectives will be based on the analysis of the source material and its comparative study aimed at proving Browne’s authorship of some works so far either only attributed to him or not even discussed in this regard at all. Furthermore, the analysis of both the content of his writings and his relations with prominent politicians will help in the identification of his political views and confirm their stability.

Indeed, there are not many sources that might help reconstruct Joseph Browne’s biography. The Dictionary of National Biography (Scott Vol. VII, 51) provides only a few facts that concern his education and literary career (referring mostly to information published earlier in A Biographical History of England that may reveal his political allegiance, and thus help in the interpretation of his works. Browne’s work and interests enable us to shed some light on his literary activity, which can be divided between medical considerations and political engagements.\(^1\) As far as the former is concerned, Browne is remembered as the adversary of the theory of blood circulation which he advanced in Lecture of Anatomy against the Circulation of the Blood (1701), the author of works concerning diseases and medical advice,\(^2\) as well as the editor and translator of medical treaties.\(^3\) A closer look at the dates of publication of Browne’s medical works demonstrates the changing intensity of his career as a medical writer, which peaked in the early 1700s, while 1705–1716 was a period of his greater engagement in politics resulting in the publication of his literary works or at least those attributed to him.

**1. Joseph Browne as a Political Writer**

In order to reconstruct Browne’s literary career it is absolutely crucial to distinguish the pieces he wrote and those that may only be ascribed to him. In fact, many eighteenth century political works were published anonymously and this impedes the identification of Browne’s complete literary output, even though there are some titles which can be accredited to his pen with reasonable certainty. In A Dialogue between Church and No-Church or a Rehearsal of the Review Browne attacked Defoe’s periodical,\(^4\) causing Defoe to complain bitterly that “of all the men in the town I did not expect to be attacked by Dr Browne” (The Review Vol. III, 169). This perhaps may sound surprising as the conflict between the two writers can be traced back to 1705 and linked to Browne’s medical writings.
In Browne’s *Lecture of Anatomy against the Circulation of the Blood* (1701), he entered into a discussion that exceeded the scope of the title. The topic tackled the then widely debated issue of what should be the priority between ancient and modern learning; obviously, the discovery of blood circulation constituted one of the aspects of this discussion. Defoe in *The Consolidator: or, Memoirs of Sundry Transactions from the World in the Moon* ridiculed Browne’s work:

> Here I found two volumes in chirurgery, being an exact description of the circulation of the blood, discovered long before king Solomon’s allegory of the bucket’s going to the well; with several curious methods by which the demonstration was to be made so plain, as would make even the worthy doctor B------- himself become a convert to his own elaborate book, and think it worse nonsense that ever the town had the freedom to imagine. (217)

Through a detailed analysis of Defoe’s other works, Narrelle Shaw demonstrates that the author of *The Consolidator*... aligns himself in a circuitous manner with the position of the moderns (396). Effectively, Defoe’s views placed him in opposition to those writers advocating for the ancient roots of the discovery, including Joseph Browne, who in his *A Lecture of Anatomy Against the Circulation of the Blood* despite his claim of “no design in my head to opposed any received Notions, either of the Moderns or Ancients,” repeatedly invoked the ancients-moderns controversy. The war of words between the two writers continued through the next months which witnessed the appearance of a piece entitled *Moon Calf: or, Accurate Reflections on the Consolidator*. Defoe identified the work as Browne’s and began the analysis of his translations of Horace giving them a negative assessment (*Little Review* 1705, 8 June) which found an immediate response in Browne’s pamphlet *A Vindication of the Specimen Design’d for a General Translation of Horace, from the pretended Criticisms of Mr. De Foe, in his Little Review*. Although the work dealt with answering Defoe’s charges of Browne’s inaccurate translation of Horace, Browne remarked on *Moon Calf*... as well and despite his denial of its authorship, he defended the piece against Defoe’s “injustice” (5).

Defoe, an engaged anti-Tory writer, as he himself declared in *The Review* by stating that “All the World will bear me Witness it is not a Tory Paper” (*The Review* Vol. VII, 377), was paid for by Robert Harley, Secretary of State for the Northern Department, in an attempt to propagate his moderate policy to reconcile Tories and Whigs and minimise extreme Tory propaganda. Harley’s plans however were continually undermined by the High Tories, many of whom were either members of the High Church or expressed support for Jacobites. The criticism both of Defoe’s anti-High Church propaganda and his promotion of Harley’s moderate policy were the issues addressed by Browne (Downie 1978, 361) – in the abovementioned *Rehearsal*. There were only seven issues published before it was terminated in the spring of 1706 when Browne was prosecuted for a short satirical poem entitled *The Country Parson’s Honest Advice to that
Judicious Lawyer, and Worthy Minister of the State, My Lord Keeper, memorializing William Cowper’s appointment as Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. Included in the verse is an explicit criticism of the Ministry’s decisions concerning political appointments of Whig politicians; the poem proves Browne’s support of the various Tory circles. During the judicial examination undertaken by Harley’s secretary, Browne admitted having penned the poem. Later he denied writing it and claimed that he only handed over the manuscript to be printed; nevertheless, in February 1706 he was committed to Newgate and indicted for libel. On 30th April he was sentenced to the pillory. Perhaps in the hope of evading punishment, Browne, in a letter to Harley, admitted to having taken an erroneous path (Downie 1979, 94). Soon after, however, in a second letter (the first evidently failing to have the desired effect) “to the Right Honourable Mr Secretary Harley, occasion’d by his late Commitment to Newgate: Together with his Interpretations of that Paper, call’d The Country Parson’s Advice to my Lord Keeper,” Browne accused the secretary of false arrest for which he was fined and pilloried twice in November 1706 (Boyer 287). Browne’s persecution during Oxford’s Ministry seems to be reflected in several works written after Harley’s fall from office in 1708. In fact, it is highly probable that Browne contributed to some pamphlets condemning the Secretary’s practice of punishing writers criticising his policy.

2. The Editorship and Authorship of State Tracts

The library catalogues, both contemporary and those published in the nineteenth century, provide long lists of Browne’s writings mostly referring to two companion volumes published anonymously in 1715 entitled State Tracts Containing Many Necessary Observations and Reflections on the State of our Affairs at Home and Abroad; with some Secret memoirs. By the Author of the Examiner. Vol. I. and State and Miscellany Poems; Compos’d Occasionally According to the Circumstances of the Author, and the Difficulty of the Times. Consisting of Fables, Satyrs, Panegyricks, &c, By the Author of the Examiner. Vol. II. This collection was initially attributed to William Oldisworth, whose fame as editor of the Tory paper inclined readers to assume any writings signed “The Author of the Examiner” to be his. Robert J. Allen, after thorough analysis, argued against both Oldisworth’s editorship and contribution to these particular volumes (161–163). In fact, the nineteenth century register, The English Short Title Catalogue, suggests Joseph Browne’s sole authorship. This claim has been questioned by some researchers who suggest the collections were a joint effort by several hands. Robert Allen admits that “if they are largely the work of one man, they were written […] by someone who changed his political views often” (163). Ruth Herman, in her study on Delarivier Manley, agrees, concluding that “the contents display such a dazzling variety of conflicting political views […] that it is difficult to believe that any one
person could have been responsible for the whole collection” (64). However, some scholars suggest that Joseph Browne is the most likely editor of the collection. This assumption has been reassessed by David Foxon and J. A. Downie, who incline to the idea that State Tracts was not only edited by Browne but was a collection of his works (Downie 2004, 251). Downie, in support of Browne’s editorship of The Examiner in the spring of 1715, argues that according to the information in Noble’s Biographical History of England, Browne “continued the Examiner after Swift, Prior and Atterbury, Oldsworth and Mrs. Manley ceased to contribute to it” (232). Browne’s attributed writings and his persecution during Oxford administration place him unambiguously in the ranks of authors who directed their pens against the Whig government and Harley’s moderate policies. As a result, he was likely to support Harley’s rival, Henry St. John Viscount Bolingbroke, Secretary of State and leader of an extreme Tory group that gathered in the October Club, which, like Browne, criticised Harley’s policy of reconciliation. The connections between St. John and Browne, though not historically evidenced, can be assumed thanks to their engagement in the publication of The Examiner. The first issue of The Examiner appeared on 3 August 1710. Little is known about its origins. Historical sources provide differing information concerning who set up the paper. According to Joseph Addison, it was the Secretary of State, St. John (Herman 126). Other suggestions indicate that its original function was as an organ for St. John’s supporters, the ultra-right wing of the Tory party, and not for Harley’s projected moderate administration (Patterson 154). This latter statement would definitely correspond with Browne’s views. Following the ascendency of George I and the Whigs’ coming to power, St. John, previously wholly engaged in issuing the periodical, resigned and went into exile in France. Thus it seems rather unlikely that the former ministerial Tory paper with an established position in the press market would be continued by a person of ideological provenance different from that represented by the preceding editors and patrons. This strongly suggests that St. John and Browne shared political views and also places them in the same ideological circle.

Another argument for Browne’s editorship (if not authorship) of State Tracts is that the collection was advertised in The Examiner (Downie 2004, 251). If Browne was the editor of The Examiner in 1715, as seems to be the case, he advertised State Tracts as “The Author of the Examiner.” What has not been noted by scholars so far, is the fact that doubts concerning Browne’s editorship seem to be cleared up by the author himself in the preface to the second volume of the collection: “This first Poem then, call’d Job’s Trial under the Persecutions of Satan, was the Author’s daily.” Allen in his article on Oldisworth while identifying the possible contributors to State Tracts provides the information that the poem Job’s Trial... was published without a date and with Browne’s authorship acknowledged on the title page (162). Moreover, a few biographical hints inserted in the preface to the second volume correspond with Browne’s state persecution in 1706. Justifying
the paraphrase of *The Book of Job*, the author believed the reader would understand his goals “if he will consider the *Circumstances* of the *Author* at that time, under a double *Prosecution* from the State, loading him with *Fines, Corporal Punishment*, and *Imprisonment*” (original emphasis). Strangely enough, the prison that is mentioned in the preface is not Newgate, where Browne’s imprisonment is confirmed, but King’s Bench. Nevertheless, the fact that the sources do not mention other places in which he might have been detained does not excluded the possibility that during the course of his prosecution and trials he spent some “short Confinement in the Prison of the Kings-Bench.”

Browne’s identification as the editor of *State Tracts* enables us to point out the writings included in the collection that were authored by him. For example, in the preface to the second volume the author also adds that it was during his imprisonment in the King’s Bench that he wrote a fable *The Singing-birds Address to the Eagle, for Relief against the Tyranny of the Birds of Prey*. Though in his opinion this “fable seems plain enough to be understood by the meanest Capacity,” he reveals the identities of three persons hidden under the names of the Lark, the Linnet and the Nightingale “who were then prosecuted by the State; the one for the *Mercurius Politicus*; the other, for *The Church of England Memorial answer’d Paragraph by Paragraph*; the last, for *The Country Parson’s Advice*.” The trials of all three – James Drake, William Pittis and Joseph Browne – ran almost simultaneously and is recounted by Abel Boyer in *The History of Life and Reign of Queen Anne* (286). Among the prosecuted writers punished at the time of Browne’s confinement in prison was also Edward Ward a High Church propagandist, Jacobite and William Pittis’s close friend. Browne’s acquaintance with this anti-Harleyste and anti-Whig literary circle, although hard to prove due to scarcity of historical information, seems indisputable. One of the few pieces of evidence which unveils the existing web of connections between Tory writers is Browne’s letter “To Mr. Edward Ward, on his excellent Version of *Don Quixote* into Hudibrastick Verse” published in Ward’s translation of *Don Quixote* entitled *The Life and Notable Adventures of that Renown’d Knight, Don Quixote De la Mancha Merrily Translated into Hudibrastick Verse*. There were two more letters praising Ward’s translation and also included in it, one by William Pittis and another by a poet and future contributor to *the Examiner*, William King. What is more, one of the publishers prosecuted by Harley in 1706 was George Sawbridge, who was later listed as one of the ten publishers of *State Tracts*.

A number of poems published in *State Tracts* condemn Harley, the authorship of which is repeatedly disguised under the name of Harlequin, as *the Punisher of Witt*. These views were reflected in a pamphlet attributed to Browne entitled *Harlequin le Grande and Louis the Petite*, the title of which directly alludes to Robert Harley and one of his secretaries, Erasmus Lewis. The fragment of the pamphlet where Louis Petite (Erasmus Lewis) directs Harlequin le Grand (Harley) seems particularly significant for the acknowledgement of Browne’s authorship
or at least contribution to it: “What would you have done with your T[oo]ls at G[uil]d-Hall, against the whole Tribe of Authors, printers, and Publishers, had not I been your standing Ev[iden]ce?’ (State Tracts Vol. I, 170). In fact, these lines refer very accurately to Browne’s Trial at Guild-Hall as described by Boyer:

On the 30th of April […] Dr, Joseph Browne was try’d at Guild-Hall, before the Lord Chief-Justice Holt, for handing to the Press a Paper of Verses, call’d, The Country-Parson’s Advice to the Lord Keeper […]. The charge being prov’d by the Printer, and by Mr. Lewis, Secretary to Mr. Secretary Harley; The Jury brought the Prisoner in Guilty: And some Time after, Dr. Browne receiv’d Sentence to stand in the Pillory; which was executed upon him. (286)

Boyer’s account mentions other writers who were prosecuted in 1706: William Pittis, George Sawbridge, William Stephens and Edward Ward, but Lewis acted as a witness only in Browne’s case. Thus, it seems logical that the author of the pamphlet referred to his own trial.

In the preface to the second volume, Browne sarcastically recommends to the reader

four Copies of Verses inscrib’d to the Eternal Fame of that Wonderful Politician, Indefatigable Statesman, Faithful Minister, Incomparable Patriot, Loyal Subject, Facetious Gentleman, Harlequin Le Grand, once the first in the House, tho’ the last in the List, who had the Honour to climb without Merit, and to fall without Pity; the Mirrour of Scribes, the Punisher of Wit, and the President of the P—ll—ry.

The use of the same invented names (Harlequin) and the repeated expressions (for example “little scribblers”12) are not perhaps conclusive evidence of Browne’s authorship of the many pieces from State Tracts but constitute a convincing argument for its support.

Although Browne’s authorship of writings included in State Tracts is still disputable, nevertheless, he is referred to as their unquestionable author. One critic, Howard Weinbrot, in his study on Samuel Johnson, draws attention to The Gothick Hero, a Poem, Sacred to the Memory of Charles XII, King of Sweden, Restorer of the Protestant Religion in Silesia, a poem from the collection, which he attributes to Joseph Browne, placing it, by association, in the context of the Hanoverian dynasty: descendants of brave ancient Goths. In this way Weinbrot argues that the verse should be categorised with those works published in favour of the new king. In other words, the poem was part of a literary output which reflected England’s divided attitude towards the king of Sweden. According to Weinbrot, “this sternly congenial Gothicism thus was easily absorbed into the heroic, glorious, and Protestant as enemies of the usurping, Popish, and arbitrary” (2005, 349). Though Weinbrot provides citations in support of his claim, perhaps it is not entirely surprising that The Gothick Hero should be counted as a contribution to the praise of George I. At first sight the outpouring of enthusiasm
for King Charles XII as the restorer of the protestant faith and a critic of the Catholic Church could be interpreted as praise for a protestant king of the Hanoverian dynasty. However, considering all the facts known about Joseph Browne, associating him with Whig support for the Hanoverian dynasty seems strikingly odd. In order to resolve this apparent contradiction the poem deserves in-depth examination in order to establish if it is Browne’s work or if its interpretation needs to be revised in the light of current research.

3. Posthumous Opinion on Joseph Browne

Finally, a historical account concerning Browne may shed some light on his political adherence. Almost all of what is known about him is reconstructed on the basis of *A Biographical History of England*, the nineteenth century publication by James Granger and later continued by Mark Noble. In their biographical sketch Browne is depicted as follows:

> a charlatan […] he published, but very inaccurately, Sir Theodore Mayern’s Works […] he was a mere tool for the booksellers, and always needy. A libeller of the purity of Queen Anne’s whig ministry, he was exalted to the pillory. But this medico-politico quack had the assurance to continue the “Examiner,” when discontinued by Swift, Prior, Atterbury, Oldsworth and Mrs. Manley; consequently it became as inferior to what it had been, as his abilities were to theirs. (232)

Referring to Browne as “medico-politico quack” is the first hint that helps in revealing Noble’s subjectivism because it directly draws on Defoe’s words through which he addressed Browne during their aforementioned conflict: “I wish him [Browne] better luck at scribbling than doctoring, though I doubt he will prove equally a quack in both professions” (*The Review* Vol. III, 187). Paraphrasing Defoe’s opinion on Browne, Noble immediately identified himself with Defoe’s views. Noble’s biographical account of Browne was later published with few alterations in various collections, for example William Wadd’s *Nugæ Chirurgicae, or a Biographical Miscellany illustrative of a Collection of Professional Portraits* (1824, 27), Thompson Cooper’s *A New Biographical Dictionary* (1873) or in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1886) famously edited by Sir Leslie Stephen. In this way Noble’s work helped to spread the negative opinion of Browne which did not necessarily reflect the historical truth. For instance, Noble and Granger mentioned Browne’s edition of Mayerne’s works, describing it as published “very inaccurately,” which stands in complete contrast to the early twentieth century comments of Norman Moore who wrote that Browne “selected such parts as he thought Mayerne would have wished to print” and “wisely decided to issue the papers unaltered” (109, 111). Perhaps the only information on Browne which stands out in its attempt at being objective rather than
conveying the usual strong and negatively loaded language is Thomas Cooper’s note published in *Notes and Queries* (Ser. 3, Vol. II, 13) a decade before his entry on Browne in *A New Biographical Dictionary*, which is a copy from Noble and Granger’s *A Biographical History of England*. In this ‘note’ Cooper endeavours to create the first ever list of Browne’s works.

Repeatedly published critical opinion concerning both Browne and the apparent decline in *The Examiner*’s quality after he resumed its editorship is not entirely groundless. However, this is not so much due to the poverty of Browne’s literary skills but to the sheer prejudice of the person who expressed such a judgement in the first place. Noble was a clergyman and antiquary supported by John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich, a Patriot Whig and a critic of Walpole. Another patron of his was George Townshend, Earl of Leicester, whose relations with Noble were closer and resulted in his appointment as a family chaplain. George Townshend was a descendant of a family that traditionally represented Whig views, and whose ancestors included Algernon Sidney, a commissioner in Charles I’s trial, and Henry Sydney, a member of the Immortal Seven, signatories to the invitation to William of Orange and who favoured the overthrow of James II. Apart from his political career George was interested in science and engaged himself in contemporary scholarly circles, serving as President of the Society of Antiquaries and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Moreover, Mark Noble was the author of *The Lives of the English Regicides, and other Commissioners of the pretended High Court of Justice, Appointed to sit in Judgement upon their Sovereign, King Charles the First* (1798), a work that referred back to Charles’ I execution in 1649. Edward Vallance argues that Noble “was innovative in encouraging his readers to identify emotionally with the regicides and to see them as individuals worthy of pity as well as enmity” and presented them “as driven by powerful delusions rather than malice” and eventually identifying their actions with madness (45–46). Such attempts at making readers sympathise with the regicides did not justify the crime but effectively presented it in a more positive light. Noble’s ideological preferences regarding the seventeenth century English conflict between the Royalists and Parliamentarians is also markedly visible in his continuation of *A Biographical History of England* which became a source for dictionaries and “clearly sought to tell the nation’s history through the lives of the noteworthy” (Vallance 46). Apparently Browne, though worth noting, was referred to from a deliberately chosen point of view; the explicit siding with what can be described as the “parliamentary – Whig cause.” The reflection of James Granger’s political allegiance can be found in a bitter comment made by Samuel Johnson: “The dog is a whig. I do not like much to see a whig in any dress, but I hate to see a whig in a parson’s gown” (Boswell 410). Doubtless, Browne was remembered as a Tory and High Church writer with anti-Hanoverian and pro-Jacobite inclinations. Therefore, considering
both Granger’s and Noble’s political views and the political allegiance of their mercenaries, the nineteenth century criticism of Browne seems unsurprising.

Conclusion

The article aimed, on the one hand, at drawing a sketch of the early eighteenth century English writer and physician Joseph Browne in an attempt to prove the consistency of his political views, which despite their Tory character were also associated with explicitly Whig support for the Hanoverian dynasty. On the other hand, this text contributes to the discussion on the authorship of a number of works included in *State Tracts*, a two volume edition of miscellaneous texts by “The Author of the Examiner” so far only accredited to Browne. Although the volumes were published anonymously, information on chosen titles from the collection as well as references to the author’s biography included in their prefaces enables us to identify these titles as Browne’s. As a prolific writer Browne was actively engaged in a long lasting war of words with Whig writer Daniel Defoe. Furthermore, he criticised Whig politicians as well as Harley’s moderate policy that comprised of appointing Whigs into high government office. The fact that he was repeatedly punished by the decisions of Harley strongly advocates for his recognition as a Tory supporter helping to impede Harley’s attempts to minimise Tory propaganda. Perhaps due to Harley’s policy of reconciliation, which stood in explicit opposition to St. John’s attempts to consolidate Tory support and lead them towards the idea of restoring the exiled Stuart monarch, Browne engaged in reviving the abandoned publication of *The Examiner*.

Browne’s identified and attributed literary output, engagements in journalism as well as political and literary circles, undoubtedly placed him among the supporters of the Tories and the High Church. It is Browne’s political allegiance that makes it unlikely that he authored any piece in favour of the newly crowned Hanoverian Dynasty, whose candidature had been so strongly advocated by Whig politicians. What is more, Browne’s political allegiance, whose echoes (perhaps not entirely objectively) were still present among nineteenth century historical opinions, strongly indicates a fidelity towards anti-Harleyite, anti-Whig and therefore anti-Hanoverian views. Noble’s bitter criticism of Browne, left as a part of historical heritage, still forms the basis for the common and most accessible knowledge of Browne, bringing him the unjust fame of an early eighteenth century “medico-politico quack” and “a mere tool for the booksellers” (232).
Notes

1. Joseph Browne probably attended Jesus College Cambridge, receiving the degree of M.B. in 1695. There seems to be no evidence of him obtaining any other titles, however as the editor of Theodore de Mayerne’s *Opera Medica* he signed off as *utriusque facultatis doctoris* which in one of his later works (*A Practical Treatise of the Plague, London 1720*) was changed into LL and MD degrees prefixed to his name.

2. *The modern Practice of Physick vindicated: and the Apothecaries clear’d from the groundless Imputations of Dr. Pitt* (1703); *An Account Of the Wonderful Cures Perform’d by the Cold Baths.* (1707); *An Essay towards the forming of a true Idea of Fundamentals in Physick, upon the Mechanism and Structure of the Blood* (1709); *A Practical Treatise of the Plague, and All Pestilential Infections that have happen’d in this Island for the last Century. With a Prefatory Epistle address’d to Dr. Mead* (1720); *Antidotaria; or, a Collection of Antidotes against the Plague, and other Malignant Diseases. Together, With some Decent and Useful Remarks, on the late Pharmacopeia Londinensis* (1721).

3. Apart from editing the aforementioned Theodore de Mayerne’s *Opera Medica* (1700) Browne also popularised the writings and discoveries by translating or reprinting other medical writers: *Institutions in Physick, Collected from the writings Of the Most Eminent Physicians.*

4. For the details of Browne’s “rehearsing” Defoe’s *Review* see Downie 1978, 357–361.

5. For the details see Shaw, 400.

6. This strong anti-moderation view was later repeated in short poem “To the Eternal Shame...” published in *State Tracts* (Vol II, 140).

7. For a detailed account of Browne’s persecutions in 1706 see Downie 1979, 93–95.

8. Downie mentions Foxon’s fairly raised question concerning the distinction between editorship and authorship of *State Tracts* by “the Author of the Examiner” (252).

9. This information was later repeated in *Notes and Queries*, 1862, 13–14.


11. *To the Eternal Shame of Low Ch[ur]ch; To my generous friend and worthy Patriot Harlequin le Grand; To the late Right Honourable, an Epigram.* What may suggest Browne’s (or another sole author’s) hand is the reiterated use of the same expressions and vocabulary.
12 The phrase was used in Browne’s letter to Harley where he alleged that Harley “ruined the trade of little scribblers,” qtd. in Downie 1979, 94.

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