

CHAPTER TWO

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*Iselin and the Swiss Debate  
on Economic Patriotism*

### 1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss Iselin's contribution to the Swiss debate on 'modern', or 'economic', patriotism during the Seven-Years War. Iselin's 'economic patriotism' contained many of the themes developed in the *Patriotic Dreams* of 1755: the simultaneous critique of both excessive luxury and Spartan austerity, the defence of man's natural goodness, and the dedication to the moderate Protestant cause. At the same time, his writings from the late 1750s and early 1760s mark a decisive break with his earlier position. There were two especially noticeable changes in Iselin's work. The first was his focus on the issue of national security; the second was his reappraisal of commerce. For Iselin, these two themes were closely interconnected. Both national security and commerce, he claimed, should become the bedrock for any subsequent reflection on the organisation of a virtuous society. How did this shift come about?

Iselin believed that the Seven-Years War had revealed some fundamental weaknesses within Switzerland's established system of self-defence, weaknesses which could be rectified only with the help of a thriving economy. The question, therefore, was no longer whether commerce should be banned or placed under government control. Commerce, Iselin now believed, was a matter of national survival and had to be given as much freedom as possible. The real question that needed to be answered was how republican politics and patriotism could be developed and adapted to fit the realities of a commercial Europe. Could there be sustainable economic growth without luxury? Was it possible to have a form of patriotism that was as effective in stimulating economic activity as man's base desire for wealth and social standing? Iselin's theory of 'economic patriotism' was designed to provide an answer to this problem.

From the sixteenth century onwards, Switzerland's system of national security had been based on two elements: regiments serving abroad and the local militia. Both were considered, at least officially, as the main guarantee of Switzerland's lasting peace and prosperity. By sending Swiss soldiers abroad, it was commonly argued, Switzerland was able to maintain the respect and friendship of its neighbours. It also effectively allowed the Swiss to maintain a well-trained, modern standing army without having to foot the bill.<sup>1</sup> The militia on the other hand kept the Swiss in a state of continuous alert and gave Switzerland its image of an unbeatable, heavily militarised people, ready to sacrifice their lives for the defence of the fatherland.<sup>2</sup> In his

<sup>1</sup> In his speech to the *Helvetische Gesellschaft* in 1796, the Lucernese magistrate F.B. Meyer von Schauensee, summarised the position of those who, throughout the eighteenth-century, had defended the deployment of foreign regiments as follows: "Da unsere Staaten, sagen sie, aus ökonomischen und politischen Gründen keine stehenden Truppen halten, und doch in der Nothwenigkeit sich befinden, gegen alle Anfälle geübte Truppen zu haben, so entspricht in dieser Hinsicht der fremde Dienst unsern Zwecken und Wünschen. – Mit diesem Dienst sind dann noch die Vortheile verbunden, dass er durch das Reisen und den Aufenthalt unserer Landsleute in fremden Ländern unsere Kenntnisse ausdehnt, und das Feld der Wissenschaften, Künste und Industrie erweitert; – dass er unsern Söhnen einen ehrenvollen Stand verschafft; – und endlich auf einer andern Seite das Land von schlechten Leuten reinigt." See, "Anrede an die Helvetische Gesellschaft", in *Verhandlungen der Helvetischen Gesellschaft in Aarau, im Jahr 1796*, Basel 1796, p. 62-63. On the economic aspect of the Swiss foreign regiments see Hans Conrad Peyer, "Die wirtschaftliche Bedeutung der fremden Dienste für die Schweiz vom 15. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert", in H. C. Peyer, *König, Stadt und Kapital. Aufsätze zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Mittelalters*, Zürich 1982, p. 219-231; see also Hans Dubler, *Der Kampf um den Solddienst der Schweizer im 18. Jahrhundert*, Frauenfeld 1939. For a late eighteenth-century discussion of Swiss foreign regiments, see Rudolf Bolzern, "Vorteile des Gebrauchs von Schweizer Söldnern. Die ökonomisch-politischen Betrachtungen des spanischen Staatsmanns und Reformers Campomanes 1792", in N. Furrer et al. (ed.), *Gente ferocissima. Mercenariat et société en Suisse (XV<sup>e</sup>–XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Lausanne et Zurich 1997, p. 267-277.

<sup>2</sup> This view was, for example, expressed in John Campbell's widely distributed *The Present State of Europe*, London 1750, p. 459-460: "We need no other Account to give us very high Notions of the Force and Bravery of this Nation, than the bare Observation, that they have not only preserved their Freedom in Spite, but have been also always formidable to the most potent of their Neighbours [...]." Also, p. 461-62: "As they are naturally of a Martial Disposition, and accustomed to Arms from their Youth, they usually seek some foreign Service or other [...]. It is owing

writings of the late fifties and early sixties, Iselin dismissed these arguments as pure myth primarily serving the interests of a few aristocratic families who had come to monopolise the mercenary trade. The Swiss foreign regiments, he claimed, had little to do with national security and a great deal more with personal enrichment. Ridiculing the idea that the foreign regiments assured Switzerland the friendship of its neighbours, he pointed out that France had consistently violated the charter which defined the way in which the Swiss troops were to be used. Despite their assurances to the contrary, the French had regularly deployed the troops offensively. As a result, the Swiss had on numerous occasions found themselves in situations where they had to fight their own Confederates. No less sinister were the effects of the foreign regiments on the republics' internal politics.

If the lucrative pensions and bribes that the French paid to various Swiss magistrates had been used to set up a common defence fund, Iselin argued, the foreign regiments could in some sense be seen to be serving the common good. Since none of this had happened, because the pensions had gone straight into the coffers of the few and the mighty, the Confederation was now more divided than ever and incapable of forming any common security policy. The militia, meanwhile, was disorganised, heavily underfunded and in danger of becoming of mere folkloristic value. Concerns about the Confederation's security disposal had first been raised during the last two decades of the seventeenth century, especially by foreign and native diplomats who had aimed to weaken the pro-French lobby within the republics' magistracy.<sup>3</sup> New developments in European warfare, they argued, had

to these People who have served abroad both Officers and Soldiers, that the Swiss are never at a Loss for as large and well-disciplined an Army as any Government in Europe can raise, which are at the same Time the Guardians of their own Liberty, and the Protectors of their Neighbours Freedom [...] so that they may be justly considered, taken in their Situation and their Militia, as the most unconquerable People in Europe." See also Béla Kapossy, "Neo-Roman Republicanism and Commercial Society: The Example of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Berne", in: *Republicanism. A Shared European Heritage*, edited by Q. Skinner and M. van Gelderen, Cambridge 2002, vol. 2, p. 227-247.

<sup>3</sup> See for example the essay written by the Dutch envoy, Petrus Valkenier, *Das Interesse einer gesamten löblichen Eidgenossenschaft bey der itzigen Conjunctionen*, s.l. 1697, p. 5: "Die alten Eydgenossen haben durch ihre Heldenmüthige Thaten Weltwunder gethan [...]. Diese Wunder thaten sie zu solcher Zeit, da sie meistens in

made the once formidable Swiss militias look increasingly outdated. Modern standing armies were not only well equipped and highly disciplined, they could also engage in lengthy campaigns without being exposed to the danger of food shortages. These arguments were neatly summarised by the Vaudois diplomat, François-Louis de Pesme, Seigneur de Saint-Saphorin, in his report to the Bernese government of 1702.

It is impossible to defend ourselves by our own means against the strength of France. [...] We cannot count on our militias for having the same advantages over those who attack us as they did in the past. We can no longer count on the possibility of engaging in the kind of decisive battles that allowed us to defeat our enemies; even if we could, we would always lose because France, having all the means necessary for a lengthy war, would slowly weaken us and make us use up all of our provisions in money and food, abandon agriculture, even without engaging in actual combat.<sup>4</sup>

Armut lebten; da ein Feind ihnen nichts abholen konnte [...]. Würden sie auch wol dergleichen Wunderthaten von sich selbst bey dieser Zeit erwarten können? da sie durch auswärtigen Dienst und Handel grossen Theils zu einer andern Lebens-Art gerathen [...]. Vormals hatten die Eydgenossen mit sothanen Feinden zu schaffen, denen sie mit genauer Noth gewachsen waren, und die höchstens nur mit ungefehr vierzigtausend Mann zu Felde zogen; Nun aber könnten sie mit sothanem Feind zu schaffen bekommen, dem die gesamte hohe Alliierte kümmerlich übermügen, und der mit zwey bis dreymal hundert tausend Mann zu Feld erscheint; Einen Feind, sage ich, der einen Ueberfluss an Geld, Volck, Reuterey, Officierern, Generalen, Kriegsnothwendigkeiten, Kriegs-List und Erfahrung besitzt". Valkenier's proposals for a Swiss-Dutch alliance are discussed in an excellent article by Thomas Maissen, "Petrus Valkeniers republikanische Sendung. Die holländische Prägung des neuzeitlichen schweizerischen Staatsverständnisses", in *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte*, 48, 1998, p. 149-176.

<sup>4</sup> *Considérations sur ce que l'on pourroit faire de plus convenable dans les circonstances ou l'on se trouve pour la seurté du corps Helvétique ...* (1702) (Archives cantonales vaudoises, P. De Mestral, Sect. II, D8/1/1/8, Saint-Saphorin): "[I]l est impossible de nous soutenir seuls et par nos propres forces contre la puissance de la France [...]. [N]ous ne devons point comter, que veu la maniere dont se fait maintenant la guerre, nos millices eussent les memes avantages, qu'elles ont eu par le passé, sur ceux qui nous ont alors attaqués [...]. [N]ous ne pouvions pas comter de donner promptement, ainsi qu'on le faisoit autres fois, de ces batailles descisives, qui nous debarrassoyent d'abord de nos enemis, ou que s'il s'en donnoit, nous y succomberions toujours, puisque la France ayant tous les moyens propres a soutenir longtems une guerre, nous sauroit miner peu a peu et nous faire consumer toutes nos provisions d'argent, et de vivre, et abandonner la culture du pays, sans en venir a des actions generales." On de Pesme, see S. Stelling-Michaud, *Saint Saphorin et*

De Pesme's warning was repeated throughout the first half of the eighteenth century; yet it was only during the second half of the 1750s that the state of the Confederation's national security became a central issue of national political debate.<sup>5</sup> One of the key texts here was an essay by the elderly Lucerne magistrate, Franz Urs Balthasar, *Patriotische Träume eines Eidgenossen*, which Iselin edited in 1758. The title itself, chosen by Iselin, could not have made the shift from 1755 more obvious. These were no longer the dreams of a 'friend of mankind' but those of a 'confederate'. Like Iselin, Balthasar insisted that the idea of a heroic Switzerland was a myth that only served the interests of the local elites. What was needed was a common defence budget to modernise the Swiss militia. "An empire cannot last without arms, arms require money, and money can be raised only through taxation."<sup>6</sup> If the old Swiss had been wise enough to introduce an even modest capital tax for defence spending, their descendents would now, because of the long lasting peace, be in possession of a considerable "common fiscal treasure."<sup>7</sup> The militia could have been reorganised without levying new taxes. Although

*la politique de la Suisse pendant la guerre de succession d'Espagne (1700-1710)*, Villetle-les-Cully 1935. It was also on these grounds, essentially, that Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, declared that a "well-regulated standing army is superior to every militia" [V. i. a]; see *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, edited by R. H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner, The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith, vol. 2, Oxford 1976, p. 705. For a wider account of eighteenth-century Scottish discussions of militias see, John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue*, Edinburgh 1985.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Charles-Guillaume Loys de Bochat's, *Ouvrages pour & contre les services militaires étrangers*, 3 vols, Lausanne et Genève 1738.

<sup>6</sup> *Patriotische Träume eines Eidgenossen*, Basel 1758, p. 31: "Es haben sich Zeiten erzeiget, wo ganze Millionen in ein solch *Ærarium* wurden eingeflossen seyn; die Gnadengelder hätten niemand von dem wahren Nuz des gemeinen Wesens abgeführt, noch verblendet; und hätte man *Pensionen* mit besserm Fug annehmen können, wenn solche zu Vermehrung der allgemeinen Schaz-Kammer wurden bestimmt worden seyn. Ein Reich kan nicht bestehen ohne Waffen, die Waffen nicht ohne Geld, dass Geld kan nicht wohl anders als durch Auflagen gesamllt [sic] werden."

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31: "[W]enn nun in der ganzen schweizerischen Bottmässigkeit auf jeden Rauchfang nur einen Groschen jährlich zu bezahlen wäre geleet worden; in was für eine grosse Summ wurde diese Auflag in so langen friedfertig genossenen Zeiten angewachsen seyn!"

Balthasar did not specify where the money for the modernisation of the Swiss militia might come from, he issued a strong warning that any new taxation in the present economic situation would lead to popular unrest and to the further destabilisation of the Swiss republics.

The *Patriotic Dreams of a Confederate* had a tremendous impact on the German speaking part of Switzerland and generated a heated debate about the future of the Swiss republics in Europe. Many younger patricians, in particular, advocated a severely anti-commercial kind of austere, military republicanism. The only way to undo the mistakes of their forefathers, it was argued, was to recreate the political culture which had existed before the Swiss became mercenaries. There were no pressing reasons why the modern Swiss could not repeat the miracles of 1476, when a united militia had defeated the invader, Charles of Burgundy, and annihilated the largest and most technologically advanced army in Europe. Thus, instead of trying to figure out the economics of modern warfare, the Swiss should immediately recall all foreign troops, sever all ties with their neighbours, and concentrate on abstinence, self-denial, and military exercises.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> A particularly striking example of this call for a return to virtuous poverty is a collection of songs which Johann Kaspar Lavater from Zurich wrote for the *Helvetische Gesellschaft, Schweizerlieder*, third edition, Bern 1768. One of the songs called, *Gemeineidsgenössisches Lied*, for example, contains the following lines: "Einfalt, Einfalt lasst uns lieben, / Friedlich uns in Waffen üben! / Unser Herz und unser Arm / Bleibe für die Freiheit warm! / Schweizer! Weichlichkeit bezwingen! / Nach der Väter Stärke ringen! / Weh, wenn Wollust, Stolz und Pracht / Sklaven aus uns Freyen macht! / Auch das Gold in Königshänden / Soll kein Schweizerauge blenden; / Soll uns seyn wir Wind und Rauch! / Goldne Fesseln fesseln auch. / Nein! Nach Schmeicheley der Fürsten / Soll kein freyer Schweizer dürsten! / Dehmut bleibe unser Ruhm! / Freyheit Schweizereigenthum!" A somewhat different, although equally anti-commercial, position was later expressed by the historian Johannes Müller in his *Fragmente von dem Kriegswesen* of 1777 (*Johannes von Müller sämtliche Werke*, vol. 27, Tübingen 1819) where he praised the virtues of military exercises. See p. 96-97: "Warum legt ihr euch auf den Ackerbau, als auf die Mittel eure Aecker zu behaupten? Warum mehr auf Reden und Witz, als auf Thaten, von welchen man könne reden und singen? – Ich selbst, eurer Väter Lobredner, will eure Schande verewigen, im Fall ihr nicht in euch die alte Tugend aufweckt!", and p. 105: "Warum warten bis die Noth uns zwingt, Brodt, Wein, Fleisch, Salz und anderes zu entbehren; warum nicht lieber auch hierin uns jährlich einige Tage zu exerciren, und in eben diesen Tagen zugleich, etwa einen Marsch vorzunehmen."

Iselin was firmly opposed to the revival of this kind of military republicanism and, during the late 1750s, he became the undisputed leader of a group of likeminded reform thinkers who pushed for the immediate implementation of economic reforms. Even highly motivated militias, he argued, required feeding. Considering Switzerland's dependence on foreign corn, it thus seemed unlikely that a Swiss army would be able to withstand any foreign assault for more than a few days. Nor did he believe that an immediate, unconditional recall of all foreign troops was a feasible option. A much better way to bring the mercenary trade to an end was to improve social and economic conditions in the countryside. By raising the living standards of the population, foreign service would gradually lose its attractiveness and cease to be considered the natural career path for the rural poor. In his letter to Felix Balthasar, the son of Franz Urs Balthasar, from 3 August 1764, Iselin expressed his hope that with the spread of manufactures, "minds would soon become much milder while independence from foreign money could be strengthened. One would soon become rich and hence too expensive for princes and kings. One would no longer require the foreign regiments, and this would place liberty on a more solid footing."<sup>9</sup> Both the fight against the mercenary trade and the establishment of a healthy militia, Iselin concluded, required a strong, competitive economy.

Already in 1756, immediately after the outbreak of war, Iselin had published a short article in the *Helvetische Patriot*, where he urged his fellow citizens to set up institutes of higher education to develop a better understanding of the workings of a modern economy. If in 1755 he had still applauded the wisdom of Hesiod and other, quasi-Xenophontian authors, he now suggested to his readers that they should immerse themselves in the works of Hume and Forbonnais. Both the *Discours politiques* and the *Elemens du Commerce*, even though Iselin rejected their position on luxury, showed that if the Basel manufacturing industry was to withstand increas-

<sup>9</sup> Ferdinand Schwarz, *Briefwechsel des Basler Ratschreibers Isaak Iselin mit dem Luzerner Ratsherren Felix Balthasar*, Basel 1925, p. 177: "Die Gemüther würden dadurch in kurzem ungemeyn gemildert und die Unabhängigkeit von fremden Gelde könnte auf keine bessre Art eingeführt werden. Man wäre bald so reich, dass man den Fürsten uns den Königen zu theuer würde. Man würde auch den fremden Kriegsdienst nicht mehr so nöthig haben, und so würde erst die wahre Freyheit recht festgesetzt werden."

ingly stiff foreign competition, commodity prices had to be kept as low as possible. "It is of crucial importance for our commerce that the price of both commodities and labour are kept low. Everywhere we see the formation of manufactories which will harm our own, unless we manage, by keeping prices low, to have the upper hand over our competitors."<sup>10</sup> Commerce, he went on, was "the art of selling one's own products at the highest profit to other countries and to obtain goods from abroad at the best possible price. The profit consists in this, namely to receive more money than one spends; this is how a country becomes rich."<sup>11</sup>

Iselin identified the main obstacle to economic reform in the dominant role of the guilds in Basel politics. Concerned only with the protection of their privileges, the guilds, he claimed, had transformed Basel into a closed city which was deeply hostile to competition and innovation. Iselin developed his critique of a guild-centred, city republicanism at length in a number of pamphlets published in 1758, where he lobbied for an immediate change in the city's overly restrictive immigration policy.<sup>12</sup> In his *Freymühtige Gedanken über die Entvölkerung unserer Vaterstadt* he argued that it was a matter of national interest that the city abandon its outdated, medieval legislation and increase its population by inviting foreign craftsmen and manufacturers into the citizenry.<sup>13</sup> Iselin underlined the urgency of his appeal with

<sup>10</sup> "Entwurf einer Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften und Künste", in *Der Helvetische Patriot*, 1756, p. 112: "Es ligt unserer Handelstadt gar zu viel daran, dass die Lebensmittel, und dadurch die Handarbeit wohlfeil seyn. Man leget allerorten Manufacturen an, die den unsern schaden können; wenn wir nicht durch die Wohlfeile des Preises in der Concurrenz die Oberhand behalten."

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113-114: "Die Handelschaft ist die Kunst, die Waaren seines Landes mit dem grössetn Vorteile in andere Länder zu verkaufen, um dem seinigen die Waaren anderer Länder mit dem grössten Vortheile zu erhalten."

<sup>12</sup> The economic and political role of the guilds in Basel politics is discussed in August Burckhardt, 'Stände und Verfassung in Basel vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert', in *Basler Jahrbuch 1915*, Basel 1915, p. 70ff.; an excellent overview can be gathered from Ulrich Im Hof, 'Vom politischen Leben im Basel des 18. Jahrhunderts', in *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 48. Band, 1949, p. 141ff.; more specifically, Alfred Müller, 'Die Ratsverfassungen der Stadt Basel von 1521 bis 1798', in *ibid.*, 53. Band, 1954, p. 5ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Freymühtige Gedanken über die Entvölkerung unserer Vaterstadt*, first and second edition, Basel 1758; see also the critique by Iselin's uncle, the law Professor, Johann Rudolf Iselin, *Unpartheyische Betrachtungen der Freymühtigen Gedanken*

the caption "Salus Populi suprema Lex esto". Economic development was a matter of reason of state. Basel, he argued, was ideally located for commerce. Situated at the crossroads of important trading routes and with direct access to the Rhine, it was able to trade with the whole of Europe and thus had every chance of becoming as rich as Geneva, Strasbourg, or the Dutch republics.<sup>14</sup> What kept Basel from realising its economic potential was not its geographical location, but the false belief of its citizenry that accepting new citizens would deprive the inhabitants of their livelihood and reduce their share of the communal property to which, they believed, they were entitled by virtue of being citizens.<sup>15</sup> As he explained, most citizens defended

*über die Entvölkerung unserer Vatterstadt*, [Basel 1758], and Iselin's reply to his uncle, *Anmerkungen über die Unpartheiischen Betrachtungen der Freymühtigen Gedanken über die Entvölkerung unserer Vatterstadt*, [Basel 1758]. The ensuing debate on the acceptance of new citizens is discussed in Ferdinand Schwarz, 'Der Kampf um die Wiederaufnahme neuer Bürger in Basel, 1757-1762', in *Basler Jahrbuch 1925*, Basel 1925, p. 212-249.

<sup>14</sup> Isaak Iselin, *Freymühtige Gedanken*, p. 10-12. See also Ulrich Im Hof, 'Isaak Iselin über Basels Handelsbeziehungen', in *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 64. Band, 1964, p. 257-259. The same argument was also put forward by Iselin's friend, Daniel Bernoulli in his "Von Annehmung neuer Bürger" in *Zugabe zu dem Helvetischen Patrioten* (Basel 1757), p. 57-58: "Weilen ich aber meine neue Bürgerannehmung, grösten Theils auf hier noch nicht getriebene Künste, Handwerke und Gewerbe gründe, damit man derselben Wirklichkeit sehe, so frage ich Sie, meine Herr! Warum sollen wir die Wollweberey nicht so wohl führen, ja in das Feine bringen können, als die nährhafte Stadt Müllhausen? Warum die Uhren, die Piererie, die Galonenfabrique nicht so wohl als ein beflissenes Genf? Oder das erst sowohl als ein kleines la Chaud fond? Warum die Seidenweberey nicht sowohl vermehren, als ein England? [...] Nein. Ich muss es zu unsers Witzes Ruhm sagen, nur unsere Unbevölkerung, nicht der Mangel der Geschicklichkeit, schreckt uns von dergleichen Vervollkommnung ab."

<sup>15</sup> Again, this argument was neatly summed up by Bernoulli in his "Von Annehmung neuer Bürger", p. 69-70: "Es gibt noch eine lächerliche Idee, dass sich etwelche auf unsere kleine Bürgeranzahl noch gross meinen. So viel weniger Bürger wir seyn, (sprechen sie) so viel mehr Theil haben wir (ein jeder) an unserem Canton, welcher uns unterworfen ist. Allein der Ungrund dieses Schlusses, fällt in die Augen. Es ist zwar wahr, viele Erben machen kleine Theile. Hingegen erbet man nicht, bis der todt ist, den man erben will. Wollen denn diese witzigen Staatsleute, ihr Glück auf des Standes Tod bauen? Und wie bald denn wollen sie ihn unter sich theilen? Wahrlich ein sehr patriotischer, und unerhört politischer Satz!"

their hostility towards foreigners on the grounds that the size of the urban population should never exceed the number of people the countryside was able to feed. This was an idea Iselin himself had defended strongly in the *Patriotic Dreams*. By 1758, however, he dismissed it as a false argument, at least with regard to Basel. What the citizens were really concerned about was not so much the maintaining of a healthy balance between the city and countryside but with securing the subject territory as a captive market to compensate for the losses brought about by both the decrease of Basel's population and the poor quality of its products.<sup>16</sup>

According to Iselin, the citizens of Basel now faced two options. They could either react to the further dwindling of the urban population by trying to impose ever more restrictive economic regulations. Alternatively, they could turn Basel into an open city and increase population density to a point at which a local market could be maintained.<sup>17</sup> It was this second option that Iselin promoted in the *Freymühtige Gedanken*. The Basel citizens, he claimed, seemed to have forgotten that new citizens were not only produc-

<sup>16</sup> For a fuller account of the relationship between the Basel guilds and the subject territory, see Margarete Vettiger, *Die obrigkeitliche Marktpolitik für Agrarprodukte und ihre Wirkung auf die Landschaft*, Weinfelden 1941; still useful is also the study by Abraham Ass, *Das wirtschaftliche Verhältnis zwischen Stadt und Land im Kanton Basel vornehmlich im 18. Jahrhundert*, Breslau 1930; also, Carlo Moos, "Freiheit für sich, Herrschaft über die Andern. Die Schweiz in der frühen Neuzeit", in Thomas Fröschl (ed.), *Föderationsmodelle und Unionsstrukturen. Über Staatsverbindungen in der frühen Neuzeit vom 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, München 1994, p. 142-162. Basel's constitutional settings are discussed in Andreas Heusler, *Verfassungsgeschichte der Stadt Basel im Mittelalter*, Basel 1860; Burckhardt, August, "Stände und Verfassung in Basel vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert", in *Basler Jahrbuch 1915*, Basel 1915, p. 70-115; Alfred Müller, *Die Ratsverfassung der Stadt und Republik Basel von der Reformation bis zur Helvetik (1529-1798)*, Diss. Basel 1945; see also Christian Simon's rich study, *Untertanenverhalten und obrigkeitliche Moralpolitik. Studien zum Verhältnis zwischen Stadt und Land im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert am Beispiel Basels*, Basel 1981.

<sup>17</sup> Isak Iselin, *Freymühtige Gedanken*, p. 8-9: "Der Mangel der Einwohner ist dagegen einer Stadt höchst schädlich, wenn der innere Verbrauch dadurch gehemmet, die Arbeit vieler Bürger überflüssig gemacht, derselben Nahrung und Verdienst geschmälert, ihre Besitzungen und Güter an ihrem Preise geschwächt, dadurch der Credit zernichtet, und also der in einer Stadt so nöthige Kreislauf gehindert, Armuth und Elend gehäuffet, und die Krankheit des gemeinen Wesens immer vermehret wird."

ers but also consumers. By inviting foreigners to take up residence and to accept citizenship, the Basel artisans would gain new customers, while the exposure to fresh competition would force them to improve the quality of their work. Even if some traditional businesses might experience some losses, the republic as a whole would profit from this upsurge in economic activity. Iselin firmly opposed the idea that any opening up of the city to foreign artisans would have to be preceded by an improvement of the local agricultural sector. While insisting on the importance of conducting agricultural experiments, and the dissemination of the ideas of the French agronomist Du Hamel amongst the rural population, he believed that the only way to stimulate agrarian reforms was by increasing the demand for primary goods. Unless the farmers were assured that their efforts would be rewarded adequately, no significant improvement was ever likely to occur. Iselin mentioned a second reason why economic reforms in Basel should start with a modification of the immigration laws. Basel, he pointed out, was surrounded by corn-producing regions, all of which would be more than willing to supply a new and strong Basel with the necessary commodities, even during times of war. Grain merchants, he pointed out, knew no enemies, only buyers. Once the rich citizens of Basel began to see the profits that could be made from grain trade, they would start investing in the local agriculture and bring it up to the level of southern Germany and Alsace.

By 1760 Iselin was convinced that his model for the economic recovery of Basel could also, with some modifications, be applied to the whole of Switzerland. The Confederation could easily double its population, increase agricultural output and develop a competitive manufacturing industry, if only the republics could find the courage to shed their late-medieval heritage and abandon their highly restrictive economic policies. By opening up their cities to members of other republics, abolishing import tariffs and other traditional forms of economic regulation, the Swiss could develop a strong internal market and gradually reduce their dependence on foreign producers.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Some interesting comments of this issue can be found in Karl Schwaber, *Zentralistisch-politische Reformvorschläge in der Schweiz im 18. Jahrhundert*, Sonderabdruck, [s.l. s.d.]; also by the same author, "Die schweizerische Geschichtsschreibung im 18. Jahrhundert und der nationale Gedanke", in *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 26, 1927, p. 152ff.

In the *Freymühtige Gedanken* Iselin made it clear that the question was not whether it wouldn't be better to live in a real Christian society rather than in an economically vibrant, commercial Switzerland. "I too", he insisted, "would rather be the citizen of such an ideal and truly Christian republic, than of the wealthiest commercial city on earth."<sup>19</sup> The question rather was whether a 'truly Christian republic', one that "did not know such deadening words as riches, extensive commerce, and luxury", was capable of survival in the midst of belligerent and commercially-aggressive nations. If Basel really wanted to become a genuinely Christian republic, it only had to follow the advice he had given in his *Patriotic Dreams* and "deport at least one thousand families of citizens", the rentiers and "capitalists", who were infesting the community with their idleness and luxury.<sup>20</sup> Iselin warned that their joy would be of only limited duration. Truly Christian societies were set to become the prey of their neighbours. Given the realities of modern Europe, the Swiss republics had no alternative but to do what all other nations did, namely to fortify their positions as best as they could. Moreover, if strength could be gained only through a modern economy, it followed that the Swiss, too, had to modernise their republics and open the gates to commerce. "In this matter, we have to follow the wise maxims of Solon and, rather than try to give ourselves the best laws that can be imagined, we should content ourselves with laws that are best suited to our circumstances and our way of thinking."<sup>21</sup>

The real question, according to Iselin was whether a new, commercial Switzerland would be able to retain some of its most characteristic features, such as its politics, its emphasis on Christian values and its republican virtues, or whether it would necessarily become something completely differ-

<sup>19</sup> *Freymühtige Gedanken*, p. 38-39: "Wäre es uns aber nicht besser, wenn wir eine kleine Anzahl ruhiger, tugendhafter und minder reicher, aber glükseliger Bürger wären? Wäre es uns nicht zu unserm wahren Wol vorträglich, wenn wir ohne die betäubenden Wörter von Reichthümern, grosser Handelschaft, Pracht zu kennen, uns zu einer weisen Mässigung unserer Begirthen bequemten? [...] Ich wollte auch lieber der Bürger einer solchen filosofischen und wahrhaft christlichen Republik, als der blühendsten Handelstadt in der Welt sein. Ist es uns aber möglich, uns dermalen in diese Schranken zu setzen."

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

ent. Given that the more classical republican virtues, such as self-denial and self-sacrifice, remained incompatible with commercial society, were there any other virtues that could take their place? Also, should these substitute virtues be instilled only into an impartial elite distinct from commercial society, or the citizenry, or the entire population? Iselin addressed these questions in a number of publications. In 1758 there appeared a revised edition of the *Patriotic Dreams of a Friend of Mankind*, to which Iselin added a chapter on 'Democracy' and two independently written essays, entitled 'Der Patriot' and 'Der Antipatriot'. This was followed in 1759 by an essay on luxury, *Von der Üppigkeit*, which was published in Emanuel Wollebs, *Helvetische Nachlese*, while in 1760 he published his treatise on legislation, *Versuch über die Gesetzgebung*.<sup>22</sup> However, the most interesting of Iselin's works from the early years of the war is undoubtedly his collection of essays, entitled the *Philosophische und politische Versuche*, first published in Zurich in 1760. One essay in particular deserves our attention, namely the 'Briefe über Herrn Doctor Browns Englische Sitten' where he gives a critical analysis of John Brown's famous *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* first published in 1757.<sup>23</sup>

Brown's *Estimate* was a violent philippic against the vices of contemporary society in general, and of the English elite in particular, which he held to be responsible for England's initial setback against France in 1756.<sup>24</sup> The English elite, Brown claimed, had succumbed to the spirit of commerce and, as a result, had become weak and effeminate, lacking in the kind of

<sup>22</sup> Iselin developed his view on luxury in his essay, *Plutus oder von den Reichthümern* (Basel 1762) where he directly turned against the anti-commercial egalitarianism that his friend, Emanuel Wolleb, had advocated in several of his entries to the *Helvetische Patriot*. See especially, "Die Meinung eines Barbarn" (*Helvetischer Patriot*, 1756, p. 407-413) where Wolleb defends the Roman agrarian laws as the most appropriate way to forestall the political effects of excessive individual wealth. See also Iselin, *Palämon, oder von der Üppigkeit* (Zürich 1769) and his *Der zweite Palämon oder von dem Aufwande* (Zürich 1770).

<sup>23</sup> John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, fifth edition, London 1757.

<sup>24</sup> On Brown, see P.M. Horsley, *Dr. John Brown (1715-1766)*, Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archeological Society, Volume LXIX – New Series, 1969; Donald D. Eddy, *A Bibliography of John Brown*, New York 1971.



virtues that military leadership required. Despite her superior wealth, Brown warned, England would in the long term prove inferior to her enemy.<sup>25</sup> The reason for this, he believed, was that the French elite, in contrast to its English counterpart, seemed more immune to the spirit of commerce. If, in England, even the upper classes had been infected by mercantile values, in France commercial society stopped at the nobility which was still ruled according to old notions of honour.<sup>26</sup> Real honour, rather than the “Debility of modern Honour”<sup>27</sup>, was able to resist the gravitational pull of vanity and luxury. What mattered to a French noble officer was not the admiration of a fickle and envious populace, but the imaginary applause of his ancestors who had died whilst serving the nation. Not only that, French honour, which its English critics (following Montesquieu) wrongly ridiculed as “false honour”, had even affected the lower ranks, thereby effectively providing the nation with a “force little inferior to that of public Virtue.”<sup>28</sup> The pervasiveness of the principle of honour in French society also helped to explain the seemingly paradoxical situation whereby “France hath become powerful, while she seemed to lead the Way in Effeminacy”, and whereby the French could simultaneously be “effeminate yet brave; insincere, yet honourable: hospitable, not benevolent: [...] warlike, yet polite: plausible, not virtuous.”<sup>29</sup>

In his *Briefe über Herrn Doctor Browns Englische Sitten* Iselin homed in on precisely this issue. He strongly criticised Brown’s suggestion that

<sup>25</sup> “[W]ill any Man of Sense assert, that the Circumstances of *paying* an Army or Fleet, is the one thing that will decide a War? ‘Tis true, indeed Provisions, Arms, Ammunition are necessary; and therefore *Wealth*, because it procures them. But will a General or Admiral therefore gain Victory, only because his Men are furnished with Provisions, Arms, and Ammunition? If not, what can Trade and Wealth do, towards making a Nation victorious? Again, therefore, let me remind my Countrymen, that the capital Question still remains, not, “who shall *pay*”, but “who shall *fight*?” John Brown, *An Estimate*, p. 197.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137: The “effeminate Manners [of the French] affect not their national Spirit of *Defence*, because they are controuled [sic] by the Principle of military *Honour*.”

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140-141. Brown had already developed his distinction between ‘false’ and ‘true’ honour in his moral poem, *Honour. A Poem*, London 1743.

France could be seen as a successful model of how a modern economy could be combined with a military, non-utilitarian ethos. He also opposed any idea that the centrifugal forces of commerce could be contained simply through the presence of a quasi-Platonic elite that remained aloof from the wheeling and dealing of the common people. Once commerce had developed to a certain point, the presence of such a virtuous elite necessarily had to become an obstacle to the ambition of common men. France, he believed, had not yet reached this point. But once that it did, Iselin predicted, the French nation would be faced with two possible and equally undesirable scenarios. Either the citizens would abolish the allegedly virtuous, military elite by force, and replace it with a system that proved more accommodating to both commerce and to men’s ambitions. Alternatively, the elite would have to throttle the economy and seek to acquire national wealth, not through commerce and trade, but through territorial expansion.

Iselin believed that there was a third possibility. A nation could be both stable *and* economically vibrant if the work of counterbalancing the potentially dislocating effects of commerce was spread more evenly. Placing the burden of patriotism squarely onto the shoulders of a small and, ideally, impartial elite, was what the “new teachers of politics” proposed.

This new wisdom takes away all the burden of virtue from the shoulders of the citizens and places it on those of the rulers. These should now, with a more than human wisdom and with almost divine strength, create order, happiness, and might from the immense chaos of common corruption, weakness, and confusion. What these gentlemen believe is impossible for God, [...] they nevertheless demand of a weak and blind human spirit. They don’t seem to realise that their requests are even more chimerical and confused than all the Platonic dreams which they find so laughable.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Philosophische und politische Versuche*, p. 30-31: “Diese neue Weisheit wälzet alle Last der Tugend ab den Schultern der Bürger auf die von ihren Vorstehern. Diese sollen mit einer mehr als menschlichen Weisheit und einer bey nahe göttlichen Kraft aus dem ungeheuern Chaos der allgemeinen Verderbniss, Schwachheit und Verwirrung, Ordnung, Glückseligkeit und Macht erschaffen. Was diese Herren der Gottheit selbst absprechen, was sie der alles umfangenden Vorsehung unmöglich glauben, das fordern sie von der Schwachheit und der Blindheit des menschlichen Geistes. Sie überlegen nicht, dass ihre Forderungen noch chimärischer und ungereimter sind, als alle platonischen Träume, welche sie so auslachungswürdig finden.”

Rather, legislators should seek to inject the values that motivated the elite into the very midst of commercial society. Iselin suggested that a modified version of honour would be most suitable for the task. The introduction of a merit-based system of honour and the handing out of signs of public appreciation enabled English or French merchants to redouble their efforts not just for profit's sake, but for the sake of honour and the fatherland. A successful merchant or hard-working artisan would be seen to be as much of a patriot as a soldier who risked his life in combat.

The central question for Iselin was whether a merit-based system of honour could be established in a republican context. Iselin was convinced that it could. In order to promote his ideas, he set up the so-called *Helvetische Gesellschaft* in 1761 and invited likeminded patriots from all over Switzerland to join. It soon became the rallying point for Swiss reformers, especially from the German speaking part.<sup>31</sup> While Iselin himself had a clear economic and moral agenda for the society in mind, the rapid increase in its members effectively prevented the *Helvetische Gesellschaft* from ever developing an easily recognisable profile or agreement on a common view of what 'economic patriotism' might be. Many of the debates that took place at the annual meetings at Schinznach simply replayed the traditional divisions within the Swiss reform camp. More important for the promulgation of Iselin's ideas was his involvement in two other societies, namely the *Economic Society* and the *Patriotic Society* in Berne. During the early 1760s, Berne became the centre for Swiss economic reform thinking and many of the key ideas put forward by the *Economic Society* corresponded fully to those that Iselin had developed during the late 1750s. Berne was also firmly aristocratic, and Bernese reformers were accordingly immensely interested in the European debate on 'commercial' versus 'military nobility' and in

<sup>31</sup> The activity of the *Helvetische Gesellschaft* is discussed at length in Ulrich Im Hof and François de Capitani, *Die Helvetische Gesellschaft, Spätaufklärung und Vorrevolution in der Schweiz*, 2 vols, Frauenfeld und Stuttgart 1983. A lexicographical overview of all eighteenth-century Swiss societies can be found in Emil Erne, *Die schweizerischen Sozietäten. Lexikalische Darstellung der Reformgesellschaften des 18. Jahrhunderts in der Schweiz*, Zürich 1988. Also, Hans Hubrig, *Die patriotischen Gesellschaften des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Weinheim 1957. For a more general European account of these societies see Ulrich Im Hof, *Das gesellige Jahrhundert. Gesellschaft und Gesellschaften im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, München 1982.

theories of republican honour. Iselin was a member of both societies and his ideas were highly valued. For Iselin, Berne became the testing ground of the theory of economic patriotism. Many of his thoughts on this subject were developed in collaboration with his Bernese friends and can therefore be fully understood only within the Bernese context.

During the early 1760s the Bernese, together with Iselin, developed a number of different models of economic patriotism. Iselin commented on all of them and contributed significantly to their theoretical refinement. The present chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will deal with the *Economic Society's* own project of developing a theory of honour-based economic patriotism. The second section will then focus on the internal Bernese debate about economic patriotism. Special attention will be paid to the *Patriotic Society* and its attempt to amend the theory of 'economic patriotism' in order to meet the criticisms expressed by some Zurich-based republicans. In the third section I shall present Iselin's own, final, model.

## 2. *The Economic Society and the critique of aristocratic Berne*

### 2.1. *The political and economic critique of Bernese Welfarism*

There are various reasons why Iselin became interested in Berne. Some were connected to his close friendship with some of the younger reformers like Vincent Bernard Tschärner, Niklaus Emanuel Tschärner and Daniel von Fellenberg. But no less important was the particular nature of Bernese politics and the way that it seemed to distinguish Berne not only from all the other Swiss republics but also from every other European state.<sup>32</sup> During the eighteenth century, the republic of Berne had acquired an almost

<sup>32</sup> See Béla Kapossy, "Neo-Roman Republicanism and Commercial Society: The Example of Eighteenth-century Berne", in Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism. A Shared European Heritage*, vol. 2, Cambridge 2002, p. 227-247. One of the best eighteenth-century Swiss accounts of Berne's political and constitutional arrangements is the article "Bern" in V. B. Tschärner and G. E. von Haller (eds.), *Historische, geographische und physikalische Beschreibung des Schweizerlandes*, vol. 1, Bern 1782, p. 119-207. See also J. G. Heinzmann, *Beschreibung der Stadt und Republik Bern*, 2 vols, Bern 1794-1796.

mythical status within European ideological debates on political economy. Occupying roughly a third of the Confederation's territory, equipped with a reasonably well-trained militia, and supported by a strongly military culture, Berne was widely seen as the last remaining, truly 'Machiavellian', non-commercial republic on the continent. The standard eighteenth-century phrase – 'Berne is rich without commerce' – indicates the distance which, many foreign observers believed, separated virtuous Berne from the large, modern trading nations of Europe. The differences were indeed noticeable. Unlike most other states, Berne was not only free of debt but had amassed a huge cash reserve, some of which was kept in the vaults underneath the city hall (until it was looted by Napoleon's troops in 1798). Berne's Patriciat, while by no means as austere as that in other Swiss republics, was subjected to a fairly strict internal discipline. A Bernese patrician, as the eighteenth-century Bernese historian J.-R. Sinner put it, very much lived for and by the state.<sup>33</sup> Most of them pursued either military careers in one of the Bernese regiments in France, or entered the administration in the hope that this might increase their chances of getting elected into the Council of Two Hundred. Moreover, unlike those of Basel, Zurich, or Geneva, Berne's patricians were almost all landowners and spent the summer months on their estates. Commercial activities were shunned as lowly professions considered incompatible with the standing of a member of the sovereign body.<sup>34</sup> Due to its fiscal discipline, military spirit, and anti-commercialism, Berne, it was regularly argued, was the only state of some significance which had managed to escape the dynamics of modern commercial politics. Looking back, the Bernese Emanuel Friedrich von Fischer argued that the most characteristic feature of pre-revolutionary Berne had been its strict opposition to modern notions of 'political economy'.

The political economy, which in recent times has been so amply discussed and which, with the help of a panoply of contradictory theories, has been founded on inalterable truths, was treated by the Bernese government from the simple viewpoint

<sup>33</sup> *Berne au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Extrait d'un volume inédit du Voyage dans la Suisse occidentale (1781)*, Berne 1853, p. 13: "Le souverain bonheur d'un citoyen de Berne, c'est d'être du conseil des 200."

<sup>34</sup> See the highly informative article by Edgar Hans Brunner, "Ist den bernischen Standesherrn eine wirtschaftliche Betätigung untersagt worden?", in *Berner Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Heimatkunde*, 1992, p. 151-163.

of a large household. Whatever seemed to be conducive [to this household] was encouraged; what ever seemed disadvantageous was impeded.

The common principles of the old Bernese fiscal administration derived from the idea of patrimony which provided the foundation of this commonwealth; the administration of finances was called 'the Household' and the government compared its duties to those of a loyal and careful head of the household. Following this simple idea, the republic did not know of any so called system of finance, that is to say, of a systematic exploitation of individual people's wealth and labour in order to pay for expenses used to promote the well-being mostly of others.<sup>35</sup>

Fischer's account of 'old Berne' (which seems to have been largely inspired by volume six of Karl Ludwig von Haller's famous *Restauration der Staatswissenschaft*) was intended to be a polemical critique of nineteenth-century Bernese Liberalism.<sup>36</sup> Historical accuracy was not his main concern. Yet the image he drew of Berne, where an internally coherent Patriciat commanded the economy like an *oikos despote* over the *oikos*, very much corresponded to the self-understanding of many patricians in the first half of the eighteenth century. Berne, it was regularly claimed, amounted to one big family, where both the citizens and subjects were the children, and where the rulers were the impartial, loving parents. Arguments of this sort featured prominently in the works that patricians wrote in defence of their own elaborate welfare programme.<sup>37</sup> From the 1720s onwards, the Bernese

<sup>35</sup> Emanuel Friedrich von Fischer, *Rückblicke eines alten Berners*, Bern 1868, p. 55: "Die in neuerer Zeit so viel besprochene Staatsökonomie, über welche widersprechende Theorien abwechselnd als untrügliche Axiome dargestellt werden, war von der ehevorigen Regierung Berns unter dem ganz einfachen Stadtpunkt eines grossen Haushalts aufgefasst. Was einem solchen nützlich schien, suchte man zu fördern, was nachtheilig, zu verhindern." See also p. 36. "Die allgemeinen Grundsätze der altbernischen Finanzverwaltung entsprachen dem Patrimonialbegriffe, der diesem Gemeinwesen im allgemeinen zum Grunde lag; die Finanzverwaltung hiess der "Haushalt" und den Befugnissen eines treuen und sorgfältigen Hausvaters gemäss seine Pflichten zu erfüllen, war das Bestreben der Regierung. Nach diesem einfachen Begriffe gab es in der Republik kein sogenanntes Finanzsystem, d. h. keine systematische Ausbeutung des Vermögens und der Arbeit der Einzelnen, um Kosten zu bestreiten, welche vornehmlich andern zu gut kommen sollte."

<sup>36</sup> Karl Ludwig von Haller, *Restauration der Staatswissenschaft oder Theorie des natürlich-geselligen Zustands, der Chimäre des künstlich-bürgerlichen Entgegensetzt*, vol. 6, "Von den Republiken oder freien Kommunitäten", Winterthur 1825.

<sup>37</sup> See, Alexander Ludwig von Wattenwil's *Rede eines Eidgenossen von der Glückseligkeit der Unterthanen unter einer freien Regierung* (Bern 1765), where he

government initiated the construction of various costly public institutions, including hospitals, armouries, churches, alms houses, orphanages and cantonal roads, which, it claimed, were all proof of the Patriciat's benevolent patriotism.<sup>38</sup> When focusing on Berne's pioneering role in the development of new forms of public welfare, historians have usually overlooked the fact that Berne's Welfarism was hotly debated, both within the Bernese citizenry as well as in the rest of Switzerland. From the point of view of the citizenry, Berne's lavish Welfarism was part and parcel of the ongoing aristocratisation of Bernese politics, and an attempt to silence all those families who were theoretically still eligible for office but who had *de facto* lost any chance of entering the self-selective, sovereign Council of Two Hundred.<sup>39</sup>

emphasises the benevolent, paternalistic nature of Berne's patrician regime. "Waren es nicht Väter, die ihren Schatz öffneten, und ihren Kindern Brodt und Aertzte verschafften. Wie viele haben noch seit kurzem auch allhier Ihnen ihre Genesung zu verdanken? Sind es nicht Väter, die so sorgfältig vor den Frieden wachen [...]? Wo sind Regenten, die ihre Schätze nicht auf den Häuftern ihrer Unterthanen einernden?" (p. 24)

<sup>38</sup> See for example Sinner, *Berne au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, p. 20: "La grande charité des établissements bernois et la beauté des bâtimens qu'on y a destinés a passé en proverbe; on dit que dans cette ville les pauvres sont logés comme des princes et les grands comme des pauvres." See also p. 22: "Le Grenier public de Berne est un des plus beaux bâtimens de la ville. [...] Il faut observer ici que le système de la république de Berne est de payer la plus grande partie des benefices et des charges publiques en denrées beaucoup plus qu'en argent. Cela me parait fort sage: car l'homme vit toujours à-peu-près de la même quantité de denrées, tandis que la valeur relative de l'argent monnayé est sujet à de grandes variations [...]. C'est en pensions de cette espèce qu'une grande partie des revenus de la république en blé et en vin sont annuellement employés. C'est une grande famille, dont l'Etat est le père et qui nourrit ses enfants, qui sont les citoyens."

<sup>39</sup> Such arguments featured prominently in the manifestos that were written in defence of the so called *Bürgerlärm*, the citizen revolt of 1749. According to Emanuel Fueter, who was one of its leaders, the political nature of patrician Welfarism could be seen in the relief which adorned the entrance to the lavishly built, new hospital and which showed a pelican feeding its young with its own blood: "Der Pelican sole vorstellen, Eine hohe Mildreiche Gnädige Oberkeit, die Jungen Pelicanen sollen seyn Gemeine Burgere, welche der Alte mit dem auss seinem Leib gezapft[en] Blut ernehrt; die Inscription soll seyn: *Christo in Pauperibus*. Für Gott und die arm gemachten Bürger." *Observationen und freye Gedanken, über den Heütigen Zustand der Stadt Bern*, Berner Bürgerbibliothek, Mss.h.h.III.51\_16.

Bernese citizens repeatedly complained about the introduction of this quasi-Aristotelian vocabulary into the language of Bernese politics. Samuel Henzi argued in his Manifesto of 1749, by describing the citizens as children and part of the patrician *oikos*, the Patriciat had directly violated the constitution which described the city as a whole as the sole locus of *potestas*.<sup>40</sup>

Iselin, too, was highly critical of attempts by Berne's Patriciat to present itself as a virtuous caste that maintained a firm distance from economic life. In his *Patriotic Dreams*, he directly alluded to the Bernese political model, dismissing, in his chapter 'Die Patricier oder die Aristokratie', the idea that a politics of the common good could be best realised through the establishment of a virtuous elite. While accepting that this solution was still preferable to the protectionist city-republicanism of Basel, where the political agenda simply reflected the interests of the guilds, Iselin insisted that even a non-commercial elite was prone to corruption.

The well-being of the people will cease to be the first principle of politics and will become secondary to the well-being of the patricians, or rather, the patricians alone will constitute the people, just as the ministers alone constitute the church. The dearest blood of the citizens and subjects will become prey to the nobility's greed, and the *state will be withdrawn from the state* and become the patrimony of a few families.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Samuel Henzi, *Denkschrift über den politischen Zustand der Stadt und Republik Bern im Jahre 1749*, posthumously published in *Helvetia*, vol. 1, 1823, p. 402-443. See p. 437: "Unlängst ist vor dem Grossen Rath vorgeschlagen worden, in den Mandaten die *Verbalia*: Unsere Angehörige zu Stadt und Land, zu gebrauchen, so dass sie uns sogar das Bürgerrecht absprechen wollen." For a recent discussion of the 1749 revolt, see Urs Haffner, "Auf der Suche nach Bürgertugend: Die Verfasstheit der Republik Bern in der Sicht der Opposition von 1749" in Michael Böhler et al. (eds.), *Republikanische Tugend. Ausbildung eines Schweizer Nationalbewusstseins und Erziehung eines neuen Bürgers*, Genf 2000, p. 283-299.

<sup>41</sup> Isaak Iselin, *Filosofische und Patriotische Träume* (1758), p. 146: "Das Heil des Volkes ist nicht mehr das erste Geseze, sondern das Heil der Patricier, oder vielmehr die Patricier alleinmachen das Volk aus, wie die Geistlichkeit allein die Kirche. Das theureste Blut der Bürger und Unterthanen wird der Raubbegierde des Adels leicht ohne Rettung ausgesetzt, und der Staat wird dem Staat selbst entzogen, und zu dem Erbgute einiger Familien gemacht". A more adequate rendering of Iselin's striking formula, 'the state will be withdrawn from the state' would be, 'the Patriciat becomes the state itself.'

Iselin was especially hostile to any suggestion that the elite should draw its livelihood from the state (as indeed had happened in the case of Berne). Public office would then come to be seen not as a burden and duty, but as an easy way to lay one's hands on public funds.

Berne's Welfarism was also criticised from within the Patriciat. Here, the concern was less with the aristocratisation of Berne's politics than with the way it was being financed. One common complaint was that patrician welfare politics had led to a massive increase in public spending, which could no longer be met by traditional sources of income. Indeed, the lavish welfare programme was believed to be largely financed through the additional income generated by Berne's heavy investments in both the London and Amsterdam stock markets. It is estimated that throughout the eighteenth century the dividends from Berne's investments in the public debts of foreign states amounted to roughly a third of the republic's total income.<sup>42</sup> Many patricians complained that Berne's investment strategy was diametrically opposed to the republican ideals of prudence and good housekeeping and that it had tied the future of the city to the economic and military fate of the large European trading nations who were Berne's debtors. The allegedly strict separation between politics and the economy which foreigners so much admired, the argument went, was based on a ruthlessly machiavellian exploitation of the mechanisms of the European system of state finance.<sup>43</sup> It

<sup>42</sup> See the detailed study by Julius Landmann, *Die auswärtigen Kapitalanlagen aus dem Berner Staatsschatz im 18. Jahrhundert. Eine finanzhistorische Studie*, Jahrbuch für Schweizer Geschichte, 28/29, 1903-1904.

<sup>43</sup> See especially C. F. Steiger's fascinating "Rede über die Errichtung der ausländischen Finantzen des Hohen Standes" of 1784, (*Gesellschaftliche Unterhaltungen patriotischer Freunde*, Berner Bürgerbibliothek, Mss.h.h.xxviii.96) where he argues that the city's investment policy was the real reason behind Berne's ability to successfully combine wealth and virtue. "Sobald einmal die fremden Kriegsdienste, die Gewohnheit der jungen Leute zu reisen, die unglückselige Oberherrschafft der Mode, und tausend andere Umstände die ehemalige Lebensart verändert, sobald als mit Verfeinerung der Sitten Gemächlichkeit und Pracht sich bey uns eingeschlichen hatten, so würden nothwendig Armuth und Elend unser trauriges Loos worden seyn, wenn man nicht gewusst hätte, den Schaden auf einer andern Seiten zu ersetzen. Womit sollten wir die unzähligen fremden Waren bezahlen, welche nun als Nothwendigkeiten des Lebens angesehen werden, in einem Lande ohne Manufacturen, wie das unsrige damals ware, welches ausser etwas Leinwand, Vieh

was also based on dangerously shaky foundations.<sup>44</sup> Many patricians feared that a sudden collapse of the public debts of Europe's major powers would also lead to the fall of aristocratic Berne.<sup>45</sup>

Funding the costs of welfare was a source of domestic political argument. While Berne's charitable institutions contributed to the image of the

und Käsen nichts auszuführen hatte, und dagegen tausend Theile der Handlung von seinen Nachbarn einkaufen musste? [...] Was möchte wohl die Wirkung hievon gewesen seyn? Hätte vielleicht die Noth jenen goldenen Tagen des Alterthums wieder herbeygerufen, wo Pracht und Üppigkeit noch unbekanntere Worte waren? Würde sie die liebe Einfalt, die Reinigkeit der Sitten hergestellt haben? Dies mag vielleicht derjenige glauben, welcher die Welt bloss aus den Büchern kennt. [...] Unsere Väter liefen Gefahr, die Früchte der Tapferkeit und der Weisheit ihrer Ahnen zu verlieren. Bald hätten sie den Überfluss mit Mangel vertauscht. [...] Die Aussern Gelder haben ferners bey uns einen allgemeinen Wohlstand bewirkt, der sich in allen öffentlichen Geschäften äussert. Die ganze Regierung trägt das Gepräge der Eigennützigkeit an sich, eine Eigenschaft, deren Seltenheit die Grösse des Werths beweiset. [...] So ist es eine ausgemachte Sache, dass die Stiftung derselben die wohlthätigsten Folgen für uns gehabt, dass sie vieles, ja das meiste zu dem blühenden Zustande unseres werthen Vatterlandes beygetragen hat, und mit Recht als die Hauptquelle desselben anzusehen ist." For an overview of these debates, see Béla Kapossy, "Le prix de la liberté: idéologie républicaine et finances publiques à Berne au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle" in François Flouck et al. (eds.), *De l'Ours à la Cocarde. Régime bernois et révolution en pays de Vaud (1536-1798)*, Lausanne 1998, p. 143-161.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner, *Etwas für die Staats-Oeconomie*, Bern 1788.

<sup>45</sup> In his speech entitled, *Rede, die Ich vor R. und B. gehalten da die Stadt Lion von Ihr. Gn. Gelt an zu leihen suchte, Ihr antrag aber verworffen worden*, delivered in front of the Council of Two Hundred (prior to 1756), the Bernese magistrate, Heinrich Emanuel Steiger warned: "Die Vermehrung der Einkünfften hat dem Luxum auff unzehlbarhe weise so wohl dem Stand als denen particularen beygebracht: da nun einerseits der Luxus allezeit steigt und zunimmt, der Reichtumb aber abnimmt; anderseits, sowohl die Particularen als der Stand aus gleicher Quelle schöpfen müssen, so muss in Wahrheit diejenige Zeit gefährlich seyn, wann die Einkünfften ohngeacht aller ausserordentlich erschöpften Vermehrungen, nicht mehr zulänglich sind; Wollte man durch die schnelle Progression des Luxus und seines bisshierigen Lauffs Calculieren wann dieser umstand eintreffen wird, so würde man finden, er seye näher als man glaubt. [...] Was aber unss hierin insonderheit schwächt ist, dass die aussgaaben zu denen unss Frembde Zinsen verleiten, beständig fort dauwren, und zu einem unablässlichen Rechten erwachsen, hingegen durch verschiedene Zufahl die Frembden Zinsen auffhören können." Berner Bürgerbibliothek, Mss.h.h.XVII.258.

Patriciat as a selfless, benevolent and paternalistic regime, and had greatly enhanced the latter's standing within Berne's subject territories, they also increased the potential for conflict within the citizenry. What the patricians had intended as charity, the citizens now regarded as part of the entitlements that came with their membership of the sovereign *civitas*.<sup>46</sup> Many citizens who were excluded from political life, it was argued, tried to defend their status by adopting the values of the Patriciat. As a result, even common citizens had become hostile to commerce and craftsmanship<sup>47</sup>, and displayed a greater interest in trying to obtain one of the numerous posts in the city's administration. Rather than bringing peace and stability, Berne's foreign investments had only lead to economic decline and initiated an increasingly vicious fight over access to public funds. Berne's investments, despite the increase of public wealth, had also directly contributed to slowing down the economy. The spread of the Patriciat's strongly anti-commercial ethos, on the one hand, and Berne's overly-restrictive economic policy, on the other, had deprived the Bernese population of all sense of 'emulation'.<sup>48</sup> As

<sup>46</sup> See *ibid.*: "Häufige Gratifikationen so den Müssiggang stiften, Verbesserungen bald aller Ämter Stellen und diensten, worauss die verderbliche Doctrin entstanden ist, der Stand seye ein Patrimonium, jeder Posten ein Bénéficiam jeder Underthan ein Pfründer: wordurch alle Emulation verschwunden ist." For an earlier critique of this trend, see Samuel Wagner, *Dess Politischen Leibes und seiner Gliedern Krafft und Stärke*, Bern 1717.

<sup>47</sup> Writing in 1798, J. J. Biedermann summed up this complaint as follows: "Die so tief eingewurzelte Verachtung der ersten Klasse der Berner gegen alles, was sich von seiner Arbeit nährt, ist leider so wahr, und so durchgängig fühlbar, dass es schwer halten wird, diese Saite zu berühren, ohne den ganzen Körper in unwillkürliche Zuckungen zu versetzen. [...] Selbst unter der arbeitenden Klasse kann man diesen schädlichen Einfluss der Verachtung nicht verkennen, denn die meisten Bürger gefallen sich in ihrem Handwerksornat nicht mehr; und man hat oft Mühe, den, der der Erste unter den Arbeitenden seyn sollte, vor dem reichen Kapitalisten zu erkennen, der arbeiten lässt." *Bern, was es werden könnte!*, Bern 1798, p. 5-6.

<sup>48</sup> Some contemporaries, however, attributed the decline of the local economy less to the effects that the patricians' anti-commercial stance had on the work ethics of common citizens than to the desire of the ruling elite to minimise the political pressure that came with economic success. See for example Henzi, *Denkschrift*, p. 425: "Die Rädelsführer unserer Statisten verkehren den bekannten Wahlspruch einer gerechten Regierung in seinen völligen Gegensatz. Anstatt des: *Salus populi suprema lex esto*, sagen sie: *Misera populi summa lex esto*." Also, p. 429-430: "Die

a result, Berne had not only become dependent on foreign corn, but even on imports of common household items which Bernese artisans were no longer willing to produce.

## 2.2. *The Economic Society's critique of 'faux civisme'*

The critique of Berne's Welfarism and, in particular, of its foreign investments, reached an unprecedented level after the outbreak of hostilities in 1756. If the ghost of voluntary bankruptcy had so far been treated as a largely theoretical and fairly distant menace, by 1756 many Bernese were convinced that the threat had become very real and that either England or France was now readying itself for this drastic solution. In their writings, the Bernese patricians called for measures to be taken to prepare the republic for the consequences that any sudden loss of public revenue would entail.<sup>49</sup> Their main concern was the effect that this might have on the already strained relationship between the Patriciat and the other citizens. Any sudden loss of public income, they feared, would leave the government with no other option but to drastically scale down its welfare programme and reduce its bloated public administration, thus risking the outbreak of internal conflict. The Patriciat, they claimed, had relied too much and for too long on charity as the principal means to maintain internal peace and, as a result, had neglected other, more typically republican tools for generating social cohesion. During the early phase of the war, several younger

Handlung ist unleugbar ein Balsam, welcher das Geblüt in den Adern des politischen Körpers allzeit erfrischt; wo die Handlung blüht, da sind Kisten und Kästen voll; weil aber unsere Usurpatoren verkehrte Staatslehre eben dies zu verhindern sucht und will, dass ein Bürger von Bern, der nicht in der grossen Stube sitzt, entweder von einem magern Pöstlein, oder gar vom Gnadenbrod seiner Gesellschaft lebe, so haben sie zum beständigen Augenmerk gehabt, die Handlung schwer und unfruchtbar zu machen, oder den Fremden in die Hände zu spielen."

<sup>49</sup> For a discussion of the eighteenth-century debate on 'Public Debt', see Istvan Hont, "The rhapsody of public debt: David Hume and Voluntary State Bankruptcy", in *Political discourse in early modern Britain*, Nicolas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (eds.), Cambridge 1993, p. 321-348; Michael Sonenscher, "The Nation's Debt and the Birth of the Modern Republic: The French Fiscal Deficit and the Politics of the Revolution of 1789", *History of Political Thought*, 1997, p. 64-103 and 267-325.

patricians argued that the only way for the city of Berne to steady itself for the coming crisis was to revive the largely neglected military spirit of their heroic forefathers.

Perhaps the strongest expression of this 'city' centred military patriotism can be found in a series of commemorative lectures held at the *Äusserer Stand* in 1757.<sup>50</sup> In his opening speech, Vincent Bernhard Tschärner launched a fiery attack upon the corrupting influence of non-republican patterns of consumption. The imitation of foreign customs, he claimed, had turned a free citizenry into fashion-slaves, subject to the dictates of French luxury industry, leading to discord amongst the citizens and driving a wedge between the city and its subject territory. Furthermore, it had introduced effeminate manners, weakened the Bernese fighting spirit and undermined the republic's traditional ability to withstand larger, and technologically more advanced, foreign aggressors. The only means, Tschärner argued, by which the republic could regain its former strength was to try to recapture the spirit of the republic's founding period and convince both citizens and subjects alike that liberty required sacrificing individual interests: It is "the common danger that unites everyone into one entity", "necessity turns all citizens into soldiers. – They do not fear any danger, because they fear servitude more than all dangers combined."<sup>51</sup> The librarian, Rudolph Sinner, took a similar line: "Each and every *Eidgenoss* was a born soldier; they trained in warfare every day." It was this dedication to the common cause that had allowed Berne to extend her territory even more rapidly and successfully than the early Rome. "She destroyed her enemies or accepted them as citizens. She formed alliances with the weaker ones in order to humiliate the stronger ones, and finally to subject them both."<sup>52</sup> Arguments of this sort can also be found in the speech by Emanuel von Graffenried. Turning upon the

<sup>50</sup> *Patriotische Reden, gehalten vor dem hochlöblichen aussern Stande der Stadt Bern, Bern 1773.*

<sup>51</sup> "Die Schlacht bey Laupen", *ibid.*, p. 19: "[D]ie gemeinsame Gefahr verbindet alle noch in einer genauen Einheit zusammen"; p. 21: "Die Noth des Vaterlandes macht alle Bürger zu Soldaten. – Sie fürchten keine Gefahr, weil sie die Dienstbarkeit mehr als alle Gefahren fürchten."

<sup>52</sup> "Die italiänischen Kriege", *ibid.*, p. 27: "Sie wuchs durch die gleichen Kunstgriffe, welche Rom über ihre Nachbarn erhoben. Sie zernichtete ihre Feinde, oder nahm sie zu Burgern an."

politically corrupting effects of the Bernese investment strategy in foreign funds, Graffenried reminded his young fellow-patricians that "whoever can make us rich or poor has more power over us than we believe. It would be desirable if our possessions, like our duty, would bind us to our fatherland; for those heroes are very rare, who put everything aside if duty calls; who consider their riches, honour, even their life so little that they gladly sacrifice these idols if the common good requires."<sup>53</sup> It was this heroic indifference to one's own property that gave the republic its initial strength: "I ask you, are we ready to do the same? The result of this attitude was the wealth and power of the republic: if you follow the opposite route, she will be poor, powerless and our heirs will be miserable."<sup>54</sup> Arguments of this kind can be found in a whole range of speeches and pamphlets, not just during the early phase of the war but right up to the end of the century.<sup>55</sup>

As the war went on, however, the younger patricians began revising their political agenda and, like Iselin, increasingly began to stress the importance of a flourishing economy for the future survival of the republic. One of the problems with a military, anti-commercial form of patriotism, they realised, was that it could not be maintained over a long period of time because men who were not directly confronted with a foreign aggressor would find it impossible to remain focused on the choice between liberty or death.<sup>56</sup> Mili-

<sup>53</sup> "Der Burgunderkrieg", *ibid.*, p. 76: "Wer uns reich oder arm machen kann, hat mehr Gewalt auf uns, als wir es selbst vermeinen. Es wäre zu wünschen, dass stets unsre Güter, so wie unsre Pflicht, und an das Vaterland binden würden; dann die Helden sind rar, (wir müssen der Wahrheit diess Zeugniß geben,) welche alles verachten, wenn ihre Pflicht etwas von ihnen fordert; welche Reichtum, Ehre und das Leben selbst gering schätzen, wenn das gemeine Wesen begehrt, dass sie ihm diese Götzen aufopfern."

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77: "Ich frage sie, sind wir bereit, eben dieses zu thun? – Die Folgen von dieser ihrer Aufführung waren der Reichthum und die Macht der Republik: solltet ihr das Gegentheil thun, so wird sie arm, entkräftet, und unsre Nachkommene elend seyn."

<sup>55</sup> See especially, *Discours de l'Assemblée patriotique de Berne 1785-1786*, (Berner Bürgerbibliothek, Mss.h.h.xiii.161) and the *Gesellschaftliche Unterhaltungen patriotischer Freunde (1784)*, Berner Bürgerbibliothek, Mss.h.h.xxviii.96

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, Rudolf Tschärner's speech at the *Äusserer Stand* (1764), "Die Schlacht bei St. Jakob", (*Patriotische Reden, gehalten vor dem hochlöblichen aussern Stande der Stadt Bern*, p. 32) where he stresses the negative effect of peace on the maintaining of military values: "O langer Friede! wie süß sind deine

tary patriotism, they feared, was also more difficult to control, and could easily degenerate into political enthusiasm, thus encouraging an unwanted egalitarian dynamic. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, while military patriotism was an effective means for creating peace within the city, it held little sway over the subject territories where economic revival was supposed to take place. Military patriotism appealed only to the citizens' common history as both defenders of the city and conquerors of its subject territories.

The *Economic Society* founded in 1759 was meant to provide an alternative to this vision of an austere, military Berne.<sup>57</sup> A good example of this shift away from a military, city-centred patriotism is the speech that the founder of the *Economic Society*, Rudolf Tschiffeli, delivered at the *Äusserer Stand* in September 1766. In his talk, dedicated to a discussion of the republic's founding principles, Tschiffeli strongly emphasised the economic component in Berne's rise to greatness:

Beneath the protective shield of the city of Berne, with its few and simple laws, trade and barter blossomed. It was not just the common artisanry which, because of a large citizenry, had plenty of work; even manufacture, this now largely neglected source of wealth, was expanding. [...]

Anyone who doubts these claims, who doubts that the former government fully protected these and other economic activities and that it considered them to be an essential pillar of the state, merely has to go through our most ancient public records: he will find with amazement the proof for this important truth on almost every page.

Früchte, und wie bitter sind deine Folgen! So lange wir die Waffen in den Händen hatten, waren wir ein tapferes und frommes Volk; nunmehr, da wir in glückseliger Ruhe die mannigfaltigen Produkte unsers gesegneten Vaterlandes einerndten können, sind wir ein ausgelassenes und zaghaftes Volk."

<sup>57</sup> On Berne's *Economic Society*, see Conrad Bäschlin, *Die Blütezeit der ökonomischen Gesellschaft in Bern 1759-1766*, Laupen 1917; E. Honegger, *Ideengeschichte der bernischen Nationalökonomie im 18. Jahrhundert*, Bern 1922; A. Kraus, *Die Einflüsse der physiokratischen Bewegung in Literatur und Gesetzgebung und ihre politische Anwendung in der Landwirtschaft der Schweiz*, Zürich 1928; one of the most balanced studies is the one by G. C. L. Schmidt, *Der Schweizer Bauer im Zeitalter des Frühkapitalismus*, 2 Bde, Bern und Leipzig 1932; more recently, H. R. Rytz, *Geistliche des alten Bern zwischen Merkantilismus und Physiokratie*, Basel, Stuttgart 1971; and D. G. Bornatico, *Die Bedeutung der ökonomischen Gesellschaft Bern*, Freiburg 1971.

How could it have been otherwise? Who among you, noble men and brothers! can be ignorant of the fact that your forefathers acquired their and your tranquillity, the surrounding countryside and their and your defense, more often with their sweat and hard-earned wealth than with their blood.<sup>58</sup>

Tschiffeli's claim that a flourishing economy could contribute as much to the greatness of a republic as the use of arms stood at the very heart of the *Economic Society's* reform programme. If Berne's economy wanted to withstand the pressure from foreign producers, it had to be competitive. "Let us never forget", the society's chief ideologue, Vincent Bernard Tschärner wrote in 1762, "that the point where our economy comes to a halt marks the beginning of its decadence & that without appropriate measures, without our efforts, the economic activity of our neighbours will always be to our disadvantage."<sup>59</sup> The central question was how to organise the transition from Welfarism to economic openness without running the risk of internal conflict and undermining the present regime. While the majority of essays that were published in their journal, the *Mémoires et Observations*, dealt with the practical side of this transition (more efficient ways of storing

<sup>58</sup> "Herr Rudolf Tschiffelis, Präsidentens der ökonomischen Gesellschaft in Bern, Rede, gehalten im Hornung 1766. Grundsätze der Stadt Bern in ihren ersten Jahrhundert, zu einiger Erläuterung der Geschichte dieses Freystaates" in *Patriotische Reden, gehalten vor dem hochlöblichen aussern Stande der Stadt Bern*, Bern 1773, p. 73-75: "Unter dem kernhaften Schutz der Stadt Bern, unter dem Schirm ihrer wenigen und einfältigen Gesätzen, blühte Handel und Wandel. Nicht nur stunde, wegen der sehr zahlreichen Bürgerschaft, der gemeine Handwerkstand in voller Arbeit, und folglich auch bey reichlichem Auskommen; sondern selbst die Manufakturen, diese nun seit langem leider vernachlässigten Quellen des Reichthums, waren in vortrefflichem Aufnehmen. [...] Wer Zweifel an diesem Vorgeben hat; wer zweifelt, dass die damalige Regierung diese und andere Gewerbschaften der allergenuesten Sorgfalt gewürdiget, dass sie solche vorzüglich als eine Hauptstütze des Staats angesehen, schlage unsere ältesten Policy-Bücher nach: bald an jedem Blatt wird er mit Erstaunen den Beweis dieser wichtigen Wahrheit finden. Und wie hätte es anders seyn können? Wem unter euch, edle Männer und Brüder! ist unbekannt, dass euere Voreltern ihre und euere Ruh, die nächstumliegende Landschaft, ihre und euere Schutzwehr, noch öfters mit dem im Schweiss ihres Angesichts sauer errungenen Vermögen, als mit ihrem Blute, erkauf haben."

<sup>59</sup> 'Preface' in *Mémoires et Observations*, 1762, xix. On Tschärner, see Enid Stoye's very informative study, *Vincent Bernard de Tschärner, 1728-1788. A Study of Swiss Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, Fribourg 1954.



grain, the better use of manure, etc.), an important number of them dealt also with theoretical issues, including the issue of economic patriotism. What was needed, it was argued, was a form of patriotism which was conducive to economic development, could generate a spirit of fraternity amongst the inhabitants of the Canton of Berne and was supportive of Berne's aristocratic regime all at the same time.

First of all, this required asking questions about the nature of Bernese politics and the relationship between the Patriciat, the citizens of Berne and Berne's subjects. There existed various interpretations of the meaning of *Respublica Bernensis*, as Berne called itself officially since the late seventeenth century. For the large majority of the Berne's non-patrician citizens it referred in the first instance to the city as represented in the CC, the Council of Two Hundred. The citizenry, or *universitas*, was the collective sovereign which ruled over an unequal federation of both subject and allied communities within the boundaries of the Bernese territory. A second interpretation of *Respublica Bernensis*, favoured by a considerable group of patrician families, claimed that it referred simply to the Senate or Small Council, and not the city. (As we saw earlier on, it was precisely this second interpretation Iselin complained about in his *Patriotic Dreams* when arguing that "the patricians alone [...] constitute the people, just as the ministers alone constitute the church") The most commonly used formula, however, was that of 'Schultheiss, Räte und Burger' meaning 'Avoyer, Senators and Citizens'; one which deliberately aimed to overcome the divisive nature of the first two interpretations. In their writings the members of the *Economic Society* were careful to avoid any direct comment on Berne's political arrangements. Nor, for obvious reasons, did they offer any clear definition of the meaning of republic. Although they occasionally talk of the entire canton of Berne as a republic, one should be careful not to overinterpret such statements, let alone to see them (as Karl Luwdig von Haller did in his *Restauration der Staatswissenschaft*) as a sign of the gradual incroachment of Rousseauian state theory into Bernese political discourse.<sup>60</sup> To my knowledge, none of

<sup>60</sup> See the striking passage in volume six, p. 4, note 5 of the *Restauration der Staatswissenschaft*: "Der Ausdruck Republik ward erst in der zweyten Hälfte des unseligen achtzehnten Jahrhunderts von einigen Schweizerischen Städten, jedoch bloss gegen das Ausland, gebraucht und dem Wort Stadt beygefügt, um dadurch

the members of the *Economic Society* advocated popular sovereignty, at least not in any of their writings from the early 1760s. This also applies to those writing from the fringes of the Bernese territory, the local elites of the Aargau and the Pays de Vaud. While the essays in the *Mémoires et Observations* tell us relatively little about the members' personal political preferences they clearly indicate what they most definitely did not want. The position they most openly rejected was that of the disgruntled citizens like Henzi who tried to legitimise their call for more stringent forms of economic protectionism on the grounds that sovereignty was invested in the city of Berne as a whole. In the theoretical essays of the *Mémoires et Observations*, it was argued repeatedly that the introduction of a less restrictive economic regime very much depended on whether Berne, and the other major cities within the Bernese territory, could manage to shed their late-medieval heritage and clearly separate politics from the economic interest of their citizens. While aristocratic Berne, where the guilds had no political function, seemed to be moving in the right direction, many authors (especially from the subject territories) insisted that even Berne's economic policies still favoured the citizens to the detriment of the rest of the Canton. This was 'bad patriotism', a "civisme très mal entendu", the heritage of Berne's gothic past.<sup>61</sup> Thus, it was only once Berne had found the political will to

anzuzeigen, dass die Stadt selbst unabhängig sey, mithin sich von anderen gewöhnlichen Städten sich unterscheidet. Indessen wusste man dieses ohnehin, und jene Eitelkeit ward in der Folge bitter bestraft: denn, indem man die Worte Stadt und Republik mit einander vereinigte, so sah man das letztere nicht für eine Eigenschaft oder ein Prädikat des ersteren an, sondern es kamen vielmehr die verkehrten Begriffe auf, dass beyde von einander gesondert und verschieden, die souveraine Stadt nur eine Privat-Stadt, das ihr untergebene Gebiet aber eine Republik sey."

<sup>61</sup> See for example the essay by Jean Bertrand, "Esprit de la législation pour encourager l'agriculture, la population, les manufactures & le commerce", *Mémoires et Observations*, 1765, p. 93: "Mais nos droits de bourgeoisie s'y opposent. Etablissements gothiques sur le pied où ils sont parmi nous, depuis une centaine d'années; je les appellerois volontiers des ligues du petit nombre, pour étouffer tous les principes de la bienveillance universelle, & y substituer le civisme, même un civisme très malentendu, contraire au bien de l'Etat, & funeste aux particuliers. Il paroît que depuis quelque tems on se dispose à en corriger les abus; mais les anciens préjugés ne se corrigent pas aisément." See also p. 99: "Une ville, un village forme une ligue: chèque famille, chèque individu ne s'occupe plus qu'à assurer à soi-même & aux

reduce the economic division between city and hinterland to a minimum and move towards the model of an inclusive, more 'modern', republic that one could witness any significant increase in economic activity and the establishment of a strong internal market. According to the Vaudois minister Jean Bertrand, "A state is like a basin in which water finds its natural level; it is a great evil when each city, village or hamlet sees itself as a separate body."<sup>62</sup> Given the Patriciat's highly contested position within the citizenry, most observers agreed that any attempts to further marginalise the guilds were unlikely to succeed. What the Bernese reformers could do, however, was to generate a political culture which was able to stimulate the development of a more modern republic. This was what the *Economic Society's* theory of 'economic patriotism' was meant to achieve. Again and again, members of the *Economic Society* stressed that the term 'patriot' should not be understood in a restrictive sense, designating only those inhabitants of the city of Berne who were legally eligible for office, but that the term 'patriot' applied to every person living on Bernese soil who contributed to the wealth and security of the whole Canton.<sup>63</sup>

siens le privilege de certains avantages. Le bien public est perdu de vue, il ne reste bientôt dans un royaume, ou dans une république que des intérêts particuliers, qui par leur collision forment une sorte de guerre civile, qui rompant les noeuds de la société générale, ne laisse subsister que l'amour propre, qui détruit tout autre principe."

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 126: "Un Etat est un bassin où les eaux se mettent naturellement de niveau, & c'est un très grand mal lorsque chaque ville, village, ou bourg, se considère comme un *corps séparé*."

<sup>63</sup> See for example Vincent Bernard Tschärner's *Preface* to the 1763 volume of the *Mémoires et Observations*, viii-ix: "Gardons nous de tout principe qui tend qu'à resserrer la sphère de nos vues & de nos sentimens. Quiconque s'est une fois accoutumé à renverser dans son Coeur l'ordre des vertus sociales, à sacrifier l'humanité à un faux patriotisme, (& ces erreurs ne sont que trop générales parmi les hommes) l'amour de la patrie au civisme rigoureux, & le devoir de citoyen à l'esprit de corps, finira par subordonner tous les devoirs publics à l'intérêt personnel."

### 2.3. *The Economic Society and the European debate on monarchical patriotism*

When searching for new principles of republican politics that could serve as an alternative to the city-centred, military patriotism, Bernese and other Swiss reformers like Iselin looked towards the already well-established European debate on honour, which had developed not only within republican but also within reforming monarchist circles especially in France and Germany. In France it was the Abbé Coyer in particular who tried to promote, first in his *Dissertation sur le vieux mot de patrie* of 1755, and then in the famous *Noblesse commerçante* of 1756, a new form of monarchical patriotism, which, he claimed, was able to take into account the changing realities of Europe's commercial politics. Rejecting Montesquieu's separation of the republican principle of virtue from the monarchical principle of honour, Coyer called for the establishment of a new form of honour, a blend of honour and virtue, which could serve to regulate the behaviour, not just of the nobility, but of all those whose activity in one way or another contributed to strengthening the nation's power and wealth. Crucial to this undertaking, Coyer argued, was the realisation that *patrie* designated not merely a stretch of land or place of birth, "*le pays où l'on a pris naissance*", (or in the case of Switzerland one's city) but a community of values founded on merit:

She is a mother who cherishes all her children to the same degree and distinguishes them only insofar as they distinguish themselves, who accepts that there is opulence and mediocrity but who does not want poverty; who, while accepting inequality, preserves a kind of equality by making the paths that lead to the highest positions available to everyone.<sup>64</sup>

Finding a system that would dispense honour according to merit was the key to monarchical patriotism. The ancients' way of celebrating the *patrie* through triumphal marches, statues, memorials, and funeral orations was

<sup>64</sup> Abbé Coyer, *Dissertations pour être lues: La première, Sur le vieux mot de Patrie: La seconde, Sur la nature du Peuple*, La Haye 1755, p. 15, 19-20: "C'est une mère qui chérit tous ses enfans, qui ne les distingue qu'autant qu'ils se distinguent eux-mêmes, qui veut bien qu'il y ait de l'opulence & de la médiocrité, mais point de pauvres; des grands & des petits, mais personne d'opprimé; qui même dans ce partage inégal, conserve une sorte d'égalité, en ouvrant à tous le chemin des premières places."

something which the moderns had almost entirely lost. The sole remnant of the ancients' public culture, and which the moderns still cherished, was the oral tradition of funeral orations. According to Coyer, a modern version of the classical culture of patriotism could be brought to life if this highly refined technique of French funeral orations was deployed to praise patriotic acts. For this purpose, public speeches should seek to honour, not just the recently deceased of the high aristocracy but every citizen of France, including merchants, artists, and magistrates who had displayed an outstanding zeal for the common good.<sup>65</sup>

Ideas of a similar kind were also presented by Victor Riquetti, Marquis de Mirabeau, in his *L'ami des hommes*, which gained cult status within Swiss reform circles.<sup>66</sup> Mirabeau was a member of the *Economic Society* and contributed a long essay to the first volume of its quarterly journal, *Mémoires et Observations*. Like Coyer, Mirabeau argued that a good legislator could reinvigorate a nation's working spirit by appealing to man's natural desire for recognition.<sup>67</sup> A similar point was also expressed in Mably's *Entretiens*

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 30: "Cette éloquence ne seroit-elle pas mieux employée à remercier, à louer publiquement au nom de la patrie quiconque se seroit distingué dans les arts, dans le commerce, dans la guerre, dans la magistrature, dans la politique?"

<sup>66</sup> On Mirabeau's relationship with the *Economic Society in Bern* see the study by August Oncken, *Der ältere Mirabeau und die Oekonomische Gesellschaft in Bern*, Bern 1886. Kaspar Hirzel dedicated the French edition (*Le Socrate Rustique*) of his famous *Die Wirtschaft eines Philosophischen Bauers*, Zürich 1761, to Mirabeau. The letters between Mirabeau and the translator, Iselin's friend Jean Rodolphe Frey, and between Mirabeau and Rudolf Tschiffeli were added to the second French edition, Zurich 1764.

<sup>67</sup> Mirabeau, *L'ami des Hommes ou Traité de la Population*, Avignon 1756, vol. 1, p. 351-353: "Ce seroit connoître mal la nature humaine, que de croire qu'il fût possible de faire exercer les emplois nécessaires au maintien de la société, par des hommes que le motif seul du devoir engageât à se sacrifier ainsi pour elle. Mais l'ordre naturel des choses a pourvu à cet inconvénient de la foiblesse humaine; et dans le principe, tout ce qui donne de l'autorité et des détails, donne aussi de la considération parmi ses semblables. C'est dans le champ vaste, ou pour mieux dire sans bornes, de la considération qu'il est permis de s'étendre sans nuire à son voisin. C'est là le trésor qui ne coûte rien à l'état qu'une dispensation juste et attentive, et qui cependant bien ménagé peut payer abondamment tous les services, chacun en son genre. Les vrais législateurs, les habiles hommes d'état ont senti les conséquences et la force de ce mobile; ils en ont organisé les ressorts, et multiplié

*de Phocion*, which won the first essay competition sponsored by the *Patriotic Society*. It was the prospect of glory, Mably claimed, not abstract moral principles, which prompted men to work for a common cause.<sup>68</sup>

Public esteem alone, which is the natural reward for the love of glory, can inspire us to elevate our soul to a certain degree. Only those who are ignorant of human nature can believe that there are any other means to inspire great deeds than a laurel bough or a statue.<sup>69</sup>

les ressources. De-là sont venus tant d'usages relatifs aux vûes de porter les hommes vers l'ambition de la renommée; les éloges après la mort chez les égyptiens; les couronnes, les statues et les triomphes chez les grecs et les romains; les prérogatives et les marques de chevalerie chez les nations modernes, etc."

<sup>68</sup> Gabriel Bonnot, Abbé de Mably, *Entretiens de Phocion, sur le rapport de la morale avec la politique*, Collection Complète des Œuvres. Publiée par Guillaume Arnoux. Réimpression de l'édition de Paris 1794-1795 avec introduction etc. par Peter Friedemann, Tome X, Aalen 1977, p. 125-129: "[A]pprenez par quel secret la politique peut leur communiquer une force supérieure à celle des passions mêmes. Apprenez par quelles ressources la pratique des devoirs, en apparence les plus austères peut devenir agréable, et même délicieuse. C'est en tenant éveillé dans notre coeur l'amour de la gloire, sentiment noble et généreux qui nous fait connoître la grandeur de notre origine et de notre destination: ce sentiment, par lequel nous sommes les rivaux des substances spirituelles, qui nous apprend que nous sommes l'ouvrage d'un Dieu. Le peuple ne raisonne point. Naturellement porté par son ignorance à ce qui flatte son imprudence, son orgueil, son avarice, sa jalousie, &c. il confondra le bizarre et l'extraordinaire avec ce qui est véritablement sage et grand. N'en doutez pas, il courra après une gloire de préjugé et de mode, si la politique, de concert avec la morale, ne le met dans le bon chemin. Il s'en écartera, si on cesse un moment d'éclairer et de guider sa marche, et bientôt il dégoûtera par ses éloges ridicules et bruyans les appréciateurs du vrai mérite, et égarera avec lui ceux qui sont frappés de l'amour de la gloire, mais qui n'ont pas assez de lumière pour savoir où il faut la chercher." On Mably, see the recent study by Johnson Kent Wright, *A Classical Republican in Eighteenth-century France. The Political Thought of Mably*, Stanford 1997. Some useful information regarding Mably's relationship with Bern's *Patriotic Society* can be gathered from the "Correspondence inédite de Mably à Fellenberg", edited by Jean-Luc Malvache, *Francia. Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte*, 19/2, 1992, p. 47-93.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 136: "C'est l'estime publique, qui, étant la récompense naturelle de l'amour de la gloire, peut seule porter notre ame à un certain degré d'élévation. C'est ne pas connoître les hommes, que de vouloir les exciter aux grandes actions autrement que par une branche de laurier, ou une statue."

No less important to the Bernese was the German debate on monarchical patriotism, which was almost identical to that of the French reform monarchists. The main German advocate of this line of thought was the young professor of mathematics, and later a friend of Iselin, Thomas Abbt. Abbt, too, maintained close ties with various Swiss and especially Bernese reformers. The central text is his *Vom Tode für das Vaterland*, first published in 1761.<sup>70</sup> It is useful to look briefly at Abbt's argument because he insisted here that his theory of modern patriotism was applicable to both monarchical and republican settings. According to Abbt, monarchical patriotism required a blend of basically three ingredients. The first was the 'fatherland' itself, the existence of which, he agreed with Coyer, was determined not so much by a stretch of land but by the rule of law. Wherever there was the rule of law, there could also be a *patria*. The actual form of government was thus of secondary importance:

What might the fatherland be? One cannot always take it to mean one's place of birth. However, when by birth or by my own free will I come to accept the good laws of a state; and if these laws don't take away from my freedom more than what is necessary for the well-being of the state: I will then consider this state to be my fatherland.<sup>71</sup>

The second ingredient needed was an affective or emotive relationship to this abstract and rule-based notion of fatherland, for, as Abbt argued, "the more sensual [*sinnlich*] one can render the fatherland, the stronger the devotion will be". As Abbt put it, there were several ways of generating emotive ties to one's fatherland, the most effective being an agrarian or an equal partition of land. As Abbt reminded his readers, this tactic had been deployed by the Romans with great success.<sup>72</sup> However, since the partition

<sup>70</sup> *Vom Tode fürs Vaterland*, second edition, Berlin und Stettin 1780.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17: "Was ist wohl das Vaterland? Man kann nicht immer den Geburtsort allein darunter verstehen. Aber, wenn mich die Geburt oder meine freye Entschliessung mit einem Staate vereinigen, dessen heilsamen Gesetzen ich mich unterwerfe; Gesetzen, die mir nicht mehr von meiner Freiheit entziehen, als zum Besten des ganzen Staats nöthig ist: alsdann nenne ich diesen Staat mein Vaterland."

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17: "Je sinnlicher man freylich das Vaterland machen kann, desto stärker wird die Anhänglichkeit dafür seyn. Daher ist die Anmerkung des Herrn von Mont.[esquieu] richtig: *Le partage egal des terres faisoit aussi bonne armée, chacun ayant un egal intérêt et très grand, à défendre sa patrie [...]*"

of land was no longer a viable option for modern Europe, the emotive ties needed to find another anchor point; this had to be the king's person.

In monarchies we have to love the laws and their father simultaneously, the fatherland and the monarch [...]. In monarchies there is a close relationship between the figure of the monarch and the fatherland. [...] Love of the monarch [...] increases love of the fatherland.<sup>73</sup>

Having shown that a fatherland was made by the rule of law, and that its citizens would establish an emotional attachment to the rule of law through the person of the king (in his capacity as the father of the laws), Abbt insisted that monarchical patriotism still needed a third element, a principle of action that prompted the citizens to act patriotically. It is here that he comes to speak of honour. Like Coyer, Abbt criticised Montesquieu's principle of honour as too narrow to serve effectively as a general spring of patriotism – one that would motivate the nation at large. According to Abbt, a "new [spring] thus needs to be installed." Honour, he explained, worked on the basis of men's desire to be well thought off by members of the same social cast, namely the nobility. But only a fraction of the population aspired to be elevated to the status of nobility. Instead honour had to be associated with the 'love of the fatherland', thus making it more general. According to Abbt, this was what republics had achieved. "The honour that they dispensed was of such a kind that everybody was entitled to it."<sup>74</sup> A contemporary version of this classical model of republican honour could, he claimed, still be found in Switzerland, where annual commemorative speeches listed the names of those who had sacrificed their lives for the common good:

If in Switzerland, they still celebrate a battle which [their ancestors] had fought for liberty with commemorative speeches and the reading out of the names of the three

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19. See also p. 25: "So war den Israeliten das kostbarste, wofür sie stritten, noch immer die Bundeslade, ob sie sich gleich einen König gewählt hatten. Jene nicht zu verlassen, erforderte ihre Pflicht, und diesem zu folgen, ermunterte sie ihre Liebe. Die erstere war das Gut, das sie nicht verlieren durften; der letztere ihr Vergnügen, das sie zu erhalten wünschten."

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81: "Man weiss es, dass nicht allen Menschen ihre Glückseligkeit in der Ehre suchen: aber diese Ehre kann man mit der Liebe fürs Vaterland vereinigen, und dadurch alle Seelen gleichsam adeln. Dieses war eben der Kunstgriff der Republiken. Die Ehre, die sie ertheilten, war so beschaffen, dass jeder darauf Anspruch machen konnte [...]."

hundred brave Swiss who had lost their lives: what more could even the most ambitious man desire than to have his name immortalised and to be remembered as one of the republic's benefactors.<sup>75</sup>

Abbt believed that this practice could and should be imitated by Prussia through the establishment of public galleries displaying the portraits of national heroes, handing out medals of merit, prizes and other signs of public recognition.

The monarchist reform discourse on meritocratic honour became central to Swiss debates on economic patriotism. We can find it, for example, in the work by Iselin's friend, Kaspar Hirzel, the *Socrate Rustique*, and his suggestion that the best way to stimulate the revival of agriculture was to select a number of model farmers and distinguish them through signs of public appreciation: "The praise we bestow upon the [farmer] we have chosen as a model, the honours that we attribute to his rare qualities will show the rural population that, if they fulfil the duties of their profession intelligently and assiduously, they will gain the general applause of all men."<sup>76</sup> Like Coyer, Mirabeau and Mably, Hirzel (who was also a member of the *Patriotic Society*) argued that men were mostly driven by the desire for recognition and admiration. Wise legislators should exploit this disposition by appealing to men's craving for honour, not by burdening them with textbooks on agricultural reform:

Nothing more inspires hard and assiduous labour than the resulting utility and the honours offered as a reward. Love of honour is one of the most potent springs of human nature. When we see how this spring acts in all men of all ranks, can we fail

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 81: "Wenn in der Schweiz auf einen Behuf ihrer Freiheit erfochtenen Sieg noch jährlich eine Lobrede gehalten wird, und nachher die Namen derer dreyhundert braven Schweizer, die dabey das Leben eingebüsst haben, hergelesen werden: was kann der Ehrgeizigste wol mehr fordern, als dass sein Name in der Republik unter dem Namen ihrer Wohlthäter unvergessen sey?"

<sup>76</sup> Kaspar Hirzel, *Le Socrate Rustique ou description de la conduite economique et morale d'un Paysan Philosophe*, (Seconde Edition, corrigée & augmentée), Zurich 1764, p. 70: "Les justes louanges dont nous comblons celui que nous proposons pour modele, les honneurs que nous rendons à ses rares qualités, feront du moins connoître aux gens de la campagne, que lorsqu'ils voudront remplir les devoirs de leur état avec intelligence & avec assiduité, ils s'attireront comme lui la bénédiction générale de tous les hommes."

to recognise one of God's wisest intentions or that he wanted legislators to make use of it.<sup>77</sup>

The example of an economically successful *and* publicly distinguished farmer would stir the *amour-propre* of his neighbours and encourage them to imitate his efforts. Hirzel believed that by following these simple measures an entire region could be transformed gradually into a hothouse of economic activity.<sup>78</sup> To impress the notion of meritocratic honour more forcefully onto the minds of the rural population, a society for the encouragement of agriculture should organise annual public events in the countryside where particularly successful and worthy farmers should be given prizes and solemnly declared the winners of that year's contest.<sup>79</sup> Hirzel suggested that the prize should not consist of money but in a medal showing the inscription: *Au meilleur cultivateur*.<sup>80</sup>

Hirzel's *Socrate Rustique* was compulsory reading within Bernese reform circles, and his account of patriotic honour was very similar to the one that

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 285: "Rien n'excite autant l'ardeur & l'assiduité au travail que l'utilité qui en résulte, & les honneurs qu'on y attache pour récompense. L'amour des honneurs est un des plus puissants ressort de la nature humaine. En voyant ce ressort agir si généralement chez tous les hommes & dans tous les états, pourrions-nous y méconnoître une des plus sages vues du Créateur, qui semble inviter fortement le législateur à en profiter."

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 283: "L'exemple de ce cultivateur influera peu à peu sur ses voisins, & pourra ramener les bonnes moeurs dans tout un village, de-là elles iront se répandre sur toute une contrée, les villages des environs qui auront un pareil modele devant les yeux ne pouvant manquer d'en profiter." See also p. 291: "C'est ainsi qu'au moyen d'applaudissemens & des recompenses qu'elle accorderoit aux meilleurs économes, elle parviendroit à exiter tous les habitans du pays à travailler à une amelioration générale."

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 292: "[A] un jour marqué, les cultivateurs qui se seroient le plus distingués; là, en présence de tous leurs confreres, elle feroit leur éloge dans les termes les plus pathétiques, les proposeroit pour modeles aux autres, les nommeroit bienfaiteurs de la patrie, & leur donneroit en témoignage de l'approbation publique les prix qu'on auroit établis."

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 292: "Je choisirois pour cet effet une médaille qu'on frapperoit tout exprès à cette usage. Elle pourroit représenter d'un côté un laboureur conduisant sa charue, un genie lui poseroit sur la tête une couronne composée de différens fruits de la terre, entrelacés les uns dans les autres, avec ces trios mots: *Au meilleur cultivateur*."

can be found in the writings of the *Economic Society*.<sup>81</sup> In his 'Reflexions sur l'Agriculture', which was placed at the beginning of the first volume of the *Mémoires et Observations*, George Louis Schmid von Auenstein insisted that governments should make use of the farmers' *amour-propre* and desire for recognition: "Honours provide a sovereign with a rich fund which he can distribute, and most landowners will be more sensitive to distinctions than to money."<sup>82</sup> Handing out prize money, he claimed, would

<sup>81</sup> See for example, Benjamin Carrard's prize-winning essay, 'Esprit de la législation pour encourager l'agriculture, la population, les manufactures & le commerce' in *Mémoires et Observations*, 1765, p. 267-268: "Un bon gouvernement trouve de grandes ressources pour manier les esprits & les porter vers tout ce qui est beau, grand & digne de l'homme, dans les distinctions, les honneurs & les recompenses qu'il accorde à ceux qui se distinguent par de belles actions, qui montrent de l'habileté dans les arts utiles à la société, & se rendent recommandables à la patrie par leur mérite. Rien n'encourage davantage les talens de toute espece, rien ne porte au bien avec plus d'ardeur. [...] Il n'est point nécessaire que les recompenses dispensées par le gouvernement soient fort lucratives. C'est assez qu'elles soient honorables, & qu'elles se distribuent d'une manière solennelle au milieu des éloges & des applaudissemens de tout un peuple. Des recompenses qui ne flatteroient que par l'appas du gain ne serviroient qu'à émousser ou éteindre le sentiment délicat de l'honneur. Elles rendroient moins sensible au délicieux plaisir qu'on devoit trouver à mériter l'estime de ses compatriotes." See also the essay by Jean Bertrand, 'Esprit de la législation pour encourager l'agriculture, la population, les manufactures & le commerce', *ibid.*, p. 67: "*Recompenses aux cultivateurs*. Accordés des exemptions, des primes, des prix, des medailles aux habiles cultivateurs & des distinctions aux oeconomistes industrieux. A la Chine, l'Empereur est informé chaque année du laboureur qui est le plus distingué dans sa profession, & il le fait Mandarin du huitième ordre. Car le païsan est prénable par l'amour de la gloire, comme le grand Seigneur." The same technique could also be used for the encouragement of manufacture: "Quand le Prince veut, il peut faire de grandes choses par de petits moyens. [...] Une légère recompense accordée avec quelque appareil flatteroit l'amour propre de l'artiste, & ne seroit point à charge au trésor public. Souvent même il suffit que le Prince veuille porter lui-même une certaine étoffe, pour en procurer au fabricant le plus grand débit. Louis XIV. dirigé par Colbert n'employa point d'autre moyen, pour arrêter le débit des mousselines & faire fleurir les manufactures de batistes." p. 115-116.

<sup>82</sup> George Louis Schmid, 'Reflexions sur l'Agriculture', in *Mémoires et Observations*, vol. 1, Zurich 1760, p. 49: "Le souverain possède un riche fonds dans les honneurs, qu'il peut distribuer, & la plupart des possesseurs des terres seront plus sensibles aux distinctions qu'à l'argent."

merely lead to luxury and moral corruption. The distribution of signs of honour, on the other hand, appealed to a more noble part of human nature and would give the farmer a sense of being part of the wider community. Everybody, Schmid insisted, was sensitive to the advantages of honour and glory, not just the nobility or the patricians: "One should not believe that rustic souls in our country are insensitive to the desire for glory. Nature is not that miserly with her gifts. She often grants a great soul to the inhabitant of a simple cottage."<sup>83</sup>

The *Economic Society* followed Schmid and Hirzel's advice to the letter.<sup>84</sup> From 1764 onwards it distributed medals of honour, the so called *Verdienstmedallien*, regularly not just to Bernese citizens but anyone living on Bernese soil, including farmers, who it considered worthy of praise. There was, however, a noticeable and highly revelatory difference from what Hirzel had suggested. Instead of showing the inscription, *Au meilleur cultivateur*, the Bernese medal bore the inscription: *CIVI OPTIMO*, 'to the most worthy citizen'. In commercial Zurich, where both the economy and politics were under the firm control of the city guilds, any suggestion that farmers from the subject territories could be publicly described as 'most worthy citizens' would have met with stiff resistance. In this respect, the Bernese *Verdienstmedallie* was more like Frederic II's '*Pour le mérite*' than Hirzel's prize-medal.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49: "Qu'on ne croie point, que chés nous ces ames grossieres soient inaccessibles au desir de la gloire. La nature n'est pas si avare de ses dons, qu'elle n'accorde souvent une grande ame à l'habitant d'une cabane."

<sup>84</sup> See for example V.B. Tschärner's introduction to the first volume of 1763 of the *Mémoires et Observations* (p. iv), where he insists that "il n'est guères possible de faire agir les homes sans les motifs tirés de la gloire".

### 3. *The Patriotic Society and the defence of republican honour*

#### 3.1. *The republican critique of monarchical patriotism*

While the ideas of Coyer, Mirabeau, Mably or Abbt were welcomed by the *Economic Society in Berne* (although most of them rejected Coyer's idea of 'commercial nobility'), many other reformers, notably those working within the framework of Switzerland's city-republicanism, remained hostile to any suggestion that the monarchical reform discourse on patriotic honour could be applied to a republican setting.<sup>85</sup> Perhaps the strongest opposition to this honour-based theory of monarchical patriotism was expressed by a group of younger followers of Johann Jakob Bodmer in Zurich. We can see this from a highly critical review of Abbt's *Vom Tode für das Vaterland*, which appeared in August 1761 in the *Freymüthige Nachrichten von Büchern, und anderen zur Gelehrtheit gehörigen Sachen*, a Zurich based literary journal closely aligned with the Bodmer circle and a rallying point for all those promoting a strictly anti-commercial republican ideology.<sup>86</sup> According to

<sup>85</sup> Already in 1728, in his poem *Ueber die Ehre*, Albrecht von Haller had denounced the craving for honour as an expression of man's fundamentally egotistical disposition. See, Ludwig Hirzel (ed.), *Albrecht von Hallers Gedichte*, Frauenfeld 1882, p. 9-19. An English translation of Haller's poems was published in London 1794 under the title, *Poems, of Baron Haller. Translated into English by Mrs. Howorth*.

<sup>86</sup> *Freymüthige Nachrichten Von Neuen Büchern, und andern zur Gelehrtheit gehörigen Sachen*, Achtzehnter Jahrgang, Zürich 1761, XXXIII. Stück, Mittwochs, am 19. Augustmonath, 1761, p. 258ff. (I would like to thank Simone Zurbuchen from the University of Fribourg for providing me with a transcription of this document). In his *Lexikon der vom Jahr 1750 bis 1800 verstorbenen Teutschen Schriftsteller* (Leipzig 1803), Johann Georg Meusel suggests that the author of the review is Jakob Daniel Wegelin. See the entry "Wegelin, Jakob Daniel", vol. 2, p. 445: "Aufsätze und Recensionen in den Freymüthigen Nachrichten 1761 [...] Kritische Recension der Schrift vom Tode fürs Vaterland (von Abbt); St. 33. 35." During the early 1760s Wegelin was one of the main advocates of the idea that Switzerland should seek to imitate the model of the ancient Spartan republic. See especially Wegelin's *Politische und moralische Betrachtungen über die spartanische Gesez-Gebung des Lyncurgus*. Lindau, Frankfurt und Leipzig 1763. On Wegelin, see Hermann Bock, *Jakob Wegelin als Geschichtstheoretiker*, Leipzig 1902. On Bodmer and the youths that rallied around him, see *J. J. Bodmer. Denkschrift zum CC. Geburtstag*, Zürich

the journal's editors, the very idea of 'monarchical patriotism' or 'economic patriotism' was a contradiction in terms. Abbt was accused of servility and branded as an apologist for base national feeling. Above all, he was accused of having completely misunderstood the notions of fatherland and patriotism. The idea of a fatherland was not simply defined by the rule of law. In most monarchies the rule of law depended on nothing but the will, or goodwill, of a single individual who could change the law according to his whim and fancy. The idea of a fatherland, the reviewer argued, implied something quite different. It implied a strong unified interest within the nation as a whole; a unified will that permitted no distinction of ranks, representative government or any other division within the body of the nation, that would allow one part to speak in the name of all others. Most importantly, the term fatherland always included a notion of communal property. There were only two cases where a monarchy deserved to be called a fatherland. The first, "concerns the government of the Franks, Goths and Saxons, where a certain stretch of land belonged to the body of the nation, so that every one could consider himself as a lord and beneficiary of the latter."<sup>87</sup> The second case

1900, especially the essays by Otto Hunziker, "Bodmer als Vater der Jünglinge", and Gustav Tobler, "Bodmers politische Schauspiele". For an overview of the various literary circles in Zurich, see Leo Weiss, *Die politische Erziehung im alten Zürich*, Zürich 1940, p. 119-166; and, above all, Emil Erne, *Die schweizerischen Sozietäten*, p. 65-157. Useful information concerning Bodmer's relationship to the reform movements in other Cantons can be gathered from J.C. Mörkofer, *Die Schweizerische Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1861; Karl Morell, *Die Helvetische Gesellschaft*, Winterthur 1863, and Gonzague de Reynold, *Histoire Littéraire de la Suisse au dix-huitième siècle. Volume 2, Bodmer et l'école Suisse*, Lausanne 1912. For more recent accounts, see Martin Bircher (et al.), *Geist und Schönheit im Zürich des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Zürich 1968; Wolfgang Bender, *Johann Jakob Bodmer und Johann Jakob Breitingen*, Stuttgart 1973; Helmut Holzhey and Simone Zurbuchen (eds.), *Alte Löcher – neue Blicke. Zürich im 18. Jahrhundert*, Zürich 1998; and, especially, Bettina Volz-Tobler, *Rebellion im Namen der Tugend. Der 'Erinnerer' – eine moralische Wochenschrift, Zürich 1765-1767*, Zürich 1997.

<sup>87</sup> *Freymüthige Nachrichten*, p. 259: "Das Vaterland schliesset den Begriff des Eigenthums gemeinschaftlicher Weise in sich; zween Fälle sind in Monarchien, da ein solches zu sehen ist. Der erste betrifft die Fränkischen, Gothischen, und Sächsischen Regierungen, darinnen eine gewisse Landschaft, dem Corps der nation zustund, ein jeder aus derselben konnte sich also für den Herren sowol als den Nutzniesser derselben betrachten."

could be found “where political constitutions are independent of the will of the monarch, where the latter is a mere executor of the will of the entire nation”. Even so, a monarchical fatherland differed considerably from a republican one. For while in republican monarchies the people could only indirectly [Abbt’s phrase is: *auf eine modificierte Art*] be called lord of the nation’s property, in republics the citizenry as a whole, and each citizen individually was directly or immediately lord of the public domain. The reason for this, the writer from Zurich claimed, was that in republics “the magistracy does not constitute a distinct order, opposed to the people”. And this, he claimed, “is what really matters”.<sup>88</sup>

Besides having misunderstood the notion of fatherland, the author of *Vom Tode für das Vaterland* displayed an equal ignorance in his analysis of the motivational force behind the “spirit of republics”. In contrast to what Abbt seemed to believe, republics did not rely on honour and reward.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 259: “Der andere ist, wenn politische von dem Willen des Monarchen unabhängige Constitutionen ihn zu dem Ausführer des Willens der ganzen nation machen, doch so, dass die Berathschlagungen unter seinem königlichen Ansehen geschehen. Das Land, welches Einwohnern solcher monarchischen Staten auf diese modificirte Art zukommt, stehet dem Republikaner noch vollständiger zu. Bey ihm machet die Obrigkeit keinen abgesonderten und dem Volk entgegen gesetzten Stand aus. Dieses kommt allein und ganz in Betrachtung. Eine jede obrigkeitliche Person repräsentirt das Volk nur so weit, als ihm seine mit allen seinen Mitbürgern ähnliche Qualität eines solchen dasselbe erlaubt.”

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 260-261: “Der Verfasser kenne gewiss den Geist der Republiken nicht, wenn er Belohnungen zu dem Grund ihrer grossen Handlungen erhebet.” The same argument was also made by Karl Ludwig von Haller who, it is often forgotten, was perhaps the most consistent, and theoretically sophisticated, defender of traditional, city-centred republicanism. See Volume six of the *Restauration der Staatswissenschaft* (p. 493), where he rejects not only the possibility of monarchical patriotism but also the idea (dear to the *Economic Society*) that patriotism could be extended to the republic’s subject territory. Genuine patriotism, according to Haller, could only develop amongst equal members of a politically and economically independent community who did not relate to one another on the basis of needs: “Genau zu reden kann aber der wahre Gemeingeist, der eigentlich sogenannte Patriotismus nur in wirklichen Gemeinwesen Platz finden, und eben desswegen auch nicht in Monarchien, ja nicht einmal von den Unterthanen der Republik selbst gefördert werden, weil da die einzelnen Menschen nicht in Communitäts-Verhältnissen mit einander stehen. Hier sind wohl Dienstfeier und dankbare Anhänglichkeit an die Person des Landesherm, lebhaftes Gefühl der Ehre und Treu, Nationalstolz, Be-

Real citizens thought of rewards as being offensive to their moral persona: “The magnanimous, moral disposition which is instructed to them by way of education – it does not require any external rewards, in most cases they even consider them insults.”<sup>90</sup> A real citizen did not seek the approval of his fellow citizens, he did not depend on their judgement; nor did he harbour any ambitions to be immortalised by some public statue. The only reward he could hope to gain from a virtuous act was “the moral sensation of political happiness”. The reason was that a citizen acting virtuously simply did his *own thing* and looked after his *own affairs*. No further incentive was needed.<sup>91</sup> From this particular republican perspective, the system of honour remained a phenomenon fundamentally associated with monarchical politics.<sup>92</sup> It described a desire for recognition within a hierarchically structured society and thrived on men’s inability to recognise themselves other than through the eyes of others. Honour, in this sense, was nothing else but a particular, and highly developed form of *amour-propre*.

The gulf, which separated this selfish or honour-based system of monarchical patriotism (as some Zurich republicans described it) from an authentic republican patriotism, is nicely illustrated by an episode that occurred

gierde nach Ruhm und Auszeichnung möglich [...]; aber der Patriotismus in jener ersteren und engeren Bedeutung lässt sich nur unter Mitgenossen denken, bey denen die gemeinsame Sache zugleich zum Theil ihre eigene ist.”

<sup>90</sup> *Freymüthige Nachrichten*, p. 261: “Dieweil grossmüthige sittliche Gesinnungen ihnen durch die Auferziehung eingeflösset werden; diese verlangen keine äussere Belohnungen, sie sehen sie in vielen Fällen für eine Beschimpfung an.”

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 261: “Die moralische Empfindung der politischen Glückseligkeit war ihnen Belohnung genug; würde eine Republik so viel belohnen als ein Monarch, so wäre es ein sicheres Zeichen des Verlusts aller ihrer guten Principien.”

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 261: “Die Freygebigkeit in Austheilung solcher Ehrenzeichen findet man nicht in Republiken, deren Repräsentanten durch die Gesetze die Sitten und Freyheiten des Volks auf allen Seiten gebundene Hände haben, sondern in den Schätzen und der Macht eines Monarchen, die über dieses alles hinaus ist. [...] So lange der Titel des Bürgers den Teilhaber einer gewissen von ihm selbst ratificirten Verfassung bedeutet, die ihm solche und solche Freyheiten verheisset und Pflichten abfordert, so ist er immer von einem Unterthan wesentlich unterschieden, dessen Verfassung in ihrer Grundeinrichtung sowol als Modification von dem unumschränkten Willen seines Oberherren abhängt, in dessen Person alle Rechte des Landes vereinigt sind.”



in the autumn of 1762. The episode involved the young Johann Heinrich Füssli, undisputedly one of the most hard-line Zurich republicans and an ardent admirer of Rousseau. Füssli was also a fervent opponent of Abbt. From correspondence with his soul-mate Johann Caspar Escher, we learn that Füssli's friends were getting increasingly concerned about his public appearance, his comments about religious matters, about politics and his open criticism of fellow citizens who seemed to lack the required zeal and dedication to the common cause.<sup>93</sup> While expressing sympathy for Füssli's militancy, Escher insisted that his recent behaviour was highly unwise; it was bad for his 'credit' and could undermine his chances of getting elected into a public post, an *Ehrenstelle*, or 'position of honour', as it was commonly called.<sup>94</sup> But most disturbing of all was Füssli's recently acquired habit of walking the streets of Zurich dressed in Spartan or Roman costume. Füssli himself described his outfit as consisting of a "simple cotton dress", a hat and a hunting knife.<sup>95</sup> This, he claimed, was the outfit that befitted a real republican. There was a more serious point to this. Füssli's Spartan dress was obviously an imitation of Rousseau's endlessly discussed Armenian outfit, and it was also an essentially Rousseauian point that Füssli was trying to make: namely that a real republican, meaning one who was truly at one with his *polis*, should never be guided in his actions by the opinion of others, not even by the opinion of his fellow citizens, but should be true only to himself. Defying conventional dress codes, and exchanging the outfit of an eighteenth-century Zurich *Burger* for that of a Roman citizen, was thus not merely exchanging one uniform for another. It was the externalisation of a true republican's disregard for the realm of opinion. Nothing, in Füssli's eyes, could be more self-revealing than for Escher to remind his friend of the possible effect that such behaviour might have on his 'credit'. To have credit could matter only to rhetoricians and opportunists, not to those whose prime concern was the fulfilment of their duty: "Oh if I could only convince myself that my Escher hadn't written this line [about the importance of credit]. Do try to distinguish between real and false credit in the same way

<sup>93</sup> The correspondence was published in Josephine Zehnder, *Pestalozzi. Idee und Macht der menschlichen Entwicklung*, Gotha 1875, pp. 244-259.

<sup>94</sup> Letter to Füssli, December 1762, *ibid.*, p. 244.

<sup>95</sup> Letter to Escher, 28 December 1762, *ibid.*, p. 245.

as one distinguishes between real and false honour, and you will understand why your sentence deserves to be thrown into hell."<sup>96</sup>

### 3.2. The 'Patriotic Society': republican honour and public opinion

Füssli clearly occupied a very extreme position within the spectrum of Swiss reform discourse, and only a small fraction of Swiss reformers reacted as strongly as he did against the honour-based theories of patriotism of thinkers like Coyer or Abbt. Iselin and his Bernese friends in the *Patriotic Society* were, as we shall see, far more open to this line of thought. In their correspondence they regularly condemned the radical moralism of the Zurich *Jeunesse dorée* as overbearing, patronising, and ultimately self-deluding. If Füssli's extravagant dress code was meant to prove his liberation from the oppressive rule of opinion he had achieved the exact opposite: instead of bringing the realm of fashion to an abrupt end, with his costume *à la Grecque* he had in fact initiated the latest style. In Zurich, it was repeatedly claimed, virtue itself had become a fashion accessory.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245-246: "O könnte ich mich überreden dass mein Escher diese Zeile nicht geschrieben hätte. Unterscheide wahren und falschen Credit wie man wahre und falsche ehre unterscheidet und du wirst den Schlüssel finden deinen eignen Satz in die Hölle herunter zu stürzen."

<sup>97</sup> The strongest criticism of Füssli was formulated by his friend Escher in a letter of June 1766: "Lass, liebster! deinen Patriotismus fahren, um deiner Ruhe, um meiner Bitte willen! Heute stehst du gleich einem Römer hoch auf wider die Ungerechtigkeit und die Frevel einer obrigkeitlicher Person. Deine That ist öffentlich und erweckt allgemeines Aufsehen. Was gewinnst du damit? Die Erbitterung und den Unwillen des Rathhauses, ohne dass du die Zuneigung unsrer Burgerschaft erlangst. [...] Gepriesen, aufgemuntert wirst du allein von dem kleinen Häufgen derer, die du meist um dich hast und die Patrioten sein wollen wie du [...]. [D]u bildest dir ein ganz ein Heiliger, ein Cato zu sein. Glaub mir mein Freund! niemand ist weniger ein Heiliger, noch ein Cato als du selbst! Deine Leidenschaft für das Gute ist die namliche mit deiner Leidenschaft für Dafne – der du noch weit entfernt bist entsagt zu haben. Und wie oft sinkest du dann wieder in ein gleichgültiges Wesen zurück, eben weil du über das Mass dich und dein Kräfte anstrengst. – heilige, Catone sind standhafter, sind beharrlicher! Um deiner Ruhe also, um meiner Bitte willen, höre auf so laut deine Stimme zu erheben, so sehr dem Publico dich zur Schau darzustellen. [...] Aber Lieber! dieser Eitelkeit – denn wahrlich es ist

It was especially when set alongside this self-deluding form of virtuous purity with its insistence on the strict incompatibility of patriotism and a system of needs, many Swiss reformers claimed, that the reform monarchists' theory of an honour-based patriotism stood out as a promising alternative and which deserved closer inspection. This was also the view of Moses Mendelssohn when, in a letter to Iselin in May 1762, he put forward Abbt's name for membership of the *Patriotic Society*.<sup>98</sup> Not only did Abbt's work show that strong common grounds existed between monarchist and republican reform theories. What made him a particularly suitable candidate, Mendelssohn suggested, was that Abbt was presently working on a new book, which fully matched the views of the Bernese society.<sup>99</sup> On the same occasion Mendelssohn complained of the harsh review that had appeared in the *Freymüthige Nachrichten*, especially the implicit accusation that Abbt was a servile propagandist in the pay of a warmongering autocrat. Abbt's views, Mendelssohn reminded his Swiss interlocutor, were anything but representative of official German thinking; nor was he on anybody's payroll.<sup>100</sup> Mendelssohn's complaints were not left without comment. In June 1762 Iselin assured Mendelssohn that: "The voice which has called him a hired eulogist is far from being the general opinion of our nation."<sup>101</sup>

nichts anderes als Eitelkeit – einmal scharf ins Gesicht geschaut, und du wirst dich ihrer schämen." Ibid., p. 258-259.

<sup>98</sup> Ulrich Im Hof: "Mendelssohn und Iselin", in Michael Albrecht, Eva J. Engel, Norbert Hinske (eds.), *Moses Mendelssohn und die Kreise seiner Wirksamkeit*, Tübingen 1994, S. 61-92.

<sup>99</sup> Letter to Iselin, 30 May 1762, in Ferdinand Schwarz (ed.), "Briefe Moses Mendelssohn an Isaak Iselin", *Basler Jahrbuch* 1923, Basel 1923, p. 61: "Ich weiss auch, dass er gegenwärtig ein Werk unter Händen hat, dass auf die Absicht der Gesellschaft eine sehr genaue Beziehung hat."

<sup>100</sup> "Man hat ihm in Ihrem Vaterlande die Beleidigung angethan, ihn für einen gedungenen Lobredner zu halten. Er ist aber so weit vom gedungenen Lobredner entfernt, dass er in den hiesigen Landen nicht einmal seine zeitliche Versorgung gefunden hat. Wenn der Tadler die Verfassung der nordischen Lande gekannt hätte, so würde er wohl gewusst haben, dass man in diesen Gegenden Husaren, aber keine Lobredner dingt." Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>101</sup> Brief an Mendelssohn vom 25. Juni 1762, *Moses Mendelssohn Gesammelte Schriften*, Jubiläumsausgabe, vol. 11, Stuttgart - Bad Cannstatt 1974, p. 349: "Die Stimme die ihn [Abbt] einen gedungenen Lobredner genannt hat ist noch lange nicht die Stimme unserer Nation."

Iselin in particular was very favourably disposed towards Abbt, to the point that he even tried to persuade him to seek employment at the University of Basel.<sup>102</sup> It is unclear how directly involved Abbt was with the *Patriotic Society*, although we do know that he wrote an essay in answer to one of the prize questions published in 1762.<sup>103</sup>

The *Patriotic Society*, founded in 1762 by the jurist Daniel von Fellenberg, was an intellectually ambitious enterprise. Fellenberg's cor-

<sup>102</sup> See Louis Frison, "Isaak Iselin: Zehn Briefe an Thomas Abbt. Erstausgabe und Einführung", in *Recherches Germaniques*, No. 6, 1976, pp. 250-268. See also Iselin's highly positive review of Abbt's posthumously published *Vermischte Schriften* in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* 1770, 12. Bd, 2. St., p. 32-43. Abbt himself was initially critical of Iselin. In his review of Iselin's *Versuch über die Gesetzgebung* (Zürich 1760), Abbt ridiculed him as a Swiss follower of Rousseau (Abbt called him J. Jousseau) who longed for a revival of classical virtuous politics (*Briefe, die Neueste Litteratur betreffend*, 1759, 4. Teil, p. 292-300). For a more positive evaluation of Iselin, see especially his review of Valentin Meyer's *Patriotische Vorstellungen und sichere Mittel, arme Staaten zu bereichern* (s.l. 1762) where he points out to the important contribution of current Swiss writers to the development of a new and specifically German form of political literature. (*Briefe, die Neueste Litteratur betreffend*, 1762, 2. Teil, p. 137-160) "Ich belausche schon seit geraumer Zeit die Herren Schweizer, und sie scheinen mir endlich das Erdreich gefunden zu haben, zu dessen Anbau sie Talent besitzen." (p. 137) "Wir reden entweder nur von den ungewungenen Pflichten des einzelnen und häuslichen Menschen; man sollte denken; wir gehörten keinem Staate an; es gäbe unter uns keine Bürger; oder wir steigen gar zu kleinen Anständigkeiten herunter, die wir mit einer abgenutzten satyrischen Einkleidung recht angenehm, so Gott will, vortragen [...]. Hier ist also eine Lücke, welche unsre deutsche prosaische Schriftsteller noch auszufüllen haben, und für welche seit einiger Zeit die Schweizer rühmlich gearbeitet." (p. 140-141) The interest of mid eighteenth-century German writers in Swiss political discourse is being discussed in Eduard Ziehen, *Die deutsche Schweizerbegeisterung in den Jahren 1750-1815*, Frankfurt a. M. 1922, and Karl Schwarber, "Schweizerische Einflüsse auf die Entwicklung des deutschen Patriotismus im 18. Jahrhundert, Isaak Iselin zum 150. Geburtstag" in *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 31 (1932), p. 227-280. A study explaining how Iselin precisely fits into the German debate on aesthetic patriotism would be much needed.

<sup>103</sup> "Abhandlung über die Frage: Finden sich dergleichen Vorurtheile, die Ehrerbeitung verdienen, und die ein guter Bürger öffentlich anzugreifen sich ein Bedenken sich machen soll?" in *Vermischte Schriften*, Dritter Teil, Berlin und Stettin 1782, p. 137-188.

respondence with Iselin, and several of his surviving manuscripts in the *Burgerbibliothek* in Berne, show that his aim was to develop a theory of a Christian Legislator. The society was intended to become the centre of a genuinely international collaborative effort involving some of the leading philosophers in Europe. The list of its projected collaborators is indeed impressive. Letters were sent out to Rousseau, George Louis Schmid von Auenstein, Johann Georg Sulzer, Johann Georg Zimmermann, Moses Mendelssohn, Johann David Michaelis, Johann Andreas Cramer, Henry Home Lord Kames, John Brown, David Hume, Adam Smith, d'Alembert, Denis Diderot, Helvetius and Algarotti. Several of them, including Rousseau and Kames, replied and sent in essays they had written specifically for the society or parts of work in progress. In addition, the society published four prize questions in various European journals which asked:

- 1) By what means can the corrupted morals of a people be restored? What path does a legislator thus have to take?
- 2) Are there prejudices that need to be respected and which a good citizen should refrain from attacking publicly?
- 3) Which people has been the happiest?
- 4) By what means can one generate a more trusting relationship and closer friendship between the citizens and the rural population of the various free states of the Confederation?

I will deal with the *Patriotic Society* at greater length in the following two chapters. What matters here is its relationship to the *Economic Society*. Fellenberg's insistence on calling it the 'patriotic' society suggests that his position differed from the one espoused by the leading members of the *Economic Society*. But this was not entirely the case. None of the members of the *Patriotic Society* disagreed fundamentally with the theoretical outlook of the *Economic Society*, while there was also a considerable overlap in the membership of both societies. George Louis Schmid von Auenstein and Vincent Bernard Tschärner, the two chief ideologues of the *Economic Society*, were also active members of the *Patriotic Society*. Fellenberg, although not a member of the *Economic Society*, was very well informed about its activities and a close friend of all its core members. Iselin was an honorary member of both societies. What distinguished the two societies was thus not a fundamental difference in attitude towards commercial society or towards the role the passions should play in the organisation of

human interaction. According to Fellenberg, the *Patriotic Society* was meant to complement the *Economic Society's* reform discourse by developing both a science of the legislator and a proper moral philosophy. We can see this from an unpublished essay by Fellenberg of 1760, *Vorschlag zu einer nützlichen Einrichtung der Economischen Gesellschaften (Proposal for a useful organisation of the Economic Societies)* where he argued in favour of widening the existing Bernese reform debate to include discussions of moral philosophy and politics proper:

Why would the learned friends of mankind want to limit their efforts only to the improvement of the physical situation of nations? Why should they be concerned only with feeding men and not with bothering about discussing far more important moral and political interests?<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Berner Burgerbibliothek, Fellenberg-Archiv, Schachtel 149, Nr. 4: "Man kan den in unseren neueren Zeiten fast allenthalben entstandenen Economischen Gesellschaften merckliche Verdienste um die Vermehrung des allgemeinen Wohlseyns nicht wohl absprechen, und diese Stiftungen scheinen zu den besonderen Vorzügen zu gehören, deren sich das gegenwärtige Zeitalter zu rechnen hat. Sie haben angefangen die Aufmercksamkeit der Gelehrten auf die ersten Bedürfnisse des menschlichen Lebens zu werfen, und dem Licht, so sie über diese ehemahls so sehr vernachlässigte Gegenstände ausgebreitet haben, hat schon manche Nation eine bessere Benutzung ihre natürlichen Reichthümer einen grösseren Wohlstand oder ein minderes Elend zu dancken. So gross indessen die Vortheile seyn mögen, so auss den Bemühungen der Economischen Gesellschaften verschiedenen Völckern zugeflossen sind, und so vergnügend es mir auch ist, dergleichen Gesellschaften je länger je mehr sich vermehren zu sehen, so habe ich doch öfters gewünscht, dass diese wohlthätige Stiftungen den Kreiss ihrer Erforschungen erweitern, und auf alles dasjenige aussdähnen möchten, was auf das gesammte Wohlseyn der verschiedenen Nationen einen näheren oder entfernten Einfluss haben mag. [W]arum wollten menschenfreundliche Gelehrte ihre wohlthätigen Bemühungen nur auf die Verbesserung des physischen Zustands der Nationen einschränken? Warum wollten sie nur für das Futer der Menschen besorgt seyn, und die noch wichtigere moralische und politische Interessen derselben unbeleuchtet lassen? Verschiedene Economische Gesellschaften haben schon angefangen, auf diese höhere Gegenstände ihre Untersuchungen ausszudähnen, sie haben schon bey mehr als einem Volcke merckliche Verbesserungen in seiner moralischen und politischen Verfassung veranlasset, und wir könnten uns von ihren Bemühungen die schönsten Früchte versprechen, wenn sie noch mehr als sie bisher gethan, alles dasjenige beherzigen wollten, wodurch die Glückseligkeit der Nationen beförderet werden kan. Gesellschaften, die sich einer so erhabenen Absicht vorsezen, und

According to Fellenberg, the *Economic Society* should transform itself into a "National-Gesellschaft", meaning a society that dealt not simply with questions of productivity but with all the factors (economic, political, legal, educational, moral and religious) which together determined the happiness and greatness of a particular nation. Above all, the *Economic Society* needed a new moral philosophy. What Fellenberg was interested in was less Hirzel's model for increasing agricultural productivity than the figure of the *Socrate Rustique* himself. Rather than using genuinely virtuous and economically successful model farmers as a stimulus to their neighbours' *amour-propre*, the farmers should themselves be turned in *Socrates rustiques*. Hirzel's model farmer, called Kleinjogg, was the quintessential natural man.<sup>105</sup> He was "free of all prejudice, his capacity for judging is as good as that of the truly wise; his will and heart are under the complete control of his reason. His thinking, speaking and acting are always in the greatest harmony with one another."<sup>106</sup> He was also immune to vanity and listened only to his own heart.<sup>107</sup> According to Fellenberg, it was this ideal of *Sittlichkeit* that Berne's reformers should aim to realise.

mit vereinigten Kräfften an der Erleuchtung der Völcker über den ganzen Umfang ihrer wahren Interessen arbeiten wurden, scheinen mir so glückliche Würckungen hervorbringen zu sollen, dass ich wünschte, die besten Köpfe unseres Zeitalters die ganze Macht ihrer Beredsamkeit anwenden zu sehen, um alle Nationen zu so heilsamen Stiftungen aufzumehmen, und ihnen die Mittel anzuzeigen, durch welche dieselben auf eine dauhafften Weise in einem jeden Lande zu bewerkstelligen wäre." I would like to thank Franziska Scheidegger for providing me with a transcript of this manuscript.

<sup>105</sup> Hirzel, *Socrate Rustique*, p. 71: "Klijogg doit tout ce qu'il est à la nature, à ses propres réflexions & rien du tout à l'art."

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271: "[Kleinjogg est] un homme doué d'un jugement aussi droit que celui du plus grand Philosophe, & dont les sentimens & la volonté étoient absolument soumis à l'empire de la raison. Sa façon de penser, ses paroles & ses actions sont toujours dans le plus parfait accord."

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 265: "Toutes ces distinctions, tous les applaudissemens qu'il reçoit ne lui inspirent pas la moindre vanité"; For a summary of Kleinjogg's moral thought, see p. 258: "Nous pouvons tous, dit-il, lire au dedans de nous-mêmes ce que nous devons faire ou éviter dans chaque circonstance. Il n'y a qu'à se demander, lorsqu'on agit vis-à-vis d'autrui, ce que nous souhaiterions qu'on fit à notre égard en pareil cas, & bien observer tout le tems qu'on agit si notre Coeur est satisfait & tranquille. C'est dans le témoignage qu'on peut se rendre à soi-même d'avoir rempli tous ses devoirs, c'est dans la paix intérieur qui en résulte, que consiste selon lui le vrai bonheur."

Thus, although they defended Abbt from the accusations of the Zurich republicans, members of the *Patriotic Society* accepted that the latter had a valid point when they argued that the various forms of 'modern' patriotism espoused by Abbt, Mirabeau and the *Economic Society* appealed fundamentally to men's self-interest. If patriotism was prompted only by the desire for praise and recognition, it was difficult to see how it could qualify as a genuine virtue, especially if patriotism was to meet the moral requirements of both republicanism and Protestantism. And yet they insisted that, when compared to the exclusive, city-centred republicanism of Füssli and Wegelin, monarchical patriotism remained the more promising option of the two. The question which Fellenberg, Iselin and the other members of the *Patriotic Society* tried to answer was whether the theory of monarchical patriotism could be developed in such a way that its utilitarian undertones could be gradually eliminated. Was it possible to generate a genuinely virtuous culture without having to go back to the kind of exclusive, city-centred republicanism of the Zurich patriots?

When reflecting on how to reduce the selfish aspect of monarchical patriotism, the members of the *Patriotic Society* initially focused on the mechanisms that determined the distribution of honour and reward. The fact, they argued, that honours and rewards were distributed by mere humans, be it a prince or a group of magistrates, meant that an honour-based patriotism was in constant danger of degenerating into clientism. Clientism meant the loss of moral authority of those responsible for the distribution of honour; and loss of moral authority, it was argued, necessarily deprived a republican system of honours of its prime motivational force.<sup>108</sup> This problem had already been raised by Hirzel in the *Socrate Rustique*, where he argued that it was crucial for honours to be distributed sparsely and only to the right persons.

<sup>108</sup> This point was also raised by Mably in his *Phocion*, p. 129: "Au lieu de prodiguer les honneurs, que la république ne les dispense qu'avec une extrême économie. La gloire trop commune s'avilit. Que les récompenses soient rares; que tous les désirent; que peu les obtiennent; elles seront méprisées si on les donne d'avance ou par caprice. Les talens ont droit d'y prétendre; mais ce n'est que quand ils sont utiles à la patrie."

It is regrettable that in most cases one does not pay enough attention and fails to be entirely just when distributing signs of honour. As a result, the corrupt and ignorant world confuses mere signs of honour with honour itself; and because it can happen that those who deserve least to be honoured acquire them through intrigue, they soon lose their value.<sup>109</sup>

No less important, he claimed, was that the moral authority of those responsible for distributing honours should be regarded as both authoritative and completely impartial. This could be achieved if they showed themselves to be not just outstanding, morally irreproachable members of the community, but equally experts in the technological, economic and generally practical aspects of agriculture.

If we wanted to inspire our labourers to work harder by handing out rewards we would have to set up a society of respectable men who, due to their unquestioned righteousness and their profound knowledge of agricultural matters, would be respected by everyone.<sup>110</sup>

These arguments also appear in the writings of the members of *Patriotic Society* and other Bernese reform thinkers. Many of them, however, believed that the measures advocated by Hirzel did not go far enough in their attempt to prevent an honour-based patriotism from sliding back towards *amour-propre*. In their writings and correspondence they thus suggested two further models.

<sup>109</sup> Hirzel, *Socrate Rustique*, p. 285-286: "Le mal qu'il y a, c'est que l'on use pas le plus souvent dans la distribution des marques d'honneur, de toute la circonspection & de toute la justice qu'il faudroit. Le monde corrompu & ignorant confond alors ces marques d'honneur avec l'honneur lui-même; & comme il arrive d'un autre côté que ceux qui les méritent le moins les usurpent par leur intrigues, elles perdent peu à peu tout leur prix."; see also p. 287: "Mais tout est perdu, lorsque ces mêmes honneurs deviennent le partage de la fainéantise, de la débauche & de mille autres vices; tout le bien s'annéantit; les affaires les plus importantes, confiées à des mains laches & ennemies du travail, sont négligees; toute emulation disparoit, un manège bas & rampant est le seul moyen qu'on emploie pour se procurer du credit."

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288: "Si l'on vouloit donc exciter l'ardeur du travail parmi nos cultivateurs, au moyens des récompenses [cela] exigeroit l'établissement d'une Société d'hommes respectables, qui réunissant à la probité la plus inébranlable une connoissance approfondie de tout ce qui concerne l'Economie rustique, jouiroient d'une confiance générale."

The first model is closely associated with Iselin and Fellenberg's friend, Niklaus Anton Kirchberger, a leading member of the *Patriotic Society* and founder of the *Moral Society* in Berne.<sup>111</sup> In his essays outlining the purpose and administrative structure of the *Moral Society* (eventually founded in 1764), Kirchberger seemed to suggest that Hirzel's ideas could be much improved if the task of distributing signs of honour and public recognition was not left in the hands of worthy and competent magistrates but was entrusted to an anonymous society. All over Europe, Kirchberger suggested, regional *Moral Societies* should be established, each with their own network of local informants.<sup>112</sup> The regional societies should then regularly report to

<sup>111</sup> The most thorough study of the *Moral Society* is that by Siegfried Viola, *Aus den Anfängen der schweizerischen Gemeinnützigkeitsbewegung mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Kantons Zürich*, Diss. Zürich, 1941, p. 83-116; Emil Erne, *Die schweizerischen Sozietäten*, p. 210f. On Kirchberger, see also Antoine Faivre, *Kirchberger et l'illumination au dix-huitième siècle*, La Haye 1996 (*Archives internationales d'histoire des idées*, vol. 16). Prince Ludwig Eugen von Württemberg who was closely associated with various members of both the *Patriotic* and *Moral Society* set up a Lausanne branch of the Bernese *Moral Society* in 1765. A good insight into the moral philosophical position underpinning the *Moral Society's* reform discourse can be found in the weekly journal, *Aristide ou le citoyen*, which appeared in Lausanne during 1766 and 1767, and contains essays of the Prince of Württemberg and other local Protestant reformers.

<sup>112</sup> See his *Projet Du Plan de la Reunion generale De toutes les Sociétés morales* which he wrote in collaboration with the Duke of Württemberg (Ms J 544 *Moralische Gesellschaft Zürich*, Handschriftenabteilung Zentralbibliothek Zürich): "1) Quand l'occasion se presentera de faire un bien de quelque genre qu'il soit, qui excedera les facultés, le Credit et les influences d'une de deux ou de trois Sociétés particulieres, toutes les Sociétés morales se reuniront pour l'effectuer, et la Société qui invitera les autres, les fera par une lettre circulaire motivée circonstancielle. 2) Chaque Société fournira pour l'accomplissement du bienfait proposé la Somme qu'elle jugera à propos. 3) La Société la plus proche du Lieu de la Scene sera chargée du soin de cette affaire et par une Lettre circulaire. Elle rendra compte aux autres sociétés morales de la maniere dont elle y aura procedée. 4) Les Sociétés morales entretiendront ensemble une Correspondence étroite et confidente, et qui est absolument necessaire pour la durée de Leur reunion. [...] 11) Les Sociétés morales promettont à celles d'entre elles qui par un effet de Leur modestie, ou pour effectuer un plus grand bien desire-ront de n'être pas connues, de ne pas dechirer le voile, dont elles voudront se couvrir. 12) Comme toutes ces diverses Sociétés sont également interessées à encourager la Vertu, on se persuade qu'Elles se feront toutes un plaisir et meme un devoir de contribuer à l'execution du projet qu'on a formé de publier des Actions Vertueuses."

the mother society (which was to be located in Berne), listing all those acts of virtue which they considered worthy of some form of public acclaim. As a next step, the mother society should initiate a second, much more thorough round of investigation. According to Kirchberger, this process of investigating, reporting and re-investigating was to be repeated until the *Moral Society* was finally able to make an absolutely faultless evaluation of the moral quality of the act in question. Only once the good intentions of the actor had been firmly established would the *Moral Society* distribute its reward, which again was to take the form of medals, open letters to journals, and the like.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>113</sup> A detailed description of the vetting procedure is given in his *Essay d'un Plan pour établir en Suisse une Société Morale* (Handschriftensammlung Ms J521 Zentralbibliothek Zürich): "Qui par ses Actions eut pour objet, de faire aimer la Vertu. La Conviction generale de la possibilité de la vertu, le respect et l'amour, qu'on portera a ceux qui ont agis d'une maniere superieure, le desir de les imiter, l'attention pour decouvrir les bonnes actions des personnes qui se trouvent placées a l'entour de nous, sont des avantages que decoulent presque immediatement des recits exacts et veridiques qu'on est obligé de faire a la Société. Comme il y a beaucoup d'actions excellentes qui veulent se dérober a la vue du public, il est necessaire de posseder l'esprit observateur a un degré eminent pour faire des decouvertes heureuses dans ce genre. Il faut s'informer chez plusieurs personnes et combiner avec le plus grand soin ce qui influe dans l'action; ce n'est qu'a force de perserverance, de penetration, et d'impartialité qu'on peut reussir. Nous serons les historiens de la Vertu et non les Juges de l'humanité, chaque membre qui recite detaillera le fait dont il est question, sans s'arreter aux faiblesses que l'acteur pourroit avoir eus dans un autre tems, il suffit pour nous interesser, qu'une personne ait été bonne une fois. La vie d'un homme agé, qui aura vecu sans injustices et sans action brillantes sera un eloge, et un grand eloge. Il est facile de voir que c'est essentiel de porter la plus grande attention a l'authenticité des faits. Lorsque dans les Assemblées on aura fini de traiter le bien des particuliers, le Directeur demandera un membre après l'autre, s'il n'a rien decouvert en fait d'action qui pourroit être proposé a la Société; l'Assesseur qui se lève a ce Sujet livra un memoire exact et impartial; le Directeur fera parvenir ce memoire sans retard au representant. La Société principale deliberera quels pourroient être les correspondans, membres isolés ou Sociétés particulieres de tous les departemens qui seroient les plus propres pour augmenter l'authenticité de ce recit. Elle chargera autant de personnes que la prudence permet pour faire des observations sur l'acteur. Ces personnes travailleront l'une a l'insçu de l'autre, avantage qui est attaché a la constitution de la Société, et feront des rapports qui seront confrontés avec toute sorte de precaution en considerant surtout le point de vue de l'objet l'Observation. On pourra tirer de ces avis de quoi confirmer le me-

Up to this point, the project of a Moral Society seemed to differ from Hirzel's proposal only in respect of its far more stringent and elaborate vetting procedure. Yet in his essays Kirchberger seemed to suggest that his own model was not just more elaborate but that it differed in a fundamental way. It was the fact that the Moral Society was an anonymous society which distinguished it from the call for competent and morally upright judges. Leaving the distribution of rewards to an anonymous society de-personalised the system of republican honour. Single moral judges despite their individual competence in technical matters and their patriotic convictions, remained prone to errors of judgement. As human beings, they also remained a target of flattery, thereby rendering the system open to abuse. An anonymous society, on the other hand, offered no targets for flattery. Keeping the identity of the judges hidden meant that no personal favours could be performed. It also meant that the recipients of honour would not feel indebted to any individual moral judge or panel of judges. Prizes and honours would arrive out of the blue, so to speak, handed out by the community or public rather than a specific group of individuals. The effect this would have on an honour-based system of patriotism was twofold. First, the prizes and honours would be deemed to be more credible and a sign of genuine moral achievement. Secondly, and more importantly, it would change the moral orientation of man's natural desire for honour. Since one of the aims of the anonymous society was to obscure the vetting process, patriotic honour was no longer tied to the person of the prince, nor even to that of a virtuous magistrate, but to the community as a whole. Honour, in Kirchberger's argument, awaited those who successfully managed to please the public.

moire ou de former des objections qui seront communiqués a l'auteur en le priant de les refuter solidement ou de recommencer des nouvelles Observations. Le memoire corrigé sera envoyé a toutes les Sociétés principales qui donneront une copie a leurs Sociétés particulieres qu'elles inscriront dans les Anales privées; la copie retournera au representant et l'Original a la compagnie principale qui l'a communiqué. Pour une raison qu'on verra plus bas, il n'y aura d'abord que la Société principale du departement de l'auteur qui saura le nom de la personne qui fait le Sujet du recit. Tous les noms seront feints et le memoire se connoitra au Titre que l'auteur lui donne. Aucun membre pourra choisir un autre membre pour être le Sujet de son recit, a moins qu'il ait ignoré la part qu'il a a cet etablissement." I am grateful to Franziska Scheidegger for providing me with a transcript of this manuscript.

### 3.3. *Iselin: republican honour and the impartial spectator*

Similar ideas can be found in the various writings of Fellenberg and other members of the *Patriotic Society*. (This was also the reason why Fellenberg insisted on keeping the names of the members of the *Patriotic Society* secret.<sup>114</sup>) They generally acknowledged that the model associated with Kirchberger and his *Moral Society* did indeed present an improvement. Yet, they seemed to believe that Kirchberger's own model of republican honour still did not fully eliminate the problem of *amour propre*. Men still saw themselves through the eyes of others. Furthermore, while in Kirchberger's model men could no longer directly aim to please a particular individual in charge of the distribution of honours, their prime motivational force would still be the desire to be appreciated by others. Also, men were still left with the hope of catching the eye of one of the anonymous judges. Pecuniary rewards were deemed especially problematic, because they further enforced the widespread but false belief that the aim of virtuous behaviour was the acquisition of wealth.

This was the point that Iselin was trying to force upon his readers. A true honour-based patriotism that wished to eliminate its utilitarian undertones needed to be rendered independent of public opinion. True patriots or *wahre Patrioten*, Iselin insisted, acted virtuously irrespectively of how others judged their behaviour. Even if every fellow-citizen was corrupt, even if there was no hope that a patriotic act would ever be honoured or appreciated by others, true patriots would still pursue the common good.<sup>115</sup> True

<sup>114</sup> See for example Fellenberg's letter to Iselin (20 April 1762): "[L]'obscurité que nous desirons montrera suffisamment que ce n'est point un projet d'ambition, mais uniquement un projet pour le genre humain." Berner Burgerbibliothek, Fellenberg-Archiv, Schachtel 152.

<sup>115</sup> See also his *Philosophische und politische Versuche*, p. 87-88: "Wenn auch alles Bestreben des Patrioten, welches falsch und unmöglich ist, in die Gemüther seiner dermaligen Mitbürger und Amtsgenossen nicht den geringsten guten Einfluss hätte, so wäre dasselbe doch weder eitel, noch unnütz, noch einfältig. Es wäre immer an sich noch ein Gut, und ein vortreffliches Gut in dem Staate; eine feyerliche Verwahrung der göttlichen Rechte der Wahrheit, und ein kostbarer Same von Tugend, der vielleicht Jahre keimen und erst bey unsern Nachkömmlingen die herrlichsten Früchte bringen wird."

patriots, in other words, acted virtuously because of the intrinsic value of virtue. This argument was at the centre of Iselin's essay, *Der Patriot*, which, together with another essay, *Der Antipatriot*, he added to the second edition of the *Patriotic Dreams* of 1758:

The sworn might of all enemies of righteousness and virtue cannot corrupt his large heart. In all his actions, he seeks nothing else but the applause of heaven, the happiness of mankind, and the plentiful pleasure that a virtuous man derives from a virtuous act and which even the injustice of this world cannot deprive him.<sup>116</sup>

And,

From the first moment when he committed himself to the service of the state, he has declared a permanent war to all the evil-doers, the unjust, or rather to their vices and corrupt intentions. He would consider it a crime, and an eternal stain on his moral life, if he decided to end his campaign by seeking a lowly agreement with his enemies. Even if he should for ever remain in a desperate position, even if malice, injustice and tyranny by superior force should win every single battle over his virtue and his good intentions, he would still never tire of continuing this glorious combat and fight for the right cause up to his last breath.<sup>117</sup>

According to Iselin, it was the Machiavellian *Antipatriot*, not the *Patriot*, who sought to find honour by pleasing the public. "In all his actions, he seeks nothing but the applause of the fickle people, his own advantage, an honour which in fact is a real disgrace, because it is not founded on virtue;

<sup>116</sup> *Patriotische Träume* (1758), p. 312: "Die zusammengeschworne Macht aller Feinde der Redlichkeit und der Tugend ist nicht vermögend sein grosses Herz zu erschüttern. In allen seinen Handlungen suchet er nichts als den Beyfall des Himmels, der Glückseligkeit der Menschen, und das Vergnügen, das die Ausübung der Tugend dem Tugendhaften in so reichem Masse gewähret, und die Ungerechtigkeiten der Welt ihm zu rauben nicht vermögend ist."

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 325-326: "Er hat seit dem ersten Augenblike an, da er sich dem Dienste des Staates gewidmet, den Schlimmen und Ungerechten, oder vielmehr ihren Lastern und verderblichen Absichten, einen ewigen Krieg angekündet. Diesem durch eine niedrige Versöhnung mit den Feinden desselben entsagen, wäre für ihn ein Verbrechen, das sein ruhmvolles Leben mit unauslöschlicher Schande befleken, und alle seine Tugenden auf einmal zernichten würde. Sollte er auch immer untenliegen, sollten auch Bosheit, Ungerechtigkeit und Tyranny, durch ihre unglückselige Uebermacht in jedem Kampfe über seine Tugend und seine redlichen Absichten siegen, so wird er doch nicht müde werden einen so rühmlichen Streit fortzuführen, und bis auf den letzten Odemzug für die gute Sache zu kämpfen."

and in this he seeks a happiness which is as vain as the foundation on which it rests, and which can be destroyed by any adversary wind and the people's simple change of mind."<sup>118</sup>

It is important to realise that Iselin's criticism of public opinion as an unreliable foundation for real honour and genuine happiness does not imply a rejection of an honour-based form of patriotism *per se*. Even a 'real' patriot, according to Iselin, was trying to acquire honour and appreciation. The crucial difference between a 'false' and a 'real' patriot was that while in the case of the former, honour was dispensed by an external source (a patriotically-minded prince, a virtuous and competent magistrate, or an anonymous society), in the latter's case it was the patriot himself who judged whether or not his action was worthy of honour. A real patriot was thus guided not by the desire to gain the appreciation of his fellow citizens but by the wish to please his own internal judge. This was possible, Iselin argued, because man possessed a natural ability to judge his own actions. Since man possessed an ideal image of his own self, which his Creator had directly implanted into his soul, it was the proximity of man's exterior behaviour to this ideal which decided whether or not an act was considered worthy of honour. This meant that for a real patriot to receive honour he had always to act in such a way as he would like to be seen by his own internal judge. It was exactly this point that Iselin was trying to stress in his *Der Patriot*, when arguing

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 337. Iselin developed his argument that real patriotism should be rendered independent from public opinion in a speech, *Die Liebe des Vaterlandes*, which he gave in 1764 in front of the assembled *Helvetische Gesellschaft* in Schinznach: "Wenn [der wahre Patriot] glauben könnte, dass seine Tugend für seine Mitbürger, für seine Zeitgenossen, für die Nachwelt verlohren seyn, dass sie nur ihm Ehre, dass sie nur ihm Vergnügen bringen, und dass alsdann gleich einer glänzenden Lufterscheinung sie verschwinden würde, so könnte er sich vielleicht darniederschlagen, so könnte er sich vielleicht abschrecken lassen. Allein er kennet die ewigen Rechte der Tugend und die unverwelkliche Natur des wahren Guten allzuwohl. Er weiss allzuwohl, dass jede edle That unsterblich ist, wenn sie schon von dem Neide verdunkelt, wenn sie schon von der Bosheit unterdrückt wird. [...] Die Ungerechtigkeit der Grossen, die Wuth des Volkes, der allgemeine Undank, die Gefahr das Leben, die Gefahr die Ehre zu verlieren, welche edeln Seelen oft werther ist als das Leben, sind nicht vermögend, ihn von einer Handlung abzuschrecken, von welcher er weiss dass sie wahrhaftig gut ist." "Die Liebe des Vaterlandes", reprinted in *Vermischte Schriften*, Zürich 1770, vol. 2, p. 172-173.

that a patriot should be less concerned with the pleasure that derived from being appreciated by the public than with the pleasure that derived from being appreciated by God. And being appreciated by God, in this world at least, meant being appreciated by one's own inner judge.

Iselin's friend Johann Georg Zimmermann put forward the same idea in a central passage of his *Von dem Nationalstolze* of 1758, where he tried to distinguish mere national pride from a morally acceptable patriotism. In contrast to common national pride, which fed on a sense of superiority towards other nations (like superiority of age, wealth, territory, military might, or religion), true patriotism, derived from a sense of one's own worth. The former resembled what French moralists had called *Orgueil*, while the latter derived from *Fierté*, the righteous pride in one's moral achievements.

The pride, which I venture to defend, is in any righteous man the sentiment of the worthiness of his soul, and which Pythagoras formerly considered as the greatest appeal of virtue, and which in our mind should generate the noblest impression. It is a guardian [i. e. the sentiment of one's own worth], which the Creator of nature has placed in it, and which condemns everything that is small and lowly, and unworthy of our soul. No harmful, no depraved thought can develop if we have this respect for ourselves, if we evaluate our passions in front of reason's throne of judgement, and if we follow the teaching of Pythagoras which says that we should fear nothing more than ourselves.<sup>119</sup>

Zimmermann insisted that while man's image of his ideal self, or, to use Zimmermann's own term, 'sentiment of the worthiness of one's soul' had been directly implanted by the Creator and, as a moral guide, was thus more reliable than the constantly swerving public opinion, it was also open

<sup>119</sup> J. G. Zimmermann, *Von dem Nationalstolze*, Zürich 1758, p. 95-96: "Der Stolz, dessen Vertheidigung ich auf mich nehme, ist bey einem rechtschaffenen Manne das Gefühl der Würdigkeit seiner Seele, das vormahls bey Pythagoras für den grössten Reiz zur Tugend gehalten wurde, und in unserm Gemüthe allerdings den edelsten Eindruck behaupten soll, es ist eine Wache die der Urheber der Natur in dasselbe geleyet hat, die alles was klein, was niedrig, und der Grösse unsrer Seelen unwürdig ist, verdringet; kein gemeiner, kein schädlicher, kein lasterhafter Gedanke wird in uns aufsteigen können, so bald wir diese Achtung für uns tragen, so bald wir nach derselben unsre Triebe vor dem Richterstuhle der Vernunft beurtheilen, und der Lehre des Pythagoras zu folge, uns, am meisten, vor uns selber scheuen."



to amelioration.<sup>120</sup> Man's image of his ideal self, he claimed, was not a fixed imprint; rather it should be thought of as an image, which, because of man's fall, had become blurred and now needed restoring. This meant that our internal judge too was prone to mistake and self-deception. Mastering one's passions and improving one's knowledge of the outside world was one important way to gain a better and, in terms of moral psychology, more effective idea of our true self. Constant and systematic self-critique was another way to test the reliability of one's moral judgements.<sup>121</sup> Religion, finally, was a third way, and it was especially the latter that Zimmermann recommended in his treatise:

From a Christian point of view, the profound corruption of our nature seems to go against this principle of Pythagoras. However this is not the case. Religion indeed wants us to recognise our utter unworthiness in front of God, and that we cannot hope to endear ourselves on the sole basis of our achievements. Yet, [religion] also wants us to understand the true worth of ourselves; she teaches us by showing us ideas of the majesty of our origins and the eminence of our calling, she shows us how to reach the latter, and fulfil the purpose of our existence; she aims to fortify our powers, to sharpen our faculties to a state of perfection, and to lift our moral excellence to the height from which it has fallen. Should such a noble creature not be allowed to have an appropriate respect for itself? The God who has created me after his image, and which he now wants to revive in me; it is him who implanted the sentiment of my own worth into my soul, a sentiment which even without any brighter light would be sufficient proof of the eminence of my origin.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>120</sup> See Haller's review of the *Von dem Nationalstolze*, in the *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*, where he firmly rejects Zimmermann's idea that patriotism could be based on a morally acceptable form of pride or *fierté*: "Hr. Z. glaubt, ein solcher Stolz sey als ein Gefühl der eigenen Würde möglich, wiewohl wir immer fürchten, die grosse Macht der Eigenliebe lasse selten zu, dass wir unsere Vorzüge nach der Billigkeit schätzen, so bald wir nicht erröthen, ihnen selbst einen Preis zu geben, und uns kömmt vor, wenn ein solcher Stolz möglich wäre, so läge er in der Bestrebung, uns unsrer Fehler zu entladen". Reprinted in Albrecht von Haller, *Tagebuch seiner Beobachtungen. Über Schriftsteller und über sich selbst*, edited by Johann Georg Heinzmann, vol. 1, Bern 1787, p. 159-160.

<sup>121</sup> See for example the anonymous essay, 'Ein jeder Mensch muss sein eigener Richter seyn', in *Der Erinnerer*, Elfte Stück, 22. Mertz 1765, Zürich. The praise of 'self-inspection' and 'self-critique' as a technique of moral fine-tuning was, as we saw in the first chapter, a standard topic within Protestant literature at the time.

<sup>122</sup> J. G. Zimmermann, *Von dem Nationalstolze*, p. 97-99: "Das tiefe Verderben unsrer Natur scheint, nach der Anleitung des Christenthumes diesem Pythagoreischen

Iselin put forward a very similar argument in his already mentioned speech, *Die Liebe des Vaterlandes*, of 1764. In it he claimed that the evolution of patriotism (from 'common patriotism' to 'real patriotism') followed a parallel development to man's divine image of himself. Each political virtue, Iselin maintained, had a natural foundation; it originated in a natural sentiment, which slowly, and according to a wide set of circumstances, developed from a mere instinct and inclination into critical reasoning. It was only once man acted through his reason that this original sentiment acquired the quality of virtue.<sup>123</sup>

Patriotism evolved along identical lines. Initially, Iselin argued, it was no more than an obscure sentiment of appreciation of those things that surrounded and immediately determined man's mode of living, his habitat, dwelling, his family, clan, and language. Man loved what, at a given time, constituted his identity.<sup>124</sup> Since the identity of early man was solely de-

Sätze zuwider zu seyn, doch ist es nicht. Die Religion will zwar dass wir unsre gänzliche Unwürdigkeit vor Gott erkennen, und nicht durch unsere eigene Verdienste vor demselben zu bestehen gedenken; aber sie fordert nicht weniger die Einsicht unsers wahren Werthes von uns, sie lehrt uns denselben, durch die Begriffe die sie von der Hoheit unsers Ursprunges und der Erhabenheit unserer Bestimmung uns beybringt, sie zeigt wie wir dieselbe erreichen, und dem Zwecke unsers Daseyns ein Genüge leisten können; sie sucher unsere Kräfte zu erhöhen, und sie ist ganz eingerichtet, unsere Fähigkeiten zu dem äussersten Staffel der Vollkommenheit zu schärfen, und die moralische Grösse auf die Höhe, von der wir herabgefallen sind, von neuem zu erheben. Sollte ein so edles Geschöpfe nicht eine gebührende Achtung für sich selbst tragen dürfen? Der Gott, der mich nach seinem Bilde gezieret, und dasselbe bey mir wieder erneuern will, der ist es, der die Empfindung meiner Würdigkeit in meine Seele geleyet hat, eine Empfindung die mir, ohne ein helleres Licht ein genugsamer Zeuge von der Grösse ihrer Herkunft wäre."

<sup>123</sup> *Die Liebe des Vaterlandes*, p. 164-165: "Von jeder politischen Tugend liegen die ersten Keime in einem dunkeln Gefühle der Seele, in einem Triebe. Obgleich schätzbar, ist eine solche unerleuchtete Neigung noch keine Tugend; sie ist noch weit von dem wahren Erhabenen und von der ächten Lauterkeit entfernt, welche die wesentlichen Kennzeichen derselben ausmachen. Erst die aufgeheiterte, die zur Weisheit erhobene Vernunft, giebt jeder Empfindung, jeden Bewegungen der menschlichen Seele eine wahre Würde, und dem Menschen selbst die erhabene Güte, zu welcher seine grosse Bestimmung ihn auffordert."

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165-166: "[M]it dem Patriotismus verhält es sich auf die gleiche Weise: Und daher fliesset der wichtige Unterschied zwischen der gemeinen und der edlen Liebe des Vaterlandes. Die erstere ist eine unüberlegte Wirkung eines natürlichen,

terminated by his physical surrounding, and the belief system of his family or clan, his 'common patriotism' was necessarily limited to the defence of his grounds, dwellings, and the values of his community. As a result, Iselin claimed, 'common patriotism' was mostly violent, always exclusive, and incapable of appreciating the merits and virtues of other belief systems.<sup>125</sup>

Despite its evident moral deficiencies, 'common' patriotism, Iselin insisted, could not simply be dismissed as barbaric but should be respected for the vital role which it played in the formation of man's ideal self-image and of 'real' patriotism. Only a 'common' patriotism was able to generate the kind of moral discipline and single mindedness that was needed to establish political society, legal systems, independent states and, more generally, the administrative structures that provided the conditions for man's subsequent mental and moral development.<sup>126</sup> It was only within the legal and administrative structures provided by political society that man could start to refine his understanding of his true nature and where he could come to recognise himself as part of a much larger entity; an entity that stretched beyond the horizon of the family, clan or tribe and encompassed the human species as a whole. Real patriotism, "true love of the fatherland", Iselin argued, was

eines beinahe machinalischen Triebes. Sie liebet, was sie umgiebet, was ihr am nächsten liegt. Noch allzu unerleuchtet um durch das Entfernte, so vortrefflich, so verehrungswürdig es auch seyn möchte, gerühret zu werden, siehet sie das Gegenwärtige allein als einen Gegenstand ihrer Liebe und ihrer Hochachtung an. Meistens sind Unwissenheit, Gewohnheit und Stolz ihre Triebräder. Sie ziehet ihr Land und dessen Verfassung nur deswegen allem andern vor, weil sie die ihrigen sind."

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 166: "Fremde Tugenden sind in ihren Augen verächtlich, und die Vorzüge anderer Völker werden von ihrem Stolz für Mängel angesehen. Ihre Denkungsart ist gewalttätig und ausschliessend."

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., p. 166-167: "Ich bin weit entfernt, die wohltätigen Einflüsse zu läugnen, welche dieser mächtige Trieb in die Glückseligkeit der Völker gehabt hat. Ohne denselben konnte die bürgerliche Vereinigung nicht entstehen. Ohne ihn konnte solche zu keiner Festigkeit gelangen. Ohne ihn konnte sie unmöglich erhalten werden. Ohne ihn hätten die wahre Tugend und die wahre Grösse unter den Menschen sich nie entwickeln können. [...] Er verdienet also unsere Dankbarkeit und unsere Bewunderung. Wir würden in dem höchsten Grade tadelswürdig seyn, wenn wir unsere Erkenntlichkeit Männern versageten, welche, in minder aufgeklärten Zeiten durch denselben beseelt, den Grund zu der Wohlfahrt und zu der Glückseligkeit der Völker geleyet haben."

ultimately "nothing else but an outflow of the purest and fieriest love of mankind."<sup>127</sup> With the "sweetest delight", a real patriot "overlooks the endless field of good things that can be done to mankind and seizes everything that is grand, that is beautiful, and useful." As a result, real patriotism was only possible once man had overcome his clan or family-based identity and recognised himself as part of mankind; or, once man's ideal image of himself had become truly universal and congruent with that of all other, equally fully developed members of the human species.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>128</sup> A remarkably similar account of the natural origins of patriotism can be found in one of Fellenberg's unpublished manuscripts entitled, *Ursprung der natürlichen Neigung gegen das Vaterland*. The manuscript is dated 1757 and kept in Fellenberg's family archive (Berne Burgerbibliothek, Fellenberg-Archiv, Schachtel 150, Nr. 4, Philosophie; Nr. 1). "Die natur hat uns bestimmt, alle unsre kräfte zu dem wohl der menschlichen gesellschaft anzuwenden. Die Erde ist unser ursprüngliches Vaterland, und die menschen sind brüder. Wir haben Vernunft, und können wählen, wir fühlen das feur der leidenschafften, und empfinden die uns umgebende Welt, damit wir die allgemeine glückseligkeit befördern können. Die menschliche kräfte sind eingeschränkt. Die Schwachheit der sinne empfindt nur wenige theile der erde. Die Vernunft und die leidenschafften haben mit den sinnen ähnliche schranken. Alle künstler bemühen sich, die verschiedene kräfte in ein solches verhältniss zu setzen, darinn sie die verlangte würkung am besten hervorbringen können. Man betrachte die Iliade, die Fornesische Venus, eine vollkommene uhr, einen wohleingerichteten staat. Mann wird finden, dass die feurige gedanken, die lebhaftige Züge, alle theile der uhr, und die glieder des staats in einem solchen Zusammenhang sind, in dem sie den Zweck des Systems am besten erreichen können. Die errichter der bürgerlichen gesellschaften haben uns die Sphere gezeigt, in der unsre kräfte das allgemeine Wohl am besten befördern können. Sie wurden sich in der weiten erde verlieren. Wie könnte ein kleiner bach eine weite wiese bewässern? Für unser kleineres Vaterland soll nun unsre Vernunft einsehen, unsre leidenschafften brennen, und unsre sinne empfinden. Wir werden zu einer iedweden pflicht durch neigungen geführt, die die weise natur uns eingepflanzt hat. Sie jagt uns oft mit gewalt zu einem unbekanntem und entlegenen Ziel. So stürmt ein feldherr mit seiner macht in das land, das nur ihm bekannt ist. das volk läufft erstaunt, und weiss nicht wohin. Der weise durchdringt die absicht unsrer neigungen, er zeigt uns die natürliche schönheit derselben, und findt in scheinenden widersprüchen die grösste übereinstimmung zu dem allgemeinen wohl. Aber wie kan einer, der die music nicht versteht, die symphonie frech zusammengefüger töne bewundern, oder ein blinder die sichtbare welt? Ich sehe die quellen, aus der die natürliche neigung gegen das vatterland fliesst. Warum lieben wir den boden,

When discussing 'real' patriotism Iselin was eager to stress that his account of the development from 'common patriotism' to 'real patriotism' founded on universally valid moral principles had nothing to do with going beyond the state. Nor was the distinction which he drew between 'common patriotism' and 'real patriotism' a restatement of the old Machiavelian dichotomy between patriotism and Christianity. The attainment of real patriotism could be achieved only within and through the state, not outside of it. The reason for this, Iselin explained, was that man's naturally limited understanding did not allow him to identify directly with the universal idea of mankind. Man could of course sense a vivid feeling of love for mankind at large and gain pleasure from imagining himself as a universal benefactor. The fact however that man could not directly recognise himself as an integrated part of mankind had the effect that his natural benevolence and good will towards the human species turned into resignation, thereby effectively undermining his capacity for moral action. Iselin described the phenomenon of resignation as a feeling of deep "sadness" replacing man's "attractive feelings" of universal benevolence. The only way man could overcome this 'sadness' was if he "drew back his daring gaze" from the universal idea of mankind and focused instead on that "country [Land] which the heavens determined to be his home." It was to his home country that man "should give his dearest love, because he recognises it as the sphere which providence assigned to his ardent desire to perform good deeds."<sup>129</sup>

aus dem wir hervorgesprossen, unsre mitbürger, und die form unsrer regierung? Warum reizt uns die lufft, und die armuth des vatterlands mehr als der überfluss bassamischer gegenden? diese unwiderstehbare neigung vereiniget unser glück mit dem wohlsegen des vatterlands. Sie glüheth in uns zu der erhaltung desselben. Wir beschützen mit feüriger freude den beliebte boden, unsre brüder, unsre regierung, unsre lufft und unser glück. Ades nihil senet sol patria, nec hoc tra qn matrem appellarii: sed in supficie signisq. caritas nobis patria pendet? Eqd. fatebor vobis – abessem, qfier.. patria in mortem veniret, hoc ora occurebant, colles campia et Tiberis, et assneta oculis regis, et hoc ... sub q natis educatis essem. Q vos Quirites, nunc moveant patis caritate sua, ut maneatis in sede vestreqm postea, reliquit ea, macerent desiderio – Camillus ap. Liv L. 5. 54."

<sup>129</sup> The relevant passage reads: "Er verlieret sich in schrankenlosen Aussichten von Wonne und von Zufriedenheit, die sich von ihm ergiessen, und vermehret und erhöht auf ihn zurückströmen. Aber bald nimmt eine nicht minder schätzbare Traurigkeit die Stelle dieser reizvollen Gefühle ein, wenn er des Unvermögens

Again, Iselin makes it clear that the *Land*, which served as the focal point of a real patriot's attempt to regain his true identity, does not simply signify a stretch of land or a group of people, but above all describes the political society which a patriot happened to be born into. What made a state endearing and pleasing to a real patriot, Iselin suggested, was the degree of its usefulness for expressing man's natural love. It was thus essentially with regard to its utility, "that the status of a republican [appears] particularly precious and desirable." Only a republic allowed its citizens to "sit next to the Monarch" and contribute directly to the better organisation of the state. A republican constitution "both entitles and obliges [every one of its citizens] to make each other happy; she gives everyone the noblest, the most sublime privilege of true liberty, namely to do unlimited amount of good."<sup>130</sup>

Political participation and collective self-rule, Iselin insisted, was not in itself the highest good. Patriots who believed this had lost all capacity for self-criticism, and Iselin warned his audience that any non-critical form of patriotism was at bottom no better than the "blind self-love of idiots". Real patriots on the other hand constantly tried to detect faults and shortcomings within the existing state. "With noble confidence his sharp eye penetrates into the most hidden faults of the state."<sup>131</sup> The motivational force behind a patriot's relentless search for means to improve the state was to make it more pleasing by rendering it more useful to his own desire to do good. According to Iselin, real patriotism was thus both utilitarian and non-utilitarian at the same time. It remained utilitarian because the 'beauty' of a state (which Iselin believed was higher in a republic than in a monarchy) was evaluated according to its usefulness. However, real patriotism could also be described as non-utilitarian because the purpose of the state was to set the conditions for benevolence.

gewahr wird, das seiner lebhaften Neigung Gutes zu thun so enge Grenzen setzt. Gedemüthiget, aber nicht darniedergeschlagen, ziehet er seine kühnen Blicke wieder in das Enge, und schränkt dieselben auf das Land ein, welches ihm der Himmel zu seinem Aufenthalte bestimmt hat. Diesem schenket er seine vorzügliche Liebe, weil er es als die Sphäre ansiehet, welche die Vorsehung seinem feurigen Triebem Gutes zu thun, anweist." *Die Liebe des Vaterlandes*, p. 168-169.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171: "Mit einer edelmüthigen Zuversicht dringet sein scharfes Auge in die verborgensten Fehler des Staates."

Iselin believed that it would be possible to locate a source of motivation in the pleasure (either aesthetic or cognitive) involved in the idea of truly general utility. A real patriot, thus, gained as much pleasure from witnessing the development of patriotism in other countries as in his own fatherland. "A true British patriot is pleased to observe [the revival of patriotism] in modest Switzerland. A virtuous [Swiss] Confederate regards with true joy the shining example of British virtue."<sup>132</sup> Real patriotism was necessarily an international collaborative effort. Iselin concluded his speech with a call to all patriots of Europe to share their findings and to help one another other in detecting the obstacles which prevented individual states from progressing towards a state of maximum utility.

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### CHAPTER THREE

#### *Iselin's Critique of Rousseau's Second Discourse*

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 177.