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**Politics and culture in Hanoverian Britain**  
**Master's Thesis**

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**Bc. Miroslava Mareková**

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA**

**FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES**

**Politics and culture in Hanoverian Britain**

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**Supervisor:** Dr. habil. PhDr. Ildikó Némethová, PhD.



## **Affirmation**

I hereby affirm that I have elaborated this master's thesis independently and I have listed all resource materials.

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Date

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Signature

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## **Abstrakt**

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Hlavným cieľom teoretickej časti tejto diplomovej práce bolo preskúmať vládu Stuartovcov, po ktorej zániku nastúpila na trón hanoverská dynastia. Hlavnými cieľmi praktickej časti je skúmanie nuáns vo vláдах hanoverských panovníkov, odhalenie ich kolektívneho a individuálneho prínosu v sociálnom, ekonomickom a politickom prostredí a ich trvalý vplyv na historické rozprávanie. Skúmanými prvkami praktickej časti sú posúdenie vplyvu a významu hanoverských panovníkov, analýza a porovnanie ich vládnutia a identifikácia spoločných znakov a trendov počas ich panovania. Prvá kapitola sa zameriava na Britániu v rokoch 1603 až 1659. Začína sa vládou Jakuba I. a končí popravou Karola I., pre ktorého bol typický diktátorský režim. Oliver Cromwell sa snažil túto situáciu vyriešiť a Británia po prvýkrát zažila republikánske štátne zriadenie. Druhá kapitola pokračuje v analýze dynastie Stuartovcov. Kapitola sa začína vládou Karola II. a končí sa smrťou poslednej stuartovskej panovníčky, kráľovnej Anny. Ide o kľúčové obdobie, ktorého udalosti umožnili nástup hanoverskej dynastie. Tretia kapitola patrí do praktickej časti tejto diplomovej práce a objasňuje obdobie vlády Juraja I. a Juraja II. Analyzuje a porovnáva ich charakteristiky a rozhodnutia prijaté v politickom, ekonomickom a sociálnom prostredí. Štvrtá kapitola je tiež praktickou časťou tejto práce a pozostáva z vládnutia Juraja III., Juraja IV. a Viliama IV. Má rovnakú štruktúru a ciele, čo znamená, že analyzuje a porovnáva ich charakteristiky a rozhodnutia prijaté v politickom, ekonomickom a sociálnom prostredí. Výsledkom práce je analýza a opis udalostí v Británii pred nástupom hanoverskej dynastie a analýza, opis a porovnanie vlád hanoverských panovníkov so zameraním na ich rozhodnutia v politickom, sociálnom a ekonomickom prostredí.

**Kľúčové slová:** hanoverská dynastia, politika, kultúra, sociálne prostredie, politické prostredie, ekonomické prostredie

## **Abstract**

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The main aim of the theoretical part of this master's thesis is the exploration of the transition from the Stuart dynasty to the Hanoverian dynasty. The main aims in the empirical part are the exploration of the nuances of the reigns of the Hanoverian monarchs, the revelation of their collective and individual contributions to the social, economic, and political environments, and their lasting impact on the historical narrative. The objectives pursued in the empirical part are assessing the impact and significance, analysing and comparing leadership and governance, and identifying patterns and trends in the reigns of Hanoverian kings. The first chapter focuses on Britain between 1603 and 1659. It begins with the reign of James I and terminates with the execution of the authoritarian ruler Charles I. Oliver Cromwell, whose government was also characterised by authoritarianism, wanted to resolve this situation. For the first time, Britain experienced a republican form of government. The second chapter continues the analysis of the Stuart dynasty. The chapter begins with the reign of Charles II and ends with the death of the last Stuart monarch, Queen Anne. This is a crucial period whose events enabled the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. The third chapter is the empirical part of this master's thesis and sheds light on George I and II's reigns. It analyses and compares their characteristics and decisions in political, economic, and social environments. The fourth chapter is also the empirical part of this thesis and consists of the reigns of George III, George IV, and William IV. It follows the same structure, which means it analyses and compares their characteristics and decisions in political, economic, and social environments. As a result, this master's thesis analyses and describes Britain before the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty and analyses, describes, and compares the reigns of the Hanoverian monarchs and their decisions in the social, political, and economic environments.

**Keywords:** Hanoverian dynasty, politics, culture, social environment, political environment, economic environment

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# INTRODUCTION

The thesis examines the interplay between culture and politics in the Hanoverian period in Britain which lasted from 1714 to 1837. Prior to the rise of the Hanoverians, Britain was ruled by the Stuart dynasty, a period marked by considerable turmoil and instability as well as intense religious discourse and the emergence of radical political movements. The transition to Hanoverian rule was precipitated by the death of Queen Anne, who left no direct heirs, so a Protestant successor had to be found. The Act of Settlement thus facilitated the accession of George I. However, he was 52<sup>nd</sup> in line to the throne, a decision disputed by the Stuart loyalists, or Jacobites, who mounted challenges to reclaim the throne. Nevertheless, the Hanoverian period was one of relative peace and political stability due to the long reigns of its monarchs: George I, George II, George III, George IV, and William IV.

The theoretical part of this thesis examines Britain during the reign of the Stuart dynasty, focusing on the critical events that marked the transition from the Stuart dynasty to the Hanoverian dynasty to highlight the changes in governance, power hierarchies, religious practices, and social conventions that resulted. By analysing the historical context, including the events, policies, and dynamics that characterised the Stuart era, this study sheds light on the political, social, and cultural developments that defined Britain under the Hanoverian rule. The foundations laid by the Stuart dynasty significantly impacted the political and cultural landscape of the Hanoverian period.

The second part of the thesis examines the reigns of individual monarchs within the Hanoverian dynasty. It studies their characteristics, the political context of their times, and the contemporary social and economic landscape to assess each monarch's effectiveness in governing and their influence on the development of Hanoverian Britain. This assessment is made through a detailed comparison of their leadership styles, policy implementation, and critical decisions. By analysing the reigns of these kings side by side, it is possible to identify recurring patterns and shifts in the political, social, and economic spheres, thereby enhancing our understanding of the dynasty's development. This comparative analysis aims to illuminate the lasting influence of each king on future generations, governance structures, and social norms and ultimately to highlight their contributions to the dynasty's legacy.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter sheds light on the Stuart dynasty, which preceded the Hanoverian dynasty, between 1603 and 1659. It is important to analyse the Stuarts to properly understand the Hanoverian dynasty. Due to this the first chapter starts with James I and terminates with the execution of Charles I. The subchapter

about Britain under Oliver Cromwell analyses Britain during the republican period. Both Charles I and Oliver Cromwell were authoritarian rulers who brought instability to the country. The second chapter reveals important events which took part during the reign of the Stuart dynasty. This chapter starts with the reign of Charles II and ends with the reign of the last Stuart monarch, Queen Anne. However, the most important ruler in this period was James II who aimed for the Catholic Emancipation. This caused political and religious turmoil since the majority of the population was Protestant. This situation led to the Glorious Revolution to prevent it from happening. Hence the first subchapter of this chapter is dedicated to the Glorious Revolution and its outcomes, which were three important documents, namely the Bill of Rights, the Act of Settlement, and the Acts of Toleration. The second subchapter analyses the political situation in 1714 and 1715 which were years before the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. Queen Anne preceded George I and died without an heir. She relied more on the Tories, who were accused of being the supporters of Jacobitism, and mocked the new king. Due to this, the reign of the first two Hanoverian kings is known for their preference for the Whigs.

The third and fourth chapters are the empirical part of this master's thesis. **The main aims of these chapters are the exploration of the nuances of the reigns of the Hanoverian monarchs, the revelation of their collective and individual contributions to the political, social, and economic fabric of their era, and the lasting impact on the historical narrative.** The third chapter analyses the reigns of George I and George II, who share many similarities. The main objectives of this chapter are the assessment of the impact and significance of Hanoverian monarchs, the analysis and comparison of the leadership and governance of Hanoverian monarchs, and the identification of patterns and trends in the social, political, and economic environment. The fourth chapter analyses the reigns of George III, George IV, and William IV. The main aims are the same as in the third chapter which means that light will be shed on the exploration of the nuances of the reigns of these monarchs, the revelation of their collective and individual contributions to the political, social, and economic environment, and the lasting impact on the historical narrative. The fourth chapter also shares the objectives with the third chapter. This means that it deals with the assessment of the impact and significance of Hanoverian monarchs, the analysis and comparison of their leadership and governance, and the identification of patterns and trends in the social, political, and economic environment.

In terms of methodology, three methods were used in this master's thesis. Particularly, comparative, analytical, and descriptive methods were used in the empirical

part. Descriptive and analytical methods were used in the theoretical part since this part does not contain any comparison. **The descriptive method** is used for the description of events, relationships, political backgrounds, patterns, and trends and the explanation of facts. As this thesis is about politics and culture the descriptive method is used throughout it. **The analytical method** was used to analyse the decisions of individual kings, acts, and foreign and domestic policy. **The comparative method** is solely present in the empirical part, where the comparison of the individual and collective contribution to the social, political, and economic environment takes place. The research was based on **secondary data analysis** and all sources are stated in the bibliography.

# 1 BRITAIN BETWEEN 1603 AND 1659

The Stuart dynasty preceded the Hanoverian dynasty in England and reigned from 1603 to 1714. Due to this, it is crucial to understand the events, policies, and dynamics of this dynasty and identify the continuities and changes that occurred during the transition to the Hanoverian dynasty. The decisions made by the Stuart kings shaped the political and social landscape during the Hanoverian era, and that is why it is important to provide an overview of religious and political dynamics, societal norms, and power structures.

It wasn't just a period of a flourishing Court culture but of upheaval and instability, intense religious debates, and radical politics. James I from Scotland was the first English king of the House of Stuarts who claimed to be the protector of the Protestants of Europe. He convinced the Parliament to pass the Black Acts which asserted the Crown's authority over all its subjects. All Church assemblies had to be licensed by the King. From the 1590s he dedicated to the restoration of bishops and the introduction of an English-style liturgy. Hoped to bring the English and Scots together after years of conflicts, but the English refused them. When he died, his son Charles became the king. He demanded to be obeyed however he was intellectually simplistic. He reigned with the Duke of Buckingham, leading to distrust and dangerous escalation as King Charles became authoritarian and started believing that the Commons wanted to usurp the king's right to govern. Buckingham was killed and King Charles blamed the Commons for his murder. In addition to this, the Commons refused to grant the customs for life, and it denied the king the money he needed to fight the war which they demanded. King Charles preferred the Arminian clergy as they stressed the divine origins of kingly power and the duty of obedience (Miller, 2017). Charles had various disputes with the Parliament, but after the wars ended, tension and financial pressure were reduced. However, he needed more revenue as he was unwilling to adapt to the sources he had. He received no tax on land, and his lawyers discovered that the royal forest used to be more significant. In order to get more money, those who unknowingly lived in the chosen areas could be fined, and local juries were convinced against their will to recognise the King's rights. Another way of getting more money was the distraint of knighthood. If someone held land worth more than 5 pounds a year, they had to be knighted or pay a fine. The English court called Star Chamber did not follow the procedures used in common-law courts (McGovern, 2021). Its proceedings were cheap and offered no protection against the Crown. The Star Chamber was used to enforce press censorship; it could impose mutilation

and claim jurisdiction in case of riots. Charles's approach towards the Church caused rage. He favoured the Arminians and saw the Puritans as hostile to the monarchy (Miller, 2017).

In 1640, King Charles I faced significant political isolation, impeding his ability to engage in civil conflict. By 1642, however, the situation had evolved, allowing him to attempt the reassertion of his authority through martial means. Accompanied by his loyal cavaliers, Charles made a bold, yet ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to arrest five prominent members of Parliament, an action that only deepened existing mistrust. The Parliament of the time, predominantly wishing for restoring a responsible monarchy and continuing moderate Protestantism, vocally criticized Charles's misrule. This period witnessed an unprecedented push for radical reforms, particularly in response to perceived misgovernance (Miller, 2017).

Additionally, there was a notable openness to petitions challenging innovations within the Church. A critical aspect of this era was the collapse of press censorship. This newfound freedom allowed for the widespread dissemination of information regarding riots and rumours, contributing to a more informed and politically active populace. Religious debates flourished under these conditions, and politicians were under intense public scrutiny. The broader context of Charles I's reign is marked by the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, a series of conflicts deeply rooted in a complex interplay of religious reform, civic strife, and authoritarian governance. Notably, Charles's decision to dissolve Parliament and govern by decree played a significant role in escalating tensions. Furthermore, his imposition of the ship money levy, initially intended for naval reforms and controversially extended from port cities to inland towns, added to the growing discontent, fuelling the conflicts that defined this tumultuous period in British history (Miller, 2017).

The complexities of political negotiations during King Charles I's reign were primarily attributed to his reluctance to compromise. Parliament, striving to achieve a peaceful resolution, hoped to persuade the King to accept reasonable terms. However, Charles's approach to concessions was often perceived as duplicitous. For instance, when the Queen implored him to abolish episcopacy, he cited his conscience as a barrier to such action. This stance persisted even in the face of military defeat, leading Charles to overestimate his bargaining power in negotiations. The propositions put forth by Parliament during this period envisioned the continuation of a monarchical system with Charles at its head. However, radical voices advocated for more extreme measures, including abolishing the monarchy or removing the King. The failure to settle further exacerbated tensions between Parliament and the army, complicating the political landscape. Between 1642 and

1646, the primary political factions were the Presbyterians and the Independents. The Presbyterians championed the establishment of a national Church, grounded in a parish-based organisation, staffed by learned clergy, and adhering to orthodox Calvinist doctrine. Additionally, they advocated for the disbandment of the army. In contrast, the Independents supported religious liberty for those they deemed godly, but this tolerance did not extend to Catholics or adherents of the Prayer-Book Anglican faith. This ideological divide between the two groups played a significant role in shaping the political and religious discourse of the era (Miller, 2017).

In 1647, the political landscape of England was marked by significant tensions between the Presbyterians and the army. The Presbyterians, advocating for the disbandment of the army and its redeployment to Ireland, proposed certain concessions as compensation. However, this move was perceived as antagonistic towards the state and public order, leading to the formation of a General Council as the army's decision-making body. The Army's Declaration, a seminal document from this period, called for a thorough purge of corrupt and delinquent Members of Parliament. It also advocated for implementing parliamentary reforms, stipulating that future parliaments should be freely and equally elected, with a tenure limited to three years. Following this, the Heads of the Proposals were presented to King Charles, suggesting a slightly modified parliamentary duration of two years. A vital aspect of this proposal was the redistribution of parliamentary seats in proportion to taxation, reflecting a more equitable representation. Furthermore, the proposals sought to restrict the King's veto power and proposed the establishment of a council of state. This council, selected by Parliament, would share executive powers with the King and maintain control over the armed forces for a decade. Additionally, the proposals were progressive in their call for tolerating most forms of Protestantism. King Charles rejected the proposals despite these comprehensive terms, precipitating a riot in London. The political impasse was eventually addressed by the Agreement of the People, which emphasised the legislative and executive supremacy of the House of Commons and contributed to ideas of self-ownership, private property, legal equality, religious toleration, and limited, representative government (*Libertarianism | Definition, Philosophy, Examples, History, & Facts | Britannica* 2024). This resolution advocated for a more accountable system to the populace, underpinned by frequent elections and electoral reforms. Notably, this agreement did not necessitate the King's deposition or the abolition of the monarchy, allowing for a resolution that stopped short of completely overturning the established political order (Miller, 2017).

As it was said, in the period between 1603 and 1659, Britain faced various problems.

During the reign of Charles I, the complicated nature of his reign caused financial problems that were solved, for example, with the distraint of knighthood. Star Chamber, a supplement to the regular justice of the common-law courts, played an important role during the reign of Charles I who used it to enforce unpopular political and ecclesiastical policies, so it served as a symbol of oppression to his parliamentary and Puritan opponents. Religion played a crucial role during this time, as there were tensions analysed between Puritans and Arminians who were favoured by the king. Later when the censorship of the press collapsed the populace gained new freedom which facilitated the dissemination of information regarding riots and rumours, therefore people became informed and politically more active.

### **1.1 Britain under Oliver Cromwell**

While King Charles I was detained on the Isle of Wight, heightened public discontent and civil unrest unfolded across England. This tumultuous phase was characterised by widespread riots, fuelled by factors such as the prohibition of Christmas celebrations, assaults on county committees, and tax strikes, particularly notable in London. Amidst this unrest, Charles sought to regain power by striking a deal with certain Scottish lords. This agreement entailed a commitment to suppress religious sects and establish Presbyterianism in England for three years. However, this strategy proved contentious. There was significant opposition within England to the presence of Scottish armies and the establishment of Presbyterianism, indicating a broad reluctance to revert to the status quo. This resistance underscored the perception that Charles was in denial about his defeat, igniting discussions about the necessity of deposing or executing him. The second Civil War, although smaller in scale compared to the first, concluded with Oliver Cromwell's victory and the defeat of the Scottish forces. In the aftermath, the Commons, albeit in principle, concurred with the settlement's establishment of a Presbyterian Church. Cromwell, advocating for more drastic measures against the King, found his views initially disregarded by the Commons. However, the army, increasingly disillusioned with parliamentary inaction, took decisive steps. The army officers ratified a remonstrance, a critical document that declared negotiations with King Charles I futile and held him responsible for the civil wars. This remonstrance called for the King's trial and condemnation. In a dramatic turn of events, the Parliament underwent a significant purge: 45 Members of Parliament were arrested, and 186 were excluded, drastically altering its composition. This led to the eventual execution of King Charles I, a pivotal moment in British history, marking the end of the monarchy and the commencement

of a period of republican rule (Miller, 2017).

After the execution of King Charles I, the English government and army emerged as dominant forces in England and Ireland. A semblance of internal peace and stability within England marked this era. The period saw regular tax payments, the dissolution of county committees, and a return to near-normalcy in local governance. However, the legitimacy of these governing bodies was questionable, as only a minority supported them, had a narrow political base, and were heavily reliant on the army for enforcement and support. Oliver Cromwell, a central figure during this time, faced the formidable task of reconciling the soldiers, who were loyal to him, with the civilian population. He acknowledged the challenge of finding a middle ground between the Presbyterians and the army. The Presbyterians aimed to establish a Puritan national church, restore the monarchy, and disband the army. In contrast, the army supported maintaining the republic and ensuring religious liberty. Cromwell's first elected Parliament failed to reach a consensus on these issues. In the subsequent Parliament, some reforms were implemented, including tax reductions, the cessation of member exclusion by the Council of State, and restrictions on religious freedom for groups like Quakers and other radicals. Cromwell was offered the crown, which he declined, and there was a proposal to establish a new House of Lords. However, unable to achieve consensus, Cromwell eventually dissolved the Parliament. Following Cromwell's death, his son Richard succeeded him but soon resigned (Miller, 2017).

Charles I's complicated behaviour, conflicts with the Parliament, and rejection of the limitation of his power created a political environment that caused Civil War and culminated in 1649. The execution of King Charles I was an important event in British history that led to the establishment of a republic. Oliver Cromwell played a crucial role in defeating King Charles I and supported his execution. Cromwell's republic was a period of political changes. His leadership was based on Puritan values and the Commonwealth abolished the monarchy and the House of Lords. Religious toleration was introduced to a certain extent however Catholicism and non-Protestant religions were restricted. Cromwell's rule was often criticised as he was an authoritarian politician who used the army to maintain order. The Commonwealth of England faced various challenges that made it impossible to keep this system of government. The main reason was that it was not widely accepted and the lack of consensus on its structure caused power struggles. The restoration of monarchy permitted the rule of other royal dynasties, such as the Hanoverian dynasty.



## **2 BRITAIN DURING 1660-1715**

The Restoration was when the monarchy regained its authority and a desire for stability spread across the country after the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth. However, this period was not without dramatic events that influenced the course of history and contributed to the later accession of the Kings of Hanover to the English throne. It is therefore essential to analyse the political and religious developments that preceded the change of dynasties to better understand how the Hanoverian kings had to deal with the political and social situation that resulted from their predecessors.

Richard Cromwell's resignation paved the way for the ascension of Charles II, marking the beginning of The Restoration period, which lasted from 1660 to 1688. Under Charles II's reign, royal revenue increased, primarily due to improved administration. Additionally, there was a significant expansion of the navy, a move that reflected the broader stabilisation and consolidation of the monarchy and governance in England during this period (Miller, 2017).

In 1685, the succession of Charles II by his brother, who became James II in England and James VII in Scotland, marked a significant turn in British history. James II was a devout Catholic, and his accession brought the period's religious tensions to the fore. His primary goal was to achieve the toleration of Catholics within his realms and to dismantle the legal barriers that restricted their participation in government and public life. This objective was controversial, given the predominantly Protestant nature of his kingdoms and the laws limiting Catholic involvement in governance. The period between 1679 and 1681 was marked by significant political manoeuvres in the House of Commons, where members passed several unsuccessful exclusion bills to prevent James's accession. The motivation behind these bills stemmed from a growing concern among Members of Parliament about the potential increase in Catholic influence. These fears were fuelled by attempts to grant Catholics modest toleration, which was viewed with suspicion by many, particularly given the religious climate of the time. This unease extended to James and his brother, King Charles II, who was perceived as sympathetic to Catholic interests. The rivalry between the Whigs and the Tories profoundly influenced the political landscape of the period. The Whigs, vehemently opposed to James's succession due to his Catholic faith, employed various techniques of agitation and propaganda to sway public and political opinion against him. Conversely, the Tories perceived the Whigs' actions as a more significant threat to the Church and the state. The Tories were primarily committed to preserving the dominance of the

Church of England and upholding the monarchy. This ongoing conflict between the Whigs and the Tories led to a profound division within the ruling elite. Aligning himself with the Tories, Charles II exerted his authority to support this faction. Consequently, the Whigs faced significant setbacks, were dismissed from local government offices, and were replaced by Tories. This shift in political power and the alignment of the monarchy with the Tory cause were instrumental in shaping the political dynamics of the time. They facilitated the eventual accession of James II despite the efforts to exclude him (Krey, 2017).

Both commonalities and significant differences characterised James II's reign, and his relationship with the Tories primarily centred around religious beliefs and policies. James, like the Tories, firmly believed in the monarchy's authority. He believed that his subjects were to obey him, while he, in turn, would rule according to the law and ensure their welfare. This perspective aligned closely with the Tory ideology, which supported monarchical solid authority and the maintenance of social order. However, the critical area where James diverged from the Tories was in his religious affiliation and ambitions. As a Catholic, James sought to promote Catholicism within his realms, a stance that was at odds with the predominantly Protestant nature of his kingdoms and the established religious policies. Despite being a Catholic in a predominantly Protestant country, James did not intend to impose his religion by force. This restraint was partly pragmatic, as his army was predominantly Protestant, and he recognised the potential for resistance. Additionally, he anticipated that his Protestant daughter Mary would succeed him, suggesting that his efforts to promote Catholicism were not aimed at a long-term religious transformation of the country. James's primary objective was to persuade Parliament to repeal the penal laws and Test Acts. These laws were significant as they not only prohibited Catholic practices but also excluded Catholics from Parliament and other positions of power. To achieve this, James needed broad support, particularly from the landed elite who dominated English politics then. England was primarily agricultural, and the nobility and gentry controlled the political landscape. This class provided the majority of the members of Parliament, making their support crucial for James to carry his program through Parliament. James's attempts to navigate this complex political and religious landscape underscored the challenges he faced in reconciling his religious convictions with the prevailing sentiments of his subjects and the established political order. His efforts to promote Catholicism while maintaining the traditional monarchical authority placed him at odds with significant segments of the political and religious establishment, contributing to the tensions that would eventually lead to his deposition during the Glorious Revolution (Miller, 2017).

The shared disdain for Catholicism was a rare point of agreement between the Whigs and Tories during the reign of James II. Despite their differing political ideologies, both parties were united in their reluctance to grant Catholics the freedom of worship. This sentiment was deeply ingrained in the Protestant-majority England of the time. The Tories, traditionally monarchists, supported James II despite his Catholic faith. This support was primarily motivated by a fear of civil unrest or a potential civil war rather than any affection for Catholicism. The Whigs, on the other hand, were generally more opposed to James's religious policies. Both parties, however, were commonly averse to Catholic emancipation. In 1685, following the general elections, James II believed that he could count on the support of the Tory-dominated House of Commons. This belief, however, proved to be misplaced as the Tories in Parliament showed little inclination to support his efforts to promote Catholic interests. Faced with resistance from both Whigs and Tories, James II shifted his focus towards the Dissenters, a group that, like Catholics, was restricted from freely practising their religion due to the penal code. In 1687, James issued the Declaration of Indulgence to broaden his support base. This significant declaration suspended the penal code against all religious Nonconformists, including both Catholics and Dissenters. It was a move toward religious tolerance and aimed at reducing the persecution and legal disadvantages faced by these groups. James replaced numerous Tory municipal officials with Dissenters in a strategic political manoeuvre. This action was likely an attempt to weaken the political influence of the Tories, who were resistant to his policies, and to create a more favourable environment for his religious agenda. These efforts by James II to extend religious freedom and realign political allegiances were part of a broader, albeit controversial, strategy to reshape the religious and political landscape of his kingdoms. However, these moves, while progressive regarding religious tolerance, contributed to the increasing tensions and unrest that eventually led to the Glorious Revolution and his deposition (Miller, 2017).

The opposition to James II's pro-Catholic policies culminated in a significant intervention by English peers, who sought assistance from William, Prince of Orange, a prominent Protestant figure. This move directly responded to James's efforts to promote Catholic interests within England, which had caused considerable alarm among the predominantly Protestant nobility and political establishment. Sensing the opportunity and responding to the call for aid, William arrived with a substantial army. This show of force was a clear challenge to James II's authority and his religious policies. Facing the prospect of a direct military confrontation with William, James II was initially poised to engage. However, he lost his nerve at a critical moment and chose not to confront William's forces

in battle. This decision was pivotal and marked a turning point in the conflict. James's decision to flee the country effectively signalled the end of his reign. His departure created a power vacuum that William and Mary quickly filled. In 1689, William, Prince of Orange, and James II's Protestant daughter, Mary, were crowned joint monarchs of England, Scotland, and Ireland (Israel, 2003).

James's Protestant daughter, Mary, and her husband and cousin, William III of Orange, spearheaded the revolution. The outcome of this revolution was the deposition of James II, marking a significant shift in the religious and political landscape of the time. William and Mary ascended to the throne as joint sovereigns, ruling as Mary II and William III. Their reign was a clear move away from the Catholic-centric policies of James II and a reaffirmation of Protestant dominance in both England and Scotland. The Glorious Revolution also reinforced the principles of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary sovereignty, laying the groundwork for modern British democracy (Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024; Vallance, 2007).

William III's accession to the British throne following the Glorious Revolution was accompanied by the introduction of significant constitutional changes, particularly concerning the Crown's powers and the role of the standing army. William brought a substantial army, which was crucial to his triumphant ascension. However, he also ensured that his reign did not impose radical new restrictions on the powers of the Crown. The Bill of Rights, enacted in 1689, was a landmark document. One of its key provisions addressed the issue of a standing army during peacetime. According to the Bill of Rights, it was deemed illegal to maintain a standing army in times of peace without the explicit consent of Parliament. This provision was a direct response to fears of monarchical tyranny and military dominance, which had been a concern during the reigns of previous monarchs, including James II (Miller, 2017).

Parliament's approach to managing the potential threat posed by the army was strategic and financially driven. Parliament effectively retained control over the military by granting funding for the army on an annual basis. This annual allocation of funds meant that the army's continued existence and operation were subject to Parliamentary approval each year. This system ensured a check on the military's power. It reinforced the principle of parliamentary sovereignty, further limiting the possibility of monarchical overreach and ensuring a balance of power between the Crown and Parliament. This arrangement was a significant step in developing the constitutional monarchy in Britain, emphasizing Parliament's growing power and influence in the country's governance (Miller, 2017).

This event marked the conclusion of the Glorious Revolution and represented a significant shift in the religious and political landscape of the kingdoms. The crowning of William and Mary as joint monarchs was a change in rulers and a symbolic reaffirmation of Protestant dominance in Britain. It reflected a broader rejection of James II's attempts to promote Catholicism and a return to Protestant rule. This transition also set the stage for establishing a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary sovereignty, foundational elements of modern British governance (Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024)

The Nine Years' War and the War of the Spanish Succession were significant conflicts that stemmed partly from the dynastic and political upheavals following James II's flight to France and William of Orange's subsequent ascent to the English throne. These wars were deeply intertwined with the broader issues of English succession and European power dynamics. Louis XIV of France played a crucial role in these conflicts. His initial support for James II, and later for James's son after James's death, was driven by his desire to restore the Stuart monarchy in England and counterbalance the growing power of the Protestant William III. Louis XIV's support for the Stuart cause was part of his broader strategic interests in weakening his rivals and expanding French influence (Childs, Childs, 1991).

In England, the domestic political scene was complex and fraught with tension. The Whigs had previously attempted to exclude James II from succession due to his Catholic faith and perceived favouritism towards Catholicism. The Tories, while traditionally monarchists, were deeply troubled by James's treatment of the Church of England and his pro-Catholic policies. This dissatisfaction among both political factions contributed to the eventual crowning of William III and Mary II and, later, the Act of Settlement 1701, which secured Protestant succession in the House of Hannover. Despite their reservations about a German king from Hanover eventually inheriting the throne, the Tory Parliament recognised the necessity of ensuring a Protestant succession, prioritising religious and political stability over nationalistic concerns. Both the Whigs and Tories were wary of the potential misuse of the army under William's rule. In response, they took measures to ensure the army was adequately resourced, especially during the wars. Financial strategies to support the war effort included traditional means such as land taxes, customs, and excise. Additionally, innovative methods like lotteries and tontines were employed. The costs of these wars were substantial, necessitating a combination of taxation and borrowing. Therefore, the Nine Years' War and the War of the Spanish Succession were not only conflicts over the European balance of power but also profoundly connected to England's internal political and religious dynamics. They reflected the ongoing struggle between Protestant and Catholic interests, the

complexities of succession, and the broader geopolitical strategies of the major European powers (Miller, 2017).

## **2.1 Outcomes of the Glorious Revolution**

The Bill of Rights (1689), the Acts of Toleration (1689), and the Act of Settlement (1701) were all pivotal legislative outcomes of the Glorious Revolution, each playing a crucial role in shaping the constitutional and religious landscape of Britain. The Bill of Rights (1689) was a landmark document in Britain's evolution of constitutional monarchy (*English Bill of Rights - Definition & Legacy* 2019). Its primary objective was to establish a monarchy that operated within defined constitutional limits, particularly about the conduct of law, parliamentary procedures, and elections. This Act significantly curtailed the monarchy's powers, prohibiting the sovereign from interfering in parliamentary matters, ensuring regular sessions of Parliament, and setting forth fundamental rights and liberties. It represented a decisive shift away from absolutist monarchy towards a system where the authority of Parliament balanced the monarch's powers. The Acts of Toleration (1689), passed in the same year, were also a direct response to the religious conflicts of the era. These Acts granted religious freedom to Nonconformist Protestants who pledged allegiance to the Crown, allowing them to worship freely, though they faced certain social and political restrictions. This legislation marked a step towards religious pluralism, although it notably excluded Catholics, non-Trinitarians, and those not aligning with the Anglican Church (Vernon, 2017). The Act of Settlement (1701) was specifically designed to address the issue of succession to the British throne. With William III and his successor, Queen Anne, having no surviving children, there was a looming succession crisis. The Act was partly driven by the need to prevent the throne from passing back to the Catholic line of James II, as there was still considerable support for the Stuart cause among his exiled followers. The Act stipulated that the Crown would pass to Sophia, Electress of Hanover, the granddaughter of James I and a Protestant. This ensured a Protestant succession, effectively sidelining the Catholic Stuarts. The Act of Settlement paved the way for Sophia's son, George I, to become the successor to the throne, marking the beginning of the Hanoverian dynasty in Britain. Together, these acts significantly shaped the constitutional monarchy, parliamentary democracy, and religious tolerance that characterize modern Britain. They marked a transition from religious and monarchical absolutism, laying the foundation for a more balanced and representative form of governance (Miller, 2014).

The Act of Settlement also introduced new measures. For example, any future monarch must join the Church of England communion. If England had a monarch who was not a native, then the country would not take part in any war to defend the territories that did not belong to the Crown. Other measures were, for example, "Judges were to hold office during good behaviour rather than at the sovereign's pleasure, though they are subject to impeachment by both houses of Parliament; (4) impeachments by the House of Commons are not subject to pardon under the Great Seal of England (i.e., by the sovereign)" (Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2023).

An analysis of this period has revealed important facts that contributed to the Hanoverian dynasty succeeding the Stuart dynasty. James II and his relationship with the Catholic religion stirred up the political scene so much that the Glorious Revolution was the only way to secure the Protestant religion and Protestant kings. This revolution resulted in important documents that determined the course of the British monarchy. The Bill of Rights sets constitutional limits, parliamentary procedures, and elections. With the passage of the Act of Settlement, it was made clear that only Protestant monarchs could be heirs to the throne, even at the cost of seeking them from outside Britain.

## **2.2 The political situation in 1714 and 1715**

By analysing the political situation before the accession of the new dynasty, it is possible to understand more clearly what obstacles the new king had to face.

Queen Anne was the last monarch of the Stuart dynasty. Being a female, she could not lead the war effort or manage Parliament. The Duke of Marlborough and Lord Godolphin were in charge of these duties. During her reign, the peaceful coexistence of Scotland and England was disrupted as their foreign and economic policies differed significantly (*Anne (r.1702-1714)*). She faced the ongoing problems between the Whigs and Tories; however, she leaned towards the Tories and the Church of England. The Tories won in 1710 and 1714 and pursued policies with which she disagreed. Marlborough was no longer in command and peace with France was concluded. The Whigs were trying to convince Sophia and George, Anne's successor, that the Tories were Jacobites and were in favour of the Stuarts. They did not fully persuade George as he was aware of potential manipulation and that some of the Tories defended his interests in Parliament. When he became a king, he appointed some of the Tories to offices alongside the Whigs. However, he was unpleasantly surprised when the Whigs celebrated his coronation day, and the Tories organised riots and mocked him. The

rioters tried to create disorder to facilitate the Jacobite invasion. King George I immediately removed Tories from minister positions, the army, and local government. As a result, the Whigs won the general elections in 1715. Their political discourse was aimed at the dangers of Jacobitism and popery. Their defeat in previous elections led to the push of the Septennial Act through Parliament, which gave them a few more years of power as it stated that general elections should occur every seven years. This Whig supremacy lasted into the 1750s (*Whig and Tory | Definition, Difference, History, & Facts | Britannica*, 2020, Miller, 2017).

An analysis of the last years of Queen Anne's reign and the early years of the reign of George I shows that the threat of the Jacobite uprisings marked political stability in this period. On his arrival in Britain, George I had to deal with the political games of the major political parties. As mentioned above the electoral period was extended from 3 to 7 years, which means that the political party that was in power had a longer time to make political and social changes.



### 3 BRITAIN DURING GEORGE I AND GEORGE II'S REIGN

To evaluate the effectiveness of each Hanoverian king's rule, it is necessary to choose specific areas to analyse. For this reason, the thesis first focuses on the qualities of a victorious king. These include qualities such as being strategic, solid, and a wise leader. One of the obstacles that any king or queen has to face is the disputes between the different factions in the government. This also requires certain personality traits, leadership skills, and a willingness to communicate problems. Humility is another quality that makes a monarch successful. In the past, there have been cases when a lack of humility and lack of concern for the subjects led to coups or resignations. A similar case is that of Louis XVI, whose resistance to popular demands among other reasons resulted in the French Revolution. Another example is that of Charles I, the king mentioned in the previous part of this diploma thesis, who believed in the divine right of king which means that he was above the law and had been chosen by God. Another important factor according to Marie-Claire Ross is trust in higher power (Ross, 2022). Ross (2022) claims that strong faith and tolerance towards other religions make trusted leaders. Professor Clare Monagle (2023) stated that one of the traits of successful monarchs from the past was the one with a reputation for virility. According to the Collins Dictionary, this means that man is supposed to have qualities that a man is traditionally expected to have, such as strength and sexual energy (*VIRILE definition and meaning* | Collins English Dictionary 2024). This is directly linked to the production of heirs which is significant for securing a smooth transition of power from one ruler to another. Finally, the longevity of the monarchs is not an indicator of success but kings and queens who reigned longer had more time for achievements by which they are judged.

Decisions in different fields are essential to assessing a monarch's reign. The fields chosen for this analysis are political, social, and economic and they are depicted in the table below. The changes that have taken place in these areas during the reigns of individual rulers will be examined. Emphasis will be placed on domestic and foreign policy and the army. In the social environment, each king's impact on social classes, religion, slavery, and the abolition of slavery will be analysed. Last but not least, this part deals with the changes that took place in the economic environment, such as new industries and the Industrial Revolution, taxes, changes in employment, population growth, and trade.

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS	SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT 1714-1837	POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT 1714-1837	ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT 1714-1837
GEORGE I GEORGE II GEORGE III GEORGE IV WILLIAM IV			
STRATEGIC, STRONG, CLEVER	SOCIAL CLASSES	FOREIGN POLICY-COLONIES	NEW INDUSTRIES- INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
MANAGEMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES	ABOLITION OF SLAVERY	DOMESTIC POLICY	TAXES
HUMILITY, PERSONAL WILL	RELIGION	ARMY	EMPLOYMENT CHANGES
TRUSTED IN HIGHER POWER			TRADE
REPUTATION FOR VIRILITY (LONGEVITY AND HEIRS)			POPULATION GROWTH

Source: Professor Clare Monagle, 2023; Marie-Claire Ross, 2022

### 3.1 George I's characteristics

King George I, crowned in 1714, did not know much about England, its politics, and its politicians. He visited the country only once when considering marriage with Queen Anne. His mother, Sophia, ensured that her children had a happy childhood and tried to keep those she considered overly religious from them. According to her, he shared her rationalism in religious matters. His father Ernst August was a conscientious administrator, so George had an example that he tried to emulate and worked hard. George I was required to have military experience to train a company composed of sons of his courtiers. At the age of fifteen, George accompanied his father on the campaign when Europe was struck by the Dutch War. When he was sixteen, he made his sister's under-governess pregnant. Despite trying to claim that the child was not his, it looked just like him. He was the oldest son, and his position became even more important when his father introduced primogeniture. His marriage to Sophia Dorothea, the heiress to Georg Wilhelm, the Duke of Celle, strengthened it even more. Their marriage was, however, unsuccessful and both of them had lovers. Sophia's lover, who was more charismatic, glamorous, and sensual than her husband was murdered as this love affair threatened the connection of Hanover and Celle's inheritances. Their marriage was dissolved, and Sophia was detained. In 1698 George succeeded his father and began looking for other opportunities in England. Thanks to the Act of Settlement George's mother, Sophia, was placed above other Catholics who had better hereditary claim. Queen Anne and Sophia died in 1714 and George I became the king. It was hard for him to adjust to his new role as he did not speak much English and English politics differed from the one in Hanover. All documents had to be translated for him and his preference for German doctors caused dissatisfaction among the Whigs and Tories. According to a report

from Prussian envoy Friedrich Bonet, George did not like England and its language and political parties (Black, 2004).

### **3.2 Political, social, and economic environment during George I's reign**

It was clear from George I's actions that he preferred Hanover over British national interests. All resources were spent on the aggrandisement of Hanover. For example, the British politicians referred to the clash over Baltic policy after the accession of George I. The launch of the Great Northern War was caused by Frederick IV of Denmark attacking Charles XII of Sweden. Denmark aimed to seize Sweden's territories in northern Germany occupying the duchy of Bremen. This was, however, Hanover's area of interest. George I wanted to prevent another Danish invasion, so he invaded the duchy of Verden and, in 1715, declared war on Sweden in reaction to pressure from Prussia and Denmark. This was the only way to ensure that the Danes would leave Bremen and the Prussians would suspend boundary disputes. Russia recognised George I's de facto possessions of Bremen and Verden and George I reciprocated by recognising Russia's conquests. George I aimed to use British naval and financial resources against Sweden, yet this was a failure. Due to this, he was soon criticised. He was not only at war with Spain but also close to war with Russia. In addition to the prohibition of the Tories and the division of Whigs, he was striving to implement a controversial legislative programme. During the reigns of William III and Anne, continental interventionism was directed against France, but George I was an ally of France from 1716. His foreign policy did not correspond with the political experiences of his British subjects (Black, 2004).

Regarding domestic policy, the major problems George I faced were his antipathy towards Tories and disputes with his son. He refused the Tories due to their opposition of Hanover to the Peace of Utrecht which was negotiated by the Tory ministry in 1713. Tory Jacobitism even reinforced his stance. During the reign of Queen Anne, there was a mixed government of the Tories and Whigs albeit centred on the Tories, as the Whigs supported the continuation of the War of the Spanish Succession. George I did not want a coalition government, so after his accession, all Tories were dismissed from their posts, including the armed forces. This hurt landed society, plagued by the perilous mix of high wartime taxes and an agricultural depression. The treatment of the Tories was cruel. George I's wish to repeal the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts while the Tories were accused of betraying national interests. A Jacobite pamphlet, *An Address to the Peers of England*,

condemned him for sending money to Hanover. By rejecting the Tories, George boosted the support for Jacobitism, and in 1715, there were already three risings planned. The rising in the south-west of England was suppressed owing to poor leadership. On the other hand, the risings in Scotland were initially successful, but, the result was the same as in England (Pittock, 1998).

Since many Tories supported James III and VIII, George I had to rely on the Whigs. However, this was not mutual. The division of the Whig party occurred due the concerns about the influence of Hanover on British foreign policy. To overthrow the Whig government, the Tories and the dissatisfied part of Whigs sought tactical cooperation. This resulted in a serious problem for the king. George was also in dispute with his son, which harmed British politics and the stability of the crown. He tackled these problems, so the political situation would not worsen. George was unable to do so. The problems deepened after the birth of George II's child. George I wanted him to be called George, and his godfather would be Lord Chamberlain, Newcastle. George II's wife wanted the name William, and they chose George I's brother as godfather. George I expelled his son from St James's and insisted that his children stay. After the death of the prince's son, George I received lots of criticism (Black, 2004).

The problems between George I and the ministers continued. George lost the support of Walpole and Viscount Townshend during the Whig Split in 1717. Since they did not support the fiscal, political, and diplomatic consequences of the Baltic policy, George promoted Stanhope and Townshend to crucial positions. However, they both failed in their positions. The ministers were however able to split over the demand for support against Sweden as there was not much support for war. George I lost Walpole's support when Parliament was asked for financial resources for concert measures against Swedish designs. This was due to Townshend's dismissal for voting against the measure. This crisis was added to the family one between George I and his son. The major issue in the Parliament was foreign policy followed by disputes between George I and the prince. Another problem was the policy to limit the position of the Established Church and to gain the support of Dissenters. The repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts took place in 1719. The Peerage Bill was another law that caused a stir. It was introduced by the Whigs whose attempt was to secure their power and control the House of Lords in perpetuity (Turner, 1913). The Bill eventually did not pass, and Walpole returned to the government. However, problems arose again when the South Sea Company scandal broke. It is important to say that the South Sea Company was directly linked to the slave trade. Britain won the asiento in

1713 in the Treaty of Utrecht and became the sole supplier of slaves to Spanish colonies in South America (Pocock, Cook, 2011). The contract was then sold to the South Sea Company and the Royal African Company was its leading supplier. The King was the Governor of the company but did not pay for the shares he held, and even though he did not earn a massive amount of money, he gained 45,304 pounds. Others who owned shares, which dropped in value when the South Sea Bubble burst, lost their savings. George I had to return from Hanover and find someone to restore public finances. As a result, the King reconciled with Walpole, who became a leading minister. Walpole helped expose the Jacobite Atterbury Plot in 1722 thanks to his old rivals, who were no more in his way. He dominated the House of Commons and managed public finances while leaving the King satisfied. The South Sea Company survived the trials after its burst, and between 1715 and 1731, it was responsible for the transportation of around 64,000 slaves. During George I's reign, the British Empire already had various colonies in America. Virginia, South, and North Carolina were the first thriving colonies in North America. They were plantation colonies with enslaved people working on them. Apart from them, New England was an important colony composed of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The middle colonies were New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Philadelphia (Stewart, n.d.; Black, 2004).

George I was not involved only in the South Sea Company but also backed the development of the port of Hamburg. The company aimed to get the financial resources in Britain by lottery. The House of Commons perceived this as fraudulent, and the sub-governor was expelled from his seat. It was not only frauds but also other pressures on British ministers to provide benefits for the Hanoverian elite. Due to this, even British ministers linked to George were seen as corrupt. George I was a person of suspicion as his wife, Sophia Dorothea, was incarcerated, and her lover disappeared. There were rumours about his personal life and his mistresses' influence on him. It is customary for monarchs to have illegitimate children, and George I was not an exception. It was said that Sophia Charlotte, his half-sister and the Countess of Darlington, was his mistress, but nobody close to the royal circle suggested this incestuous relationship. On the other hand, Melusine von der Schulenburg was his mistress with whom he had three daughters. They were very close and spent lots of time with them as they were installed at St James's Palace. Melusine enjoyed many privileges. She became the Duchess of Kendal and Duchess of Munster, received stock in the South Sea Company and the patent for the Irish coinage. George was able to remarry after his divorce, but in England, he only could do so after his wife's death, which was in

1726. It was known that he had affairs with various women, but there were speculations about his improper relationship with Mehmet and Mustapha, Turkish servants. In the later years of his reign, George was trying to secure good relations with his son-in-law Frederick William I of Prussia. It was not only necessary for dynastic reasons but also for diplomatic protection for Hanover (Black, 2004).

George I had various cultural and intellectual interests, for example, he was engaged in scientific research for the Royal Society. The Enlightenment influenced him as he had his granddaughters vaccinated against smallpox. In education, he planned the university at Gottingen and founded the Regius Professorship at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. According to the University of Cambridge (2015), he also bought 30,000 books and manuscripts collected by the Bishop of Ely John Moore and gave this kindly gift to the University of Cambridge due to the University's loyalty to him. Oxford was not treated in the same way due to its Toryism. As far as art is concerned George I supported Italian opera London, George Frideric Handel and on various occasions attended performances at the King's Theatre. (Burrows, Hume 1991). George I fought in various wars such as the Dutch war against Luis XIV, against the Turks in Hungary, the battle of Neerwinden, and the War of the Spanish Succession he commanded on the Rhine. Thanks to them he had the reputation of a warrior (Black, 2004).

The death of Louis XIV in 1715 marked a turning point in Anglo-French relations, creating an environment conducive to improving diplomatic ties between the two nations. This shift coincided with the accession of George I to the British throne, a period that also saw significant domestic policy changes, particularly in taxation and military organisation. Under the leadership of George I, Whig ministers, most notably Sir Robert Walpole, who is often regarded as the first de facto Prime Minister of Britain, sought to revise the taxation system. Walpole's strategy was to reduce the land tax, a move aimed at appeasing the landowning class, which formed a significant part of the political and social elite. To compensate for the reduced revenue from the land tax, he proposed increasing excise taxes, which were levied on specific goods and services. This shift in taxation policy was part of a broader effort to stabilise the nation's finances after the costly wars of the previous decades (Walpole and the National Debt | History of Parliament Online [no date]).

During George I's reign, the British army played a crucial role in maintaining internal stability, particularly in response to the Jacobite rising of 1715, which aimed to restore the Stuart monarchy (Szechi, 2006). The army at this time was relatively small but capable of responding effectively to such internal threats. One notable change in the army was the

elimination of Tories from its officer corps, transforming it into a predominantly Whig force. This realignment reflected the political landscape of the time, where the Whigs had gained ascendancy. George I's approach to the military was characterised by a desire for control and discipline. He was particularly concerned about preventing violence by soldiers against civilians. The renewal of the Mutiny Act, which provided legal authority for the control and discipline of the army, was crucial in this regard. It allowed Members of Parliament to address grievances and complaints about the misconduct of soldiers, reflecting a growing concern for civilian oversight of the military. Under George I and his successor, George II, the military assumed a more prominent role in public life during peacetime. This increased visibility and importance of the military indicated the changing nature of the British state, where the army became integral to domestic stability and the projection of power abroad. The reforms and policies of this era laid the groundwork for developing a professional, disciplined military force that would play a significant role in Britain's emergence as a global power in the subsequent centuries (Miller, 2017).

The establishment of a fiscal-military state in Britain during the 18th century marked a significant transition from a medieval system of governance to one incorporating more modern administrative practices. This evolution was crucial in supporting the country's growing military and imperial ambitions. Central to this transformation was the systematic accumulation and maintenance of records and the meticulous keeping of accounts. These practices brought a level of organization and accountability that needed to be improved in the more informal, medieval administration systems. A notable change in this period was how official positions were granted. Rather than being awarded purely based on personal favour or aristocratic privilege, appointments increasingly became based on merit. Officials began to receive salaries, a departure from the earlier practice where personal gain and self-advancement through favouritism were commonplace. This shift towards a merit-based system and the concept of public service instead of personal enrichment represented a significant modernization of the state apparatus. Departments such as the Treasury, Admiralty, War Office, and Ordnance Office were at the forefront of these changes. They adopted more systematic and professional administrative practices, essential for managing the complex logistics of a growing empire and a large military. However, this modernisation was not uniformly applied across all aspects of the military and government. The practice of buying military commissions or obtaining them through favour persisted despite efforts by monarchs like George I to abolish it. This aspect of the military system remained a vestige of the older, more feudalistic approach to governance. In the broader society, even though

the number of professional administrators remained small throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there were significant developments at the local level. New powers were granted to groups and corporations, particularly in urban areas. This included the establishment of paving, cleansing, and lighting commissioners, who took over responsibilities that householders traditionally exercised, like street maintenance. The period also saw the development of waterworks in some towns, the construction of canals, and the establishment of turnpike trusts, reflecting urban infrastructure's growing complexity and needs. A key element in the development of the modern fiscal state was the ability of the state to borrow money from private individuals. This was facilitated by a range of private bankers and the establishment of the Bank of England in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The ability to raise funds through public debt was a crucial factor in financing Britain's military and administrative expansion, underpinning its emergence as a global power in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Miller, 2017).

The origin of the Industrial Revolution is placed by the majority of historians in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the British population rose significantly. However, during the reign of George I some agricultural methods were already introduced which are included in the inventions of the Agricultural Revolution. Jethro Tull invented the first farm machine which drilled holes and put a seed in each in 1701. Moreover, he wrote about sowing crops in rows with a wide gap between two or three of them, which allowed his horse-drawn machine to be pulled there. Viscount Townshend improved this method. He suggested planting certain crops in rotation which in turn absorbed or put back different nutrients in the soil. In the past people left one field unused every third year. Townshend used turnips, which served as food for cattle in winter, and in the rotation cycle, they improved the soil. The modern ways of stock breeding were introduced by Robert Bakewell. Since he introduced the Leicester breed, England has continued dominating the supply of wool overseas (Hunter, 1997).

The sign that George I adapted to British institutions is his approach towards religion. He conformed to the Church of England even though he was a strong Lutheran. Lower clergy criticised the toleration of Dissenters hence, a clerical assembly composed of representatives for each archdiocese was prorogued from 1717. Dissenters, such as Baptist, Independent, and Presbyterian churches, also received royal support which served as a supplement of the incomes of their clerics. In 1726, Sir Robert Walpole obtained the Indemnity Acts, documents which protected the Dissenters from prosecution. Officeholders who failed to take communion were specifically mentioned in these documents. The Church of Scotland was given an annual grant of 1000 pounds to help against Catholicism (Black, 2004).



### **3.3 George II's characteristics**

George II was the only son of George I and Sophia Dorothea so, he was brought up as the future successor. He married Princess Caroline of Ansbach, who influenced him to a great extent. Since he had seven children who lived to adulthood, he certainly had a reputation for virility. Not only did he have children with his wife, but there were several offspring with his mistresses. He shared his love for military matters with his father, which is visible for example in joining the campaign in the Low Countries against France in the War of the Spanish Succession, serving at the battle of Oudenaarde. George lacked a good family background due to sour relations with his father and loss of connection with his mother after their divorce. She died before he became king, and his accession passed without disturbances. There is no evidence of the King being humble, as various authors described him as a bore, reserved, and serious monarch. However, he was able to compromise, which was visible in his acceptance of Pitt to secure goals. Same as his father after he acceded to the British throne, he continued his trust in Whigs, and apart from several ministerial disputes with his ministers, particularly Walpole and Pitt, he was able to manage the government. Having been a strong Lutheran, he visited the Chapel Royal, and like his father, he sponsored several bishops. When the threat of Jacobitism arose in 1745, George II displayed level-headedness and proved to be a monarch who did not panic in crisis (Black, 2004).

### **3.4 Political, social, and economic environment during George II's reign**

Most of the Tories paid respect to the new King, which some perceived as superficial. The prohibition of Tories and the preference for Whigs, which occurred during the reign of George I, did not have comparable continuation under his son. Scotland, Ireland, and the English Jacobites were serene. Even though George II had little to do with the Tories, he made some concessions, such as an increase in the number of Tory justices of the peace. Unlike his father, when George II became the King, he knew much about British politics and politicians. Spencer Compton, an MP for Sussex, was the Speaker on the day of George II's proclamation and people believed that he would be the chief man. Besides the function of Speaker in the House of Commons, he was also Treasurer and Paymaster General. The King decided to continue Walpole in power. After the accession of the new monarch, Parliament had to be summoned, and Walpole had the opportunity to secure the Civil List of 800,000 pounds yearly, which contented the King as he had debts and was known for being avaricious. The national debt in 1753 was over 74,000,000 pounds, which resulted in the introduction of heavy taxes. These were raised on the sale of property, the number of

windows, horses, dogs, and women servants on one's property (Vernon, 2017). The Civil List was a sum of money paid by the Government to the monarch to cover official expenses. Walpole's fiscal arrangements were successful in the Parliament. There were speculations about why George II did not change the government which included Walpole's influence with the Parliament, the Bank of England, and the South Sea Company. Furthermore, it was not recommended concerning foreign policy as replacing them with people who did not know much about the European situation was dangerous. George promoted some of his aristocratic friends such as Essex, Grantham, Lord Chamberlain, Scarborough, or Sir Charles Hotham, and Walpole secured his position and that of his allies and colleagues. However, the King intended to control all activities of government. He was very ambitious and hard-working as he aimed to control the Treasury in person and to cut pay for officials who held more than one post. It was said that it was not his avarice but a fiscal and political strategy. According to the manuscript newsletter sent to Ernst August, George devoted attention to the administration and salary of his household and guards officers. George II wanted to nominate the benefices and prebendaries, a Lord Chancellor's job, so he was criticised. Moreover, he was involved in the financial reform, which weakened the position of his ministers. His wish was to control foreign policy and many feared that he wanted a war and lead his army due to his military character. George read all dispatches of British envoys and knew the diplomatic corps well. His relationship with Frederick William I of Prussia was a source of some problems as he hoped for a new treaty through marital links. George refused this idea for he wanted to please his ally, France. On the other hand, the relations with Spain deteriorated, and a war was under consideration. As a result of his politics Townshend resigned and was replaced by William Stanhope, Lord Harrington. It is necessary to say that George II's politics was influenced by his wife Caroline, who, on the other hand, was influenced by Walpole. In 1736, Walpole persuaded her to press George against an alliance with Denmark and Sweden. Walpole's influence, however, did not change after Caroline's death and it did not change in 1733 even though he failed to push through the Excise Scheme, which concerned taxation. This influence continued until he died in 1745 (Spriggs, 1982). After his death, problems in the ministerial rivalry intensified. Pelham got the position of First Lord of the Treasury, for which George did not care as much as about foreign policy. Carteret became Secretary of State for the Northern Department, which dealt with German states. Before his death, Walpole advised him to abandon Carteret, and the King listened. Apart from that, Newcastle and Pelham lacked his support. After their short resignation, they returned, including William Pitt the Elder. The Jacobite activity increased when the war with

France broke out. Charles Edward Stuart wanted to overthrow the Hanoverian rule in 1745. He successfully captured Edinburgh and Perth as part of the British army was sent to the Austrian Netherlands to fight against the French. After his position was consolidated, he invaded England via Carlisle. Afterwards, Jacobites advanced through Penrith, Lancaster, Preston, and Manchester until reaching Derby. However, Charles Edward was soon criticised for the lack of support he promised. Due to this, he had to retreat north. During this time, George kept his head and did not panic. The main result was that the nation accepted the Hanoverian dynasty, representing the realm's security. The problems in ministerial politics, however, were not resolved. Pitt aimed to gain the Secretaryship at War, but the King refused this idea, however, later, he could not prevent this from happening. His new ministers in Secretaryships were Holderness and Thomas Robinson. Robinson was soon replaced as he could not deal with the problems from the outbreak of hostilities with France. Instead, Henry Fox took the post. However, Pitt was stirring up the situation more, resulting in Newcastle's resignation. Pitt-Devonshire ministry was created but did not last long after Pitt was dismissed. After some time, Newcastle-Pitt's ministry was secured even though George was displeased with Pitt's role as he criticised British policies favouring Hanover. The King spent much time in the Electorate, ensuring it expanded its territories. However, his nephew Frederick II, the Great, of Prussia became the leading ruler in northern Germany. George II did not like art much or was interested in science. On the other hand, he enjoyed music like his father. His military career clearly meant much to him, and he was the last British monarch who led troops into battle. He enjoyed the company of military men and also followed and was interested in the European campaigns. One of the most important events of his life was the battle at Dettingen in Germany, where they fought against France. Handel wrote *Dettingen Te Deum* about his victorious battle (Cudworth, 2024). The British did not appreciate his victory and condemned him for preferring the Hanoverian troops, and Pitt personally attacked this conduct in the battle. The following events were not as successful due to military indecision, differences of opinion, poor weather, and disease. The navy did not enjoy comparable interest, probably due to their background. The King's martial temperament was accompanied by pragmatism but also choleric anger. Various sources claim that George left the ministers to control domestic matters while he was concerned about the Electorate and foreign policy. There were also disputes within the royal family which negatively influenced the politics. George had eight children with Caroline and his relations with his eldest son Fredrick, Prince of Wales, were particularly complicated. Even though his parents did not get divorced, he was left in Hanover while his parents were in

England. After he arrived in Britain, he developed political links with the opposition Whigs, which is why he was seen as an antithesis to Hanoverian kings. It is essential to mention that Frederick was the one responsible for the fall of Walpole. It was believed that he would become the King after his father's death, but Frederick unexpectedly died sooner than his father. The remaining son was Cumberland who was known as an authoritarian militarist. There were problems with the sons and with George II's son-in-law, who was willing to become a Catholic. Caroline died in 1737, and George II continued his relationship with his mistress, Amalia Sophie von Walmoden, with whom he had children. John, her second son, was brought up to be a field Marshal in the Hanoverian army. Madame Walmoden became Countess of Yarmouth and her relationship with George II was similar to that between Melusine and his father. She influenced him in the political sphere so she was used as a medium through which ministers could convey messages. Pitt mainly used her in this way. The King's last years were marked by wars, namely the War of Jenkins' Ear and the War of Austrian Succession. This meant that the relations with Spain and France were hostile even though war with France was not declared until 1744. The King also had to face the Seven Years War, which was played out on a global scale. Regarding British colonies during George II's reign, Britain smashed the French navy and took much of the French empire, for example, Quebec in 1759 (Griffith, 2021). Britain became the dominant European power in South Asia and North America. After a successful campaigning period in 1758, George wanted to keep Cape Breton and Canada (the latter was not yet conquered) and regain Minorca by exchanging it for Martinique (which was not yet conquered). The King and Pitt could not agree on the situation with France, as George wanted to obtain peace through war, and Pitt preferred negotiations. They also disagreed on reinforcements for India because the French were contesting Britain's position (Black, 2004).

Hanover was occupied by the French in 1757, which led George to think about negotiations with Austria to neutralise the electorate. Pitt disliked this idea as it could wreck the alliance with Prussia. Due to this, he proposed that a German force would be created to protect Hanover, which was paid for by Britain. This idea was successful, furthermore, he won support for a dispatch of British troops which were sent to assist that army. George II, however, died during the height of wartime euphoria in 1760 (Brain, n.d). It is necessary to mention that after his death many ministers and people from the court wrote about how good a King and friend he was. In a personal assessment, Elizabeth Montagu said that laws and liberties were safe during his reign, that he was confident with a steady character, and respected foreign governments. And even though he was not interested in sciences or fine

arts he considered common sense as the most important quality (Black, 2004).

The praises of George II's reign were opinions of the gentry, but the quality of life in general changed considerably but not evenly. The changes were predominantly seen in towns rather than in the countryside and applied to the prosperous rather than the poor. According to Joseph Massie, an economist, the bottom forty per cent of the population had to survive on less than fourteen per cent of the nation's income. The affluent were the landowners who often belonged to the peerage. The positive was that the food prices fell significantly in the 1730s and 1740s. Miller (2017) claims that the support of the poor continued under both George I and George II. Villages formed unions that established joint workhouses; and by 1750, there were about 600 of them. Those unable to provide for themselves could accommodate them and they were offered employment. According to Razzell (1993), the population grew in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, caused by the fall in mortality. It is claimed that this was not only due to economic reasons. Certain is that the data prior to 1837 are incomplete since there was no registration of births or marriages. The first census took place after 1801. However, the vaccination against smallpox was not practiced on any scale in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The possible explanation could be the rise of real income for most of the population or the decline in the severity of certain diseases. The main fall in mortality was probably due to the rebuilding of English houses and the improvement in domestic hygiene as earthen floors were replaced by brick. The creation of the Bank of England made it possible for others to earn high amounts of money on the stock market. When trade and industry expanded powerful mercantile families emerged. The number of middle-income groups rose in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. This was due to new job opportunities in law, medicine, school teaching, banking, and government service. It was directly connected with the creation of other types of jobs such as musicians and music teachers and more dancing masters, booksellers, caterers, and landscape gardeners, which apart from providing people with work contributed to the development of leisure time. Due to the rise of wages in certain industries, wage-earners had more money to spend on better food or consumer goods. According to Crafts and Harley (1992), inflation-adjusted GDP per person increased during the reign of George II which means that the economic prosperity of citizens was rising. The expansion of shops in the 18<sup>th</sup> century accelerated and proliferated even more than in the previous century. (Ravenhill, Prestwich, Colley, Barr, Hastings, Chaney, Morrill, Spencer, Atkins, Frere, Whitelock, Kellner, Smith, Baldwin, Bentley Brinkerhoff, Briggs, Josephson, Joyce, and Kishlansky, 2024).

The Industrial Revolution during the reign of George II brought more changes than

during his father's reign. The production techniques and styles surpassed those of most European countries by 1750. Significant innovations in technology and design were introduced. English manufacturers tried to imitate producers of Chinese porcelain and Venetian glass due to consumers' interest in these products. In 1733, John Kay introduced weaving shuttles, which speeded up weaving. New factories were opened where people worked hard to the orders of those who employed them. Working conditions were dangerous, and women and children had to work from 5 a.m. in the morning to 8 p.m., six days a week. There was a watershed in English trade and manufacturing in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Before, the goods were mainly raw materials and woollen clothes. New markets and units of production appeared thanks to the growth of colonial populations. More demand at home and in the colonies caused the growth of English manufacturers. In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the royal dockyards were the largest enterprise. Large-scale production was also typical for London breweries and mills. Extractive industries such as the Yorkshire alum industry, were located near the mineral deposits. Under the leadership of Pelham and Walpole, there was the so-called policy of salutary neglect regarding the North American colonies. This policy introduced lax enforcement of trade regulations and imperial loose supervision of internal colonial affairs as long as the colonies remained loyal to the British government and contributed to the economic profitability of Britain (Wallenfeldt, 2022). The English government also adopted the Navigation Acts. All merchandise exported to England and its colonies had to be conveyed by English ships or by ships from the country where it was produced. John Hadley contributed to explorations with his sextant, which allowed him to measure the height of a star above the horizon against the scale using mirrors and lenses. This facilitated the navigator to plot his position. Harrison's chronometer was added to the portfolio of tools used during the voyages. Thanks to the advancement in science a handful of territories were added to Britain's Atlantic Empire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One of them was Virginia which was chartered in 1732 under trustees who wanted to establish a haven for debtors from British prisons and for Protestant refugees from Continental Europe. By 1750, the introduction of slavery was permitted in Georgia even though it was originally considered to be a free colony. Grenada, Dominica, St. Vincent, and Tobago were given to the British at the Treaty of Paris which was the result of the Seven Years' War and slavery was present in all of them. New France and Florida were ceded to Britain thanks to the same treaty and Vermont became a British colony, too. The British Empire succeeded on the other side of the globe too. Thanks to Robert Clive's victories in India at Arcot (1751) and Plassey (1757), Madras and Bengal were under British control (Spear, 2024).

Both George I and George II were not very popular with their contemporaries; however, they both played a major role in the development of the British monarchy. Both kings fulfil the characteristics of a ruler who leads an army into a war that he wins. Their strength was demonstrated in the fact that the battles they fought were victorious. Both were interested in foreign policy, and they showed their strategic skills. George I sought to win territories from the division of the Swedish Empire. George II continued with this conquering strategy and pursued Hanoverian interests in neighbouring principalities. In terms of virility, longevity, and heirs, both Kings produced several offspring; however, in the case of George II, his oldest son died, so his grandson accessed the throne after his death. The difference between these monarchs is, that, unlike his father, George II could converse in English, and when he accessed the throne, he already knew the politicians and politics. Regarding religion they were strong Lutherans; however, ready to conform to the Church of England and visited the Chapel Royal. Both openly supported and sponsored various bishops with heterodox beliefs. In the social environment, it is clear that both monarchs had positive attitudes towards slavery. George I owned shares in the South Sea Company, which was linked to slavery, and during the reign of George II, it was employed in more colonies in North America. Regarding the social classes, there was a division done by Joseph Massie, an 18th-century economist. According to him, there were six social categories in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The top three categories were connected to land which was the source of wealth. This means that they belonged to peerages, and they were dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts, or barons together with squires and gentry. Thanks to these hereditary titles given by the crown, they could sit in the House of Lords. During the reigns of George I and George II, there were 170 of these peers, and the monarchs liked to give these titles to people according to their merit. There is not much information about his 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> categories, but the number of middle-income groups was rising. During the reign of both monarchs, the poor could get help in the workhouses. On the other hand, nothing was done to help the slaves, and the abolition of slavery became a topic in the reign of later Hanoverian kings (United Kingdom - Industrialization, Reforms, Monarchy, 1998).

There were several commonalities regarding the patterns found in the reigns of George I and George II. Both monarchs were pragmatists who did not have an agenda for Britain other than helping Hanover. Every decision concerning foreign policy aimed to help Hanover, and most of the time, it was to extend the boundaries of the Electorate. George I and George II were not very interested in the other colonies of the British Empire. Another common feature was their mistresses, who influenced royal decisions to a certain extent.

Both kings had excellent relations with them and several offspring. The trend that both kings shared was the Whig oligarchy. The Whigs were the main political party in government because both kings distrusted the Tories. The reason for this was that during both reigns the Jacobites sought to place the Stuart dynasty on the throne. One rebellion took place right at the beginning of George I's reign in 1715, and the other during the reign of George II, in 1745. However, both rebellions were unsuccessful, thanks to the fact that both kings were prudent and did not panic. They had the same approach to domestic politics, but they were not very interested in it. George I was the first monarch of the Hanoverian dynasty, and during his reign, the Prime Minister's office was established with Robert Walpole as the first de facto prime minister. Parliament was composed of two chambers: the House of Lords, an unelected body, and the House of Commons, which consisted of members of Parliament who were elected. It is necessary to mention the army's critical position during the reign of both monarchs. Even though they were not interested in the navy, it doubled its manpower and tonnage during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. George I's reign was relatively stable, and the constitutional monarchy strengthened. During the reign of George II, the stability and economic growth continued. British Empire conquered new territories. The development of trade marked George II's reign, the increase in standards of living, and new employment opportunities were created (Vernon, 2017; Miller, 2004).



## **4 BRITAIN BETWEEN THE REIGNS OF GEORGE III AND WILLIAM IV**

Jeremy Black divides the Hanoverian period into two groups. The first group is the reign of George I and George II, and the second group is the reign of George III, George IV, and William IV. Since the first two Hanoverian monarchs share more similarities and they reigned in a period known as British Baroque, they are included in a separate chapter. Due to this, this thesis follows this division, and the third chapter is dedicated to George I and George II. The fourth chapter analyses the reigns of George III, George IV, and William IV. This chapter focuses on the comparison of the reigns of three Hanoverian Kings: George III, George IV, and William IV. The impact and significance of these Kings will be assessed in this chapter together with the comparison and analysis of their leadership and governance. In addition, patterns and trends found in their reigns will be revealed and identified. The table from the previous chapter, which is a combination of Marie Clare Ross's (2022) and Professor Monagle's (2023) views on successful monarchs, is used for this purpose in this chapter. This means that in the field of personal characteristics, this chapter focuses on monarchs being clever, strategic, and strong. Successful kings should also be humble and manage the political parties well. Trust in a higher power is another element of memorable rulers. Finally, reputation for virility is considered to be a factor of success. It is believed that the more heirs the king has the more stable the country is. The longevity complements this factor as monarchs who lived longer had more opportunities to make a change during their reign. The kings' decisions and their collective and individual contributions to political, social, and economic environments will be uncovered. This means that in the social environment, the thesis deals with aspects like social classes, slavery and abolition of slavery, and religion. The political environment is divided into foreign policy and domestic policy and sheds light on the army as it gained importance during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The economic environment copes with each king's contribution to new industries and the Industrial Revolution, economic indicators such as taxes, population growth, employment changes, and trade. Since the research on this topic was broad, environments are complemented by other changes that took place during the period between 1760 and 1837.

## **4.1 George III's characteristics**

George III's court was the first and the only one of the monarchs that matched the standard of politeness. He was the longest living King in Hanoverian Britain, who experienced major changes during his reign, and also the longest-reigning male monarch (George III. Historic Royal Palaces, n.d.). He was not the brightest of monarchs nor the most sparkling one. However, he had several positive traits, such as diligence. George's wife, Charlotte Mecklenburg Strelitz, with whom he had a close relationship, shared his propriety, piety, and philanthropy. She established a school for poor girls where they learnt spinning. Together, they had six daughters and nine sons with whom they did not often get on well. Particularly, the boys were the complicated ones as they had dissolute lives, and the King had endless disputes with the Prince of Wales. Gambling was another activity of their sons disliked by the Queen and King. Due to this, he shares the trend of not having good relationships with sons like his predecessors. However, as a person, George III differed from them. He believed that dignity did not lie in social distinctions and spoke with people of all ranks with ease. His illness led to stress on a common humanity. He preferred simple life instead of ostentatious grandeur, for which he was often satirised. On the other hand, his attitude contributed to the popularity of the monarchy and the emphasis on the domesticity of the British royal family. George III was also a devout Anglican who supported the spread of this faith (Black, 2004).

## **4.2 Political, social, and economic environment during George III's reign**

After he accessed the throne, he had feelings of antagonism towards the prevailing political system, which he considered oligarchical, factional, and corrupt. He ascribed it to the national debt. His advisor and confidant was John Stuart, also known as the third Earl of Bute, with whom he liked the idea of politics without a party and a King above faction. Due to this, he thought it necessary to take a central political role. The idea was that George III would be a Patriot King which meant that he would be virtuous, impartial, and powerful to override parties. The King and his advisor were displeased by the political realignment in 1757 that brought Pitt and Newcastle together and they were ready to oppose the government when George became King. Henry Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, stood against Simeon Stuart who was backed by George. Stuart, however, had to back down due to Legge's strong position. As a consequence, Bute pressed Legge to promise support in the next general election. Later George dismissed him since he refused. George did not care much about Hanover; he lacked the emotional attachment of his predecessors. He never visited Hanover;

however, he spoke German and had a German wife Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. The King repudiated the policies and methods of his grandfather, and he was willing to break with Frederick III of Prussia without securing an alliance. In terms of domestic policy, he let his leading ministers to direct the domestic affairs. A revolutionary step was when George III sought Tory support. This was unimaginable for his predecessors. This support, however, reflected support for ideas and ideals of non-party governments and not Toryism itself. The King was not a pragmatist, but he was the first monarch who had an agenda for Britain. However, he found it difficult to form relationships with senior politicians which caused political instability in the 1760s. As it was said before George did not accept Pitt since he formed a ministry with Newcastle and broke with them. The King was willing to break with the Whigs which was seen as suspicious, and he was accused of being connected with Tories. However, his motivation to do so was pious diligence. It was believed that George III tried to increase the royal power and undermine politics as he used secret advisors. The cooperation between Bute and George ended when Bute resigned due to feelings of disillusionment with the government. After his resignation, George Grenville represented the ministry, but the relationships with the King were poor. The situation resolved when Grenville's ministry was replaced by one under Marquess of Rockingham and William, Duke of Cumberland, became King's new advisor. George's popularity was harmed after Pitt's resignation in 1761. In 1766, Pitt was asked to return but was unable to create an effective ministry. Nevertheless, the political situation was quiescent, and George found an effective political manager in Frederick, Lord North, who was able to manage the government business, maintain a united government, and reintegrate the Tories. King recovered his popularity and there were two reasons why this was easily effectuated. Firstly, it was the collapse of Bute and secondly, it was the absence of a dynastic rival. Nevertheless, his popularity in London was not very visible (Black, 2004).

In terms of foreign policy, George was grieved first between 1765 and 1766 when the Stamp Act crisis took place. The Stamp Act was issued to increase taxation from the colonies. A tax had to be paid on all paper on which documents were printed (The Stamp Act of 1767 and the petition of the British Colonies in North America-UK Parliament, 2016). This crisis in the American colonies transformed into a revolution in 1775. The American War of Independence broke out in 1775 and the King was seen by the Americans as the cause of their problems. France joined the war against Britain in 1778 and Spain joined one year later which contributed to the fact that Britain did not care much about military support after the French were removed from the continent. Unlike his predecessors, George was not fond

of military service, and he did not join any campaign or battle. However, the army grew in size in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and distinguished itself during the Napoleonic Wars. Later, reforms were implemented to increase its efficiency and improve its organization. When Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown in 1781, it brought down the North ministry in 1782 and caused political instability until 1784. In 1782, George had to turn to Rockinghamites (The Rockingham Whigs) and accept a peace whose consequence was to abandon the Thirteen Colonies. Moreover, the King had to accept a coalition ministry led by the Duke of Portland, the new leader of the Rockingham Whigs. The most important members of this ministry were North and Charles James Fox who did not get along in the past. The ministry, however, did not bring political stability. Britain and George were seen as weak by the foreign rulers. Due to this, a stable ministry under William Pitt the Younger was inevitable. George appointed him, but Pitt lacked a Commons majority which resulted in the collective resignation of many office holders. Pitt thought about resigning and George about abdicating. However, the new government received about 50,000 signatures from counties and boroughs in favour of the free exercise of the royal prerogative in choosing ministers. The dissolution of Parliament took place in 1784 when Pitt felt ready to face a general election. The election result was in favour of the ministry and supported George as a symbol of stability and continuity. Moreover, the King survived an attempt to kill him in 1786 which even increased his popularity. George was easily irritable due to his poor health nevertheless; he became a practised politician. The political situation in Britain was stable once the crown-elite consensus was restored and the stability was the reflection of the King's willingness to adjust and compromise (Black, 2004).

Pitt dominated the politics from 1784 to his death in 1806. Some of his policies did not align with George's views such as the parliamentary reform in 1785. However, Pitt was George's very much own minister. The opposition, however, was present between him and his son George who disagreed with his father's frugality, virtue, duty, and Pitt. In fact, he preferred Fox. George III's influence during Pitt's ministry was stable. The situation in 1788 and 1789, when the King had an attack of porphyria, caused the Regency Crisis. If his son George would become the Regent, the ministry would change as he politically agreed with Fox. Nonetheless, George's health began to improve so regency was not necessary. George showed his merciless side when he insisted on enforcement of the death sentences decreed for the naval mutineers who had harmed British naval power (Black, 2004; Magill, 2013).

The King's popularity increased when he distanced himself from the daily processes of the government. Measures such as the abolition of sinecures, the diminution of the

influence of court favourites, and the growth of accountability of Parliament decreased royal influence and patronage. George did not aim for a revival of power for the crown separate from that of Parliament and the political role of monarch within the Parliament was curtailed. The celebration of his fiftieth jubilee in 1809 symbolised the stability he had provided in the age of volatile politics and the admiration of the nation towards him. George also showed his commitment to the country through a series of gestures. He paid 20,000 pounds from his privy purse to the Voluntary Contribution of 1798, and, as a result of the passage of the Crown Private Estates Act of 1800, he extended the taxation to the private income to the crown. The success of the monarchy was also seen in the lives of ordinary people. According to Brown (2009), the population grew every decade and in 1801 it reached 15.7 million. The growing number of people stimulated demand for raw materials, manufactured goods, food, and services. As the Industrial Revolution continued during the reign of George III, manufacturing industries and artisan-based trades expanded. The demand for domestic, legal, and medical service grew which caused the expansion of the service sector in general. People moved from the rural areas to the urban centres and to London. The urban life was advantageous as people had more job opportunities. On the other hand, the death rates were high in cities due to poor working conditions and exploitation. The King's interest in farming made it a sector that dominated the British economy in the 1780s. Later, corn imports were limited by the war, but its prices fell in 1813, 1814 and 1815 (J. Silberling, n.d). George III supported the enclosure, which was based on the division of large fields into smaller ones demarcated by hedges or fences. The advantage of enclosure was a better use of land. Nonetheless, the economic situation after the French Wars was not thriving. Unemployment rose due to the demobilisation of armed forces, enclosures in farming, and mechanisation of the textile industry. The disadvantage of the Industrial Revolution was the necessity to reduce the size of the labour force. It was essential to bring the economy to peacetime conditions, so the government had to take an active role in the economy. The embargo on widespread trade was terminated and therefore grain import was renewed. This had the following consequences for the farmers: there were large numbers of bankruptcies, some landowners charged less money for rent, farmers reduced the wages they paid, and it caused a situation of emergency in areas where farming was the main occupation. As a result, the Corn Law of 1815 was introduced and banned the import of grain. British farmers could charge a higher price without worrying about the imports. Nevertheless, this legislation set off riots, where the working class showed their disagreement with higher prices. The radicals considered this law as a way for farmers to penalise working people. The French Wars directly influenced

the financial state, which was not healthy. Taxation was high and so were the expenses of the government, which exceeded the income from taxation by 45 per cent. The national debt reached 902 million pounds in 1816. The income tax played a major role in the financial stability. Even though it was popular among the people, it was tolerated. However, when the war ended, the nation asked for its abolition. The Whigs organised a successful campaign in 1815 and 1816, so Liverpool had to cancel it. This made the financial situation even worse. Liverpool's attempts to find a solution resulted in the rise of indirect taxation. By 1818, the indirect taxation covered the government expenses. However, there was a need to reform the financial system. The last measure taken by the government was the resumption of payments in gold and silver rather than paper currency. The recommendations of a second committee that looked at government finance were the imposition of three million pounds of new taxes, a new malt tax, and a withdrawal of twelve million pounds out of government reserves. This was the financial management that dominated the century. It was believed that the policy of free trade, which included loosening of commercial regulations and removing tariffs on imports, would revive the economy. Liverpool was cautious about it since it was unpopular among most sectors of society. Since the 1780s there was an attempt to increase the number of people who could elect MPs. Charles Grey and later William Pitt tried but they both were unsuccessful. The Tories were against all parliamentary reforms because they considered it a threat to the constitution and monarchy. On the other hand, the Whigs were in favour of such reforms. From their point of view, the current system was unfair and unrepresentative. The working-class radicalism declined in the 1790s and did not re-emerge until the end of the French Wars. Major John Cartwright encouraged the middle class to work together to achieve parliamentary reform. Consequently, Hampden clubs were created which were popular in northern manufacturing districts. The changes required by both classes differed. On one hand, the working class demanded manhood suffrage. On the other hand, the middle class demanded household and tax-payer suffrages. The Hampden clubs were replaced by political unions which contributed to the organisation of petitions between 1817 and 1818. The social and economic relationships were negatively influenced by the transition to a peacetime economy. The government was pressured by riots which aimed for restoration of wages and prices, and by the demands from radical orators. The government was confronted by the revolutionary challenge to its authority. This dissatisfaction resulted in disorder at the Spa Field meetings in London. The calls for parliamentary reforms were louder which was visible in the attack on the regent's coach and the march of the blanketers. These events led to the suspension of Habeas Corpus and the passage of the Seditious Meetings Act, which

restricted meetings for twelve months. The government and the Whigs were worried and became more cautious when dealing with the parliamentary reform. The radical activities declined thanks to two factors. The government immediately reacted which was followed by the alleviation of economic conditions. The seditious Meeting Act came to an end in 1818 and Habeas Corpus was revived at the same time. In 1819, the economic conditions worsened again, which resulted in the Peterloo massacre (Pidd, 2019). Hunt was one of the speakers there and the local magistrates decided to arrest him. The chaos resulted in many injuries and eleven deaths. In 1819, the Six Acts were introduced. They restricted meetings and the content of the press to prevent drilling. Magistrates were also allowed to seize weapons and the government could cope harshly with the signs of discontent. Despite the unpopularity of the government, the radical action decreased. George III suffered from several attacks of porphyria in the 1790s and the political situation experienced a crisis. The Prince of Wales agreed to Pitt's proposal that if the King did not recover, there would be a restricted regency. In 1804, Pitt went to opposition, and the ministry was run by Addington, who had been in power since Pitt resigned in 1801 over Catholic Emancipation. Pitt became first minister again in 1804 but died in 1806, and the Ministry of All the Talents under Lord Grenville was formed after his death. Lord Grenville, stubborn like his father, detested his colleagues, especially Fox. The ministry fell since it was not able to promise not to raise the question of Catholic Emancipation again. It resulted in a succession of Portland administration, which, however, failed due to an unsuccessful expedition sent against Antwerp in 1809. As a result, Spencer Perceval replaced Portland, whom George trusted. In 1811, the crown was put in commission with the passing of the Regency Act. George, Prince of Wales, was to become the King's lieutenant. From 1811 George III became more seriously ill and did not recognise his family anymore. When the Queen died, Frederick, Duke of York, was appointed as George's guardian. Liverpool became Prime Minister in 1812 after Perceval was assassinated. He was the head of the government towards the end of the wars with France. After its end, Liverpool faced two major problems. Not only he needed to reorganise government finances but also fought against working-class radicalism (Brown, 2009, Black, 2004).

The social environment was more fruitful during the reign of George III. Unlike his predecessors, he devoutly supported the Anglican Church and had a liking for various activities which was reflected in the changing social environment of 18th-century Britain. Apart from that he opposed the extension of rights to Catholics in Ireland or Britain which meant that Catholics could not become MPs in the new Parliament created by the Anglo-

Irish Union of 1801 until 1829. The religious issues were central in the politics due to King's attitude. He opposed the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. He was motivated by his religious convictions and by the fact that the position of the Church of England rested on parliamentary legislation. He was a supporter of the Church of England and a devout believer. His interest in his faith was visible in various ways. He appointed bishops and unlike his two predecessors was concerned about their pastoral qualities and doctrinal orthodoxy. George I and George II used the church in order to maintain Whig strength. The King's interests were seen also overseas where the Anglican faith was encouraged. Therefore, the Anglican bishopric was created in Nova Scotia. A few years later, an Act was issued which supported the Church in Upper Canada. The King was also interested and supported the Naval and Military Bible Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Apart from that he also supported the German Protestant mission to the East Indies (Brown, 2009; Black, 2004).

George's favourite hobbies were books, art, maps, science, scientific instruments, and music. As a result, he revived links with the Royal Society and supported an astronomer William Herschel who became the court astronomer and was also an inventor of the telescope. George was also fascinated by clocks and barometers, and due to this, he had a barograph made by Alexander Cumming. Moreover, he was fond of botanical science. Thanks to his foundation, the Royal Academy was founded in 1768. George played various musical instruments, collected music, and was fond of Handel's oratorios. In 1788, he visited Worcester's Three Choirs Festival and added his own band to the orchestra. This festival satisfied all his concerns as its main aim was the relief for the widows and orphans of the clergy. It was also an opportunity for him to show royal bounty. This was shown through allowances such as ten guineas for the workmen at the china factory, fifty pounds for the poor of the city, two hundred pounds for the widows and orphans, and three hundred pounds to liberate debtors. George III was also fond of theatre, which he visited often. Architecture was another of King's likings. He purchased the Queen's Palace, later Buckingham Palace, which was furnished as a town residence. The decoration was in Gothick style and matched the one in Windsor Castle. This helped to make the Gothick style the national style. The royal family moved permanently to Windsor, which was neglected by George II. George III's interest in farming was particularly visible from the 1780s after visiting many farms. He had merino sheep imported, which improved the British woolstock. The King was also an active hunter. Due to his interest in farming and simple life, he was known as Farmer George. Since he did not go to Newmarket for the horse race, forbade dice at court, and



shunned masquerades, his preference for a simple life was also seen at court (Brown, 2009; Black, 2004).

Even though slavery was abolished in the British West Indies in 1833, the Quakers brought a petition against it to Parliament in 1783 (Carpenter, 2019). When George was a teenager, he considered slavery immoral. On the other hand, he supported the continuation of the slavery and slave trade. He considered the Caribbean colonies vital as they generated revenue. Jamaica was one of the most important colonies since it served as the hub of the British Atlantic Empire. The King wrote a letter to Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, in which he said that the protection of the islands was more important than the recovery of the rebel territories. However, after the French Wars, when Britain was part of the Fourth Coalition with Austria, Prussia, and Russia, new territories such as Ceylon, Malta, Trinidad, Tobago, Cape of Good Hope, Ionian Islands, and St Lucia were added to its list of colonies. The movement for the abolition of the slave trade succeeded in 1807 when the Act of Parliament to abolish the slave trade was signed by George III. It banned trading enslaved people in the British Empire (Newman, n.d.; Conn, 2023; Brown, 2009).

### **4.3 George IV's characteristics**

George IV was the first child of George III and Queen Charlotte and was brought up in a political and personal morality set up by his parents. George III's preferred values were prudence and austerity. Like his father, he did not join any military campaign but on the contrary, he saw himself as a person with an important military background. George was the one waiting the longest time to become a king. He also had poor relations with his father like all his predecessors. He accessed the throne at the age of fifty-seven when he was already lazy, self-indulgent, and had poor health. He did not share any of his father's sense of duty, moral concern, or royal diligence. Apart from this, he was unable to manage scandals effectively. His wife was Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, his first cousin, whom he married in 1795. He aimed to clear his debts, so he did not have any preference for marriage. He met her three days before the wedding and they both were disappointed with the choice of spouse. His mistress, Lady Jersey, deteriorated their relationship. Caroline left the Carlton House and stayed in Blackheath. She was not a saint, but this was not very emphasised. When Lady Jersey lost his favour, she was replaced by Elizabeth Fox with whom he had a son. The King longed for Maria Fitzherbert, with whom he lived again from 1800. This relationship was damaged by George IV's favour for Isabella, Marchioness of Hertford, so

it ended in 1809. George and Caroline had a daughter, Princess Charlotte born in 1796, who died in 1817. Due to this, it was clear that after his death his brother Frederick, Duke of York, would access the throne. The King's disappointment resulted in Caroline not being crowned Queen and her name was left out of the prayer for the King and the royal family. A similar trend was found in George I's life who imprisoned his wife for thirty-two years (Cartwright, 2023). As a result, the radicals took up this conflict and demonstrated it as a hypocrisy of the government. Due to this, the ministers feared radical action and an attack on George. As a monarch, he lacked charisma and had no sense of integrity. There is no sign of him being humble. However, his reputation for virility is significant. His poor relationship with his wife made him seek comfort in several mistresses. Britain under George IV lacked flair and his unpopularity was greater than that of his predecessors. The King also trusted in a higher power, which was visible towards the end of his reign (Black, 2004).

#### **4.4 Political, social, and economic environment during George IV's reign**

George was not a military figure; however, associated himself with military success. He made painters depict him as a general and told people that he was in Waterloo. The truth was that he was in Waterloo in 1821 when he was on his way to Hanover. George IV was Wellington's supporter and believed that Napoleon had to be removed and replaced by Luis XVIII. He was interested in the campaigns and was happy when Hanover and Mecklenburg were liberated from Napoleon. Unlike George III, George IV showed interest in Hanover which he visited often. Napoleon's abdication in 1814 was followed by celebrations of victory. Tsar Alexander I of Russia and King Frederick William III of Prussia visited Britain. The Russian Tsar was displeased with the lack of applause he received; besides, he lacked sympathy for George. The nature of the British monarchy was changing as George IV, like his father, did not fight in any battle. In 1811, he was sworn in as Regent with limited powers in case George III recovered. However, in 1812 he gained the full powers. Firstly, George was politically linked to Whigs who opposed Pitt, but later, he shifted his position. This was reflected in the changes in British politics. When George IV got older, his views became more conservative as he was concerned about the position of the Anglican Church and tried to correct relations with his father. The King opposed the Whigs' appeasement of Napoleon as they aimed for negotiations. When he was a Prince Regent, like his father, he stressed his patriotism and wished for inclusive ministry. He was accused of being a turncoat by the Whigs. They claimed that he was influenced by his Tory associates and Isabella, Marchioness of Hertford with whom he was very close. The Whigs had a liberal view of

Catholic Emancipation and war, due to which George IV could not bring them into his inclusive ministry. Apart from that he did not like that they criticised him. There was an attempt to create an all-party ministry, but the Whigs asked for too many places, so the plan failed (Black, 2004).

The crisis caused by the Queen's name being left out of the prayer encouraged the radicals to take up this conflict. They demonstrated it as a hypocrisy of the government. Due to this, ministers feared radical action and an attack on George. There were threats on his life, a fact he shares with George III. This unsuccessful relationship was similar to the one of George I, but the difference was that his relationship with Caroline was played out in public in Britain. The Bill of Pains and Penalties was introduced to end the marriage and dethrone her. However, the Bill was withdrawn by the small Lords majority. The King was furious, but he was pleased by the growing disquiet about Caroline's personal life. Her coronation was denied, and he was coronated alone in 1821 (Brown, 2009).

After his coronation, George visited Ireland, Hanover, and Scotland. Both the Irish and the Scots responded to him well. Caroline died three weeks after his coronation, however, George did not show appropriate sorrow and wanted to see his mistress, Lady Conyngham, in Ireland. After this visit, he went to Hanover. On the way there, he stopped in Brussels where he had dinner with William I of the Netherlands. George was not in good health and was a less experienced traveller than his predecessors. George continued his visits and in 1822 he visited Scotland on the Royal George. The yacht, as a sign of modern technology, used steam tugs to cope better with contrary winds. The King liked the Scottish music and dances and renewed public interest in tartans and clans. His visits were more favourable in Hanover, Dublin, and Edinburgh than they were in London. However, after 1823, he did not visit London publicly apart from ceremonial openings and proroguing of Parliament. This was due to his unpopularity there and poor health (Black, 2004).

As the economic situation improved in the 1820s radicalism declined. However, other types of radical action appeared. Some turned to religion and Methodists were revived. Others showed their disagreement with the Combination Acts, which made trade unions illegal. Due to this, they were repealed in 1824. The government's reaction to radicalism emphasised the need for public order. Liverpool's stance towards agriculture changed. He claimed that agriculture was not the sole British interest. Minor changes were introduced in 1822, but due to price levels, they never came into operation. Problems such as the rising of wheat price from 1823, the financial crisis in 1825, and the depression in the manufacturing industry stirred up the situation, and demands for the abolition of duties on foreign grain

increased. There was an attempt to make the abolition of the Corn Laws an issue in 1826. However, this was unsuccessful. Huskisson and Canning introduced Corn Laws in 1827 and 1828. They decreased the amount of duty paid as the price of wheat rose. Liverpool did not abandon the question of trade either. He emphasised the positives of freer trade but ensured everyone that absolute free trade would not become a reality. A journey towards freer trade was commenced. Thomas Wallace claimed that it would help industries out of depression, create employment, and look for new markets. Proposals were drawn up for the reforms. After 1823 they were taken into consideration. Proposals for the development of new financial and commercial policies were established by Liverpool. These reforms and sound money policy increased government revenue. In 1823, the surplus was seven million pounds. Five million pounds were used to pay debts and the rest was used to cut taxes. This meant the reduction of excise duties on a variety of consumer goods and raw materials. The tax reduction limit was reached in 1824. Due to this, Liverpool aimed for the reintroduction of the income tax (Black, 2004).

Even though George IV's reign was rather sad, he created an alternative image of royalty and a new standard of English and international elegance. The legacy of his high sense of taste is the Brighton Pavilion. He was given Carlton House on Pall Mall, which was rebuilt by Henry Holland, and it was lavishly decorated. This increased his debt which deteriorated his relations with his father. The King spent most of his summers in Brighton where Brighton Pavilion was freshly reconstructed and exuberantly decorated. The dome was built and furnished in Indian style. During his reign, he was responsible for rebuilding Buckingham Palace and supported John Nash, the architect who worked on Regents Park and the building on Regent Street. The cost of the reconstruction of Buckingham Palace was overrun which led to public and parliamentary criticism and it harmed George's reputation. However, he clearly shared his love for architecture with his father, George III. The King was also a patron of the arts. Various painters such as Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, or Hoppner received patronage. George was a keen supporter of the Royal Academy, where he frequently attended its exhibitions and dinners. George's favourite painters were Hoppner and Lawrence. George bought several paintings from Stubbs and David Wilkie. The King and the government backed the national gallery, which resulted in buying the collection of John Julius Angerstein, which made it the basis of the gallery. George was also fond of old masters, and he especially liked the Dutch and the Flemish paintings. He was also keen on bronzes, furniture, porcelain, and the ornate decoration of French furniture. This had an impact on British furniture makers. However, when he became solitary the contrast between

him, and the restored Bourbons in France was considerable. The Bourbons set the fashion for court life and the court was used for strengthening relationships between the crown and elite and crown and church. George was on the other hand, interested in many activities. He supported the Literary Fund for indigent writers, was fond of literature, and ensured the return of Stuart papers to Britain. Apart from that he subsidised the copying of papyri found at Herculaneum. His interest in animals was shown in the wide menagerie he owned. These were kangaroos, an ostrich, a zebra, a leopard, and a giraffe (Black, 2004).

The population growth continued during George IV's reign, which stimulated an already growing economy. New markets appeared, and manufactured goods were exported to the United States and Latin America where markets opened in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Cotton goods were mainly exported to the Indian market and a similar opportunity arose in the Middle East and South America. The trade was shifted towards less developed economies from which tropical products were imported. Such countries had the purchasing power to buy British goods. Profitable trade helped to finance industrial expansion and agricultural improvements. Investments in roads, canals, buildings, and enclosing lands continued to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. By the 1830s, the annual investment rate reached over 40 million pounds, and annual investment in industry and trade rose to 17 million pounds by 1850. The sum spent on investment in canals, roads, docks, and harbours was about 1.5 million pounds by 1830. The gross domestic product increased to over 2 per cent per year between 1800 and 1850. This was thanks to the increase in the workforce caused by population growth, rise in capital investment, and increase in productivity mainly in agriculture and manufacturing industries (Brown, 2009).

In the political environment, the ministry of the Earl of Liverpool lasted ten years and brought stability. It still had considerable energy because of the emergence of liberal Toryism. Nonetheless, the crisis which followed his retirement made George Canning the head of the government. Canning died soon after and was replaced by Frederick, Lord Goderich. His political weakness led to his resignation in 1828. The King had to appoint Wellington, whom he distrusted and insisted that the government should not acknowledge Catholic Emancipation. However, George was pressed by Wellington, who saw the Catholic Emancipation as necessary. In the end, there was no way to avoid it from happening. He signed the Catholic Relief Act in 1829 and it left him deflated. Apart from that, the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed. During his last months of reign, he was very sick but still eager to devote time to his activities. He was interested in races and horses. Moreover, he

became devout, read the Bible, and took solace in receiving the sacrament. During his last days, he was courageous and calm, which led to his decease (Black, 2004).

#### **4.5 William IV's characteristics**

William was George and Charlotte's third son, and his reign is seen as a beginning of revival, which culminated during the reign of Queen Victoria. He was not a military figure, but his father demanded him to join the navy, so William did so. He started as a seaman and later became a midshipman. It made him popular. William's teacher was Henry Majendie, whose father taught Queen Charlotte English. However, William was as obedient as his father wanted him to be. In 1780, his disorderly behaviour sent him back to his ship. His father described him as giddy and said that William needed polishing and composure, which would make him a charming character. Due to his naval life, the King had a liking for alcohol, smoking, bluff manners, and rough speech. Even though he had many failures his reign was seen as a relief. He was seen as a compromising King; he did not have prejudices against the Whigs and was willing to cooperate with ministers with whom he did not get along. His personality was well-meaning, impulsive, ebullient, and eccentric. He had an unbuttoned style which he did not abandon when he became King. He claimed himself to be his brother's friend, but he did not show enough grief at his funeral. He even left earlier than the coffin touched the vault. His lack of dignity was explained as openness and eccentricity, but others claimed that he had similar behaviour to his father's, who suffered from porphyria, a hereditary disease. His behaviour was unpredictable, particularly in spring, but it was incomparable to what his father experienced in 1788 and 1801. However, he did not share the poor relations his father had with his son and heir. William behaved particularly strangely and difficult when he was Lord High Admiral in 1827 and 1828. He was also like his uncle, Henry, Duke of Cumberland, who was also eccentric and lacked dignity. However, when he accessed the throne, his behaviour differed from his predecessors. Walks in the capital without show or ceremony was one of his likings but was told not to do so when he received unwelcome attention from the populace. He also liked to invite new acquaintances to dinner at the palace, but he was dissuaded to continue this activity. His demeanour lacked royalty which was seen also in his coronation. It was economic and no state banquet was held afterwards. He shared this pattern with his father who also preferred simple life and disliked grandeur. This resulted in the slackening of the ritual of monarchy. His thrifty nature was also seen in his attitude towards Buckingham Palace, which George IV wanted to rebuild in the major palace. William continued to live in Clarence House and proposed the rebuilding

of Buckingham Palace into barracks. His preference for easy style was not universally popular. People were confused by his easy-going character as they explained it as an inclination towards political reform. Some saw him as generous and a man of good will but for others, his behaviour represented a vulgarisation of the crown. He was also characterised as dim-witted by some part of the populace. His love life was not as scandalous as that of George IV. He had lived with Dorothy Jordan, an actress before he became King. They had ten children, and their relationship was public (Tomalin, 2000). When he accessed the throne, he left Dorothy but secured her life. He wanted to marry according to his status and clear his debts. He married Adelaide, daughter of Duke George of Saxe-Meiningen, in 1818. George III ensured that all his children had German spouses. She had two miscarriages and gave birth to two girls who both died in infancy. The King faced financial problems, so they went to Hanover. They returned and lived some time in Bushy, where William used to live with Dorothy. In 1824, they moved to Clarence House. Queen Adelaide was a loving stepmother to the FitzClarence children after the death of her children (Black, 2004).

#### **4.6 Political, social, and economic environment during William IV's reign**

William politically supported his brothers George and Frederick; however, he stayed affectionate towards his parents. This does not mean that he never came across problems with his family. His Mother upset him during the Regency Crisis. He was threatening to stand for Parliament as the granting of his dukedom was delayed. It stimulated his promotion to his titles. When William received his social and professional promotion, he became Earl of Munster and Duke of Clarence and St Andrews. Apart from this, he was the Admiral of the Fleet and thus Commander-in-Chief. He became Lord High Admiral in 1827. The end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was known as a period of British naval triumph and hegemony. However, William was not responsible for this success. He commanded ships during 1786 and 1790 and saw active service during the War of American Independence. William was the captain of Pegasus, later he was transferred to Andromeda and Valiant. Valiant was part of the fleet which was supposed to be used as war with Spain was likely to happen, due to claims on British Columbia. Spain, however, backed down. William did not serve afloat after 1790. He took part in ceremonies such as commanding the naval escort for Luis XVIII when he returned to France. Despite not being a military figure, his naval career made him popular. According to George IV, and Wellington, William was not in a position to exercise military command even though he was Lord High Admiral. Consequently, he

resigned. It was assumed that the Board of Admiralty would direct the navy. On the other hand, William thought that thanks to his experience, he was entitled to direct affairs. He also spent lots of money on naval expenditure and the condition of officers and sailors. He aimed for reforms of the system of punishments and promotions and gunnery. This contributed to his resignation and abolition of this office. Unlike Horatio Nelson, there are no signs that William was an effective admiral as he never had a chance to prove himself. However, the nation was proud of British military strength. This was visible in King's pressure for a naval presence in the Mediterranean facing international threats. William also showed his firmness in an international crisis of 1836. His reign was also marked by the issue of political reform. There was a demand for a change of the electoral franchise which should be more representative. The Tories, who dominated the House of Lords, did not agree with this idea. Thus, they lost the general election of 1830. Wellington was defeated on a crucial vote over the Civil List. He disagreed with the parliamentary reform; thus, he was replaced by a Whig government under Lord Grey. He supported the reform since he was fearful that a revolution like that in France could take place in Britain. Lord John Russel introduced the Reform Bill in 1831, which was unsuccessful. Parliament was then dissolved and prepared for another election to achieve more reform-minded Commons. William agreed on the second election in a short time which was popular among the supporters of reform. Lord Grey won the general election with a large majority and in 1831, the second Reform Bill passed the Commons. However, the Tory-dominated Lords declined it again. Meanwhile, the discontent among the nation erupted into riots in Derby, Bristol, and Nottingham. A third Reform Bill was the result of discussion and was introduced in the Commons in the same year. The King was pressured to appoint more peers thanks to whom the Bill would be successful. He reluctantly agreed to it. The Bill's third reading passed in the Commons and went to the Lords. However, there the Bill came across problems as the majority of Lords was judged as insufficient by Grey. William was asked again to create more peers, but he refused. Due to this, Grey resigned. The King accepted his resignation and asked Tories to form the government. Robert Peel rejected this offer and Wellington was influenced by the Tory division. William turned back to Grey and promised to create new peers, if necessary, a few days later. He also sent a circular letter to the Tories which persuaded many to abstain as Wellington promised. The Lords were pressured to yield, and the Bill passed the third reading. The Reform Act became law in 1832. The Act changed the political geography and franchise of England and Wales since the 1650s. It established a uniform borough franchise, which was based on households rated at ten pounds annually. This resulted in the



enlargement of the English electorate by fifty per cent. Sections of middle-class were included and one-fifth of all adult males could vote after 1832. Ireland and Scotland received separate Acts. Seats were distributed radically so growing towns such as Birmingham, Bradford, Blackburn, Manchester, and others were rewarded. These towns did not have their own MPs. Seats in the north of England meant a shift in fortunes from industrialisation as well as the growth of political weight of these parts. Thanks to the Act the nation participated in the political system which made it popular and accepted. The most important result of the Reform Act was that a new political climate was established and questions about reforming the constitution were no longer seen as revolutionary. Nevertheless, these Acts did not remove all the inequalities of representation. Even though William did not like the Radicals, he was an avid supporter of reforms. The King was willing to cooperate with Grey and his attempt to form a ministry. Even though he gave concessions to the Whigs, reluctantly, he gave way to satisfy the populace. The fact that he was unwilling to make more peers to make the Act successful was blamed on his wife or sisters but not on the King himself. Many pubs were named after him, and he also profited from the popularity of the navy. In 1834, the King dismissed the Whig ministry with Melbourne as its leader. Melbourne became Prime Minister after Grey's resignation over the appropriation of Irish Church revenues for lay uses. William aimed for a coalition of Melbourne and the Tories. This was, however, unsuccessful. The King had a dispute with Grey over his willingness to discourage the opposition to radicalism on the Continent. However, this crisis was solved. When Melbourne became Prime Minister his and the King's views on church differed. Melbourne wanted Lord John Russel to become the Leader of the House of Commons. Russel, however, agreed with the use of church revenues for secular purposes. William considered it a threat to the rights of the church and an echo of the concerns of his predecessors over Catholic Emancipation. Due to this, he dismissed the government in 1834. Nevertheless, Melbourne returned to office as the proposed coalition was rejected by the Whigs. The King accepted Melbourne's return, who was careful in his relationship with the King. William, in turn, accepted the new state of constitutional monarchy. Nonetheless, there were disputes which reflected problems with settling the new practice of politics. On the other hand, he had to see Russell to become a Home Secretary. Luckily for William, the ministry rested on Tory support and adapted to Tory views. The combination of Peel and Melbourne was thriving since Peel was not an ultra-Tory. The King realised that he and the Lords could not prevail against the Commons. The Reform Act of 1832 helped this political stability as it brought important changes but did not lead to any kind of revolution. The socially prominent had the

political system under control and met William's wishes in this respect. During the rule of the Hanoverian dynasty many colonies were named after its monarchs. South Australia was a new British colony, and its capital was named after the Queen. The naming of places was most pronounced for the Hanoverian period since during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, imperial names were rejected especially in Africa. The Hanoverian legacy in the world was, for example, Georgetown in South Carolina, Charlotte in North Carolina, and the royal colony of Georgia. There was also the Fort George opposite the American Fort Niagara. Posts in Canada also received names such as Frederick House, Fort Charlotte, Fort William, Cumberland Houses, and Fort George. When Philip Carteret was discovering the Pacific, he named Osnaburg, Duke of Gloucester and the Queen Charlotte Islands. In Malaysia, a British base was named George Town in 1786 (Black, 2004).

Victoria succeeded William after his death. She was the daughter of George III's son Edward, Duke of Kent. However, she was like William and Adelaide's daughter as her father died in 1820 and William did not like her mother. Maria Louisa Victoria affronted the Queen when she ignored her birthday celebrations and arrived in time for those of the King. William did not want her to become Regent since Victoria was underage. The King was determined to live until she came of age, which became true as he died a month later. During William's reign, the British monarchy was not associated with political conservatism, and he was grouped with the reign of Victoria rather than those of his predecessors. Important reforms were introduced during this time. Factory Act and Bank Charter Act were suggested in 1833. The Factory Act was passed in 1833 (Cooke-Taylor, 1894). It referred only to the textile industry. Young children could not be employed anymore, and an inspectorate was established to enforce its requirements. The latter established notes of five pounds or more as legal tender in England and Wales. The bank accounts were published every quarter of the year. However, the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire was a more prominent change. Slave owners received twenty million pounds as compensation. It was clear that the abolition of slavery happened thanks to an extra-parliamentary campaign. The Whigs, thanks to the abolition, fulfilled their promises to the electorate given in the 1830 and 1832 general elections. In 1834, the Poor Law Amendment created a centrally controlled bureaucracy. The home relief was replaced by workhouses which consisted of local parishes that had to join. It ensured that people who entered workhouses were housed, clothed, and fed and children received some education (1834 Poor Law-The National Archives, n.d.). All paupers had to work in return for several hours in the workhouses. Another important law was the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. It was introduced as a part of parliamentary

reform. Many towns did not have independent rights, so they were under the control of local magistrates paying them country rates. The increase in population and the transformation called for reform. Concerns about large towns being ungovernable owing to their undisciplined population were growing. According to Whigs, the reform would allow towns to compete for economic advantage. The reform came across Tory opposition in the Lords, but Whig compromises facilitated its passage. This Act replaced self-selecting oligarchic corporations, which were run predominantly by Tories. Thanks to this Act the elected borough councils could control the local police, markets, and street lighting. Urban politics noted an upsurge and the middle-class achieved freedom of political expression in towns. In 1836, the Tithe Commutation Act was introduced (Jamelske, 2000). This Act was part of the reform of the Church of England. It originated from the work of the Ecclesiastical Commission. In the field of education, there were various improvements. London University received the right to grant degrees. This meant that the monopoly of Oxford and Cambridge, where students had to be Anglicans to take a degree, was broken. As a result, All Protestants could attend London University. In 1833, voluntary societies received 20,000 pounds to provide elementary education. Furthermore, the registration of births, marriages, and deaths was made compulsory. The civil registration was introduced so the Anglican Church lost its monopoly on registering this data. In 1836, Nonconformists were allowed to marry outside the Anglican Church in a civil ceremony on special conditions thanks to the Dissenter's Marriage Act. Major reforms were introduced which strengthened state control over the Church. It was clear that the state was remoulding and there was no opposition towards it (Phillips, Wetherell, 1995; Brown, 2009; Black, 2004).

## RESULTS

This master's thesis consists of four chapters. The first two chapters belong to the theoretical part, and they analyse the Stuart dynasty which is important for a better understanding of the Hanoverians. The findings from the theoretical part are called four Rs as they concern elements such as religion, revolution, reproduction, and regime. The authoritarian regime of Charles I and Oliver Cromwell brought instability and dissatisfaction among the population resulting in the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and limitation of the power of the next monarchs. In terms of religion, the aims of James II for Catholic Emancipation stirred up the religious and political situation in a way that revolution was inevitable. Due to this, the element of revolution means the Glorious Revolution whose outcomes were three important documents the Bills of Rights, the Acts of Toleration, and the Act of Settlements, which defined the events that followed. The inability of Anne Stuart to produce an heir resulted in the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty to the British throne.

The remaining two chapters belong to the empirical part of this master's thesis. The first chapter of this part analyses George I and George II's reign. The second chapter analyses the period between 1760 and 1837, in other words, the reigns of George III, George IV, and William IV. The reigns of George I and George II differ from the reigns of George III, George IV, and William IV in social, economic, and political environments. However, all monarchs except William IV share a family pattern of not having good relationships with their heirs. Both George I and George II preferred Hanover over Britain which was reflected also in the politics. They both cared more about foreign policy rather than the domestic one. However, they both played a major role in the establishment of the British monarchy as their reigns were significant in the establishment of the practices and conventions known as the Revolution Settlement. George I and George II had a military background as they both fought or joined a campaign. In the field of domestic policy, both kings relied on the Whigs. They had to deal with Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 thanks to which the Hanoverian dynasty became accepted in Britain as the kings managed them without panic and displayed levelheadedness. Not many reforms were introduced during their reign as they lacked interest in Britain, however, some of them were repealed such as the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts. The taxation system was revised under the reign of George I which resulted in the reduction of land tax and increase in excise taxes. Both George I and George II conformed to the Church of England and Dissenters received royal support and Indemnity Acts were introduced to protect them from prosecution. The army played a major role during

the reigns of the first two Hanoverian kings as it maintained internal stability and prevented Jacobite risings. Renewal of the Mutiny Act provided legal authority for its control and discipline. George II shared his father's pleasure for mistresses as well as his preference for the Whigs. During his reign, the economic situation improved, and even more technological inventions were introduced because of the Industrial Revolution. New factories were opened, and the population was rising due to the improvement in living standards. Managing the Whigs was not without problems but despite this, both kings were able to get along with them.

The period of the reign of George III, George IV, and William IV was different yet more beneficial for Britain. However, not all these monarchs were equally popular among the nation. The least popular king of this trio was George IV, who contributed to this title thanks to personal scandals and exaggerated spending. The most famous is his affair with the Queen, whom he did not want to be crowned and had several mistresses. In this respect, he was like George I, who had his wife imprisoned. In the political sphere, he followed the trend like his father, working with both political parties. During his reign, there were several Prime Ministers such as Liverpool, Canning, and Goodrich but he managed to work with them. He was, however, nothing like his father who was dedicated to his duties as a king. Despite losing the American colonies during the reign of George III important measures were taken such as the abolition of the slave trade. All three monarchs were religious and supported the Anglican Church. During the reign of all Hanoverian monarchs, the British population was growing and was generally divided into the working population, the middle classes, and the landed classes. William IV's reign also introduced the Poor Law Amendment Act which abolished the old Poor Law system. This was followed by the establishment of workhouses for the paupers and during William IV's reign they could live there and work to pay for the accommodation in return. Important acts were introduced such as the Reform Act of 1832 which redefined who had the right to vote. Slavery was also abolished during the reign of William IV so the life of this part of the population became easier. The Industrial Revolution brought significant changes in employment and improving life conditions created new job opportunities. However, the disadvantage of technological improvements was seen after the French Wars when soldiers who returned could not find jobs due to the not-as-high demand for the workforce. George III was the monarch with a higher interest in farming and improvements of agriculture as well as in new inventions which made the expansion of the British Empire easier but paradoxically during his reign American colonies were lost which was seen as a major failure. During his reign income tax was repealed by

the Whigs and it harmed the government's financial situation. Due to this, indirect taxation was increased which displeased the working-class radicals as it increased prices of food. A movement towards freer trade was in consideration during this period. These three monarchs were not as fond of the army as their predecessors, who both fought or joined campaigns, but, for example, in the case of George III whose reign was influenced by the French Wars, the army improved its efficiency and grew. Britain became part of the Fourth Coalition together with Austria, Prussia, and Russia. They defeated Napoleon and Britain gained new territories such as Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon, Malta, Ionian Islands, St Lucia, Trinidad, and Tobago (Brown, 2009). In domestic policy, during George III's reign, the governing political parties were both the Tories and the Whigs. The Tories were in power during most of George IV's reign and were resisting political reforms. The Whigs gained power during William IV's reign and introduced several important reforms. **The hypothesis used for the elaboration of the empirical part claims that the reigns of Hanoverian kings were effective due to the decisions made in the political, social, and economic environment reinforced by individual characteristics.**

## CONCLUSION

This master's thesis is comprised of four main aims. The first aim refers only to the theoretical part which explores the transition from the Stuart dynasty to the Hanoverian dynasty and sheds light on Britain during the reign of the Stuart dynasty. It is essential to analyse and explore the preceding dynasty since it explains several events which took place in the transition to the Hanoverian dynasty. The first chapter focuses on Britain between 1603 and 1659. This period starts with the reign of James I and terminates with the execution of Charles I. It is important to say that some of the monarchs such as James I or Charles II in the second chapter are not described in detail because their reign was not relevant to the transition of the dynasties, but they serve as links in the historical events. Charles I stands out in this period as his complicated character led to the disputes between Parliament and the crown and resulted in the Civil War. He wanted to rule without Parliament and the religious situation during his reign was chaotic. This led to his execution, and he was replaced by Oliver Cromwell and the republican Commonwealth. Due to this, the subchapter is dedicated to Cromwell's rule. Cromwell was another authoritarian ruler who used the army as an instrument of power. Commonwealth was not popular among the nation and after Oliver's death, his son did not share his experience which led to its failure and restoration of monarchy. The second chapter focuses on Britain between 1660 and 1715 and consists of two subchapters: Outcomes of the Glorious Revolution and the Political situation in 1714 and 1715. The chapter starts with the reign of Charles II and ends with the death of the last Stuart monarch, Queen Anne. The most important period is James II's reign since this ruler aimed for the Catholic Emancipation which stirred up the political situation as the majority of the nation was Protestant. This situation resulted in the Glorious Revolution. James had to flee to France and William and Mary were crowned together. The outcomes of this Revolution were three important documents namely the Bill of Rights, the Act of Toleration, and the Act of Settlement. The Bills of Rights ensured that a standing army in times of peace without the explicit consent of Parliament would be illegal. This document was issued to prevent tyranny and authoritarian regimes. The Act of Toleration granted religious freedom to Protestants and the Act of Settlement ensured the Protestant nature of the monarch. The latter made the way for the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. The political situation in 1714 and 1715 explains the preference for the Whigs over Tories who were accused of being supporters of Jacobitism. The main aims in the empirical part are the exploration of the nuances of the reigns of the Hanoverian monarchs, the revelation of their collective and

individual contributions to the social, economic, and political environments, and their lasting impact on the historical narrative. The objectives of the empirical part consist of the assessment of the impact and significance of the Hanoverian monarchs, analysis, and comparison of their leadership and governance, and identification of patterns and trends in the social, economic, and political environment during their reign. The third chapter belongs to the empirical part and sheds light on Hanoverian Britain during the reign of George I and George II hence follows the objectives stated above. These monarchs preferred Hanover over Britain which was seen in their lack of interest in domestic policy. They were unpopular among the nation and between each other. They meet the requirements of being monarchs who joined a campaign and therefore had military background so they can be considered strong, clever, and strategic. Both had a reputation for virility with a few mistresses standing by their side. However, there are no indications of their humility and their will was directed towards Hanover. On the other hand, after their victory over the Jacobites, the Hanoverian dynasty became accepted in Britain. George I and George II leaned towards foreign policy and attempted to use British resources to help Hanover. Both monarchs had to accept the limits of their power and authority which resulted in the Glorious Revolution. The population experienced continuous growth from the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. The kings did not introduce as many reforms as their later successors. Still, they contributed to the introduction of the Septennial Act and ensured stability and prosperity after the tumultuous period of the Stuart dynasty. During their reign, the army gained importance and laid the groundwork for developing a professional, disciplined military force that would play a significant role in Britain's emergence as a global power. The fiscal-military state was established where modern administrative practices were used. The fourth chapter sheds light on the reigns of George III, George IV, and William IV. Their reigns differed from those of their predecessors. George III preferred Britain and never visited Hanover. He preferred a simple life and was known as Farmer George. This was due to his interest in farming and support of enclosures which were one of the improvements of the Industrial Revolution in agriculture. He was not a military figure like his predecessors but, for example, William IV had a naval background which made him famous. On the other hand, George IV saw himself as an important military official, but the reality was different. George III, George IV, and William IV were not as keen on the army as their predecessors, but during George III's reign, the army improved its efficiency and grew. Their religious character and support for the Anglican Church were more visible than during the reign of their predecessors. However, the feared Catholic emancipation was granted during the reign of George IV. Regarding the



British population, there was continuous growth and fewer deaths were noticed as the quality of life improved. The general division of population was the working population, the middle classes, and the landed classes which differed in the number of financial resources and status they possessed. The concern about the slavery and slave trade also increased during the reign of the last three Hanoverian kings. First, the slave trade was abolished during George III's reign, and slavery in the British Empire was abolished during William IV's reign. The life of the poor was improved thanks to the introduction of the Poor Law Amendment Act. The Reform Acts of 1832 expanded the voting rights to the middle-class male population. Evidence of the distinction and influence of this royal dynasty is seen in the names of colonies that bear the names of these monarchs around the world. The legacy of these monarchs is that their reforms reflected the beginning of democracy, which created one of the most advanced states in the world.

**The hypothesis used for the elaboration of the empirical part claims that the reigns of Hanoverian kings were effective due to the decisions made in the political, social, and economic environment reinforced by individual characteristics.** It is important to say that the power of the rulers in this period was limited. However, their preference for certain political parties influenced the events in British history. Their decisions influenced the ease with which certain laws were passed and changes enforced. Each king's characteristics had an impact on their popularity more than on political events. However, their interests certainly encouraged new technologies, art, and architecture. The changes that took place in Britain during this period were the result of the cooperation of kings and Parliament. It is certain that the values of the political parties equally directed the nature of the reforms that were introduced at this time.

As a result, the master's thesis explores the transition from the Stuart dynasty to the Hanoverian dynasty, the Stuart monarchs, and events that influenced and enabled the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. It explores the nuances of the reigns of the Hanoverian monarchs and reveals their collective and individual contributions to the political, social, and economic fabric of their era. Last but not least, it analyses their lasting impact on the historical narrative. The purpose of this thesis lies in a thorough analysis of the Hanoverian dynasty and the events that preceded its accession to the throne. The roots of today's British democracy are found in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Hanoverians helped shape the modern British monarchy and constitutional development.

## RESUMÉ

Diplomová práca sa zaoberá štyrmi hlavnými cieľmi, z ktorých jeden sa nachádza v teoretickej časti a zvyšné tri sú v praktickej časti. Cieľom teoretickej časti bolo preskúmanie zmeny dynastií, a to ukončenie dynastie Stuartovcov a nástup hanoverskej dynastie na trón. Medzi zvyšné tri ciele patrí odhalenie nuáns v panovaní hanoverských kráľov, odhalenie ich individuálneho a spoločného prínosu v politickom, spoločenskom a ekonomickom prostredí a ich trvalý vplyv na historické rozprávanie.

Prvá kapitola sa venuje Británii v rokoch 1603 a 1659, keď krajine vládla dynastia Stuartovcov. Kapitola začína vládou Jakuba I. a končí popravou Karola I., ktorého vláda je charakteristická diktátorským režimom a ktorého komplikovaná povaha vyústila do občianskej vojny. Oliver Cromwell sa snažil vyriešiť túto neľahkú situáciu a počas jeho vlády Británia po prvýkrát zmenila štátne zriadenie z monarchie na republiku. Keďže bol Cromwell ďalším diktátorským vládcom, ktorý si moc vynucoval pomocou armády, nebol schopný túto situáciu vyriešiť. Republika nezískala na obľube a Cromwellov syn nebol natoľko skúsený, aby po jeho smrti dokázal pokračovať v tom, čo začal jeho otec. Monarchia bola preto opäť obnovená.

Druhá kapitola sa zaoberá analýzou Británie v rokoch 1660 a 1715. Kapitola začína vládou Karola II. a končí smrťou poslednej stuartovskej panovníčky, kráľovnej Anny. Najvýznamnejším panovníkom tohto obdobia bol Jakub II., ktorého iniciatíva v zrovnoprávnení katolíkov bola prijatá s nevôľou. Výsledkom tejto situácie bola Revolúcia v roku 1688, tiež známa ako Slávna revolúcia, a zosadenie Jakuba II. z trónu. Villiam III. Oranžský a Mária II. sa stali panovníkmi. Po Slávnej revolúcii boli vydané tri dokumenty, ktoré priamo ovplyvnili vládu hanoverskej dynastie. Jeden z dokumentov, známy pod názvom Bill of Rights, uzákonil konštitučné a občianske práva a obmedzil silu britskej monarchie, čím zvýšil postavenie britského parlamentu. Zákony o tolerovaní určitých vetiev náboženstva alebo Acts of Toleration, udelili slobodu vierovyznania niektorým protestantským cirkvám odštiepeným od anglikánskej cirkvi. Zákon, ktorý zabezpečil protestantského nástupcu na trón, bol vydaný pod názvom Act of Settlement. Juraj I. mohol vďaka tomuto dokumentu nastúpiť na britský trón. Keďže kráľovná Anna zomrela bezdetná a všetci potenciálni nástupci na trón boli katolíci, jedinou možnosťou bolo hľadať mimo Británie. Juraj I. sa vďaka svojej matke Žofii Hanoverskej, vnučke kráľa Jakuba I., mohol stať britským kráľom. Druhá podkapitola tejto kapitoly sa zaoberá politickou situáciou v rokoch 1714 a 1715. Rok 1714 je posledným rokom vlády kráľovnej Anny, ktorá sa politicky

prikláňala na stranu toryov. Preto táto politická strana nepodporovala nástup na trón panovníka z hanoverskej dynastie. Keď Juraj I. na trón nastúpil, toryovia sa z neho vysmievali, a preto sa politicky priklonil na stranu whigov.

Tretia kapitola patrí do praktickej časti tejto diplomovej práce. Cieľom tejto a štvrtej kapitoly bolo hodnotenie vplyvu a významu hanoverských panovníkov, analýza a porovnanie ich vládnutia a identifikácia ich spoločných znakov. Tieto ciele boli skúmané v politickom, sociálnom a ekonomickom prostredí. V politickom prostredí sa analyzoval a porovnával ich vplyv na domácu a zahraničnú politiku. V sociálnom prostredí to boli oblasti ako náboženstvo, otroctvo a jeho zrušenie a spoločenské vrstvy. V ekonomickom prostredí boli analyzované ekonomické ukazovatele ako zmeny v zamestnaní, nárast obyvateľstva, dane, obchodovanie a priemyselná revolúcia. Bolo tiež potrebné zistiť, či títo panovníci vyhovujú kritériám úspešných panovníkov stanovených podľa profesorky Clare Monagle z Univerzity Macquarie v Sidney a Marie-Clare Ross, odborníčky na správne vodcovské schopnosti. V tretej kapitole sa skúmajú prví dvaja hanoverskí panovníci, a to Juraj I. a Juraj II. Oboja králi zdieľajú viacero spoločných znakov, ako napríklad nezáujem o domácu politiku a pevné puto k Hanoveru. Boli to taktiež jediní králi, ktorí sa angažovali vo vojenských výpravách. Nespájala ich len záľuba v milenkách, ale aj zlé vzťahy, ktoré poškodzovali dobré meno monarchie. Ich vláda však hrala dôležitú úlohu v upevnení monarchie po revolučných zmenách. Oboja králi museli čeliť jakobitským povstaniam, ktoré úspešne prekonali a vďaka tomu ich Británia začala akceptovať. V rámci politických strán sa obidvaja priklonili k whigom, ktorí boli pri moci počas celého trvania ich vlád a toryovia boli odstránení zo všetkých dôležitých funkcií. Z tohto dôvodu sa môže hovoriť o oligarchii tejto politickej strany. Počas vlád oboch panovníkov ekonomická situácia v krajine začala stúpať, čo bolo dôsledkom rastu obyvateľstva a vzniku nových povolání. Už počas ich vlády mohli chudobní ľudia pracovať v chudobincoch. Situácia bola počas tohto obdobia viacmenej stabilná a Británia rozšírila svoje impérium o Madras a Bengálsko. Dôležitou udalosťou bol vznik premiérskej funkcie a Robert Walpole sa stal prvým de facto premiérom.

Štvrtá kapitola analyzuje vládu Juraja III., Juraja IV. a Viliama IV. a v rámci cieľov nadväzuje na rovnaký postup, ako bol použitý v tretej kapitole. Vlády týchto panovníkov sa líšili od vlád ich predchodcov. Juraj III. uprednostňoval Britániu a nikdy nenavštívil Hanover. Uprednostňoval jednoduchý život a bol známy ako farmár Juraj. Bolo to spôsobené jeho záujmom o poľnohospodárstvo a podporou oplotených areálov, ktoré boli jedným z vylepšení priemyselnej revolúcie v poľnohospodárstve. Nebol kráľom, ktorý by sa zapojil do vojenských výprav, no počas jeho vlády armáda narástla a zvýšila svoju účinnosť. Nové

vynálezy uľahčili rozširovanie Britského impéria, ale paradoxne počas jeho vlády došlo k strate amerických kolónií, čo sa považovalo za veľký neúspech. Aj napriek tomu bola jeho vláda prospešná, pretože obchod s otrokmi bol zakázaný. Hoci nemal milenky, počet jeho detí svedčí o tom, že aj takto sa snažil zabezpečiť stabilitu monarchie. Okrem toho, bol Juraj III. najdlhšie žijúcim a vládnucom panovníkom spomedzi spomínaných kráľov a ako o jedinom, je možné povedať, že bol skromný a pokorný. Juraj IV. bol jeho presným opakom a bol to najmenej obľúbený panovník z tejto trojice. Keď nastúpil na trón, bol už starší, chorľavejší, pôžitkársky a chýbala mu svedomitosť Juraja III. Na rozdiel od jeho predchodcu, jeho vláda pozostávala najmä z toryov, ktorí boli proti politickým reformám, čo znamená, že počas jeho vlády sa neuskutočnili väčšie zmeny. Hoci nedisponoval vojenskou kariérou, rád sa nechal spájať s vojenskými úspechmi. Azda najväčším fiaskom počas jeho vlády bolo jeho manželstvo s Karolínou Brunšvicovou. Podľa neho mu bola neverná a chýbali jej základné hygienické návyky. Jedinou možnosťou bol rozvod a zabránenie jej korunovácie. Snemovňa lordov preto prišla s návrhom zákona, ktorý by Karolínu zbavil nároku na trón a povolil ich rozvod. Zákon však neprešiel, čo Juraja IV. veľmi nahnevalo. Jeho honosná korunovácia, na ktorú boli minulé tisícky libier, sa však konala bez nej, pretože jej zabránili vstúpiť do Westminsterského opátstva. Kvôli tomu si Juraj IV. vyslúžil množstvo kritiky od radikálov. Už krátko po jej smrti odcestoval do Írska za jednou zo svojich milieniek. V Írsku aj Škótsku ho ľudia prijali pozitívne, rovnako ako aj v Hanoveri, kde rozvíjal svoje diplomatické vzťahy. Posun v technológiách bol vidieť na jeho lodi Royal George, ktorá využívala parné remorkéry v boji s nepriaznivým vetrom. Odkazom jeho vlády a vkusu je Brighton Pavilion, ktorého kupola je navrhnutá v indickom štýle. Záľubu našiel aj v maľbách, a preto podporoval známych maliarov, ako napríklad Romney a Hoppner. Sponzoroval aj Literárny fond pre chudobných spisovateľov. Problémom počas jeho vlády bolo, keď musel vymenovať Wellingtona, ktorému nedôveroval a ktorý trval na tom, že vláda nesmie uznať zrovnoprávnenie katolíkov. Wellington na Juraja IV. tlačil a považoval katolícku emancipáciu za nevyhnutnú. Preto nakoniec neexistoval spôsob, ako jej zabrániť. V roku 1829 podpísal zákon o zrovnoprávnení katolíkov, s čím sa nevedel vyrovať. Na sklonku života prejavil záujem o vieru. Často čítal Bibliu, hľadal útechu v prijímaní sviatosti a kajal sa za svoju mladosť. Posledným panovníkom bol Viliam IV. a jeho vláda bola považovaná za proces obnovy, ktorý vyvrcholil za vlády kráľovnej Viktórie. Bol synom Juraja III. a bratom Juraja IV. Jeho otec sa rozhodol, že by mal vstúpiť do námorníctva a Viliam ho poslúchol. Stal sa z neho námorný podporučík, vďaka čomu bol populárnejší než jeho bratia. Počas Americkej vojny za nezávislosť bol aktívne v námorníctve, ktorému velil

aj počas mieru v rokoch 1786 a 1790. Preto financoval námorné výdavky a podmienky dôstojníkov a námorníkov. Rovnako ako jeho predchodcovia, aj on bol veriaci a podporoval anglikánsku cirkev. Za vlády Viliama IV. sa zaviedol aj zákon Poor Law Amendment Act, ktorým sa zrušil starý systém chudobincov a starostlivosti o chudobných. Nasledovalo zriadenie chudobincov, v ktorých mohli ľudia žiť a pracovať, aby na oplátku zaplatili za ubytovanie. Boli zavedené dôležité zákony, ako napríklad volebná reforma z roku 1832 známa ako Reform Act, ktorá nanovo vymedzila, kto má volebné právo a rozšírila ho o mužskú populáciu strednej vrstvy. Počas vlády Viliama IV. bolo zrušené aj otroctvo, takže život tejto časti obyvateľstva sa uľahčil. Počas vlády všetkých hannoverských panovníkov britská populácia rástla a vo všeobecnosti sa delila na pracujúce obyvateľstvo, strednú vrstvu a vrstvu vlastnícu pozemky. Počet udelených hodností peera, teda šľachtica s právom hlasovať v Hornej snemovni, rástol počas vlády Juraja I. a Juraja II. Juraj III. však udelil najväčší počet týchto hodností.

Podľa hypotézy použitej pri vypracovaní praktickej časti, bola vláda hanoverských kráľov efektívna, vďaka rozhodnutiam prijatým v politickom, spoločenskom a ekonomickom prostredí posilnenom ich individuálnymi charakteristikami. Je dôležité povedať, že moc panovníkov v tomto období bola obmedzená. Ich preferencia určitých politických strán však ovplyvňovala priebeh udalostí v britských dejinách. Ich rozhodnutia do určitej miery ovplyvňovali ľahkosť prijímania určitých zákonov a presadzovania zmien. Vlastnosti každého kráľa mali vplyv na jeho popularitu viac ako na politické udalosti. Ich záujmy však určite podporovali nové technológie, umenie a architektúru. Zmeny, ktoré sa v Británii uskutočnili v tomto období, boli výsledkom spolupráce kráľov a parlamentu. Je isté, že hodnoty politických strán rovnako ovplyvňovali charakter reforiem, ktoré sa v tomto období zaviedli. Preto bola pre voľba ministrov pre všetkých kráľov zásadná. Keďže v tom čase politické strany ešte neboli tak jednotné a nie vždy mali jasné vedenie, kráľ mal možnosť vytvoriť ministerstvo s najpriateľnejším politikom, ktorý by dokázal viesť parlament.

Výsledkom práce je analýza a opis udalostí v Británii pred nástupom hanoverskej dynastie a analýza, opis a porovnanie vlád hanoverských panovníkov so zameraním na ich rozhodnutia v politickom, sociálnom a ekonomickom prostredí. Práca skúma nuansy vládnutia týchto panovníkov a odhaľuje ich kolektívny a individuálny prínos v politickom, sociálnom a ekonomickom prostredí. V neposlednom rade analyzuje ich trvalý vplyv na historické rozprávanie. Cieľ tejto práce spočíva v dôkladnej analýze hanoverskej dynastie a udalostí, ktoré predchádzali jej nástupu na trón. Korene dnešnej britskej demokracie siahajú

do 18. storočia a práve hanoverská dynastia pomáhala formovať modernú britskú monarchiu a ústavný vývoj. Odkazom týchto panovníkov sú ich reformy, ktoré odrážajú začiatok demokracie jedného z najvyspelejších štátov na svete. Využitelnosť tejto práce spočíva v tom, že poskytuje prehľad udalostí a vysvetľuje okolnosti nástupu na trón hanoverskej dynastie a odкрýva základy britskej demokracie.

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